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

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THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

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INDEX TO THE SIGNATURES.

- Ambrose, 353
 A Member, 231
 Ashdown (E.), 43, 86, 138, 227
 Asker (W.), 157, 203, 253, 448
 Augustine, 27, 52, 60, 108, 111,
 165, 345, 354, 402
 Ball (W.), 466
 Bamford (Jas.), 467
 B. (E.), 459
 Beecher, 81
 Bennett (J.), 97, 324
 Birch (H.), 125
 Bisco (T.), 156, 170, 348, 402,
 413, 436, 443, 534
 B. (J.), 130
 Bourne (J.), 36
 Bradshaw (G.), 418
 Brandon (A.), 373
 Brown (W.), 306
 Bunyan, 65, 114, 149, 193, 413
 Burchell, 538
 Burgess, 52
 Careless (John), 388
 C. (E.), 211
 C. (E.), 257
 C. (E.), 465
 Chapman (S.), 398
 Chappell (A.), 238
 Charles, 13, 170, 240, 268, 271
 Charnock, 27, 52
 Cleare (H.), 421
 Coles (Elisha), 425
 Collins (W.), 84
 Constable (H.), 32, 74, 112, 172,
 207, 262, 541
 Cook (A.), 396
 Covell, 174, 79
 Cowper (W.), 476, 521
 Crawford (Archibald), 355
 Crisp (Stephen), 329, 377
 Crouch (W.), 216
 De Fraine (E. S.), 460, 414
 De Fraine (R.), 175
 Densham (J. B.), 78
 Dutton (Anne), 349
 Dye (A.), 82
 Editor's Pieces,—5; 107; 391;
 437; 444; 517
 Errey (T. P.), 323
 Erskine, 202, 424, 520
 E. (Z.), 49
 F. (A.), 122
 F. (A. E.), 272
 Field (R.), 306
 Fleming (R.), 52, 121
 French (T. C.), 284
 Gadsby (W.), 13
 Gilpin (R.), 469
 G. (J.), 109
 Gladwin (D. P.), 496
 Godwin, 266
 Gregory (M. E.), 268
 Guthrie (W.), 299
 Harlick (J.), 94
 Harris, 108
 Hatton (W.), 538
 Hawker, 342, 345, 357, 488
 H. (C.), 61, 133, 515
 Hewitt (J.), 129
 Hicks (C.), 145
 Hill (T.), 326
 Hinchliffe (H. M.), 419
 Hobson (T.), 293, 335, 380
 Hooker (T.), 100, 137, 376, 424,
 459
 Huntington; 13, 30, 52, 121,
 156, 165
 J. (J), 128
 Kemp (J.), 236
 Kilmister, 327
 K. (W.), 109
 Luther, 261, 268, 305, 475, 516
 Millard (J.), 558
 Mitchenall (S.), 274
 Morse (E.), 176
 Mower (R.), 91
 Muskett (W.), 279
 Newman (G.), 143, 145
 Newton (J.), 84, 395
 Nunn (T.), 401
 Old Author, 22
 One who sorrows for Zion's
 state, 318
 Owen, 274, 252
 Page (Eli), 186
 P. (H.), 433
 Philpot (J. C.), 132, 328, 475
 Philpot (John), 343
 P. (J.), 275
 Porter (E.), 325
 Potterton (A.), 234
 Richardson (S.), 33, 75, 113,
 173, 209, 264, 512
 Rickett (J.), 280
 Romaine, 488, 498
 Row (D.), 124
 R. (R. W.), 319, 365
 Rumsey (H.), 189

Russell (J. E.), 446	Tiptaft, 80
Rutherford (S.), 240	Trail, 202, 210
S. (C.), 539	Tryon (F.), 83
Sharp (Cornelius), 372	Tryon (M. J.), 191
Shillingford (R.), 282	Turner, 180
Sibbes, 52, 27	Wadsworth (B.), 422
S. (J.), 467	Warburton (J.), 37
Smart (D.), 218	Watson, 261
Smart (T.), 28	Welch (John), 489
S. (M. L.), 419	Wermullerus, 165, 192, 353, 449
Stevens (Jas.), 356	Wright (W.), 374
Tanner (J.), 34	

SIGNATURES TO THE POETRY.

A Friend, 305	Mason (John), 317
A Hearer of the late Mr. Freeman's, 535	M. (B.), 165
A Solitary One, 123	Medley (S.), 65
B. (E.), 459	One who was afflicted for Thirteen Years, 498
Bolton (J.), 265	Read (G. H. M.), 357
C. (E.), 29, 111, 226	Shepherd (T.), 171
Ellwood (T.), 210	Smith (Alfred), 540
G. (H.), 38	Spire (C.), 443
H. (A.), 424	"Spiritual Gleanings," 516
Hunt (J.), 354	Unknown, 76

INDEX TO THE POETRY.

	PAGE
A National Fast	65
And to wait for His Son from Heaven ..	459
A Pastor's Prayer for his Flock	111
A Song of Luther's	354
A Song of Praise for the Pardon of Sin ..	317
Breathing after the Holy Spirit	123
Broken Cisterns	443
Deliverance	226
For Communion with God	171
Gethsemane and Calvary	265
Godly Wishes	210
In the Mount of the Lord it Shall be Seen ..	357
Lines suggested by a Sermon	305
Little Faith	76
Sinful Self	165
Submission	498
Supplication	29
The Consolation of Israel	535
The Desire of Nations	540
The Divine Presence	516
The Lord Reigneth	424
The Lord sought in Adversity	38
The Wonder	413

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JANUARY, 1882.

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

ADDRESS TO OUR SPIRITUAL READERS.

TIME has almost imperceptibly crept on moment by moment, and stolen from us another year of our term of pilgrimage on earth; and has rolled us onward with its ever-flowing stream twelve months nearer to eternity. Solemn thought! But how vastly do times and seasons change! Now a little sunshine; then a dark cloud obscures the face of the heavens, and all things appear to wear a gloomy aspect. Blackness gathers thicker and thicker, and a storm bursts forth, with lesser or greater fury over our heads, overturning thrones and kingdoms, and tearing up long and well-established dynasties; leaving them a ruinous heap for ever. Again, this hurricane is succeeded by a calm, and the world goes on as usual, guided by an unerring hand. In providential things and in the church, everything is in a restless state. Morning succeeds night, light darkness, and adversity follows prosperity. Hence we are called upon to "consider the work of God; for who can make that straight which he has made crooked? In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider. God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him." (Eccl. vii. 13, 14.)

What an awful proof do these mighty upheavals leave behind them of the truth of God's Word: "Then I looked on all the works that my hand had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do; and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun." (Eccl. ii. 11.) Yet how intently do the sons of men *seek* profit, although a sudden blast from the Almighty may scatter everything, like chaff before the whirlwind.

In vain we seek lasting seasons on this side the grave; but yet, all these vast commotions and variations are so many links in the great chain of events leading to the closing up of time and the issuing in of eternity, both to the righteous and the wicked. And all events are specially guided to bring about good to the election of grace: for "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Rom. viii. 28.)

As time whirled onward towards the season when we knew our readers would be expecting the usual annual address, we were anxiously looking forward for the promised help of God in the time of need. A volume of the late Mr. Philpot's sermons lay close at hand; we opened it, and the introduction to the sermon on Isa. xxix. 18, 19, No. 5 (1844), New Series, appeared to us both timely and seasonably fitted for our purpose. It draws as faithful a portrait of the features of the professing church of God at this period as in 1844; if not much more so.

“What a picture does the Holy Ghost draw in this chapter (Isa. xxix.) of a professing church, ‘having a form of godliness, and denying the power thereof!’ And with what a solemn woe does it open: ‘Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt!’ Ariel means ‘the light of God,’ and is the name given to Jerusalem, as being the place where the Lord specially manifested himself; for ‘out of Zion went forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.’ (Isa. ii. 3.) But the Lord saw into what an awful state Jerusalem had fallen; and therefore, though the Holy Ghost still calls her by the name of Ariel, ‘the light of God,’ viewing her according to the position in which he had originally placed her, yet he pronounces a woe on her, because that light was become dim, and burnt not as brightly as when David dwelt there. He therefore says, ‘Add ye year to year’—go on still in your dead and lifeless profession; ‘let them kill sacrifices’—let all the forms still be observed, but think not that these things are acceptable in my holy eyes, or that I can be satisfied with the *form* while the *power* is wanting.

“The former part of this chapter is obscure, and probably contains much that remains to be fulfilled; but the latter part is sufficiently plain. God the Spirit files in it an awful bill of charges against the professing church. Let us see what they are.

“We read, then, of a *general sleep*. (v. 10.) ‘The Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes; the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered;’ and the effect of this general slumber, which the Lord thus solemnly declared to have proceeded from himself in a way of judgment was, that neither the learned nor the unlearned knew the power of God's truth. ‘And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed. And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I am not learned.’ The learned could not read the book, for it was ‘sealed;’ and the unlearned could not, because they were ‘not learned;’ and thus, secondly, the effect of general sleep was *general ignorance*.

“The third charge which the Holy Ghost files against the professing church is *general hypocrisy*. ‘This people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me; but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me

is taught by the precept of men.' The first step, then, in the apostacy of the professing church, was judicial sleep; the second, as its effect, general ignorance; and the third, as the fruit of general ignorance, was general hypocrisy; that they drew near to God with their lips, while their hearts were far from him; and their fear was not the godly, filial fear, which is a fruit of the Spirit, but a base counterfeit, taught by the precept of men.

"The fourth charge is *general perversion and confusion*. 'Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay.' Right and wrong, bitter and sweet, good and evil, light and darkness, were all confounded; truth was perverted, and error substituted for it; and thus universal confusion prevailed.

"The fifth charge is that of *general rebellion*. 'For shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? Or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He hath no understanding?' The creature dared to arraign God's *power*: 'He made me not'—my own will and power made me a Christian; and to doubt God's *wisdom*: 'He hath no understanding'—man's wisdom outshines the Lord's.

"See, then, what an awful bill of charges the Holy Ghost here files against Ariel, the professing church of God—general slumber, general ignorance, general hypocrisy, general perversion, and general rebellion. Can we find a counterpart to this picture? Do you think that any church ever existed since that time, resembling the one which the Holy Ghost has here described? Yes; the professing church of the day in which we live presents a perfect counterpart to the picture here given; nor could we have a portrait of it more minute in all the details, or a more graphic, vivid, or powerful description of what the professing church is, in the day and generation in which our lot is cast. Are not the five marks I have mentioned, now so plainly stamped on its forehead, that he who runs may read?"

"Has God, then, abandoned his people? Has he forsaken his church? 'Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?' No; he has reserved to himself 'a remnant.' Therefore we read in the text, '*In that day*' (that day of general slumber, general ignorance, general hypocrisy, general perversion, and general rebellion), '*In that day* shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.' We see here a gleam of sunshine breaking through the black cloud that overspreads the earth."

If, then, God has not forsaken his church, and eternal truth forbids the thought that he should ever do so, the Lord grant us help to lay before his people what God the Holy Spirit will own to the profit of his saints. 1. To our brethren in the

ministry. Let us lift up our voices like a trumpet in proclaiming the *whole truth*, and *nothing but the truth*. Let it be done firmly and affectionately; fearing no man's frown, and courting no man's smile. Let us use great plainness of speech, and in no case confer with flesh and blood. Conceal no part of God's truth; but whatever a "Thus saith the Lord" declares, proclaim on the house-top. The true test of a faithful preacher is hatred from the mere professor, a good conscience before God, and the power of the Holy Spirit accompanying the Word. It is impossible to unite faithfulness to the gospel and the approbation of the world together. Sacrifice name, reputation, and the esteem of professors and profane; but do not sacrifice any part of truth: "Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding." (Prov. xxiii. 23.) Fear no man who despises the truth, nor regard any man who keeps back the great truths of the gospel. They are not to be feared, nor yet associated with. But beware of men who conceal the doctrines of the gospel under a splendid display of talent and human learning. The Word of God has always been set at nought, denied, and misinterpreted by such preachers; but after all their dazzle and glitter, the Word of the Lord is found to be established in the very heavens. It remains unshaken, while its opponents keep passing away to receive that sentence it has pronounced on all liars. (Rev. xxi. 8.)

The same Word has declared that God gives eternal life to his sheep; and that they shall never perish. (Jno. x. 27-29.) God having promised it, he faithfully bestows it on every one to whom he hath eternally purposed in himself to give it: "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." (Acts xiii. 48.) Real believers will always be limited to the "heirs of the grace of life." (1 Pet. ii. 7.) God works his own counsels, saying, "Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country; yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will do it." (Isa. xlvi. 9-11.) The Lord having purposed in himself before the world began to *give* eternal life to all his sheep, he will do it; they cannot perish, neither can *one* of them be lost. The Lord gathers them out of every nation, and calls them his "elect." He *needs* no human agency, and therefore it is impossible that any one of them should perish for lack of means. He does at times use means; but they are of his own choice, and their success is of his own effectuating. He has engaged to make them willing to be saved by his own power, and in his own appointed way. (Ps. cx. 3.) It is impossible that he should require any help from man, for no event can precede or impede his operations. All that the man of God requires is help from God.

Seek his help in the work of the ministry, and the Lord crown the labours of his sent servants with abundant success. But let us beware of men who are for uniting the world and the church, and carrying all before them. These tread down the fences fixed by the Lord, and say, "Let us merge all our differences in the one cardinal qualification for fellowship—faith in the Redeemer." Why, it is human faith in the Redeemer that creates these differences. For Christ is personal Truth. To really believe Christ is to believe the truth; to believe the truth, is to profess and confess it. To profess and confess it, is to exhibit it before God, angels, men, and devils; and to do this, is to bring down on our heads the bitterest reproaches imaginable.

But let us now draw the attention of both ministers and people to the alarming signs of the times—times wherein nearly all parties are agreed on one point, viz., the dethroning of the Lord and the exalting of the idol, "Universal Charity." Before this idol all parties prostrate themselves. Infidels and Pharisees both alike fall down and worship the image set up; and human benevolence is set in battle array against the Sovereign of heaven. His law is stripped of its authority to condemn; God of his right to punish the condemned transgressor, and sovereignty of its power to execute vengeance on its enemies. Nearly the whole world are on these points become infidels. But a confession of sin to God proves the accountableness of the creature to his Creator; and if he is accountable, God has a right to inflict punishment. Infidelity has struck her talons in the body of nominal Christianity, and is bearing her away into the regions of Satanic pride; where she dares seat herself on the throne of sovereignty, and arraign the infinite Sovereign at her depraved bar, and instruct the Almighty. To this idol ("Universal Charity")—the "Molech" of human benevolence, falsely so called, are sacrificed these great fundamental truths—original sin; its imputation to all Adam's race; the sentence of death on the whole world; the universal depravity of mankind; the death in sin; deserved punishment; the wrath of God against sin; and the existence of the bottomless pit.

The nominal church and the profane world have ever been in close approximation; and the man who can stand with one foot in the world and the other in natural religion, serves the two parts of the same body the most satisfactorily; and this is done by uniting Christianity (in name) and philosophy together, and forming a compound of the two. On these grounds every learned man can become a "Christian," because he is a philosopher. The same thing happened in the third century as that which is now taking place. Those who displayed the greatest philosophic attainments rose to the highest pinnacle of human glory. Their rule was "that truth must be impartially sought, and collected from all the various systems in which it had been dispersed." This ultimately led to the Word of God being set aside; and the present movements among rational Christians

will introduce avowed infidelity; to which the Revised Version has contributed not a little. If there were no other grounds of objection to it, it would be sufficient that it contains the sentiments of Arius. An Arian New Testament we will never accept.

We have felt it incumbent upon us to lay these facts before our readers, in order that ministers may be led (by the Holy Spirit, if it please Him,) to show a bold front against the deadly errors of these extraordinary times; and that churches may be led to contend more earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. For if the professing church in 1844 presented a perfect counterpart to the picture drawn of "Ariel," how much more do the outlines and colours of the picture stand out in 1882. Turning, then, from these things, we will close our address with a few words to the children of God on other matters.

The old year has indeed fled and left the marks of God's displeasure deeply engraven upon passing events; but God bestows his love and affections on his church, and ever will do so while the earth stands. For their sakes he governs it, and fights their battles for them; because his church are the "members of his body, of his flesh, and his bones." And he cares for his own body; therefore passing events are carefully guided so as not to damage his own flesh. It is true the whole earth is disquieted by wars, and rumours of wars; and disasters everywhere abounding. The hand of God has been heavily laid upon our harvest, and his floods have, in various places, swept away much of the food of both man and beast. Everything is also unsettled; and who can divine what is about to issue into being, and thereby disclose the marvellous wisdom of him who sits "upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; that bringeth the princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity." (Isa. xl. 22, 23.)

Casting our eyes around us, we see grave and important events on every hand,—strife and disunion in the churches; the rapid advance of infidelity; the ever-growing restlessness of the papacy for temporal power; the general and wide-spreading of errors of the most deadly nature, and unclean tendencies; the serious reverses in our harvests; and insurrection continually breaking out in many places. These things, in some measure, force themselves on the attention of every spiritual observer; and, for this cause, we have desired, in the opening of this new year, to lay before the family of God something that might, under God's blessing, be of use to the churches at the present dark, foreboding season. For who can tell what is folded up in the bosom of this year, which will imperceptibly steal away from us by fleeting moments? On this account the Lord grant us his renewing Spirit, and an increase of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Standing, then, on the threshold of the coming year, we crave the blessing of renewed spiritual health for the living family of

God; and as there are several things that tend to injure the spiritual health of the soul, let us point some of them out.

1. *Sin*; and for this purpose Satan lays his snares, and practises his wiles to draw the soul unawares, if possible, into his net; well knowing that the committing of sin involves the loss of soul liberty; and the loss of liberty injures the health of the soul. Bondage is the sure accompaniment of sin; which in its turn begets fretfulness, discontent, barrenness, and a whole host of evil complaints. What child of God is there who has not, in some form, lamented his loss of liberty through sin? The good Lord set us, one and all, on our guard against this cause of sickness. O beware of the sins of luxury and intemperance; and likewise of those things which both cause uncleanness of conscience and undermine the health.

2. *A loose, Antinomian spirit* is a cause of sickness of soul, whenever its pestilential air is breathed by any child of God; and it frequently spreads, like a prevailing epidemic, until many become affected by it; which is sure to manifest itself by a loose, careless spirit in life and conversation. Is not this a prevailing evil in our day? and are not many sunk into the spirit of carnality and disobedience? Yea, are not all more or less affected by the spirit of insubordination? There are, no doubt, a few names even in this Sardian age, "which have not defiled their garments;" but the lack of a spirit of heart obedience, and a lack of power to create a free yielding of the whole soul to God's Word is, we believe, universally felt in some measure. Nearly all feel the sickening effects of their want of a spirit to cleave more to the Lord, and groan under the heavy burden caused by this ill-health of soul. We say *nearly* all; for we fear some are so much affected that they feel very little; and a still more serious sickness has seized them, so that if any one venture to reprove or admonish them, they parry off the reproof by the well-known retort, "Physician, heal thyself;" and so, generally, become more hardened than otherwise; and perhaps this spirit becomes infectious to another, by which the disease goes on spreading its baneful influence on others less affected. "But," it may be said, "who can give reproof or admonition? Where is the man not more or less affected himself?" Well; but yet, we may say, including each one, "Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name; and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake." (Psa. lxxix. 9.) But beware of that spirit which closes the ear against God's Word, as well as that which breathes the thought that sin does not hurt the child of God. It is true it will not kill a quickened soul; but hurt it, it most surely will. But this Antinomian spirit assumes at times a yet more subtle and serious form, in that Satan would, by it, settle the soul down on a really sound truth, namely, the doctrine of *man's helplessness*; which, if he succeed, causes the person to hold *that truth* in unrighteousness. For although it may be but a short season wherein the soul is held in this snare, yet it

seriously affects the health of the soul while it lasts. No spirit from God would settle a man down in anything short of Christ; therefore this cannot be of God; neither is it like the work of God's Spirit, because *he* would direct the soul to Jesus; but this one would actually stay the eye from its upward glance to God, and treat with contempt such an experience as, "I will look once more toward thy holy temple." It also blunts the conscience against the reproofs of God's own Word; and is even diametrically opposite to the whole spirit of the gospel. The Lord enable us to be aware of this spirit of evil.

3. Another cause of sickness is from the attempt made by persons who find their way into our churches to *break down the barrier between the living house of God and the professing world*. False churches are effecting a re-union of their *bodies*; and openly, with unblushing faces, pleading for a union of the professed service of God with that of Satan. It is, of course, merely a re-union of bodies, as their spirits ever were one. But the great danger arising to the church of God from the influence of this spirit lies in its wicked attempt to lessen the distance between a flesh-pleasing worship and the spiritual service of the redeemed; or even to try to bridge over the wide valley that forms a separating line between the child of God and the man of the world, so as to form a communication between the two, to the hurt of the former. Its cry is, "Unity, unity." But a unity of what? Why, a "unity" between the dead and the living; between flesh and spirit; between a worldly religion and the spiritual, heavenly religion of God; and between him who serves God and him who serves him not. This spirit would "unite," if it could, the two distinct families existing on earth—the one born after the spirit and that which is born after the flesh; well knowing that it would be a mixture that never would *unite*; but the word "unity" is used to beguile the minds of the simple. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. vi. 14-18.)

There are many other causes of soul sickness; but enough has been said for our purpose. We have sounded the alarm and blown the trumpet in the land, to warn the churches of God that the enemy has got into the camp; and the degrading absurdities of the Ritualistic delusion, and the blasphemous reasonings of infidelity, have surrounded us. What right has the re-

ligious-infidel to reason away eternal punishment? There are seventy places where the word "eternal," or "everlasting" occurs. It is applied to God; to the Spirit of God; to redemption; to salvation; to the life of the saints; to the habitations of the saints; and to glory. Then, by what authority do these reasoners reason away "everlasting" duration from the word, when applied to the wicked and their punishment? Stick to the good old Book.

The eternal union of the church with Christ, and the union of every member of his body with each other in their Head, will ever remain an unbroken reality; but these foes to God's Word have made a desperate effort to escalate and take the citadel of the unity of the faith. For as the indwelling of the Holy Spirit vitally unites the members of the body to the head, and the members one to the other, so is he the uniting influence to a oneness in the truth. Hence there is the "unity of the Spirit," which we are to endeavour to keep "in the bond of peace." (Eph. iv. 3-6.) This oneness of faith appears to be the object of attack. This, then, must be the place of defence. For as Truth cannot lower its standard, the Lord help us to flock round it with unflinching fidelity.

So prays, Your affectionate Friend,

THE EDITOR.

FULL assurance is a most blessed and comfortable grace, the choicest piece of silver of the ten, except love. It may, for a time, be lost in a dark night; but the soul that has ever enjoyed it will "sweep the house and search diligently" till he find it.—*Huntington*.

I THINK I know, in some small measure, the amazing difference between the effects of the Holy Spirit's influences and all other feelings and workings whatever. In his light, Christ in my estimation is in some degree what he ought to be,—excellent, glorious, precious. But without him, Christ and his salvation seem to be nothing at all but dreams and shadows.—*Thomas Charles*.

If the gospel is no rule of obedience (as numbers declare), I am at a loss to know what the apostle means when he says, "The mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known unto all nations for the obedience of faith." (Rom. xvi. 25.) It is by faith "we wait for the hope of righteousness." (Gal. v. 5.) We are "saved by grace, through faith." (Eph. ii. 8.) The word does not profit, if not "mixed with faith." (Heb. iv. 2.) "Faith is the substance of things hoped for." (Heb. xi. 1.) "The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith." (Rom. i. 17.) God purifies our hearts by faith. (Acts. xv. 9.) Saints are comforted together, by their mutual faith. (Rom. i. 12.) We are made "strong in faith," in order to give glory to God. (Rom. iv. 20.) "We have access by faith." (Rom. v. 2.) "We walk by faith." (2 Cor. v. 7.) We stand by faith. (Rom. xi. 20.) We live by faith. (Gal. iii. 2.) Faith works by love. (Gal. v. 6.) Our victory over the world is by faith. (1 Jno. v. 4.) Without faith it is impossible to please God; and, as "the law is not of faith" (Gal. iii. 12), then the blessed gospel of God our Saviour must be the law of faith.—*Gadsby*.

FREE-WILL AND MERIT FAIRLY EXAMINED;
OR,
MEN NOT THEIR OWN SAVIOURS.

A SERMON BY AUGUSTUS TOPLADY, M.A.

“Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.”—Ps. cxv. 1.

SOME expositors have supposed that this Psalm was penned by the prophet Daniel, on occasion of the miraculous deliverance of Shadrach, Meschach, and Abednego, when they came out unhurt from the burning fiery furnace, into which they had been thrown by the command of king Nebuchadnezzar. And, indeed, there are not wanting passages, in the Psalm itself, which seem to countenance this conjecture. As where we read, at the fourth verse, speaking of the idols of the heathens, and perhaps with particular reference to that golden image which Nebuchadnezzar commanded to be worshipped: “Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands; they have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not.”

I dare say that, in such an auditory as this, a number of Arminians are present. I fear that all our public assemblies have too many of them. Perhaps, however, even these people, idolaters as they are, may be apt to blame, and indeed with justice, the absurdity of those who worship idols of silver and gold, the work of men's hands. But let me ask, if it be so very absurd to worship the work of other men's hands, what must it be to worship the works of our own hands? Perhaps, you may say, “God forbid that we should do so.” Nevertheless, let me tell you that trust, confidence, reliance, and dependence for salvation, are all acts, and very solemn ones too, of divine worship; and upon whatsoever you depend, whether in whole or in part, for your acceptance with God, and for your justification in his sight, whatsoever you rely upon, and trust in, for the attainment of grace or glory; if it be anything short of God in Christ, you are an idolater to all intents and purposes.

Very different is the idea which Scripture gives us of the ever-blessed God, from that of those false gods worshipped by the heathens; and from that degrading representation of the true God which Arminianism would palm upon mankind. “Our God,” says this Psalm, verse the third, “is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.” This is not the Arminian idea of God; for our free-willers and our chance-mongers tell us that God does not do whatsoever he pleases; and that there are a great number of things which God wishes to do, and tugs and strives to do, but yet cannot bring them to pass. They tell us, as one ingeniously expresses it,

“That all mankind he fain would save,
But longs for what he cannot have;—
Industrious thus to sound abroad
A disappointed, changing God.”

How does this comport with that majestic description, "Our God is in the heavens!" He sits upon the throne weighing out and dispensing the fates of men, holding all events in his own hand; and guiding every link of every chain of second causes, from the beginning to the end of time. Our God is in the heavens, possessed of all power; and, which is the natural consequence of that, "he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased," for as the apostle expresses it,—the words are different, but the sense is the same,—"he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Therefore it is that we both labour and suffer reproach; even because we say,—and the utmost we can say upon the subject amounts to no more than this, to wit, that, "Our God is in heaven, and has done whatsoever pleased him." And do according to his own sovereign pleasure he will, to the end of the chapter, though all the Arminians upon earth were to endeavour to defeat the divine intention, and to clog the wheels of divine government. He that sits in heaven laughs them to scorn, and brings his own purposes to pass, sometimes, even through the means of those very incidents which evil men endeavour to throw in his way, with a mad view to disappoint him of his purpose. "All things," saith the psalmist, "serve thee." They have all a direct tendency, either effectively or permissively, to carry on his unalterable designs of providence and grace. Observe,—effectively, or permissively. For we never say, nor mean to say, that God is the worker of evil; we only maintain that for reasons unknown to us, but well known to God, he is the efficacious permitter (not the agent, but the permitter) of whatsoever evil comes to pass. But when we talk of good, we then enlarge the term; and affirm, with the psalmist, "that all the help, *i.e.*, all the good that is done upon earth, God does it himself."

I remember a saying of the great Monsieur Du Moulin, in his admirable book, entitled, "Anatome Arminianismi," viz., "That the wicked, no less than the elect, accomplish the wise, holy, and just decrees of God; but with this difference,—God's own people, after they are converted, are led to do his will from a principle of love; whereas they who are left to the perverseness of their own hearts (which is all the reprobation we contend for), these persons, who care not for God, nor is God in all their thoughts, resemble men rowing in a boat, who make toward the very place on which they turn their backs. They turn their backs on the decree of God; and yet make toward that very point without knowing it."

One great contest between the religion of Arminius and the religion of Jesus Christ is, who shall stand entitled to the praise and glory of a sinner's salvation? Conversion decides this point at once; for I think, that without any imputation of uncharitableness, I may venture to say that every truly awakened person, at least when he is under the shining of God's countenance upon his soul, will fall down upon his knees, with this hymn of praise ascending from his heart, "Not unto me, O

Lord, not unto me, but to thy name give the glory. I am saved, not for my righteousness, but 'for thy mercy, and thy truth's sake.'" This, moreover, holds true even as to the blessings of the life that now is. It is God that sets up one and puts down another. Victory, for instance, when contending princes wage war, is all of God. The race is not to the swift, as swift; nor the battle to the strong as such. It is the decree, the will, the power, the providence of God, which effectually, though sometimes invisibly, order and dispose of every event.

At the famous battle of Agincourt, in France, where, if I mistake not, 80,000 French were totally defeated by about 9000 English, under the command of our immortal King Henry V., after the great business of the day was over, and God had given that renowned prince the victory, he ordered the foregoing Psalm, that is, the 114th, and part of this Psalm whence I have read you the passage now under consideration, to be sung in the field of battle, by way of acknowledging that all success, and all blessings of what kind soever, come down from the Father of lights. Some of our historians acquaint us that, when the triumphant English came to these words which I have taken for my text, the whole victorious army fell down upon their knees, as one man, in the field of conquest, and shouted with one heart and with one voice, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." And thus it will be when God has accomplished the number of his elect, and completely gathered in the fulness of his redeemed kingdom. What do you think your song will be when you get to heaven? "Blessed be God that he gave me free-will; and blessed be my own dear self, that I made good use of it?" O, no, no. Such a song as that was never heard in heaven yet, nor ever will while God is God, and heaven is heaven. Look into the book of Revelation, and there you will find the employ of the blessed, and the strains which they sing. They "cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue, people and nation." There is discriminating grace for you! "Thou hast redeemed us out of every kindred," &c.; that is, from among the rest of mankind. Is not this particular election and limited redemption? The church below may be liable to err; and if any visible church upon earth pretends to be infallible, the very pretension itself demonstrates that she is not so. But there is a church which I will venture to say is infallible. And what church is that? The church of the glorified, who shine as stars at God's right hand; and upon the infallible testimony of that infallible church, a testimony recorded in the infallible pages of inspiration, I will venture to assert that not one grain of Arminianism ever attended a saint into heaven. If those of God's people who are in the bonds of that iniquity, are not explicitly converted from it while they live and converse among men; yet do they leave it

all behind them in Jordan (*i.e.*, in the river of death) when they go through. They may be compared to Paul, when he went from Jerusalem to Damascus, and the grace of God struck him down; he fell a free-willer; but he rose a free-gracer. So, however, the rust of self-righteous pride (and a cursed rust it is; may God's Spirit file it off from all our souls), however, I say, that rust may adhere to us at present, yet when we come to stand before the throne, and before the Lamb, it will be all done away, and we shall sing, in one full, everlasting chorus, with elect angels and elect men, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us." And why should we not sing that song now? Why should not we endeavour, under the influence of the Spirit, to anticipate the language of the skies, and be as heavenly as we can before we get to heaven? Why should we condemn that song upon earth which we hope ever to sing before the throne of God above? It is to me really astonishing that Protestants and Church of England men, considered merely as rational creatures, and as people of common sense, who profess to be acquainted with the Scriptures, and to acknowledge the power of God, should have any objection to singing this song, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." Still more wonderful and deplorable it is that some who even make profession of spiritual religion, and talk of an inward work of God upon their hearts, should so far lose sight of humility and truth as to dream either that their own arm helped the Almighty to save them, or at least that their own arm was able to have hindered him from saving them. What can reflect deeper dishonour upon God than such an idea? And what can have a direct tendency to engender and to nourish that pride of heart which deceiveth men?

It pleased God to deliver me from the Arminian snare before I was quite 18. Antecedently to that period, there was not, with the lowest self-abasement I confess it, a more haughty and violent free-willer within the compass of the four seas. One instance of my warm and bitter zeal occurs just now to my memory. About a twelvemonth before the divine goodness gave me eyes to discern and a heart to embrace the truth, I was haranguing one day in company (for I deemed myself able to cope with all the predestinarians in the world), on the universality of grace, and the powers of human free-agency. A good old gentleman, now with God, rose from his chair, and coming to mine, held me by one of my coat buttons, while he mildly addressed me to this effect: "My dear Sir, there are some marks of spirituality in your conversation, though tinged with an unhappy mixture of pride and self-righteousness. You have been speaking largely in favour of free-will; but from arguments let us come to experience. Do let me ask you one question. How was it with you when the Lord laid hold on you in effectual calling? Had you a hand in obtaining that grace? Nay, would you not have resisted and baffled it, if God's Spirit had left you in the hand of your own counsel?" I

felt the conclusiveness of these simple, but forcible interrogations, more strongly than I was then willing to acknowledge. But, blessed be God, I have since been able to acknowledge the freeness and omnipotence of his grace times without number; and to sing, what I trust will be my continual song when time shall be no more, "Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but unto thy name, give all the glory."

We never know so much of heaven in our own souls, nor stand so high upon the mount of communion with God, as when his Spirit, breathing on our hearts, makes us lie low at the footstool of sovereign grace, and inspires us with this cry, "O God, be mine the comfort of salvation, but thine the entire praise of it!"

Let us briefly apply the rule and compass of God's Word to the several parts of which salvation is composed; and we shall soon perceive that the whole building is made up of grace, and of grace alone. Do you ask, in what sense I here take the word grace? I mean by that important term, the voluntary, sovereign, and gratuitous bounty of God; quite unconditional by, and quite irrespective of, all and every shadow of human worthiness, whether antecedent, concomitant, or subsequent. This is precisely the scriptural idea of grace; to wit, that "it," salvation in all its branches, "is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God, who showeth mercy." Thus it is that grace reigneth, unto the eternal life of sinners, through the righteousness of Jesus Christ our Lord.

1. In canvassing this momentous truth, let us begin where God himself began, namely, with election. To whom are we indebted for that first of all spiritual blessings? Pride says, "To me." Self-righteousness says, "To me." Man's unconverted will says, "To me." But faith joins with God's Word in saying, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name, be the whole glory of thy electing love ascribed; thou didst not choose us on supposition of our first choosing thee; but through the victorious operation of thy mighty Spirit, we choose thee for our portion and our God, in consequence of thy having first and freely chosen us to be thy people." Hear the testimony of that apostle who received the finishings of his spiritual education in the third heavens. "There is a remnant," says he, "according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it [election] be of works, then is it no more of grace; otherwise work is no more work." Let us sift this reasoning, and we shall find it invincible. There is a "remnant," *i.e.*, some of fallen mankind, who shall be everlastingly saved through Christ. This remnant is according to election. God's own will and choice are the determinate rule by which the saved remnant is measured and numbered. This election is an election of "grace," or the free, sovereign, and unmerited act of God. The apostle would not leave out the word "grace," lest people should imagine that God elected them on account of something he saw in them above others.

“ Well, but,” some may say, “ admitting election to be by grace, might not our foreseen good works have a little hand in the matter? Might not God have some small regard to our future good behaviour? “ No,” answers the apostle, “ none at all.” If election be by “ grace,” of mere mercy and sovereign love, “ then it is no more of works,” whether directly or indirectly, in whole, or in part; “ otherwise, grace is no more grace.” Could anything human, though ever so little, be mixed with grace, as a motive with God for showing favour to Peter, for instance, above Judas; grace would all evaporate and be annihilated from that moment. For, as Austin observes, *Gratia non est gratia, nisi sit omnino gratuita*: “ Grace ceases to be grace, unless it be totally and absolutely irrespective of anything and of everything, whether good or bad, in the objects of it.” So that, as the apostle adds, was it possible for election to be “ of works,” then would it be “ no more” an act of “ grace;” but a payment instead of a gift; “ otherwise work were no more work.” On one hand, “ work” ceases to be considered as influential on election, if election is the daughter of “ grace;” and on the other hand “ grace” has nothing at all to do in election, if “ works” have any concern in it. Grace and conditionality are two incompatible opposites; the one totally destroys the other; and they can no more subsist together than two particles of matter can occupy the same individual portion of space at the same point of time. Which, therefore, of these contrary songs do you sing? (for all the art and labour of mankind, united, can never throw the two songs into one). Are you for burning incense to yourselves, saying, “ Our righteousness, and the might of our own arm, have gotten us this spiritual wealth?” Or, with the angels and saints in light, do you lay down your brightest honours at the footstool of God’s throne, with, “ Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give the glory, for thy loving mercy, and for thy truth’s sake?”

Certainly, election is the act, not of man, but of God; founded merely upon the sovereign and gracious pleasure of his own will. “ It is not of works lest any man should boast;” but solely of him who has said, “ I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” God merits of us, not we of him; and it was his free-will, not ours, which drew the impassable line between the elect and the pretermitted.

2. God’s covenant love to us in Christ is another stream, flowing from the fountain of unmingled grace; and here, as in the preceding instance, every truly awakened person disclaims all title to praise; puts it away with both hands; and not only with his hands, but with his heart also; while his lips acknowledge, “ Not unto us, O thou divine and co-eternal Three, not unto us, but to thy name give glory!”

How is it possible that either God’s purposes, or that his covenant concerning us, can be in any respect whatsoever suspended

on the will or the works of men; seeing both his purposes and his covenant were framed, fixed, and agreed upon, by the Persons in the Trinity; not only before men existed, but before angels themselves were created, or time itself was born? All was vast eternity, when grace was federally given us in Christ ere the world began. Well, therefore, might the apostle, in the very text where he makes the above assertion, observe that the holy calling with which God effectually converts and sanctifies his people, in time, is bestowed upon us, according to God's own free purposes and eternal destination.

Repentance with faith, new obedience, and perseverance, are not conditions of interest in the covenant of grace, for then it would have been a covenant of works; but they are consequences and tokens of covenant interest: "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election [which is the standard of covenant mercy], might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." It was said unto her, the "elder shall serve the younger." As it is written, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*" Now, whether you consider this passage as referring to the posterity of Jacob and Esau, or to Jacob and Esau themselves; or, which is evidently the apostle's meaning, as referring to both, the argument will still come to the same point at last; namely, that the divine counsels and determinations, in whatever view you take them, are absolutely irrespective of works, because God's immanent decrees and covenant-transactions took place before the objects of them had done either good or evil. Of course, all the good that is wrought in men comes from God, as the gracious effect, not as the cause of his favour; and all the evil which God permits (such are his wisdom and his power) is subservient to promote, instead of interfering to obstruct, the accomplishments of his most holy will. I mention God's permission of evil only incidentally in this place; for properly it belongs to another argument. My present business is to show that the good and the graces which God works, not permissively, but effectively in the hearts of his covenant people, are the fruit, not the root of the love he bears to them.

3. To whom are we indebted for the atonement of Christ, and for the redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins? Here likewise, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us!" It was God who found a ransom. It was God who provided his own justice with a Lamb for a burnt offering. It was God who accepted the atonement at our Surety's hand, instead of ours. It is God who freely imparts the blessings of that completely finished redemption, to the comfort and everlasting restoration of all those who are enabled to trust and to glory in the cross of Christ. Against such persons divine justice has nothing to allege; and on them it has no penalty to inflict. The sword of vengeance having been already sheathed in the sinless human nature of Jehovah's Equal, becomes to them that are enabled to

believe, a curtana, a sword of mercy, a sword without a point. Thanks to the reconciling mercy of God the Father, and to the bleeding grace of our Lord Jesus Christ! Human free-will and merit had nothing to do with the matter from first till last.

4. As pardon exempts us from punishment, so justification, *i.e.*, God's acceptance of us as perfect fulfillers of the whole law, entitles us to the possession of the kingdom of heaven.

Now, the great inquiry is, whether God be indeed entitled to the whole praise of his unspeakable gift? Whether we should, as justified persons, sing to the praise and glory of ourselves, or to the praise and glory of God alone. The Bible will determine this question in a moment; and show us that Father, Son, and Spirit are the sole Authors, and consequently should receive the entire glory of our justification.

(1.) It is God the Father who justifieth; *i.e.*, who accepts us unto eternal life; and that freely by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ, and through the imputation of Christ's righteousness, without works—without being moved to it by any consideration of the good works, and without being restrained from it by any consideration of the evil works, wrought by the person or persons to whom Christ's righteousness is imputed, and who are pronounced just in consequence of that imputed righteousness.

(2.) Justification is also the act of God the Son, in concurrence with his Father. Paul expressly declares that he sought to be justified by Christ. The Second Person in the Divinity joins, as such, in accepting his people through that transferred merit which, as Man, he wrought for this very end. Now let me ask you, did you assist Christ in paying the price of your redemption, and in accomplishing a series of perfect obedience for your justification? If you did, you are entitled to a proportionable part of the praise; but if Christ both obeyed, and died, and rose again, without your assistance, it invincibly follows that you have no manner of claim to the least particle of that praise which results from the benefits acquired and secured by his obedience, death, and resurrection. The benefits themselves are all your own, if he give you faith to embrace them; but the honour, the glory, and the thanks, you cannot arrogate to yourself, without the utmost impiety and sacrilege.

(3.) God the Holy Ghost unites in justifying the redeemed of the Lord. We are declaratively and evidentially justified by the Spirit of our God; whose condescending and endearing office it is to reveal a once-broken-hearted Saviour in the broken heart of a self-emptied sinner; and to shed abroad the justifying love of God in the believer's soul. Herein the adorable Spirit neither needs nor receives any assistance from the sinners he visits. His gracious influence is sovereign, free, and independent. We can no more command or forbid it than that of the shining of the sun.

(To be continued.)

OF THE PERSON WHO IS MEDIATOR,
AND OF THE GREAT DISCOVERIES OF GOD WHICH ARE MADE
TO US IN AND THROUGH CHRIST.

JESUS CHRIST the Mediator carries three Names, which relate to three great discoveries and manifestations of God that are made to us in him:

I. As he manifests the will of God, he is called the "Word of God." (Rev. xix. 13.)

II. As he manifests the nature and essence of God, he is called the "brightness of his glory." (Heb. i. 3.)

III. As he manifests the Persons of the Godhead, he is called the "express image of his Person." I do not say these Names relate only to these discoveries; but mainly.

I. The Person who is the Mediator of the covenant of grace, is he whose Name is called the "Word of God," and that both in relation to creation and redemption. 1. He is the Word by whom all things were made. (Eph. iii. 9; Heb. i. 2; Ps. xxxiii. 6.) 2. He is the Word in relation to the revealing all the will of God. There is a new discovery of God after the fall; it is a discovery of him in Christ; and this is a mystery which the angels dive into, with stupendous endeavours. (1 Pet. i. 12.) Christ is the Word of God that reveals this mystery. (Matt. xi. 27; Jno. i. 18.) 3. He is the Word of God in relation to the fulfilling of all the Word of God, and accomplishing his will, especially that which relateth to himself. This Name is given him in the time of the seventh trumpet (Rev. xi. 15, with xix. 13), when all the promises and threatenings are to be fulfilled; then he shall be acknowledged to be the Word of God. The ordering of all things according to the Word of God, and the accomplishment of all his will since the fall, is committed to the administration of Christ the Mediator. (Jno. v. 22, 23.) It was Christ that brought the flood upon the world. It was he that went down to Sodom and destroyed it. (2 Pet. ii. 5, 6.) *Jehovah* did it. (Gen. vii. 21.) The same Name is given to Christ. It was Christ the Angel of the Covenant that appeared in the bush, and delivered his people out of Egypt. (Exod. iii. 2; Acts vii. 30.) It was he that brought all those judgments on them in the wilderness. (1 Cor. x. 9.) It was he that brought them to Canaan, and out of Babylon; and built the temple, and filled it after their return. (Isa. lxiii. 9; Zech. vi. 12; and ix. 11; Hag. ii. 7.) This contributes to make Christ a fit Mediator, and fit to support the faith of God's people; in that the making of all things, the revealing of the will of God, and the fulfilling of it, even the whole government, is upon his shoulders; which may assure our hearts that the work which he undertaketh shall be accomplished.

II. This is he who is called the "brightness" of his Father's "glory." As Christ manifests God's will, so he manifests the nature of God; and—

1. Here let us see what the glory is. I take it to be meant, not of the *essential* glory which he had with the Father from all eternity, but of the *manifestative* glory and majesty of the Lord which shined forth in Christ; for it is of Christ the Mediator that the apostle is here speaking. It is the excellences of God as they shine forth in the Mediator, which otherwise had been invisible, and could not have been seen, discovered, nor looked upon (2 Cor. iii. 18.) Therefore the end of Christ's being constituted Mediator is for this manifestative glory, whereof we read, Jno. xi. 4; v. 22, 23.

2. The *brightness*, or *sent forth light*, here spoken of, is a similitude taken from the sun, wherein there is the body of the sun, there is the light of the sun and the shining splendour or beams of the sun. Interpreters think this to be an expression of the eternal generation of the Son, proceeding from the Father, as light from the sun. I take it rather to be the manifestation of the Father, in Christ the Mediator, who is otherwise invisible. As the sun is manifested by its own light, so that if you would light all the torches in the world, you cannot see the sun by the light of these without its own light; no more can you see God but in Christ Jesus, who is "the brightness of his glory," the light whereby his excellences are manifested. (Jno. i. 9; Matt. xi. 27.)

III. This is he who is called "the express image of his [Father's] Person," (Heb. i. 3,)—the *imprinted form*. This similitude relates to the Persons of the Godhead, as the former did to the Divine Essence and Nature. It is borrowed from the signet's impression, which represents all the lineaments of the seal—the Character is the perfect expressed Image. Mark, Christ is called the *Image of God's Person*, not of his *Essence*; for he is the same Essence, not the same Person. There is in the Godhead, *essentia* and *subsistentia*, the Essence is but one; but the subsistences or Persons are different, as is expressed in Scripture (1 Jno. v. 7): "For there are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost."

For our knowledge of the Person who is Mediator, I lay down two conclusions from that comprehensive description of him.

1. That Jesus Christ hath in him a glorious resemblance and a perfect Character of all the glorious excellences and attributes of the Father: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." "But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord."

2. That it is by Christ the Mediator that all the glorious excellences of God are revealed unto us. (2 Cor. iv. 6.)

Consider,—1. That God's great end in all his goings forth towards the creature, in predestination, creation, providence, &c., is his own glory, and the manifestation of his excellence. (Prov. xvi. 4; Rom. xi. 36; Rev. iv. 11.) But more especially this is the end in redemption. (Eph. i. 6; Jno. xvii. 4.)

2. That which is God's end is our happiness; even to have God manifested to us; to see him, and to have discoveries made

to us of his excellences. (Jno. xvii. 3; Matt. v. 8; 1 Jno. iii. 2.) To see him and be transformed by that sight. (2 Cor. iii. 18.)

3. The way of God's attaining his end and our happiness (which are both one), the way, I say, is also one. It is in Christ the Mediator that God is manifested; and in him do we see God; the knowledge of his glory, and our happiness, are both *in the face of Christ*. (2 Cor. iv. 6.) All the excellences of God are manifested in Christ; he revealeth the mysteries,—First. Of his will, as he is the Word. Secondly. Of his nature, as he is the brightness of his glory. Thirdly. Of the subsistences and distinction of the Persons, as he is the *Image of his Person*. He only knows the Father; and he only can reveal the Father: "He is the image of the invisible God;" *i.e.*, the excellences of God (otherwise invisible) are revealed by him, and are to be seen in him.

These three things are discovered in Jesus Christ:

I. The attributes of God.

II. The distinct subsistences of the Persons of the Godhead.

III. The distinct offices of the Three Persons.

I. There is a full manifestation of the attributes of God in Jesus Christ the Mediator of the new covenant. These attributes that were never manifested before, that is, mercy and long-suffering, are revealed in him; and those that were manifested before, shine more brightly through Christ.

1. The *wisdom* of God. There was great and infinite wisdom shown in creating the world and ruling it by his wise providence; but what is that to the wisdom that is shown in Christ? The wisdom that reconciled justice and mercy; the wisdom that punished sin, and pardoned the sinner! How wonderful and unsearchable is that wisdom that, by the fall of man, raised him to a greater height of happiness than he ever had before! (Rom. xi. 33, 34; Eph. iii. 10.) This is "the manifold wisdom of God," which yet doth not fully express the Greek word, which signifies the *manifold and various wisdom*, or the wisdom of God that is full of admirable varieties. So, Beza, Erasmus, Zanchius, Stephanus.

2. The *goodness* of God is manifested in Christ Jesus. His goodness and love to man appeared much at first in making him of the rank of the highest creatures on earth, and putting all the rest of the creatures under his feet. (Ps. viii. 5, 6.) This was penned to magnify the nature of man; but in Christ our nature is more magnified, as we shall show by-and-by. (Heb. i. 6.) This is a higher pitch of the love of God. This is the goodness of God more manifested than ever before, to give his Son, Christ, for man; and his Son to become sin, and a curse for man. (Jno. iii. 16; 2 Cor. v. 21; Gal. iii. 13.)

3. The *mercy* of God is eminently manifested in Jesus Christ. In him man is made to rise by his fall. Mercy never came to light before. It was never revealed but in Jesus Christ; for it respects the creature in its misery. (Luke i. 72, 78.) When all

the posterity of Adam were as fuel for the fire, mercy rescues and reserves some to be sons and heirs. (Rom. ix. 23.)

4. The *power* of God is manifested in Christ. God showed his power in creation, as we read (Isa. xl. 12, &c.; Job. xxxviii., &c.); but what is this to the taking of our nature, and uniting it to a personal union with the Son of God—that God should become Man; the Ancient of days become a Child; the Incomprehensible to become comprehensible (Col. ii. 9); the invisible God to become visible; and, as such, to dwell here in a tabernacle with men? (John i. 14.)

5. The *sovereignty* of God is manifested in and through Christ. Great was the sovereignty of God that was exercised in predestination—in making vessels of honour or dishonour, according to the pleasure of his will. (Rom. ix. 21–23.) Yet all this was sovereignty over the creature; but that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, should be appointed a Mediator of the new covenant, made a Servant, and appointed to lay down his life, *this* is greater sovereignty. (John vi. 38; x. 18.)

6. The *justice* of God is manifested in Christ. His holiness did appear in that holy image which he put in Adam, and the holy law which he gave to him under penalty; but this holiness of the image of God stamped on the creature was possible to be lost, for both men and angels were capable of sin, and did fall; but herein is a greater manifestation of God's holiness, that Christ Man, Christ the Mediator, is made the fountain of all holiness; and holiness cannot be lost in him; yea, it is derived from him. (John i. 14, 16; iii. 34.) "For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." This is spoken of Christ-Man, of Christ-Mediator; for one of the Persons of the Godhead cannot receive another. O what an impression of holiness is this—what a communication and manifestation of the holiness of God. The "fulness" of the Godhead dwells "bodily" in the Man Christ. (Col. ii. 9.) Where there is the highest union there is the greatest communion; there was never such another union as that personal union, and therefore there never could be such a communication of God.

7. The *all-sufficiency* of God appears more in Christ than ever before. The declarative glory thereof shines in the restoring of lost man. For whosoever can restore lost man can raise him to a higher happiness than he fell from. This did God in Christ the Mediator. He is all-sufficient, and almighty, and is thereby declared to be so. This is a declaration of God's all-sufficiency, and of Christ's. (Gen. xvii. 1; 2 Cor. viii. 9; xii. 9.)

8. The *patience* and *long-suffering* of God was never heard of before, until it was manifested in Christ. God executed his justice against the fallen angels, without exercising any patience and long-suffering towards them (2 Pet. ii. 4); but, in Jesus Christ, there is a discovery of the patience of God, and his bearing with sinners (Isa. xlix. 8). There is a covenant to establish the earth; that justice do not ruin it. Jesus Christ obtained

pardon and reproof for some sinners, that they should be spared. (Ex. xxxiv. 6.) In him the Lord proclaims himself, "merciful, gracious, long-suffering," &c. (1 Tim. i. 16.) Yea, and by way of concomitancy, and for the elect's sake, the non-elect reap some benefit by the patience of God thus manifested. He suffers the creatures to mock him, and say, "Where is the promise of his coming?" (2 Peter iii. 4; see also Rom. ix. 22.)

9. The *faithfulness* of God is manifested in Christ. He was known to be true and faithful in fulfilling the threatening and certification of the transgression of the first covenant (Gen. ii. 17); and in keeping the covenant with all creatures (Gen. viii. 22; Jer. xxxiii. 20, &c.); but this was only a small declaration of his faithfulness, when compared with the manifestation of his faithfulness in Christ, which shines so brightly in keeping covenant and promises with him, and with his people on his account, notwithstanding all our unfaithfulness to him. Hereby he is proclaimed to be the Lord, "abundant in truth." (See 2 Cor. i. 20; Ps. lxxxix. 34, 35; Mic. vii. 18, 20.)

10. The *majesty* of the Lord, something whereof is manifested in creation (Ps. xix. 1); but much more in restoring man. If there be a majesty in angels (Heb. i. 7), and in godly men—which is only a little discovered here, but shall be more fully afterward (2 Thess. i. 10)—O what excellent majesty must there be in Jesus Christ! (Heb. i. 13;) and what shall yet be revealed in him, when he shall come in glory! (2 Thess. i. 7; Col. iii. 4.) You see, then, all the attributes of God are made more bright, and get a new lustre in Jesus Christ the Mediator.

II. The distinct Subsistences of the Persons in the Godhead, and blessed Trinity, are more brightly discovered in Jesus than ever before. God was but darkly seen before in the distinct Subsistences of the Persons of the Trinity; but in the gospel, through Jesus Christ, there is a glorious manifestation thereof. (2 Cor. iv. 6.)

1. The Eternal Son of God, the second Person's taking on our nature, doth clearly show that there are distinct Subsistences or Persons in the Godhead. There are *two* natures in *one* Subsistence or Person, which illustrates the Three Subsistences in one nature, or Three Persons in the Godhead.

2. By Jesus Christ, from his own mouth, and in his carriage as Mediator, there are many bright discoveries of this great mystery, as we may read, Matt. iii. 16, 17; xxiii. 28; John xiv. 16, 26. And many like testimonies were from him, manifesting this glorious mystery.

III. The distinct offices of the Three Persons, or their ordered administration and working, and the various and distinct acts of the Trinity, in the work of redemption, are brightly discovered in and by Jesus Christ the Mediator. (2 Tim. i. 9, 10.) But because these may be gathered from what hath been spoken of the covenant of suretyship or redemption, I shall only touch upon them in this place. And

1. The acts of the Father plotting, and making the covenant with Christ the Mediator. (1.) He had a purpose to raise man through a Mediator. (Eph. i. 5.) (2.) He chose the Son for the doing of this work, and us in him. (Eph. i. 4; Ps. lxxxix. 19.) (3.) He makes a covenant with the Son, ver. 3, and promises where given to Christ, and grace given to us in him, before the world began. (Tit. i. 2; 2 Tim. i. ix.) (4.) God the Father appoints who shall be saved, and gives them to the Son, that all who were written in God's book may also be written in the Lamb's Book of Life. (Jno. xvii. 9; Rev. xx. 12, 15; xxi. 27.) (5.) He appoints what measure of grace and glory every one of them shall have. (Eph. iv. 7; Matt. xx. 23.) (6.) He commits all government to the Son for the elect's sake, that he may do according to this appointment. (Isa. ix. 6; John v. 22.)

2. The acts of Jesus Christ's undertaking. (1.) He consents to the covenant. (Ps. xl. 7.) (2.) He engageth himself to take the creature into union with his Person (Heb. x. 5), and to lay down his life according to his Father's command. (John x. 18.) (3.) He undertakes to receive, keep, and raise up at the last day all those given him by the Father. (Jno. x. 18; xvii.) (4.) He undertakes the government of the world, and to judge it at the last day. (Ps. ii. 8; Matt. xi. 27; Jno. iii. 35.)

3. The acts of the Spirit. (1.) He undertakes to unite the human nature of Christ by a miraculous conception. (Luke i. 35.) (2.) To join us with God in one Spirit. (1 Cor. vi. 17.) (3.) To be a Spirit of unction; first to Christ, and to us through him. (Jno. iii. 34; Isa. lxi. 1.) (4.) To act all our graces; to blow upon them; and to help our infirmities. (Song iv. 16; Rom. viii. 26.) (5.) To shed abroad the love of God in our hearts. (Rom. v. 5.) (6.) To set a seal upon our hearts, and to bear witness to all the work of God in us. (Eph. i. 13; Rom. viii. 16.)

Now all these things are discovered, and manifested to us in Jesus Christ the Mediator of the new Covenant.

OLD AUTHOR (Name unknown.)

THE saints do not make a trade of sinning; and yet they are not without sin.—*Augustine*.

ALL our goodness and comfort come from this original, the knowledge of God's love to us. When that is in us, this is the spring of all other graces, of all services; it sets all graces on work.—*Sibbes*.

God's creative power drew the world out of nothing, but his converting power frames the new creature out of something worse than nothing. What power must that be which can stop the tide of the sea, and make it suddenly recoil back? What a vast power must that be that can change a black cloud into a glorious sun! This and more doth God do in conversion; he doth not only take smooth pieces of the softest matter, but the ruggedest timber, full of knots, to plane, and show his strength and art upon. It is not so great a work to raise many thousands killed in battle as to gospelize one dead soul. (2 Cor. iv. 6; Eph. i. 19; ii. 1, 5.—*Charnock*.)

COVENANT ENGAGEMENTS.

“Quicken thou me according to thy word.”—Ps. cxix. 25.

“Uphold me with thy free spirit.”—Ps. li. 12.

“And afterward receive me to glory.”—Ps. lxxiii. 24.

My very dear Friend in Him that cannot lie,—I just drop you a line or two of love-tokens. I am a poor letter-writer indeed, but I dare say you can make it out. I thank you very much for your kindness in sending me those four “Gospel Standards,” which I received some time ago. I was reading one of them last night. What glorious truth and blessed experience are in them! I did enjoy one piece in particular. I will mark them, and send them back soon. Ah, friend, it is a blessed favour indeed to be a child of God! I sometimes think I am one; then again I *think* it is too good news for poor me; but, thanks be unto God, our *thinking* does not alter it one bit. It is the devil’s work to harass, and God’s work to comfort: “These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” (Jno. xvi. 33.) Our foundation is a sure one; for it is Jesus himself. There is a glorious and blessed Trinity,—Three Persons in one God,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and they were engaged from all eternity on the behalf of a certain number of the human race. In support of which truth the Word of God abounds with proofs. The Father chose the church in Christ, and gave them to his Son; and he accepted them and undertook to redeem them; and in the fulness of time he accomplished their redemption. He took the whole guilt of their sins upon himself, and became surety for them; discharged their debts; fulfilled God’s holy and righteous law, magnified and made it honourable; wrought out and brought in a neverlasting righteousness; most perfectly and completely finished redemption’s work; and is now returned and seated at the right hand of God, and “ever liveth to make intercession for us.” The Holy Ghost undertook to quicken each of these; to raise them from a state of death in trespasses and sins; to reveal Christ to their hearts the hope of glory; to lead and guide them into all truth; and at last to bring them to eternal glory. This is what the Scriptures set forth all through them; and if this is God’s way of saving sinners, our *thinking* does not alter it in the least. But faith, my friend, is not always working in us; and then it is that we are in trouble. I do not know how it is with you; but I tell you how it is with me. When I have faith given me, and I can believe that Jesus did all for me, that my debts are all paid and I am free (let come on me what may), if I had to lie out all night on a bed of thorns, it would be all right. Now I trust I have felt like this before now, and I want to feel it again and again. My prayer has been and still is, “Quicken me again and again.”

There is a blessed sermon by Mr. Miller in the “Christian’s

Monthly Record" this month. How I did enjoy it! It picked me up, and I felt the words with power; for without power everything is very dry.

You must excuse bad writing, dear friend. We have just begun harvest here; it is such nice wheat and good crops; what we want now is fine weather to gather it into stacks. May the Lord favour us with it, and may we be led to pray for a blessing to rest upon both man and beast.

May I ask you to remember me to your God at a throne of grace, that he may be mine also. Do not put yourself out of the way to answer this; any time will do.

O friend, that we may be fitted and prepared for that eternal rest that remaineth for all God's people is my prayer.

T. SMART.

Wernham, near Marlborough, Wilts, Aug., 1881.

SUPPLICATION.

O! THOU Most High! To thee I raise
My feeble cry in prayer and praise;
My eager feet would fain draw near
Thy mercy-seat with filial fear.

With lowly mind, I'd tell thee all—
Thou Saviour kind—my sin and thrall.
On thee I wait, I look to thee;
Lord! At thy gate a suppliant see.

Lord! I am weak and foolish too;
Thy face I seek, my strength renew.
I scarce can pray, so faint am I!
But, if I could, to thee I'd fly.

Oppress'd indeed, and very low,
In this my need thy mercy show.
Sweet Jesus, shine into my heart;
Thy love divine soothes all its smart.

Physician! Heal this wounded soul;
The griefs I feel thou canst control.
Thy grace on me, O Lord, bestow,
That I may flee from all below.

Thy love divine, if thou dost give,
This heart of mine shall surely live.
Lord! (if 'tis meet) I would prolong,
At thy dear feet, my plaintive song.

Lord! Hear me now! Say, "Peace, be still."
Then let me bow to thy dear will.
O! May thy peace rule all within,
Thy blood release my soul from sin.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

The following letter was copied from a manuscript of the late Mr. Huntington; it is addressed to a friend in Sussex, but was never published, so far as we know:

THE troubler of Israel is come once more to see, or else to converse with his sister Mary, wishing her and her household a happy new year, and that in the best sense. A new year must begin (in the best sense) when old things are passed away, and when all things become new; and this is done when we get from the curse of the old covenant into the blessing of life, in Christ Jesus, which is promised to all sensible sinners in the new covenant of grace. Then we "put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man," though he is sure to come on us again; this makes putting off the old man, or denying self, which is one and the same thing, a work to be done daily. However, we get rid of our old righteousness, old forms of worship, old doctrines and commandments of men, of our false hopes and wrong notions of God, and of our old companions also. As soon as the good Spirit of God begins to awaken, alarm, and to convince us of sin and unbelief, then the old things, one after another, begin to vanish; as God says unto Israel, as soon as the Passover was instituted, and God had begun to deliver his people, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you." (Ex. xii. 2.) And when our deliverance is completed, then comes our new birthday; then he saith, "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom. His flesh shall be fresher than a child's; he shall return to the days of his youth." (Job xxxiii. 24, 25.)

This, sister Mary, begins the new birthday, the new time, the new month, and the new year; and in this sense I sincerely wish both you and yours a happy new year. Nor is it too late to wish you a merry Christmas; for that day is kept in the commemoration of the Saviour's first birth upon earth; but he has been born a thousand times since that one: "I travail again in birth," says Paul, "till Christ be formed in you;" and when he is formed there, he will grow up within us till he becomes Christ in us, "the hope of glory;" and after this he dwells in the heart by faith; and when perfect love comes and casts out fear and torment, then Christ, his word, and Spirit, have got full possession; and what says the Lord to this? Hear it from an answer that he gave to some of his troublers: "Behold, thy mother, and thy brethren, stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my mother, my sister, and brother." (Matt. xii. 48-50.) In this sense I wish thee a merry Christmas and a happy new year; and after this we shall see many new

things, have many new visits, some new comforts; and these will be the forerunners of many new trials, new troubles, new plagues, and new temptations; but all shall work together, to bring us to the new heavens and to the new earth, which is promised to all new creatures in Christ Jesus our Lord. Come, my dear sister in Christ Jesus, be of good comfort, for he certainly calleth to thee; and take notice to whom his kind invitations and affectionate calls are made; to the hungry soul: "And they shall come that are ready to perish;" and to those that labour under fear, bondage, and sin: "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden;" and to the thirsty: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine that I have mingled;" and, in the last place, if any be made willing in the day of God's power: "Whosoever *will*, let him take the water of life freely." Now be sure of this, that every word of the Lord is spoken in truth and uprightness. His calls are true, sincere, and affectionate; nor shall a jot or tittle of his Word ever fail, or pass away unaccomplished, or unfulfilled. The soul to whom the Lord gives an appetite, is as sure of the feast as of the hunger given, or of the invitation proclaimed. There is no room for the devil, unbelief, doubts, and fears to work here, if we do but feel our need, and are enabled to seek relief in God's own appointed way; that is, in and through Christ Jesus, who is the only way to the Father, and the object set before us; and in whom all fulness of grace dwells.

But forget not, my dear sister, that God regards the intent desires of the soul as real prayers, and has made many promises to them, for the comfort and encouragement of such of his poor, weakly family who cannot address him as they would,—such as these: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered;" "For the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord;" "For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul;" "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him?" "The desire of the righteous shall be granted;" "To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death." He often stands "behind the wall," and shows himself through the "lattice," in our distress; and now and then gives us a ray of light, a drop of comfort, a feeling sense of his power (nearer than usual), to enlarge the heart, to raise hope, to increase our expectations, to set an edge to our appetite, and to expect no less than his real manifestation to our souls; and then, off he goes, and takes all the bag of money with him, and we seem further from the mark than ever. Then jealousy burns, anger rages, disappointment enters, the devil comes, sin revives, unbelief prevails, and all confidence is cast away; and the language of the devil and unbelief is, "Let him go, if he will; I would to God I could rest satisfied without him;" but this ends in grief, sorrow, horror, confession, double love, and treble desires;

cursing self, and crying for mercy. "O that I could lie passive, watch his hand, and wait his time! But I always was a devil; there never was one of such a disposition, such a fool, such a perverse, headstrong, obstinate ass as I am," saith the poor soul; "and now, perhaps, he has taken me at my word, and is gone for ever; and out of my own mouth will he judge me at the great day." No, no, Mary, none of this cometh from him that calleth us.

I should not have troubled you with this; but knowing the bad weather, and fearing poor brother Jenkins could not attend you often, I have thus far presumed.

Tender my kind love to Mr. Blaker, Miss Mary, and the young gentlemen; and I assure you that Bolney has a share in every private prayer of thy poor, unworthy friend and servant in Christ Jesus.

W. H.—S. S.

[The above has been copied from a manuscript as stated. We do not know whether it has been published before or not. We know Mr. H. says somewhere in his works, "This will do for So-and-so; and I have sent him a copy." So that he sent two or more copies of the same letter to different persons, altering the heading and address only. Hence both parties believed they possessed the original, which in one sense they did.—Ed.]

THE OLD LAMP LIT UP AFRESH.

"And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them."—LU. XXIV. 15.

HAVING received a packet of letters written by the late Mr. H. Constable, of Penshurst, to Miss Richardson, of Blackham, Kent, we purpose, if God permit, to lay them before our spiritual readers, and trust they may receive some real benefit by their insertion. Mr. Constable was upwards of seventy years of age when the correspondence began, and Miss Richardson had some inward disease which terminated her existence and closed the correspondence. There are 23 letters of Mr. C.'s. He was for some years a deacon in connection with the cause at Penshurst.

No. I.

To Miss Richardson.—Madam,—You will be surprised to receive a letter from me, particularly so as I have never had any communication with you, though we have frequently met at the chapel, and I do hope at the throne of grace also.

I must explain the cause. I have for some time had it on my mind, should the good Lord spare my life up to the age of man, viz., three-score years and ten, that I would endeavour to retail some of his dealings with me, so unworthy a creature. The account is only intended to be seen by a few friends. Mr. G. wished to take it to Cowden last night, and read the contents. I have had some secret wish for you to see it also; why and wherefore it is so I cannot tell. I therefore asked Mr. G., if he should be going to Blackham, to leave it with you.

After I had left him I was sorry I had told him to do so, as I thought you might think it very abrupt on my part to send such a poor scribble for you to look at; but I do hope that what I have done may be for the glory of my dear Redeemer. If I know myself, I believe exaltation of self has had no hand in the matter; besides, from what I feel, I could not do otherwise, for the dear Lord has placed me on Pisgah's mount for some months, even from May last, as you will read; yes, he has again lit up the lamp with a fresh supply of the *oil of grace*. It has got at times a little dim and flickering; but bless his name it has not gone out; no, thanks to his Majesty, he poured a little more of the same oil into the old lamp about ten days ago, and it now shines bright again; and I do wish it may shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

“'Tis no wild fancy of our brains,
No metaphor we speak;
The same dear man in heaven now reigns,
That suffered for our sake.”

Perhaps the Lord has not appeared to you in so singular a manner; you have not, I believe, been placed in the same circumstances; but, whether our faith is great or small, the dear Lord knows how to deal with each case. I sometimes think he indulges the “Little-faith Christians,” and deals more tenderly with them than he does with the strong ones. Yes, the weaklings he has promised to carry in his bosom, and to gently lead those that are with young; but the strong have to travel the rough road. Yet in the end we shall be all brought to the same fold, and have the same Shepherd.

I have often been glad to see you and your sister at the chapel; but I have observed you have not been so constant in your attendance of late as formerly. I suppose we shall lose your sister; I was glad to see her there the other Sunday, and more so; that she stayed all day.

I have many times in my own mind wanted to have a little conversation with you, but never seemed to have the opportunity. Everybody knows that I am a man of few words; but this I do know, I love from my heart all who love our Lord Jesus Christ.

I should like to have the scraps of my experience returned into my own hands on Sunday week.

You can make what use you please of my poor writings, only do not cast pearls before swine, they will only turn again and rend you; but a word in season sometimes is like “apples of gold in pictures of silver.”

May my God bless you and make his face shine upon you, is my prayer in a blessed Jesus.

HY. CONSTABLE.

Penshurst, March 2nd, 1863.

REPLY.

My dear Sir,—I thank you heartily for your kindness in writing, and also for sending me your experience to read. I assure you I felt some sweet meltings of soul in reading it. I

could bless God who has been so good to you; for when I came to where you speak of "the old lamp sometimes becoming dim," and then "again lit up" with a little more of the "oil of grace;" "O," I thought, "what a blessed thing it is to be able to feel assured we have the *oil of grace!*" How many fears I have had, especially of late, lest I should at last be found to possess the lamp of profession only. The question often arises in my mind, "Have I been deceiving myself and others?" For I feel such deadness, and know by painful experience that I cannot quicken my own soul.

I often look back to formers years when my soul did indeed hunger and thirst after righteousness, even the righteousness of Jesus. Scarcely anything in those days would keep me from chapel. I thank you for the reproof yours contained on that point. I know I am not so constant as formerly, whereas any one would think I should be more earnest, seeing I know and am assured of what must shortly come to pass. Sometimes when I feel a little stirring of soul, and some desires arising, I begin to hope it may be the "well of water springing up into everlasting life." I felt a little of this under dear Mr. Chandler, the last time I was at Smart's Hill; at least, I blessed a good and gracious God that my soul was not quite dead, but was open to reproof. I would beg for more quickening grace; and that I may not be left in such a lifeless state.

May the dear Lord go on to be gracious to *you*. For I can rejoice in another's welfare, though I fear for myself.

May I beg an interest in your prayers; and I remain,

Yours sincerely,

Blackham, March 13th, 1863.

S. RICHARDSON.

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

SELF-ABASEMENT.

My dear Friend,—I feel ashamed to see the date of your kind letter addressed to me Dec. 19th, 1865; and that you have not yet had a line from me to thank you for the same, or even to acknowledge it. I hope you will be able to forgive me; I have not done it wilfully. I am a poor writer in every sense of the word, and keep putting it off till shame rises in my face. When I received yours I was very unwell, and had been so for some time. I was also called upon to bear trials, bitter trials, such as I had never before passed under. Many, and anxiously felt, were the messages of war and grief; something, in a small measure, like poor Job's,—whilst one was speaking, there came another. I felt in my soul to exclaim with David, "Thou hast showed thy people hard things; thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment." One night I felt as though I must sink under it. Being very ill in body, it seemed as if I could not live till the morning; and my poor soul was crushed under the weight of troubles. I have so sunk in body and mind that I have felt fit

for nothing. Often have I groaned before God in secret under a felt sense of my deadness, darkness, barrenness of soul, and unfruitfulness in the things of God. My past unprofitable life in my profession of the name of the holy Lord Jesus likewise overwhelms me with grief; and at times I look back upon it as being altogether a blank. I am deeply ashamed of the sins of my heart, lips, and life; and feeling so barren, blind, and full of confusion, I have many times been ready to say, "It would be a mercy if the Lord would bless my poor soul, and take such a poor useless creature to heaven, such a useless lump of lumber out of everybody's way." Sloth seems to eat me up, as it were. I know what Solomon said, by sad soul-experience, "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep; so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man."

I am still very poorly; I have been here one Lord's day, and I have another to stay. I leave, nothing preventing, for my home on Monday next. I was at Gower Street the two Lord's days before. While in London, I underwent two rather painful operations with, I think, only partial success; so that I have constantly a pained, afflicted, and weak body. But I do not find the inward man renewed day by day, as I see it is in some others, whose outward man, like my own, is decaying.

I have carried your letter, and one which I received from another friend yet unanswered (and others indeed), hundreds of miles, hoping when out to be able to answer them; but from one cause or other have been let hitherto. Sometimes a deep sense of helpless ignorance and deadness has been a barrier. Then I have waited, hoping the spring would rise, or that it would be better with me. But, after all, I am brought to what Hart says about a poor sinner coming to the Lord Jesus:

"If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all."

So this poor scrawl comes of it, which I do not send as being worth your reading, but as a token that I neither treat you with wilful neglect, nor your letter with silent contempt. I have thought, perhaps, Satan has had to do with your mind about it, and you have wished you had never written to me. I assure you, dear friend, I was much surprised, and somewhat humbled in the dust, on reading in yours, that anything written by such a very poor, barren, blind worm as myself, should have been in any measure blessed to your soul. I remember with what fears and tremblings I wrote to the dear friend you mention (whom I have never seen) in answer to a good letter I had from him.

I know what it is to be sorely tried about my poor preaching. Sometimes I feel ready to throw down my arms, and run from the battle-field altogether. Sometimes it seems to be come to an end—I cannot go on. Yet I am still a spared monument of God's long-suffering goodness and mercy; and am still out of a deserved hell. Yea, and after all, I am the subject of a hope

that my never-dying soul will be found among the blood-washed family of God. I often have the words of the poet in my heart in solemn appeals to the Lord Jesus, and tell him he knows it is the feeling of my soul,—

“Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee;”

and sometimes I can sing,—

“A few more days, or months, or years,
In this dark desert to complain,” &c.

I sometimes get a little in preaching God's holy word with the ability he has given me. Sometimes I feel it to be so solemn and great a matter to stand up in the name of the living God, that it makes me move on in much fear, feeling something of what I am as a polluted, vile sinner; unworthy to take his holy name within my unclean lips; and feeling I neither know how to think nor what to speak. Sometimes I have trembling heart-searchings. I would not be deceived in my profession, and be only a lamp, and light professor, with no oil in the vessel, for thousands of worlds; nor would I run unsent of *God* to preach for all the world calls good or great.

I am thinking you will be saying, “Well, this is a strange sort of a professor and preacher; and a poor one, if his preaching is no better than his writing.” Well, dear friend, I must honestly confess it is the best I can write at present. My pride would say, “Don't send it, as it will disclose the nakedness of the land.” But, however, I do so.

I wish you all needed grace, strength, help, and wisdom to uphold you; guide and direct you in the ministry, and your own soul. It is a day of great, very great profession: but I believe comparatively very little soul-saving religion. O what a mercy is this, to be one of the few.

May the Lord give us an increase of grace, to live more in his fear and to his glory, that in a gospel way our last days may be our best days.

I am, dear Friend,

Yours sincerely in the hope of the grace of life,

Godmanchester, June 19th, 1866.

JOSEPH TANNER.

To Mr. Bennett.

“THE RECOMPENSE OF THE REWARD.”—HEB. XI. 26.

My dear Children,—I have just time to say that the glory of the Lord shone round about me this morning in my preaching. The glory of his rich grace to *me*: it reached my heart; and the glory of his truth was unspeakably sweet, and so cleared the way for me that I perceived “righteousness, justice, and peace kissed each other;” and I was reconciled to the Father, through his well-beloved Son. I had been in some fear and trouble, but my text was sweetly applied: “Be still, and know that I am God.” (Ps. xlv. 10.) “I will be exalted” in saving thee and destroying all thine enemies; the worst of which is unbelief. I found the account of Abraham offering up Isaac to be a sweet and encour-

raging example of offering up all idols, believing God would provide a rich compensation by giving us "a hundredfold." I am sure one touch of his divine presence is ten thousandfold, and is, by me, far preferred to all earthly considerations. Accept my love, and that of all here.

From your affectionate Father,
Sutton Coldfield, Oct. 3, 1847. JAMES BOURNE.

ETERNAL LIFE.

"I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."—JNO. x. 29.

My dear Friend.—You have concluded your letter with the words, "I feel as dead as a post." I shall begin this with the words, "And your life is hid with Christ in God." We forfeited our created life of holiness in the sin of our first father Adam; but, by the superabounding goodness of the grace of God, we have in the Second Adam, who "was made a quickening Spirit," a better life, even an eternal and incorruptible life. Then surely for us to die is gain. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Now, one blessed quality of this life is, that it is resurrection life: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." Then comes forth a song: "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Now mark what I say. In order to live a life of faith on the Saviour, a life of love towards God and his truth, a life of peace with God by the atonement, and a life of victory over every enemy, you will be led to look out of yourself, away from yourself, your bad self, your good self, praying self, dead self; and, just as you are—dead, stupid, filthy, lost, naked, and as black as the tents of Kedar—to look unto Jesus Christ, and to him alone, to save you, wash you, clothe you, cleanse you, and beautify you; and, as one of the most ugly creatures, to transform you into the most lovely,—surpassing angels. Indeed, there is a great mystery in vital godliness. The Lord is our Judge. He passes sentence of condemnation upon us, and upon everything we do, say, or think; and thus we are brought in guilty before him. Our mouths are stopped; conscience is against us; the Word is against us; and even our Judge is against us. Now, to go to him that condemned us (and that righteously) for pardon, for glory, for honour, and for long life, requires something more than the exertion of our natural powers.

Israel of old declared: "We will serve the Lord; for he is our God." But Joshua knew better than they did; therefore he said unto the people, "Ye cannot serve the Lord; for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God." But God giveth grace, and "he giveth more grace;" and that grace is sufficient to enable us, against all hope in the creature, to believe in the promise of God; and out of weakness to be made strong in faith; so as to be fully persuaded that what he has promised, he is able and

willing to perform. The faith which God gives looks upon God as faithful, and sure never to fail in his word. Faith views everything possible with God; and, in the greatest extremity, off she goes to her Almighty Friend, to tell him all her sorrows; to plead his word; to weep, beg, pray, struggle, and knock; and to implore his mercy, love, and grace to shine forth. He will not be sought in vain. The Lord increase our faith!

Yours in Love,

J. WARBURTON.

Southill, near Biggleswade, Nov. 13th, 1879.

THE LORD SOUGHT IN ADVERSITY.

“Thou hast known my soul in adversities.”—Ps. xxxi. 7.

JESUS, wilt thou condescend
 Still to be the sinner's Friend?
 Saviour, wilt thou hear me?
 Since for sin thy blood was spilt,
 Let it, Lord, remove my guilt;
 Let me find thee near me.

When thou leav'st me, Lord, alone,
 All my evils to make known,
 Ease and sloth benumb me;
 Sins of every shape and kind,
 In the flesh and in the mind,
 Rise and overcome me.

When for help I try to pray,
 And that help thou dost delay,
 Angry murmurs seize me.
 Grovelling in that dreadful case,
 Atheistic thoughts find place,
 And no friend can ease me.

When nor sun nor stars appear,
 And my soul is urged to fear
 Lest thou'lt never own me;
 Then a ray of heavenly light
 Lets me see that all is right—
 That even *there* thou'st known me.

Then submissive to thy will,
 Patiently my soul lies still;
 Who like thee can teach me?
 From the miry clay and pit,
 On the Rock to set my feet,
 Thy kind hand can reach me.

Grant me by thy Spirit, Lord,
 To retain each wholesome word,
 When thou dost instruct me.

To thy feet with nought to give,
Full remission to receive,
Thus thou dost conduct me.

When again from thee I stray—
Nor can I regain my way
Unless thou direct me—

When my sinking spirits droop,
And the tempter hides my hope,
Saviour, then protect me.

When he spreads the hidden snare,
Some kind whisper to beware
By thy Spirit send me.

Or when taken in the net,
Struggling I but faster get,
Even *then* befriend me.

Fill me, Lord, with godly fear,
And my praises deign to hear,
For what thou hast taught me.

O reveal thy smiling face,
That with joy I may retrace
All the way thou'st brought me.

Dec. 25th, 1839.

H. G.

REVIEW.

Remarks on Pre-Existerianism: as set forth in the Writings of Mr. Stevens, Mr. Allan, &c. &c. Newcastle-on-Tyne: J. Beall, 32, High Friar Street. 1881.

VIEWING, as we do, that any approach to the mystery of the holy nature, and sacred Persons in the Triune Jehovah to be the most hallowed ground on which a man can tread, we desire to approach it with profound reverence and holy adoration; and seek the help of the Holy Spirit to aid us against our infirmities. For the nature of God is incomprehensible; as, also, the mystery of the Three Persons in the One Jehovah. Yes, all the works of God are incomprehensible; and for what may be known of him, we are indebted to the revelation of it in his Word. Without his Word we have no pathway for our thoughts to tread in the way of knowledge; and without the Holy Spirit's guidance therein, we only become wanderers in the region of fancy, where proof can never be found. Where the Scriptures have no voice, and where the Holy Spirit does not guide, we prefer saying "we do not know," feeling it is better to own our ignorance than attempt to speculate in visionary notions. But, still, what is revealed becomes an object of *faith*, and the sublime subject believed is faith's delight. The Lord and his prophets have left us examples of procedure: "It is written;" "Thus saith the Lord." Here we are safe if guided by the Holy Spirit. Let us, then, appeal to God's Word. Here we find an account recorded of the forma-

tion of the "*first man*:" for so the Holy Spirit terms him: "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthly; the second Man is the Lord from heaven." (1 Cor. xv. 45-47.) Here we have two men spoken of, "the first" and "the last;" the "first natural," that is, *ψυχικός*, *pertaining to the soul*; "the last, spiritual," or *pertaining to the Spirit*. The "soulish man is said to be "the first man;" then Adam must have possessed the *first soul*. The Lord Jesus is said not to be a "natural," or "soulish man;" that is, Adam's highest created animating power was a human soul; but that of the Lord was a "spirit." We must conclude from this that what the Lord assumed at his incarnation was this soulish nature, or, in other words, the soul and body of the nature of Adam. But let us look at the formation of this "first man:" "And the Lord God formed man (the Adam) of the dust from the ground." Here we are told that the body was formed *first*. It was moulded as an artificer models his work, and into the nostrils of this beautiful piece of mechanism, God "breathed" or "blew" the breath of life; and man (the Adam) became a living soul. Now this is denied of the "second Adam," seeing it was not a soul only that animated the body of the Lord, but a spirit; and we are told who that Spirit was: "When his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." (Matt. i. 18.) Again the angel said, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." (ver. 20.)

It appears to us, then, that the eternal Son assumed the complete and perfect human nature that was created, body and soul, which was called "a thing," because it had no personal existence of itself, and that "thing" was wonderfully conceived through the power and influence of the Holy Spirit, being produced by him in a suitable condition for the glorious and eternal God, who was to assume it, and to unite it to his own Person. By which act he did not change *his* name, but that thing which was born was itself called by *his* name: And the angel answered and said unto her, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (Lu. i. 35.)

We are bound, with these facts, to believe that the soul of Adam was the first soul created, and that it was an immortal soul, because it was the "breath" of God.

The sum of the whole is, then, that we have an account of the creation of the first soul, constituting the first man a soulish man; we are told when and whence it came. We are also told that there was a *He* that passed by the nature of angels, and that "He took on him the seed of Abraham." This is said to be

“flesh and blood:” “Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” (Heb. ii. 14.) If he took flesh and blood, there never was blood before there was flesh, nor yet without the flesh; and living flesh and blood never existed apart from a soul. We have no hint of a soul existing before flesh; but, being immortal, it exists afterward, and apart from the flesh; yet only for a limited period. We feel bound to believe, from the example of the creation of Adam, that no soul ever existed before its body; and that a soul without a body is not a man.

We cannot verify the quotations given by Mr. Mayell, as we have not the works referred to in our possession, and indeed have not seen them. Some of the quotations appear very extraordinary; for instance, Mr. Stevens says,

“The Word who was God, was in the beginning, and from the beginning with God, in regard to his begotten existence as man; and (page 126) he says the term ‘Word’ and ‘Word of God’ can be no expressions of his divinity!” (Page 5).

The testimony of the Holy Spirit on this subject is that the “Word was God.” The soul of Jesus is not God; the whole human nature is not God. There are two distinct natures in the Person of the Son of God; and the “Word,” being God, he was made flesh. In his becoming flesh nothing was added to the divine nature in form of change. This “Word” was not the flesh he assumed; and as he assumed flesh he necessarily took body and soul together at one and the same time, because he took flesh, and living flesh could not be without the possession of a soul. No one ever heard of such a thing—living human flesh without a soul! It could not be a soul that was made flesh. This was never known; and Jesus was “made like unto his brethren.” (Heb. ii. 17.)

The Son of God did not become two Persons by his incarnation; but both natures are united in *One Person*, that of the divine nature. Hence all Personal acts are those of the divine Person. He as a divine Person could act and speak as a man, because he was a man. So, what a man could do, he could do, sin excepted. He could say, “I and my Father are one;” and, “My Father is greater than I.” Both are perfectly true, although the speaker is the same *Person*; because this one Person possesses two distinct natures—divine and human; one equal to the Father, and one unequal to him. The Pre-existerian doctrine divides the natures into two distinct acting persons, which was the error of the Nestorians. The Person being one, Christ could be poor, and at the same time the Creator of all things. The same *I* could be a servant, and at the same time be the eternal I AM: “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made *himself* of no reputation, and took upon *him* the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

(Phil. ii. 6-8.) The "*He*" and "*Himself*" here is God's equal, and it is God's equal that "was made in the likeness of man." Jehovah being the great I AM, there is no succession or change in him; he is, "from everlasting to everlasting;" so that there cannot possibly be anything new nor anything old with God. All events ever did and ever will stand present before him in the order of their appearance in time—everything is now. On this account God calls those things which are not as though they were—to him they *are*. But on this subject we will give an extract from Mr. Mayell's book.

"Again, Mr. Stevens says, in his verses on the Sonship (page 13), 'What Christ was reputed that Christ must have been, or arguments must all be vain.' I answer, all arguments must be vain when they are contrary to the Word of God; but it is very certain that 'God calleth things which *be not* as though they were,' (Rom. iv. 17.) Mr. Stevens also says, (page 13) 'If God can repute us as living when dead, who could believe what he said?' I answer, Abraham could believe what *He* said, though his own great age, and the deadness of Sarah's womb, were evidences of their deadness; and so also any one can believe what the Lord tells them, when he gives them faith to believe it. Did not Isaiah believe that the Redeemer was wounded for his transgressions? and yet it was more than seven hundred years before our Lord was crucified. Therefore in the time of Isaiah, Jesus Christ was reputed as being born, 'unto us a child *is* born,' (chap. ix. 6;) as 'preaching by the Spirit of the Lord,' (chap. lxi. 1;) and as 'having laboured in vain,' (chap. xlix. 4;) and as having been 'wounded for our transgressions;' as having 'poured out his soul unto death;' as being 'taken from prison and from judgment;' as having 'made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death;' as having 'given his back to the smiters and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, and hid not his face from shame and spitting;' and the church is called upon to 'Arise, shine, for thy light is come.' Now all this is reputed of Christ, and much more, seven hundred years before it was done; and all this is spoken in the past tense as having been already done; and the inspired psalmist sings, "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men," &c. Now, I ask, who is spoken of as having done and suffered these things? Was it the pre-existent soul? Did the pre-existent soul give his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair? It will be admitted that Jesus Christ the God-man is meant. Then, I say, Jesus Christ in Isaiah's time was reputed to be what he had not yet become, the "Word made flesh," and so in 8th Proverbs, "I was set up, brought forth," &c., is no more evidence of the human soul being brought forth in a pre-existent state, than the 53rd of Isaiah is evidence that Jesus Christ was crucified seven hundred and twelve years before he was born. But to say that "what Christ was reputed that Christ must have been," is to me awful, for certainly Christ was reputed "sin" and "a curse;" therefore what Christ was by God's appointment as the substitute and surety of the church, and what he was in himself, are as opposite as sin and holiness, for in himself he was holy; yea, the most holy God, the most holy man, yea, in his humanity, the most holy of the whole creation, for in holiness, as in everything else, he has (and has rightly) the pre-eminence; therefore what Christ was reputed that Christ could *not* have been, viz., sin, or he could not have been "the Lord our righteousness."

Mr. Mayell's book might be a help to any one who may be brought in contact with Pre-existerians; as such we recommend a perusal of the work by them. The reader will discover that Pre-existerians try to make out that the human nature of the Lord "has power to put forth all the acts of the Godhead," by its union to the divine Person. But the human nature is not the Person; it is "that holy thing."

Obituary.

A brief account of the Lord's mercy and grace manifested to my dear friend, George Weston, of 17, Foundry Street, Brighton, who died in peace, Jan. 22nd, 1881, in the 86th year of his age. I buried him, in the presence of many friends, in the cemetery, Brighton.—E. ASHDOWN.

GEORGE WESTON was born July 1st, 1795, of God-fearing parents, in the old county town of Lewes. He was brought up to hear the truth under Mr. Jenkins, and occasionally heard Mr. Huntington. But to use his own words:

"I was dead in sin, and also unconcerned about what I heard, until I was between seventeen and eighteen years of age; at which time it pleased God to quicken my poor, dead soul, according to the riches of his grace, and to convince me of my sins. This made me a poor wanderer, seeking rest, and finding none."

When Mr. Huntington was buried at Jireh Chapel, Lewes, in 1813, young Weston's parents and friends went to the funeral; but he feared to go, feeling himself so sinful in the sight of a just and holy God. For he thought that none but good people would be present at the grave of so holy a man as Mr. Huntington. In his last illness he told his daughter what esteem and reverence he had at that time for those godly men; and also what soul trouble and guilt he was then in.

He says:

"For nine years I walked without any light shining on my path, and with these scriptures following me: 'There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked;' 'The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt;' 'He that doeth aught presumptuously shall be destroyed;' but 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' I saw I had not one particle of purity in me. I thought I should go out of my mind, as a poor uncle of mine did, and be put into an asylum. I wished I had never been born, or that I had been one of the brute creation, which have no sins to answer for. This was my state, which David describes in the following verse: 'When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth.'"

Thus he wandered about in guilt and trouble for nine years. At length the day drew near in which he was to taste and feel a little of the mercy and goodness of God. It occurred on a Lord's day morning. On that day he left his bed-room with a heavy burden of guilt, sorrow, and trouble, and went to John Street chapel, Lewes, to hear the late John Gibbs, whose

ministry that morning was made a great blessing to him. He says:

"Such a light shone on my path under this sermon, and such a blessing flowed into my soul, that I could see I was travelling in the footsteps of the flock; which raised my soul to hope in the sovereign mercy of God towards me, a poor, base sinner.

"Law and terrors do but harden

All the while they work alone ;"

but this mercy melted my soul, and I wetted the floor of the chapel with tears from my eyes. It also caused me to be looking forward for greater things, even the pardon of all my sins, and a fuller manifestation of the love of God in my heart—the entire removal of the guilt of my sins, the fears and castings down of my soul, the sentence of death from my conscience, and the witness of the Spirit with my spirit, that I was a child of God."

This blessing united him to Mr. Gibbs and his ministry; and there was, in consequence, a close union between them until Mr. Gibbs's death.

He married at the age of twenty-one, and became the father of six sons and six daughters; and lived to see them all married, and several of them called by grace (to the no small joy of his heart) after many fears that the Lord would visit the sins of the father upon his children.

I must pass over some years, after his having been raised to hope under the sermon by Mr. Gibbs. For he had to walk in tribulation's path eighteen years, before it pleased the Lord to seal home pardoning mercy and love upon his soul. He says:

"I was labouring under a sight and sense of the holiness, justice, and tremendous majesty of God, attended with the guilt of sin; and feeling at the same time much of the depravity of my heart, which sank me very low in my mind. O, how my soul prayed, longed, hungered, thirsted, begged, and craved for mercy, daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly before the set time came. I prayed with earnest supplication for pardon and acceptance in his presence, declaring at the same time that I was willing to suffer any affliction, trials, temptation, or persecution for his name's sake. The salvation of my soul was of the greatest importance to me; and blessed be his holy name, he, in his own due time, granted me the desire of my soul, which is 'a tree of life,' and hath brought me through great and sore afflictions.

"In Nov., 1839, when in very trying circumstances both temporally and spiritually, it pleased the Lord to appear for me, and shed abroad his love in my heart, removing fully the guilt of my sins, the fears and castings down of my soul, and the sentence of death from my conscience; and he granted me the witnessing of the Holy Spirit with my spirit that I was a child of God. All my trouble and sorrow fled away under the power of this blessed visit. For three days I was so overpowered with the continual blessing and praising God for his wonderful mercy, goodness, and loving-kindness to me, a poor unworthy worm, that my eyes flowed with tears and almost prevented me seeing to do my work. O, the rejoicing of my heart! Bless his holy name I could now say, with the psalmist, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life

from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies.' (Ps. ciii. 1-4.)

"This pardon, this peace, which none can destroy,
This treasure of grace, this heavenly joy,
The worthless may crave it; it always comes free;
The vilest may have it; 'twas given to me."

"Like Bunyan's pilgrim, I could now leap for joy, and did, in my soul; and I praised and blessed my dear Redeemer as *my* Saviour, *my* Lord, *my* portion, and *my* all. O the exceeding riches of his grace to sinful me!

"In guilt's dark dungeon when I lay,
Mercy cried, "Spare," and Justice, "Slay;"
But Jesus answered, Set him free,
And pardon him, and punish me."

So the Lord fulfilled his blessed word, to the joy of his heart:
"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

About three months after, in Feb., 1840, his daughter Susanna was brought into the liberty of the gospel, while reading Mr. Huntington's "Destruction of Death by the Fountain of Life." She had been in bondage and soul trouble under the sentence and fear of death for six years. On hearing of the Lord's mercy to her, he wrote the following letter:

"My dear Daughter,—I now acknowledge your cheerful epistle, which I received on Thursday. How many times has that passage, 'I will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children,' rolled over my mind in times of darkness. Many times has my heart been pained and grieved at the thought of God's displeasure being put forth on my children, in some way or other, as visitations to wound the heart of their wicked, base, unbelieving, mistrustful and ungrateful father; especially so at times; and for a long time before you sent me the account of the Lord's mercy being manifested towards you, in raising you to a good hope through grace, shedding abroad his love in your heart, casting out fear and torment, and giving you the spirit of adoption, whereby you cried, 'Abba, Father,' the Spirit bearing witness with your spirit that you were a child of God, 'an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ.' Then you found that peace 'which passeth all understanding,' because the love of God was shed abroad in your heart. Then you entered by faith into rest; and Christ became your hope, 'as an anchor' to your soul, 'both sure and steadfast,' entering into that which is 'within the veil.' Then you could love God, because he first loved you, and manifested the same to the joy and rejoicing of your heart. Then you entered by faith into Christ, the 'city of refuge,' safe from the avenger of blood that pursueth the guilty. Then you could shout from the tops of the mountains, and sing of sovereign, free, electing love. Then you could exalt his blessed name, and say, 'Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.' (Ps. lxxvi. 16.) Then you had love to the brethren; and you were *experimentally* transplanted from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Then, instead of unbelief, you had the *gift* of living faith; instead of despair, a lively hope; instead of a guilty conscience, a conscience void of offence, cleansed by the efficacious blood of your dying Saviour. Instead of a troubled, distressed, cast-down, dejected, and comfortless heart, you were filled with joy and peace in believing; and began singing, 'Honour, praise, and glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,' three Divine Persons in one undivided Jehovah, for having

delivered your soul from death, your eyes from tears, and your feet from falling; for having set your feet upon a rock, and established your goings.

The account you sent me of the mercies which were manifested towards you was particularly blessed to my soul at the time; and it has often been a comfort to me since, and a means in the hand of God of delivering me from those evil suggestions of Satan, 'that God would visit my sins on my children.' 'When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.' My soul has therefore been sweetly refreshed and comforted in meditation by the account of the reason of your hope; and praise and thanksgiving have flowed from my heart for his tender mercies in providence and in grace towards us both. Your letter of last Thursday informs me of the 'Sun of righteousness' arising again 'with healing in his wings,' when the beasts of the forests were obliged to creep into their dens; and of the return of the wayfaring man with his 'bag of money,' making your heart happy in the Lord. This is another of 'the days of the Son of man,' which you have desired to see. The Bridegroom and you have entered the bridechamber; and you are feasting on the Paschal Lamb, after a fast. This is the way to the heavenly Canaan, 'which the vulture's eye hath not seen; the lion's whelps have not trodden it;' but 'the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein,' being led by the mighty power of God the Holy Ghost. He that hath no changes fears not God, and is, therefore, like a stagnant pool. But we must receive streams of living water from the fountain that maketh glad the city of God; and be emptied from vessel to vessel; and find the day of adversity, and the day of prosperity, are set, the one over against the other. Pure and living faith must be tried by fire; and the Lord declares he will 'sit as a refiner.' There must be these melting and humbling days of adversity and sorrow; but, blessed be the Lord, nothing shall destroy or even hurt us, for he saith, 'I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.' What precious promises, my dear child! So we may sing:

"Gold in the furnace tried
Ne'er loses aught but dross;
So is the Christian purified
And better'd by the cross.'

"His chastening, therefore, prize,
The privilege of a saint;
Their hearts are hard who that despise,
And theirs too weak who faint.'

And also:

"When Jesus, with his mighty love,
Visits my troubled breast,
My doubts subside, my fears remove,
And I'm completely blest.
I love the Lord with mind and heart,
His people and his ways;
Envy, and pride, and lust depart,
And all his works I praise.'

"This is the way I travel through this waste, howling wilderness; sometimes lifted up, then again cast down in sad adversity, both in providence and grace. Again, there is a sweet refreshing from his presence, and a God of providence and grace becomes my All in all; and this sweetens my path, so that praise and thanksgiving, with a humbling sense of God's goodness and mercy, have followed me all my days.

“May the person you speak of as being brought out from the national church, find admittance into the heavenly Jerusalem, to ‘the spirits of just men made perfect,’ and to ‘the church of the first-born.’ Faith will bring in joy and peace in believing; but he will find himself lost before being found, dead before living, shut up before he comes forth, and darkness will come on before the light of life shines into his heart, giving him the knowledge of the glory of God in Christ Jesus.

“May this blessing be his portion, is my desire.

“My paper is full, and bed-time is come; therefore, adieu, my daughter, and accept the natural and spiritual love of thy father.

“Lewes, Nov. 28th, 1841.”

“GEORGE WESTON.

In the beginning of the year 1843, he had a rather severe illness, and was brought very low in body; but as my knowledge and friendship with him did not begin before Jan., 1864, there are many particulars of his life omitted. But what is written is taken from his own writings which I have by me; also from conversations with him at different times, and from my knowledge of him in after-years; I beg, therefore, the forbearance of those friends who had more knowledge of his early life, for any omission I have made.

As he was recovering from his illness, he wrote the following letter to his daughter:

“My dear Susanna,—I suppose, from what Mary said, you will expect to see me at Brighton; but I am sorry to say I shall not be able to come, not being so well as I expected to have been by this time. The keen winds have prevented my taking air; and the sudden change on Thursday gave me a fresh cold. I am somewhat better to-day; but not well enough to go to Brighton to-morrow. Sunday will be the day for the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper. Should you be at the chapel, may the Lord bless your soul with his presence, and enable you to feed by faith on the precious body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, as broken and shed for you. Although you will not partake of the symbols with the brethren and sisters in the faith; yet the Lord can bring forth in your heart the same joy and rejoicing in his great, glorious, matchless, and free salvation that has redeemed your soul, as well as mine, from eternal death; and although separated in body from them at present, yet there is the same spirit, the same faith, the same love, the same joy and rejoicing, the same God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, Israel’s Three-One God, the Author and Finisher of every good word and work for us, in us, and by us, to his eternal honour and glory, and our everlasting benefit and salvation. Therefore, when his set time comes, he will bring us forth as visible members of his militant church, to receive the ordinances of his death and sufferings, which paid the heavy debt of sin and transgression, that must otherwise have lain on our souls and bodies for ever and ever. Ah! my dear, I do believe you and I could receive the bread and wine, and not eat and drink our condemnation, but be enabled to discern the Lord’s body. Blessed mercy and favour! blessed gift! yea,—thus to be favoured with that faith which purifies the heart, and works by love; that hope which is ‘as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast;’ and that love which flows from the soul, bedewed with the love of God shed abroad therein, and casteth out fear and torment. Ah! my dear child, this is a blessed experience; this is what you and I have found, blessed and praised

be his holy name! This is more than all the comforts of this world; and it is what my soul prayed, longed, hungered, thirsted, and begged for daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly before the set time came for me to enjoy it. Then I found it precious to my soul; and I proved him to be

“The sinner’s Peace, the Days-man he,
Whose blood should set his people free;
On me his fond affections ran,
Before creation-work began.’

“Then I could say, ‘Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling’ (Ps. cxvi. 8); and, ‘In thy presence is fulness of joy.’ Praise and thanksgiving was the theme of my soul. O blessed change, from fear of death to life eternal—from despairing to a good hope, fixed in a covenant-keeping God—from the guilt of sin corroding in my conscience, to pardoning love manifested—from standing afar off, to be made nigh by the blood of the cross, from a heart full of trouble, to finding peace in believing, through our Lord Jesus Christ! O, my dear girl, I have found the blessedness of these things in this affliction; though my tabernacle has been weakened, yet my ‘inward man’ has been strengthened. What a blessed contrast between this illness and my last, about six or seven years ago. Then there were fears weighing me down, the guilt of sin pressing me sore, and the fear lest God’s justice should be executed upon me (considering myself to be one that had been ‘often reproved,’ yet had ‘hardened my neck;’ whom God would ‘cut off, and that without remedy’); no exercise of faith, hope, or love—afraid to die, and afraid of God’s judgment-seat. Then I had both distress of mind and affliction of body. Yes—I say it is a blessed contrast! For now there is no fear of temporal or eternal death, no fear of God’s vindictive wrath, no guilt of sin distressing me, no fear of being cast from his presence when summoned to appear before him at the end of this life; but a sweetly viewing the way God has led me these many years and instructed me, and given me to know what was in my heart. He has led me ‘to the Rock that it is higher than I;’ and to see that, as far the heavens are above the earth, so far are his thoughts above my thoughts, and his ways above my ways; and to give me a good hope and an expected end. My mind has been fixed, trusting in him; and praying that he would not permit the corruptions of my heart to rise up against his sovereign will; which prayer he has heard and answered; so that I have been sweetly passive in his hands, as clay in the hand of the potter, without rebellion, fretfulness, or repining at God’s dispensations towards me. Therefore I cannot say, in the spiritual sense of the word, that I have been afflicted, distressed, or in soul trouble; nor yet lamenting the loss of his presence. Neither am I labouring under the power of unbelief, nor the fear of my hope being ‘removed like a tree.’ For the enemies of my soul have all their bounds fixed, as it is written: ‘Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.’ (Job xxxviii. 11.)

“These are some of the things which have been on my mind since I have been taken from my labour by illness. I hope the Lord will enable you to rejoice with me who doth now rejoice—with me, your natural father, and spiritual brother in God’s elect family. Blessed and praised be the name of our Three-One God for his great mercy, which endureth for ever.

“I thought I should have been able to get to chapel last Sabbath morning, but was not allowed by my doctor to get out. I think I should have done so, on Thursday evening had not the change of

weather prevented me. I hope I shall to-morrow morning, if the Lord will. Mr. Cowper preached last Lord's-day evening. I love God's sent servants. His house of prayer has been to me holy ground, like that which Moses stood on, when made so by his presence. I love his children also, as I find their hearts answer to my heart, 'even as face answers to face in water.'

"My dear child, may the God of Israel bless, preserve, and keep you from evil, and enable you to serve him in newness of spirit. This is the desire of one who loves you as your natural parent and fellow-traveller in the way which leadeth to that 'city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.' I have not forgotten your letter on baptism; my thoughts are much engaged on the subject, at times. I think of writing to you, and giving you my mind thereon. I cannot think any argument can stand against it; the more I think of it the more I want instruction from above; and the more I search the Scriptures, the more it appears right for believers to be baptized.

"From your loving Father in twofold Bonds,

"Lewes, April 1st, 1843."

"GEORGE WESTON.

(*To be continued.*)

JOHN EMERY.—On Aug. 29th, 1881, aged 65, John Emery, at 21, George Street, Poplar. His experience appeared in the "Gospel Standard," August number, 1853, signed "Nathaniel."

He was born at Houndsditch, Feb. 15th, 1816; and at the age of 17 he took a situation at Hertford with a Mr. Payment, where he stayed some few years. During that time he became acquainted with Miss Clarke, of Welwyn, daughter of John Clarke; whose name is still retained in that neighbourhood to the honour of a covenant-keeping God. My father was constrained to hear that dear man of God, Daniel Smart. I have found since my father's death a portion of a letter, written to Mr. Smart, which it appears was never finished. It is as follows:—

"It is now some 43 years since I first saw you in the flesh; and well do I remember hearing you preach in your early career, when you were full of fire and zeal for the Lord God of hosts! If ever a man was raised up of God to unmask hypocrites in Zion, and to tear the veil from off formalists, you are that man. I have had to bless God many times that you were qualified to chase me out of my refuge of lies; and it is a question with me whether I ought not to call you my spiritual father; for up to the time of hearing you, having led a strictly moral life, my language often was virtually to the openly profane, 'Come not near to me, for I am holier than thou.' I was indeed wrapt up in my own righteousness; but in the power of the Spirit you wielded the two-edged sword in such a manner that my covering was torn into shreds, and I was experimentally left naked, without a shelter, and exposed to the just indignation of a holy God in his righteous law; which I found pierced betwixt the joints and marrow; and was a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and that the commandment was exceeding broad. For while the outside of the platter was kept tolerably clean, yet within was all manner of sin and uncleanness. You used to drag me 'fore and aft;' and at times in your ministry you would, as it were, take me by the 'collar of my coat,' as though you would shake the very life out of me. Yet with it all, you had the Word of God to prove your assertions; so that I could neither gainsay nor resist your testimony."

My father at length married the afore-mentioned person, and removed to 13, Elizabeth Street, Chelsea. He frequently heard those very powerful men of God,—the late Mr. Gadsby, Mr. Kershaw, and Mr. Philpot, when they came to pay their annual visits to London.

There were ten children born during the 21 years my parents lived at Chelsea. It pleased the Lord to take away their eldest daughter, then another daughter, and a week after that, their eldest son. This caused them much grief, and had a wonderful effect upon my dear father. He became like a "wild bull in a net;" until one day, while thinking upon his children's eternal state, these words came with irresistible power: "How stands the case with thee, my soul?" It then pleased the Lord to bring my dear mother nigh unto the gates of death. This gave my father a fresh errand to the "throne of grace;" which brought deliverance from the Father of all mercies, who has declared, "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them." Perceiving a great change for the better, this caused a sensible feeling of gratitude to arise in his breast towards the Author and Giver of all our mercies. That same night, while reading Psalm ciii., he was almost overcome, especially when reading the words, "He will not always chide; neither will he keep his anger for ever." This brought forth these lines from his heart:

"And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

Very soon after this, the Holy Ghost sealed pardon home to his soul, while reading Judah's supplication to Joseph on behalf of Benjamin. It appeared as though scales fell from his eyes; and where it is said that Joseph could not refrain but wept aloud, he was overcome with a look from Him of whom Joseph was a type. He never forgot the feeling produced by the words, "I am Joseph your brother." It was the personal application, "*your* brother," that suited him so well. There he beheld a "brother born for adversity." From this time my dear father rejoiced in the blood and righteousness of a dear Redeemer. He then became a member of Rehoboth, Pimlico; and some time afterwards a deacon. I remember my father once relating to me that, when hearing the late Mr. Gadsby preach there, in the course of his sermon he said, "There may be a poor wretch here to-night, who feels determined to take away his life, if the Lord does not set him at liberty, and he may have the instrument in his pocket"—which was the case with my dear father. Upon another occasion he was tempted to drown himself, while walking round the pond; but passages of Scripture kept suggesting themselves to him with power; therefore he could not carry out Satan's suggestion.

It appears that during the whole period he was at Chelsea, God's afflicting hand was not removed from the family long together. On that account, my father, perceiving that his chil-

dren did not enjoy very good health, removed to Pinner, near Watford, Herts. No sooner had he settled there than God's providence appeared against him in business. Many very sore trials of this kind came upon him, which sometimes almost drove him to despair; but the Lord stood at the helm. After some years he removed to Fulham. There everything in the way of providence seemed against him; opposition opened upon every hand. He then removed to Watford, Herts, where he remained in business until a few months before his death. My father was a business man; but God in his all-wise providence had ordained that he should be amongst the poor in this world, "rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom." O what matchless grace!

On Sept. 24th, 1880, when travelling from Pinner to Bushey, the train came to a stand at Bushey, and my father was in the act of alighting, when the train gave a jerk and threw him on to the platform upon his chest and face with very great force, knocking out his front teeth, and very much affecting his heart. In a short time he became almost incapable of attending to business, so that he was pressed very sorely to know what course to take. Trade being so bad, he was at length compelled to shut up his shop, as his landlord, not being a very humane man, would not allow him to let his business. Therefore he removed to 21, Gough Street, Poplar, where he resided with his youngest son and two daughters. I must here say that he has many times had to bless and praise God's holy name, for snatching four of his children as brands from the burning. He saw them follow their Lord and Saviour through the ordinance of baptism. There are three besides, whom he had a hope of, who are seeking their "way to Zion, with their faces thitherward." I think it was Oliver Cromwell who asked his daughter if she had a good hope, and she replied, "Father, I am a seeker." He said, "Then you are the next best to a [sensibly] saved one." My dear mother is also one of these seekers, and is left to mourn the loss of a dear and loving husband.

I would just observe that all who knew my father can bear witness that he was a practical Christian, and a regular attendant upon the means of grace. He would never allow his frames and feelings, nor the weather, to keep him away from the prayer-meetings. While at Poplar he enjoyed some blessed seasons under the ministry of Mr. Ashdown, at Zoar Chapel, Great Alie Street, where he attended very frequently upwards of forty years back.

My father's heart became weaker and weaker. The last time he attended the means of grace was at Homerton Row, on the first Lord's day in August last. He also sat down at the Lord's table. This seems a very remarkable circumstance, as my father had never before had the opportunity of hearing his prodigal son proclaim (in much simplicity) the tidings of the ever-blessed gospel.

He could only manage to sit in a chair and read, the latter

part of his time. A friend sent him upwards of 100 of Mr. Philpot's sermons, which he perused with great delight; they were meat and drink to his soul, until a few hours before his death. On Sunday, Aug. 28th, he seemed very weak and low, but partook of his usual meals. His mind seemed to be very much impressed with that beautiful hymn,

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness," &c.

Towards ten o'clock at night, he tried to get upstairs to bed; but he found his strength failed him. He was assisted, and when he laid himself down he said, "I have had many of these attacks, and this may be the last. The will of the Lord be done." A short time after this he said, "Dear Lord, remember me." These were his last words, as his breath became so bad that he could not speak. I was summoned at six o'clock in the morning to see him. I found him quite prostrate. He knew me when I spoke to him; but I felt sure that life was fast ebbing out.

About half-past ten o'clock that morning, my father gave one gentle sigh, and his fetters broke. We could scarcely say, "He's gone," before his ransomed spirit took its place before the throne. May our last days be like his. †This is the desire of
49, Glenarne Road, Clapton Park. Z. E.

THE whole world cannot weigh against this one comfort, that God is ours. (Ps. xlv.)—*Sibbes*.

THE field which hath millions of weeds in it is a corn-field for all that.—*Burgess*.

PRAYER for the most part goes forth in groans rather than words; and in tears rather than address. Thy meditation has a loud voice with God.—*Augustine*.

A PERSON may have had law terrors, and yet be a stranger to justification. Salvation lies not in Moses's rod, but in Christ's balm. It is Moses that gives the wound, but Christ the cure.—*Huntington*.

It is the peculiar work of the Spirit to open the eyes and enlighten the soul by an effective illumination, and discover to us the evidence of divine truths; nor can the proposal of the object with the greatest certainty of evidence, or by mortal reason, cause men to discern spiritual things spiritually; since there must be a supernatural light and suiting of the visive faculty to the object. (Lu. xxvi. 45; 1 Cor. ii. 14; Jer. xxiv. 7.)—*Fleming*.

MORALITY is not grace, because it doth not change nature. If it did, many of the heathen were as near to God as the best of Christians. Whatever may be done by the strength of nature cannot alter it; for no nature can change itself. Poison may be great within the skin, like a viper's. Be we never so speckled with a reformation, freedom from gross sins argues not a friendship for God. None were ever so great enemies to Christ as the Pharisees, to whom Christ gave no better a title than that of the devil's children, and charges them with hatred both of himself and his Father. (Jno. xv. 24.)—*Charnock*.

Errata.—In line 7, p. 549, last month, *above* should be *alone*. Line 27, p. 550, *kneel* should be *pray*.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

FEBRUARY, 1882.

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

CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS LIKE THE GREAT MOUNTAINS.

NOTES OF TWO SERMONS PREACHED BY THE LATE MR. SAMUEL TURNER, SEPT. 1ST, 1850, AT SUNDERLAND.

"Thy righteousness is like the great mountains."—Ps. XXXVI. 6.

My text is a very important and a very solemn one; it contains truths exceedingly awful to those who live and die out of Christ; and truths exceedingly precious to those who have an interest in the great God our Saviour. When the psalmist compares the righteousness of God to the great mountains, these mountains are used in scripture figuratively to express eminence, strength, stability, and firmness. Babylon, which was raised to such a high pitch of grandeur and power, is called a great mountain; and frequently the heads of nations, who are by the providence of God raised so much higher than others, are compared to mountains. But that which I believe to be meant by the psalmist in my text is the strength, stability, firmness, &c., of the righteousness of God. In Ps. cxxv. it is said, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abideth for ever;" and, "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth and for ever." Yet the Lord says that these mountains, notwithstanding their firmness and stability, shall be removed; but though this shall be so, "though the mountains depart and the hills be removed," yet "my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." Hence the psalmist here compares the righteousness of God to the great mountains, to show the firmness, stability, and immutability of it. The righteousness of God respects the perfect holiness, purity, and justice of his nature; but there are several acts of righteousness which flow from that perfection of the divine nature, which are called the righteousness of God; because those righteous acts manifest the righteous nature of God; and I believe the psalmist more respects those righteous acts than that perfection of the divine nature, although that is principally mentioned; because all his

righteous acts flow from his perfect holiness, purity, and truth. To make this as plain as I can, I will endeavour to show what other scriptures say of his righteousness; for though I often take my texts from the Old Testament, I get my discourses principally from the New Testament, because that is as a key to unlock the treasures contained in the Old Testament.

The apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, ascribes righteousness to the sovereign acts of almighty God, which are his own perfect right, as Creator and Lord over all his creatures; they being all his work, must all be subjects to his dominion for him to do what seemeth good in his sight with them.

The apostle treats of this in Rom. ix., where he shows that though the greater part of the Jews rejected Christ and his gospel, yet there was a remnant among them, according to the election of grace, who were children of the living God by eternal predestination, and in consequence of that eternal determination of Jehovah they were redeemed from under the law by the blood of Christ, that they might receive the adoption of sons, and they were favoured by God with the spirit of adoption, to witness to them that they were interested in such a great, perfect, and almighty Saviour.

Although the Jews were privileged with the oracles, the prophets, and the service of God, and though of them "Christ came who is over all, God blessed for ever," yet the apostle knew that this objection would be raised. How is it that this so highly favoured people should now be despisers and rejecters of the gospel, and Messiah the subject of the gospel? Well, says he, "They are not all Israel that are of Israel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children:" I mean that the children of the flesh, the lineal descendants of Abraham, "these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." For this is the word of promise: "At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one even by our father Isaac, for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her the elder shall serve the younger, as it is written, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Now mind, "What shall we say, then? Is there unrighteousness with God?"

Why, Paul, there are thousands of preachers, and tens of thousands of professors, now-a-days, who would tell thee that there is unrighteousness with God. If God, foreseeing neither their good nor bad works, as the cause of love to the one or hatred of the other, it is tyranny, partiality, injustice, not giving all a chance. All this has been said, and it is in print. But Paul asks, "Is there unrighteousness with God?" Hear his answer, "God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion upon whom

I will have compassion." The inference he draws from the whole is, "So, then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy."

Here the apostle is ascribing righteousness to the Most High, who is the Creator of heaven and earth, and therefore has dominion over all the works of his hands, and a right to do with them what seems good to himself. God has left these truths upon record in his Word, in order that they might be made known, and those preachers who profess to believe them, and do not preach them, for fear of their doing harm, are guilty of almost as great a sin as it is possible for them to commit; for it is setting up their wisdom, holiness, and goodness above those glorious attributes of the eternal Jehovah, as if the omniscient God could not foresee the consequences of publishing and making known these solemn truths. But if the truths I have mentioned be the Word of God, then how awful that the God of heaven should publish a truth that his poor blind creatures who in their own eyes are so wise, so holy, and have such regard for the honour of God, that they should think it right to smuggle it up and not preach it, surely this is an awful sin, and shows their ignorance of it, their disbelief of it, or their dislike of it, as it prevents them having a large congregation to get them a good living; for such is the awful pride of man, that he cannot submit to be at the disposal of the almighty God.

But whether they will have this truth or not, it stands fast as the mountains, and to this day the Lord has some of his own sent servants who publish it; and facts also loudly proclaim it, for how many of the great and learned and wise of this world are left in nature's blindness, darkness, and death; while God will take some of the scum of mankind, some of the vilest sinners, and at once put a stop to their evil course, the blessed Spirit working in them, until he brings them humble penitents to the feet of Jesus, true believers in his Name, unfeigned lovers of God, heartily devoted to his cause, and glorifying his blessed Name by thanking him with all their powers of heart and soul, for the grace with which he has been pleased to favour them.

The most high God has a supreme right to do with his creatures as seemeth good to himself, however unseemly it may, through the ignorance and pride of fallen man, seem in his sight. It was the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of wisdom, who directed the apostle to leave this solemn truth upon record, for he did not write it as a fallible man, who might be mistaken, but as an amanuensis of the Holy Spirit, as a pen in the Spirit's hand. Of the Corinthians, Paul says, "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables or the heart." This, blessed be God, some of us are witnesses of to this day, for at times we sit and hear the preacher just like a person who has a pen in his hand, but without ink; he writes, but it leaves no impression; but when

the blessed Spirit is pleased to take the pen in his hand, and accompany the preaching of his truth with his blessed teaching, it leaves such an impression upon the heart that with the mouth we make confession unto salvation. Every scholar in the school of Christ is an epistle of Christ, known and read of all men; but, then, all men here must be rightly understood, or facts would contradict scripture, and scripture cannot contradict facts. They are known and read of all those who are capable of reading, all who have been taught to read by the blessed Spirit. You must not think I mean to read letters. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them." "He that is spiritual judgeth all things." If you put these passages together, and do not limit all, to those taught by the Holy Spirit to read, you will cause the two passages to clash. The carnal man knows not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them; therefore the spiritual man cannot be judged by him.

Words cannot be plainer. Hence the poison of the serpent has been employed, with all the sophistry possible, to soften the truth, and make it palatable to the natural mind; but all this will not do. God will not have a proud, empty creature to regulate his truth. I say the words are direct, that as those two "children before they were born, or had done either good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, it was said unto her the elder shall serve the younger. Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated." If election were of works it would make it uncertain, our enemies themselves being judges; for by their scheme it is uncertain who will believe or who will not, and even after some did believe they may not hold out to the end, for they may make shipwreck of their faith at the last, therefore it must be uncertain, to God as well as man, for even God could not know a thing certainly, unless that thing certainly takes place; but to ascribe want of knowledge to the infinitely wise Jehovah is dreadful blasphemy. The words are plain, that as it is from first to last the work of God, to fulfil the eternal counsel of his will, this makes his choice as stable as the great mountains. If the accomplishment of his everlasting appointment of his people to salvation depends upon Jehovah himself, he being almighty, it is impossible it can fail. If God from eternity determined, in the fulness of time, to send his Son to die for his people, to bear the punishment of their sins, to redeem them from under the law, from death, and from the wrath to come, and the Son perfectly accomplished this his Father's will, this makes their salvation sure and certain. In addition to this, that his people might be brought to the knowledge and experience of these covenant blessings, God's providence, and God's Spirit and grace, go hand in hand in causing them to hear and know the joyful sound, to know it by his operation, to have faith wrought in their hearts to receive it, to love it, and to embrace it in their affection; for he circumcises

the heart to love him, with the circumcision not made with hands: "He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter." "In whom (Christ) ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands." If God thus breaks up the fallow ground of the heart, circumcises the heart to love him, gives the Spirit as a comforter to abide with him for ever, to incline and enable him to worship God, who is a Spirit, in spirit and in truth, to love God, to trust in him, to pray to and praise God, to be dependent upon God for everything, both in providence and grace, and to abide in him, to preserve him in all opposition from the powers of the world, the flesh, and the devil, until the whole work is completed, the body raised, and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ, and soul and body are presented blameless before the Lord, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; this causes that glorious act of divine sovereignty, which Jehovah has a right to put forth, to be like the great mountains which cannot be moved. That sweet passage of scripture of which we have heard (for sweet it is to the children of God), however grating it be to the children of the flesh, yet did men feel it and enjoy it; they could not spit out their venom against such blessed truth, but they would be singing the high praises of God, crying with humility of soul, "O Lord! Why me, why me? Whyever has thy love reached such a vile rebel as I? Only because for so it seemed good in thy sight." The Saviour expresses the same acts of divine sovereignty, not in a murmuring, but grateful way. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes," and this, "because it seemed good in thy sight." O how blessed are those souls who are thus favoured with this revelation; they have cause to bless God for humbling their hearts, not only to submit to, but to delight in this glorious truth, for they find all their salvation depends upon it. The ever-blessed Spirit, being perfect in knowledge, foresaw all the objections that would be raised by proud mortals against the truth; therefore he inspired the blessed apostle to show that God's love was not fixed upon us on account of our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which were given us in Christ before the world began, and also that his purpose according to election might stand, that all those might be saved whom he chose to salvation. It is true, works are spoken of. Isaiah the prophet speaks of them; he says, "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." But these are works of God's grace; not the cause of his choice, but the effects of it. These works are wrought in his people that his purpose might stand, that all those whom he hath appointed to salvation might be saved. This is all of grace, for all the good wrought in us and done by us, it is the blessed Spirit and the grace of God that is the cause of all, and these works are the effects of his grace. This being the case, it makes it an undoubted right of Jehovah to do what

he pleases with his creatures. He was pleased of his grace to confirm the angels who fell not, in their first estate, therefore they are called elect angels. It also pleased him to suffer the others to fall into condemnation, and not to provide a Saviour or any salvation for them, out of that tremendously awful state in which they are reserved in chains to the judgment of the Great day. It is amazing, as a great writer says, "that we can read of the doom of the fallen angels without emotion; but when it comes to fallen man, we from nature, having a fellow feeling, rebel because God has not given (as it is objected) every individual a chance of being saved. Against that objection, facts prove this dispensation of Jehovah. Will you ascribe it to luck or chance? Can it be ascribed to Bible or Missionary Societies, which if they are doing the work of God, who inclines and enables them to do it? Who disposes a nobleman to take the chair at their meetings? Who furnishes the large sums of money that are spent to circulate the Scriptures? Is puny man to have this honour, and the most high God to be set at nought? Who is the giver of every good gift? And after all their efforts, is the Bible in possession of all nations? Are there not whole nations in total ignorance of the true God? How is it with those nations which were once favoured with the presence of Christ, and his apostles? Where are they now? In gross darkness. Here is this nation, formerly living in the grossest idolatry, burning their children in sacrifice to wooden gods. Why should the gospel reach this nation in all that purity which it has done, and the Word of God the Scriptures of truth should be so abundant that it is almost in every hand? If this is to be ascribed to any cause but the will of the sovereign Disposer of all events, it is an awful dishonour done to his Blessed Majesty, which he will not overlook. Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? God forbid. Every spiritual person knows the awful charges that are brought against this truth to this day. Say they, we are opposing Calvinistic doctrine. But without comment, hear what the apostle who was inspired by God says: "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." And that "he showeth mercy to whom he will show mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." You may find these words in Calvin's writings, but it is what God reveals that is to be believed, for what comes from God must be truth. Of all the truths in the Word of God none can be more comforting or soul establishing than this, to a poor humble sinner who is enabled by God to venture his all upon the mercy of God through Christ. Jehovah himself says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure;" and "God being willing to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." What a sweet condescending description is this of those in,

terested in his counsel. They are poor sensibly wretched sinners in danger of God's wrath. God's voice comes to them: "Flee from the wrath to come." But, ah! Lord, whither shall we flee? Flee to the Saviour of sinners, who bore your sins in his own body on the tree, he who has procured pardon and peace for the ungodly, for those who are without strength, for those who are enemies to God, and rebel against the Majesty of heaven. Hearing of this sovereign grace, for sovereign it is, for God was by no means bound to send his Son to die for such wretches; but these poor sinners hearing of this sovereign grace, they are enabled by the blessed Spirit to betake themselves to this Rock for shelter. These are the heirs of promise, which they became by an eternal act of predestinating grace. God has promised to teach these heirs of promise, to clothe them, to feed them, to chastise them, put their feet into the way of peace; to preserve them in it, and finally to bring to the inheritance prepared for them. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world." In consequence of God's everlasting decree, they become heirs of promise; but until it pleases God to regenerate us we are totally ignorant of this, unconcerned about it, callous in heart, and thoughtless about it. But when it pleases God to give us light in our understandings, when he quickens and puts life into our souls, and causes us to hear, and to know the joyful sound of a free, full, perfect, and everlasting salvation, to every sinner who is enabled to come to God by Jesus Christ, the blessed Spirit causes the soul to flee to that almighty refuge. When it pleases the good Lord to break the hard heart, to humble the proud spirit, to quicken the dead soul, to give sight to the blind eyes, to enlighten those who sit in darkness, to show them their danger, and the awful storm that hangs over their head, the blessed Spirit enables them to flee to the hope set before them, even Christ and him crucified; for he is the hope of Israel.

This is, I think, a real scriptural account of the righteousness of God, in his dealings with his rebellious creatures; for in disposing of their eternal state the apostle asks, "Is there unrighteousness with God?" Some would reply, "If you say that God foresaw that Jacob would be good, and Esau bad, therefore he loved the one and hated the other, there could be no unrighteousness with him; but if you say without consideration of this goodness or vileness, God manifested a right to do as the potter, of one piece of clay to make one vessel to honour and another to dishonour, there is unrighteousness with him; it is partiality, injustice." And shall a poor worm of the earth have this right, and a proud rebellious wretch dare to deny the Lord over all the right he has over his lumps of clay? For we are nothing else formed by the Creator out of the dust of the ground. "What shall we say then, is there unrighteousness with God." Yes, say thousands, there evidently is. God ought to deal with men as they are. If they do good let them be rewarded, and punished if they do evil. But here is the grand point! Who makes the good

good? I have laboured to control my thoughts, to get rid of evil thoughts, and have my mind set upon good ones, but unless God stays my mind, I cannot continue to fix my thoughts for ten minutes together. Particularly at night, I have tried to keep my mind upon spiritual things, but in spite of all my endeavours it has wandered to vain thoughts; I could not keep it stayed upon good things. I may be weaker and viler than others, but when I go to the scriptures I find I am like Paul, not sufficient to think a good thought. "When I would do good evil is present with me. The good that I would I do not, but the evil that I hate that do I." That God has a right to dispose of his creatures as seemeth good in his sight the Word of God is plain, and what he does must be righteous. Well then, blessed are those who are enabled to take the consolation of this glorious truth, for to those whom he hath appointed to salvation, and whom he brings into the way of salvation, that he might manifest to them that he has not appointed them to wrath, what can be more comforting, more supporting, or more soul-establishing, than that the purpose of God is stable, fixed, and immutable, like the great mountains? I believe I never had a more humble spirit, never more abhorred myself, never more dearly loved my God, my thanks to him never were warmer, or my soul more comforted, than under this consideration,—that the good Lord had revealed his purpose concerning me in this passage: "I will not turn away from thee to do thee good." At times, notwithstanding all my cries, tears, and diligence in his ways, he has kept me at a distance from him; at other times, when I have expected some rod for my wandering from him, to my surprise he has spoken pardon and peace to my soul, and caused me to weep with tears of joy and gratitude that, in spite of all my rebellion against him, and my hard thoughts of him on the one hand, and on the other my cries and tears, the good Lord has gone on doing me good, and he will not turn away from it. This is a sovereign act of God, entirely of his own good pleasure; hence he says, "Not for your sakes do I this, be it known unto you, but for my own name's sake." It is for my own sake that I save you, that I may to eternity manifest all my glorious perfections in your everlasting salvation. This is such a stable revelation of God's righteousness, that it is for the strong consolation of every soul who has been enabled to flee with wings of God's gift to the refuge set before them. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains, fixed firm and stable, and, says God, I will not remove it, and man cannot. God bless what has been spoken for Jesus' sake.

[The remaining notes of the above excellent sermons will (G.w.) be continued in our next issue.—ED.]

WHEN it is well with thee, thou shouldest fear, nor shouldest thou settle thy mind, as though thou wilt never be tried. For if thou art never tried thou wilt never be approved. Is it not better to be tried and approved than to be a reprobate without trial?—*Augustine*,

A MAN'S "OWN WORK," THE WORK THAT MOST NEEDS PROVING.

THE apostle's exhortation concerns not so much the many collectively taken, but each and every professor of religion. It comes home personally to one's self. "Let every man," says the apostle, "prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another." (Gal. vi. 4.)

We are very apt to spy out the faults of brethren, and overlook faults greater in ourselves. But we need to cast the mote out of our own eye first, before attempting to pull it out of the eye of a brother. We are poor erring creatures, and were our eyes set upon things wrong in ourselves, as much as they should be, it would be our own wrongs we should see most of, and the wrongs of others least. The grace of God, which saves the worst of sinners, pardons the worst of crimes, and passes over the worst of faults in the believer, teaches us as children of God to deal tenderly with such believers in Christ as are overtaken with sin, temporarily drawn aside by temptation into some evil in practice; but who afterwards manifest true gospel repentance and contrition of spirit, and a turning from sin unto God. We are to "restore such," says the apostle, "in the spirit of meekness," considering what we are ourselves, what we are capable of, and what sins we should soon fall into if left to ourselves. In the fourth verse the apostle takes advantage of the backwardness of some children of God, to forgive their erring brethren, by exhorting every one to look well to himself, to his own work, so as to be sure, by the help of God, that he has something of a vital saving nature *in* him, in his own heart, which proves him to be a saint indeed. This, we repeat, is the thing which appears to be so needful in the day we are living in.

Not that we are to look to anything in ourselves for our justification before God. No. Speaking for ourselves, we don't bless God, expect to be saved *in respect of merit*, by anything we are in ourselves, or by anything we do, or by any feelings or experiences we may be the subjects of. The sweetest and happiest moments we have ever had in religion cannot justify us, cannot wash us from our sins, and make us "as white as snow" in the sight of God. Nothing in respect of merit can ever save us, but the atonement of Jesus—his finished work *for* us. We have to say,

"I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesu's name."

Well, it is a mercy to see this, because our seeing this in a spiritual way throws us off from everything for salvation, in respect of merit, save the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ.

But, then, to be brought into an experience of salvation by Christ's death, to *feel* salvation in our hearts, to *feel* pardon in our souls as perceptibly as we feel heat and cold in different seasons of the year, proves a work *in* us; and it is only by a work in us

that we can touch in a spiritual way Christ's work for us. (But, then, what does the apostle mean by a man's own work? Not any work which a man himself performs or produces by his own effort. Such labour of our hands is all turned into dung and dross with the believer who knows Christ, and is taught the truth as it is in him; it is made dung and dross by the very work of Christ itself, in which he is brought to believe for salvation. But Paul means, evidently, the Spirit's work in the heart, and which is called a man's "own work," because he is made the subject of it—made a partaker of the grace of God—the possessor of faith, and hope, and of the love of God; and surely these are the things which above everything else are needed to be proved as being in us.

Now the Spirit's great work is the new birth, or quickening the dead soul into spiritual life, and adopting us as living souls into the family of grace, and writing the "new commandment" of the gospel on the fleshly tables of the heart, and forming Christ *in* us "the hope of glory." But not one of these acts of the Spirit is traceable apart from the effects which follow upon them. It is only by our being enabled to trace the effects that we can trace the Spirit's acts, from which the effects flow. As we cannot tell how we were born of the Spirit, so neither can we tell whether we have been born again or not, except by the fruits and effects of regeneration. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth," so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Herein, then, we think lies the secret of a man's proving his own work; it is in his being enabled to discover in himself the true effects of grace. Such as are young in their profession of religion need to look for such effects as what grace produces in the first stages of her work in the soul. Neither should young believers conclude that God's work, as being in them, is not provable because they cannot see in themselves what is discoverable in other children of God of riper and deeper experience. Have we among our readers some who are not only young in years, but young in religion? We would ask them such questions as these: Have you reason to believe that you have been brought unto real repentance towards God, repentance, we mean, for the sins you have committed against him, and for which the law of God condemns you? Is your repentance of that nature that it has made you hate sin, as sin, more than dread its consequences? Well, this is the effect of grace. Have you, as a poor broken-hearted sinner been led, as you sincerely hope, to Jesus Christ, and to him alone, for salvation? Is it through his obedience, sufferings, death, and resurrection, and in no other way, that you hope to be saved? This is the effect of grace. Have you some hope of salvation through Christ, and although your hope may often be almost too weak to be traceable, yet, for all that, do you feel that you have a hope, and that your little hope is more to you than your natural life? This, again, is surely the effect of grace. A repentance there may be, which may not

be a real repentance unto life. A going to Christ there may be, but it may only be in pretence; and a hope there may be which may only be a hope that will perish. But when the repentance is such that the subject of it is turned from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God, it can be nothing else but gospel repentance. So, when the going to Jesus Christ is a going with the conscience pierced with the guilt of sin,—a going as a poor sensibly lost, ruined sinner, and with the cry, “God be merciful to me, a sinner,” leaving the heart, it is such a going that none such shall ever be cast out. And the hope of salvation that proceeds from such experience shall stand its ground in spite of all the malice of Satan, and everything else that would put it to shame. Let not young professors, then, be so much concerned about who is right in religion, and who is wrong; in whom the effects of grace are traceable, and in whom, with all their profession, none of them can be seen. But let them look to themselves and try, with the help of God, what of such effects they can discover in their own experience, and prove every one his own work in that way.

Further, with such as have been much longer in profession, and yet perhaps may hardly know where they are in religion, how equally important a matter is this proving every man his own work as it pertains to them. How often in our own case have we been led of late to think much about the years gone by, during which we mean we have been making a profession of the Name of God, and the gospel of Christ; and how again and again have we been led to put close and searching questions to ourselves in reference to what real vital gracious experiences we have been brought into, and in that way to try and prove our own work. Often when looking back only upon the year that has so recently bid us adieu for ever, what have we seen? Why, much of darkness, much of coldness, and deadness in worship, much ingratitude, much of the flesh, much of self, and much in every way to make us sad. And yet withal we have been helped, we hope, to see something of an opposite nature, something of the operations of grace on the heart, something of the sweet fruits of grace in our experience, and enough to enable us in some moments to prove our own work by.

Perhaps it has been the same with some of our readers,—perhaps like us they have in stepping, onward upon another stage of their mortality, been filled with reflection in reference to their past life, and past experience in profession. Well, how have matters stood with you? What has your experience really been during the twelve months upon which your reflections have been turned? Have you and God had a few good and refreshing times together? Have you had some real comforting times in prayer with the Lord? Have there been times when you have lost your burden of sorrow and care, through some sweet word of promise being dropped with power into your soul? Have you had, now and again, a blessed time in worship, through the

glorious gospel of God's grace being heard by you, not in word only, but in power, and with the Holy Ghost, and much assurance? What a blank, in a sense, must any whole year be with such professed children of God, as have been years in profession, who are unable at the close of the year to have in their remembrance any such blessings as these; but whose souls have been too lean and barren for such fruits of grace to be traceable by them in their experience.

Again, some might be ready to think if such blessings as have been mentioned were really traceable, that there would be little need, or at least no difficulty, in proving an inward work of grace in the heart. No need, some might say, of proving what is too manifest to require any proving. Ah, but there is so much of the opposite to hide the Lord's good work in us from our eyes. It gets so buried up amidst the rubbish of nature that often we feel as if we could discover nothing. To use a simple illustration, it is something as when a poor man who has taken his weekly wages, amounting to half-a-sovereign in gold, lets it drop out of his hand amidst a mass of dead leaves upon the ground. He has to look and search for the money he has lost. He has to turn over the leaves again and again, and he would be sure to have plenty of fear that he would see nothing but dead leaves. So it is in the experience of the children of God. With us at least the dead leaves, or what answers to them, lay very thick, and God's work gets wonderfully underneath them, so much so that we are often afraid that it is all dead leaves, and nothing else; so that there will often be a great need to try and prove at one time what perhaps at another time proves itself through the light of God, which makes it manifest. O what looking into things, and turning things over and over, there is at times.

But when the Lord enables us to prove our own work, and to feel a little blessed confidence that we have a work of God *in us*, then our rejoicing, as the apostle says, is in ourselves, and not in another. When we are told of other children of God being blessed in their souls, we may rejoice, and should always wish to do so. It is, indeed, a comfort to us, when we can see them blessed, whether through our labour, or by any other means. But, then, we cannot put ourselves into the experience of their blessings, and hence cannot rejoice just in the way that they do. It is our own work we need to prove, more than anybody else's; in order that when, through God's help, the proving turns out in its result in our favour, the rejoicing may become as much individually our own, and be as much in us as the work itself.

We wish, then, that the Lord would help us all who profess his holy Name, to prove our own work more, and help us to come to a sweet and unshaken conclusion, supported by the Spirit's testimony in our consciences, that we are not in our profession merely like empty tubs, which when struck make a noise, but contain nothing; but that we have the truth of God *in us*, and that it shall be with us for ever.

A NATIONAL FAST.—1779.

“The signs of the times.”—MATT. XVI. 3.

LORD, hear a guilty nation mourn,
Nor let thy dreadful anger burn;
We own, and we lament our crimes,
And see “the signs of threat’ning times.”

We tremble at thine awful hand,
Stretch’d out against our sinful land:
At home, abroad, in distant climes,
We see the signs of dreadful times.

We feel at home, and hear from far,
Alarming sounds of thund’ring war;
The guilt of our enormous crimes
Brings on the signs of bloody times.

What sins, what horrid sins, abound!
While earthquakes dire convulse the ground!
Shall we not these, thy judgments, fear,
When signs of such dark times appear?

How is religion folly deem’d,
And thy most holy Name blasphemed!
While numbers strive, who most shall do,
The signs of harden’d times to show.

Surely such awful times declare
The day of judgment must be near;
When sinners, in astonish’d crowds,
Shall see Christ coming in the clouds.

Prepare us, Lord, for that great day;
Forgive, and take our sins away;
Then shall we see, without a fear,
The “coming of the Lord” draw near.

Lord, our dear native country spare,
Attend our cry, and hear our prayer;
And yet, in mercy, let us see
The signs of better times from thee.

SAMUEL MEDLEY.

THERE may be a great mistake in our judging of our own fruitfulness. The soul that is indeed candid and right at heart, is taught by grace to judge itself, though fruitful, yet barren upon two accounts: 1. When it compareth its life to the mercy bestowed upon it. For when a soul doth indeed consider the greatness and riches of the mercy bestowed upon it, then it must needs cry out, “O wretched man that I am!” For it seeth itself wonderfully to fall short of a conversation becoming one who hath received so great a benefit. 2. It may also judge itself barren, because it falleth so far short of that it would attain unto; it cannot do the things that it would. The heart of a Christian is naturally very barren, upon which though the seed of grace (that is the fruitfulest of all seeds) be sown, yet the heart is naturally subject to bring forth weeds.—*Bunyan*.

FREE-WILL AND MERIT FAIRLY EXAMINED;
OR,
MEN NOT THEIR OWN SAVIOURS.

A SERMON BY AUGUSTUS TOPLADY, M.A.

(Concluded from p. 21.)

THE conclusion from the whole is, that not our goodness, but God's mercy; not our obedience, but Christ's righteousness; not our towardliness, but the Holy Spirit's beneficence; are to be thanked for the whole of our justification. But it is no easy lesson to say from the heart, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us!" Self-righteousness cleaves to us as naturally and as closely as our skins. Nor can any power, but that of an Almighty hand, flay us of it. I remember an instance full to the point; and which I give on the authority of a clergyman, now living, and eminent above many for his labours and usefulness. This worthy person assured me, a year or two since, that he once visited a criminal who was under sentence of death for a capital offence (I think for murder). My friend endeavoured to set before him the evil he had done; and to convince him that he was lost and ruined, unless Christ saved him by his blood, righteousness, and grace. "I am not much concerned about that," answered the self-righteous malefactor. "I have not, to be sure, led so good a life as some have; but I am certain that many have gone to Tyburn who were much worse men than myself." So, you see, a murderer may go to the gallows trusting in his own righteousness! And you and I should have gone to hell, trusting in our own righteousness, if Christ had not stopped us by the way. I dare believe that the above-mentioned criminal, had the subject been started, would also have valued himself upon his free-agency. Free-agency, it is true, he had; and he was left to the power of it; and ruined himself accordingly. Free-will has carried many a man to Tyburn; and, it is to be feared, from Tyburn to hell; but it never yet carried a single soul to holiness and heaven. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." Free-will can do that for us; "but in me," says God, "is thy help." His free grace must be our refuge and shelter from our own free-will, or it were good for the best of us that we had never been born.

In one word, all the glory of our pardon and justification belongs to the Trinity, and not to man. It is one of God's crown jewels, unalienable from himself; and which he will never resign to, nor share with, any other being. It is impossible, in the very nature of things, that he ever should; for how can any of depraved mankind be justified by works—and without being so justified we can come into no part of the praise—how, I say, can any of us be justified by our own doings, seeing we are utterly unable even to think a good thought until God himself breathes it into our hearts? Suffer me to observe one thing more under this article, viz., that if God's Spirit has stripped you of your own righteousness, he has not stripped you in order to leave

you naked, but will clothe you with change of raiment. He will give you a robe for your rags, the righteousness of God for the rotten righteousness of man; rotten indeed we shall find it, if we make it a pillar of confidence. I will say of it, as Dr. Young says of the world, "lean not upon it;" lean not on thy own righteousness; if leaned upon.

"It will pierce thee to the heart;

At best a broken reed, but oft a spear.

On its sharp point peace bleeds and hope expires."

Self-reliance is the very bond of unbelief. It is essential infidelity, and one of its most deadly branches. You are an infidel if you trust in your own righteousness. You a Christian? You a believer? No, you have, in the sight of God, neither part nor lot in the matter. You are spiritually dead, while you pretend to live. Until you are endued with faith in Christ's righteousness, your body, as a great man expresses it, is no better than "the living coffin of a dead soul." A Christian is a believer; not in himself, but in Christ. And what is the language of a believer? "Lord, I am, in myself, a poor, ruined, undone sinner. Through the hand of thy good Spirit upon me, I throw myself at the foot of thy cross; and look to thee for blood to wash me, for righteousness to justify me, for grace to make me holy, for comfort to make me happy, and for strength to keep me in thy ways."

5. For holiness, the inward principle of good works; and for good works themselves, the outward evidences of inward holiness, we are obliged to the alone grace and power of God most high. We do not make him a debtor to us, by loving and performing his commandments; but we become additionally debtors to him for crowning his other grace, by vouchsafing to work in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight. Say not, "Upon this plan sanctification is kicked out of doors, and good works are turned adrift." Nothing can be more palpably and flagrantly untrue. Newness of heart and of life is so essential to, and constitutes so vast a part of, the evangelical scheme of salvation, that were it possible for holiness and its moral fruits really to be struck out of the account, the chain would at once dissolve, and the whole fabric become a house of sand.

The Arminians have of late made a huge cry about "Antinomians! Antinomians!" From the abundance of experience the mouth is apt to speak. The modern Arminians see so much real Antinomianism among themselves, and in their own tents, that Antinomianism is become the predominant idea, and the favourite watchword of the party. Because they have got the plague, they think everybody else has. Because the leprosy is in their walls, they imagine no house is without. Thus,

"All looks infected, and th' infected spy;

As all seems yellow to his jaundiced eye."

It is cunning, I must confess, in these people, to raise a dust for their own defence; and, like some pick-pockets, when closely

pursued, to aim at slipping the stolen watch or handkerchief into the pocket of an innocent by-stander, that the real sharper may elude the rod of justice. But, unhappily for themselves, the Arminians are not complete masters of this art. The dust they raise forms too thin a cloud to conceal them; and their bungling attempt to shift off the charge of Antinomianism upon others rivets the charge but more firmly on themselves, its true proprietors. The avowed effrontery with which they openly trample on a certain commandment that says, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," may stand as a sample of the little regard they pay to the other nine. Pretty people these, to look for justification from the "merit" of their own work, and to value themselves on their perfect love to God and man!

With regard to sanctification and obedience, truly so called, it can only flow and cannot but flow from a new heart; which new heart is of God's own making, and of God's own giving. "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh;" a soft, repenting, believing heart; "and I will cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." Now God accomplishes this promise by the effectual working of his blessed Spirit; by the mystic fire of whose agency, having melted our hearts into penitential faith, he then applies to them the seal of his own holiness; from which time we begin to bear the image and superscription of God upon our tempers, words, and actions. This is our "licentious" doctrine, namely, a doctrine which, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, conforms the soul more and more to God; carefully referring, at the same time, all the praise of this active and passive conformity to God himself, whose gift it is; singing with the saints of old, "Thou, Lord, hast wrought all our [good] works in us; and for all the work so wrought,—for the will to please thee, for the ability to please thee, and for every act whereby we do please thee,—'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name, give glory.'" For, indeed, was not this the truth of the case, *i.e.*, if conversion, sanctification, and good works were not God's gifts, and of his operation, men would have, not only somewhat, but much, even very much, to boast of; for they would be their own converters, sanctifiers, and saviours. Directly contrary to the plain letter of Scripture, which asks, "Who maketh thee to differ from another; and what hast thou that thou didst not receive" from above? Nor less contrary to the scriptural direction: "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

6. Once more. Whom are we to thank for perseverance in holiness and good works to the end? "Oh!" says an old Pharisee perhaps; "the thanks are due to my own watchfulness, my own faithfulness, my own industry, and my own improvements." Your supposed watchfulness answers a very bad purpose, if you make a merit of it. The enemy of souls cares not the turning of a straw whether you perish by open licentiousness, or by a delu-

sive confidence in your own imaginary righteousness. It is all one to him, whether you go to hell in a black coat or a white one. Nay, the whitest you can weave will be found black, and a mere *san benito* to equip you for the flames, if God does not array you in the imputed righteousness of his blessed Son.

But, for the present, leaving Pharisees and legalists to the hands of him who alone is able, and has a right, to save or to destroy, let me address myself to the true believer in Christ. You were called to the knowledge of God, it may be ten or twenty years ago, or longer, and you still are found dwelling under the droppings of the sanctuary, and walking in him you have received; following on to know more of the Lord; sometimes faint, yet always wishing to pursue; tossed, but not lost; occasionally "cast down, but not destroyed." How comes all this? How is it that many flaming professors, who blazed out for a while, like luminaries of the first lustre, are quenched, extinguished, vanished, while your smoking flax, and feeble spark of grace, continue to survive, and sometimes afford both light and heat? While more than a few who, perhaps, once seemed to be rooted as rocks and stable as pillars in the house of God, are become as water that runneth apace; why are you standing, though in yourself as weak if not weaker than they? A child of God can soon answer this question; and he will answer it thus: "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day; not by my own might and power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts." And he that kept you until this day will keep you all your days. His Spirit which he freely gives to his people is a well of water springing up, not for a year, not for a lifetime, only; but into eternal life. God's faithfulness to you is the source of your cleaving to him. Christ intercedes for you; and therefore he keeps you watching unto prayer. He preserves you from falling; or when fallen, he restores your soul, and leads you forth again in the "paths of righteousness, for his name's sake." He has decreed and covenanted, and promised and sworn, to give you a crown of life; and, in order to that, he has no less solemnly engaged and irrevocably bound himself to make you faithful unto death.

"Well, then," says an Arminian, "if these things are so, I am safe at all events. I may fold up my arms, and even lay me down to sleep; or, if I chose to rise and be active, I may live just as I list." Satan was the coiner of this reasoning; and he offered it as current and sterling coin to the Messiah; but Christ rejected it as false money: "If thou be the Son of God," said the enemy, "if thou be indeed that Messiah whom God upholds, and his elect in whom his soul delighteth, 'cast thyself headlong;' it is impossible thou shouldst perish do what thou wilt—no fall can hurt thee; and thy Father has absolutely promised that his 'angels shall keep thee in all thy ways;' jump, therefore, boldly from the battlements, and fear no evil." The devil's argumentation was equally insolent and absurd, in every point of

view. He reasoned not like a serpent in his wits; but like a serpent whose head was bruised, and who had no more of understanding than of modesty. Christ silenced this battery of straw with a single sentence: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." So said the Messiah; and so say we. And this is answer enough to a cavil whose palpable irrationality would cut its own throat, without the help of any answer at all. God's children would be very glad if they could "live as they list." How so? Because it is the will, the desire, and the wish of a renewed soul; that is, of a new man, or the believer's regenerate part; for old Adam was never a saint yet, nor ever will be; it is, then, I say, the will and the wish of a renewed soul, to please God in all things, and never sin on any occasion, or in any degree. This is the state in which our pantings aspire; and in which (would the imperfection of human nature admit of such happiness below) we "list" to walk. For every truly regenerated person can sincerely join the apostle Paul in saying, "With my mind, I myself serve the law of God, and wish I could keep it better." God's preservation is the good man's perseverance. "He will keep the feet of his saints." Arminianism represents God's Spirit as if he acted like the guard of a stage coach, who sees the passengers safe out of town for a few miles; and then making his bow, turns back, and leaves them to pursue the rest of the journey themselves. But divine grace does not thus deal by God's travellers. It accompanies them to their journey's end, and without end. So that the meanest pilgrim to Zion may shout, with David, in full certainty of faith, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Therefore, for preserving grace, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."

7. After God has led his people through the wilderness of life, and brought them to the edge of that river which lies between them and the heavenly Canaan, will he intermit his care of them, in that article of deepest need? No, blessed be his name. On the contrary, he (always safely, and generally comfortably) escorts them over to the other side; to that good land which "is very far off," to that "goodly mountain, and Lebanon." I know there are some flaming Arminians who tell us that "a man may persevere until he comes to die, and yet perish in the very article of death;" and they illustrate this wretched, God-dishonouring and soul-shocking doctrine, by the simile of "a ship foundering in the harbour's mouth." It is very true that some wooden vessels have so perished. But it is not less true that all God's chosen vessels are infallibly safe from so perishing. For, through his goodness, every one of them is insured by him whom the winds and seas, both literal and metaphorical, obey. Since their insurance runs thus: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee:" "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come

to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads.' So they are far from foundering within sight of land. Even an earthly parent is particularly careful and tender of a dying child; and surely, when God's children are in that situation, he will, speaking after the manner of men, be doubly gracious to his helpless offspring, who are his by election, by adoption, by covenant, by redemption, by regeneration, and by a thousand other indissoluble ties. There are no marks of shipwrecks, no remnants of lost vessels floating upon that sea which flows between God's Jerusalem below and the Jerusalem which is above. The excellent Dr. William Gouge has an observation full to the present point. "If a man," says he, "were cast into the river, we should look upon him as safe, while he was able to keep his head above water. The church, Christ's mystic body, is cast into the sea of the world, and afterwards into the sea of death; and Christ, her Head, keeps himself aloft, even in heaven." Is there, then, any fear or possibility of drowning a member of this body? If any should be drowned, then either Christ himself must be drowned first, or else that member must be pulled from Christ; both which are impossible. By virtue, therefore, of this union, we see that on Christ's safety ours depends. If he is safe, so are we. If we perish, so must he. Well, therefore, may dying believers sing, "Not unto us, O Lord, but to thy name give glory!" Thy loving mercy carries us when we cannot go; and, "for thy truth's sake," thou wilt save us to the utmost, without the loss of one.

8. When the emancipated soul is actually arrived in glory, what song will he sing then? The purport of the text will still be the language of the skies: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give glory." Whilst we are upon earth, we have need of that remarkable caution which Moses gave to the children of Israel: "Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, for my righteousness, the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land. Understand, therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiff-necked people." Now, if the earthly Canaan, which was only a transitory inheritance, was unattainable by human merit; if even worldly possessions are not given us for our own righteousness' sake; who shall dare to say that heaven itself is the purchase of our own righteousness? If our works cannot merit even the vanquishing conveniences and supplies of time, how is it possible that we should be able to merit the endless riches of eternity? We shall need no cautions against self-righteousness when we get safe to that better country. The language of our hearts and voices will be—and angels will join the concert; and all the elect, both angels and men, will, for ever and ever, strike their harps to this key: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and thy truth's sake."

O, may a sense of that loving mercy and truth be warmly and transformingly experienced in our hearts. For, indeed, my dear brethren, it is experience, or the felt power of God upon the soul, which makes the gospel "a savour of life unto life." Notwithstanding that God's purpose is steadfast as his throne; notwithstanding that the whole of Christ's righteousness and redemption is finished, and as complete as a Divine Power and Almighty Agent could make it; notwithstanding that I am convinced that God will always be faithful to every soul whom he has called out of darkness into his marvellous light; and notwithstanding that none can pluck the people of Christ from his hands; still, I am no less satisfied that it must be the feeling sense of all this, *i. e.*, a perception wrought in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, that will give you and me the comfort of the Father's gracious decrees, and of the Messiah's finished work. I know it is growing very fashionable to talk against spiritual feelings; but I dare not join the cry. On the contrary, I adopt the apostle's prayer, that our love to God, and the manifestations of his love to us, "may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment," or feeling. It is no enthusiastic wish, in behalf of you and of myself, that we may be of the number of those "godly persons" who, as our church justly expresses it, *feel* in themselves the workings of the Spirit, mortifying the works of the flesh, and drawing up their minds to high and heavenly things. Indeed, the great business of God's Spirit is to draw up and to bring down: to draw up our affections to Christ, and to bring down the unsearchable riches of grace into our hearts. The knowledge of which, and the earnest desire for it, are all the feelings I plead for. And for these feelings I wish ever to plead; satisfied as I am, that, without some experience and enjoyments of them, we cannot be happy, living or dying. Let me ask you, as it were, one by one, Has the Holy Spirit begun to reveal these deep things of God in your soul? If so, give him the glory of it. And as you prize communion with him, as you value the comforts of the Holy Ghost, may he help you to endeavour to be found in God's way, even the highway of humble faith and obedient love; sitting at the feet of Christ, and desirous to imbibe those sweet, ravishing, sanctifying communications of grace, which are at once an earnest of, and a preparation for, complete heaven when you come to die. God forbid that we should ever think lightly of religious feelings! For, if we do not in some degree feel ourselves sinners, and feel that Christ is precious, I doubt if the Spirit of God has ever been savingly at work upon our souls. Nay, so far from being at a stand in this, our desires after the feeling of God's presence within, will enlarge continually the nearer we draw to the end of our earthly pilgrimage; and resemble the progressive expansion of a river, which, however narrow and straitened when it first begins to flow, never fails to widen and increase in proportion as it approaches the ocean into which it falls.

God give us a gracious spring-tide of his Spirit to replenish our thirsty channels, to swell our scanty stream, and to quicken our languid course! If this is not our cry, it is a sign either that the work of grace is not yet begun in us or that it is indeed at low water and discoloured with those dregs which tend to dishonour God, to eclipse the glory of the gospel, and to spread clouds and darkness upon our souls. Some Christians are like decayed mile-stones, which stand, it is true, in the right road, and bear some traces of the proper impression; but so wretchedly mutilated and defaced that they who go by can hardly read or know what to make of them. May the blessed Spirit of God cause all our hearts, as we travel, to undergo a fresh impression; and indulge us with a new edition of our evidences for heaven! O, may showers of blessings descend upon you from above! May you see that Christ and the grace of God in him, are all in all! While you are upon earth, may you ever ascribe the whole glory to him! For sure I am that, when you come to heaven, you will never ascribe it to any other.

CHRIST'S ETERNAL LOVE TO HIS CHURCH.

Who can the distant period trace,
When God, to glorify his grace
And magnify his love to man,
Drew forth redemption's wondrous plan.

Jesus was Head elect proclaim'd,
With all his mystic members nam'd;
One glorious Head, one body there,
Who should at last one glory share.

To Jesus thus, the Father spake,
"If this thy bride my statutes break;
Wilt thou engage the debt to pay,
And bear her load of sins away?"

"Yea," said the Son, "with her I'll go,
Thro' all the depths of sin and woe;
And on the cross will even dare
The bitter pains of death to bear."

In God's decree, her form he view'd,
All beauteous in his eyes she stood,
Presented by the eternal name,
Betroth'd in love, and free from blame.

Not as she stood in Adam's fall,
When guilt and ruin cover'd all;
But as she'll stand another day,
Fairer than sun's meridian ray.

Then justice on sweet mercy smiled,
And truth with peace was reconciled;
The scene so vast, each one amazed,
They kiss'd and, lost in wonder, gazed.

O glorious grace, mysterious plan,
Too great for angel mind to scan.
Our thoughts are lost, our numbers fail,
All hail, redeeming love! All hail!"

THE OLD LAMP LIT UP AFRESH.

No. II.

Dear Miss R,—I received your letter, and thank you for it, especially as it conveyed the intelligence that my poor scribble has, in a small measure, been of some little encouragement to you. I have many times had a yearning in soul towards you, and I do believe the Lord put it there. It really does me good to hear you say there was a time when you did hunger and thirst after righteousness, yes, the righteousness of my Jesus. A blessed discovery is that: "In him dwelleth all fulness." There is nothing in self, as it is said: "In the flesh dwelleth no good thing;" no, not even a good thought. O, how self-humbling is this! It is that Jesus may be all and in all. You have been taught by painful experience that you cannot quicken your own soul; no, nor keep it alive when quickened. Now you were never taught that lesson from man; no, the ungodly will not have it so, nor the self-righteous either. Therefore I say, cheer up, my dear friend; for where God has begun the good work, he will surely carry it on, and to perfection too. He is a God that cannot lie; and he has pledged his word.

The Scripture saith, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;" for it shall not be more than you are able to bear; and "*He*"—mark, "*He* will make a way for your escape." These dead and barren seasons you describe have been experienced by the greatest saints. The psalmist says at one time, "Is his mercy clean gone, and will he be favourable no more?" But by-and-by you will hear him say: "Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure. I have myself been at times in that dead state for a long time, insomuch that I felt as though all my religion were entirely gone; but, blessed be God, I was never comfortable there, and thus I find it is with you. No doubt, there is some "old leaven" lurking in you somewhere, and the Lord is driving it out. Yes, he will empty you from vessel to vessel; and when he has tried you—and it may be "so as by fire," wherein he will burn it all up—then he will bring you forth to the light. (1 Cor. iii. 15.) What for? Why, that he may have all the glory of your salvation.

"He knows how weak and faint thou art,
And must appear at length;
A look from him will cheer thy heart,
And bring renewed strength."

You have been a good deal on my mind this week, and the good Lord has enabled me to carry you to the throne of grace; blessed be his name, I felt a nearness when I addressed the Almighty, and I do believe I got his ear. O, how sweet it is when our heart and words go together! Do try to go to the Lord for all you want; for he has promised to "feed the hungry with good things;" yes, "*with good things*;" but the rich he sends empty away. I long to hear that you have again found the Pearl of great price.

You will pardon my familiarity. "Out of the abundance of

the heart the mouth speaketh;" and when the Lord shines upon the soul, love will flow out; we then love both his people and his ways. Your afflictions, no doubt, are heavy, and be assured, whatever professor or profane may say, that it will be "through much tribulation we shall enter the kingdom;" for the Lord hath spoken it. There is no other way. But

"The joy prepared for suffering saints,
Will make amends for all."

May the Lord sustain you under them all. This is the prayer of
Yours in Christ Jesus,

Penshurst, March 21, 1863.

HENRY CONSTABLE.

REPLY.

My dear Friend,—It was very kind of you to write. I did not expect a second epistle. It has opened the way for me to write again, and thank you for your prayers and kind admonitions. I do think I am reaping the benefit of them already; for I feel my heart so drawn out to a precious Jesus,—I who have been so long dead and lifeless in my feelings. I really feared I was "twice dead, plucked up by the roots." The parable of the ten virgins had been much on my mind. I knew I was in a sad, sleepy state; and O, I feared I was without oil in my lamp. When you wrote of "having fresh oil poured into the old lamp," making it burn brighter, it seemed to stir up godly jealousy; for while I thanked God for his goodness to you, I was enabled to beg the same blessing for myself. And, I trust, the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit have in some measure been shed abroad in my soul, causing desires to flow out after him continually, and a blessed hope in his mercy to spring up, that I can say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

Yesterday I had a sweet view of his mercy to me, so utterly unworthy as I feel myself to be. I could and did say, with Job: "Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another." I must think, dear Sir, you were directed to write to me, all seemed so suitable; and I trust the blessing of God may rest upon you. I know he can, if he pleases, work without outward means; but, bless his dear name, I would say, let him send by whomsoever he will, so that he accompany the word with power. O, I do indeed feel my unworthiness to be so great, that when looking at myself, I see no ground of hope. Yet, when I look back to years gone by, I am helped to hope it was God the Spirit's work, by which I was convinced of my sinful state by nature, when quite a child. I have sometimes gained a little hope there, when I could see none elsewhere.

Dear friend, may God give you the heart still to pray for me, that he would keep me near to himself and little in my own eyes, which I ever wish to be; and O that we might live more "to the praise of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the Beloved."

Your friend in a precious Jesus,

Blackham, March 25th, 1863.

S. R.

LITTLE-FAITH.

Poor Little-Faith's oft in the valley of fear,
 And often in secret is shedding a tear,
 Surrounded with doubting, and slow to believe,
 And subject to mourning, and sorrow and grief.
 Yet Little-Faith is of most excellent birth,
 And heir to true riches of durable worth,
 Born free of a city, fair Zion above,
 And wedded to Jesus in infinite love.
 The planet that ruled on the day she was born
 Was Bethlehem's Star, the delight of the morn;
 And we may well prophesy, under this star,
 She'll surely be rich, and a diadem wear.
 By union to Jesus, all his is her own,
 His grace, and his righteousness, glory, and crown.
 With him she shall reign, in his glory divine,
 For ever and ever in glory shall shine.
 Then what is the reason she often is sad,
 And seldom rejoicing in confidence glad;
 So deeply depress'd on account of the way,
 So fearful of falling to Satan a prey?
 The reason is this, if the truth you would know;
 Her enemies daily perplex and bring low,
 And sorely molest her and cause her to fret,
 And often entangle her feet in the net.
 They say that her love to her Saviour and Friend
 Was never sincere, but a false one and feign'd;
 That all the enjoyments which she has receiv'd,
 Are but a delusion—she never believ'd.
 Sometimes they will raise such a mist in her eyes
 As fills her with fear, and with trembling surprise.
 "Now look to your int'rest," cries one in her ear,
 "You see you can't read it, it never was clear.
 Now look at your sins, and you see them quite plain;
 Your falls and your failings are of a black stain.
 Your wand'ring in prayer, and your coldness in love,
 Must prove that you never were born from above."
 Poor Little-Faith tries on her map now to trace
 The way that Jehovah has led her by grace;
 But see it, she cannot, without or within,
 For all that she's looking at is her own sin.
 While this sad confusion takes place in her heart,
 The enemy throws in a fiery dart—
 A horrid temptation concerning her Lord—
 A wicked suggestion concerning his Word;
 Then turns the accuser of all that she feels,
 Nor can she believe what the Bible reveals.
 Confused in her mind, at a loss what to think,
 She fears in despair and in terror to sink.

Distracted with pain, she cries out for her Lover,
 "Lord, save, or I perish, and all will be over!"
 He catcheth her sinking and graciously saith,
 "I'm ready to save thee. Fear not, Little-Faith."
 His love he reveals to her poor trembling spirit,
 And comforts her heart with the worth of his merit.
 He points out the way he in wisdom has led her,
 The waters and pastures wherewith he has fed her.
 "I found thee a rebel, I made thee a friend,
 And low at my footstool I caus'd thee to bend.
 I found thee a stranger, I made thee come near;
 I found thee quite careless, I caused thee to fear.
 I found thee quite naked, without any dress;
 I cloth'd thee, I rob'd thee in my righteousness.
 I found thee forlorn in pollution and sin,
 I destitute found thee when I took thee in.
 I cleans'd thee and dress'd thee, supplied thee with food,
 And every comfort that really was good.
 I taught thee to hope and to trust in my Name,
 And now dost thou think I will put thee to shame?
 No, never, I still am thy Saviour and Head,
 And to thee I am everlastingly wed.
 I never will leave thee, but always will be
 A covenant Saviour, a God unto thee."
 Thus rescued by mercy she falls to the ground,
 Rejoicing that she her Redeemer has found.
 She looks at her troubles when freed from the evil,
 And sees that her Captain has vanquish'd the devil.
 She now for a season is raised on high,
 And feels either willing to live or to die.
 While Jesus is smiling, she sings away night,
 And lives in the prospect of perfect delight.
 But if the Redeemer his face but conceal,
 His mercy and love but cease to reveal,
 She quickly is vested in mourning and fear,
 Lest her Saviour departed should no more appear.
 Now hoping, now fearing, now singing, now sighing,
 Believing or doubting, rejoicing or crying,—
 Thus toss'd up and down, amidst turbulent foes,
 Like a ship in the ocean, poor Little-Faith goes.
 One moment she rises, then down she is toss'd;
 But Jesus preserves her, she cannot be lost.
 In glory's bright harbour she surely shall come,
 For Jesus, her Pilot, shall bring her safe home.
 Midst shouting of triumph, her spirit shall rise,
 Bid adieu to the world, and ascend to the skies;
 Transported in glory, her spirit shall sing,
 While gazing for ever on Jesus her King,
 All glory, all glory, to God, and the Lamb,
 All glory, all glory, Amen and Amen.

UNKNOWN.

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

THE SPIRIT'S WITNESS.

My dear Friend,—Truly the Lord's leadings and dealings and teachings are very marvellous; directly opposed to all the feelings and desires of the flesh.

I have seen much lately in that word of the Lord (by Moses) to the children of Israel: "Thou shalt remember all the way the Lord thy God hath led thee," &c. What an unfolding it will be by-and-by, of all his mysterious ways in providence and grace with his people, when the "whole body," as Paul says, shall be completed,—"*fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part.*" (Eph. iv. 16.) "*Every joint,*" "in the measure of *every part,*"—nothing left out. How it will be seen that every furnace, every fiery trial, every season of darkness and depression, every conflict with the enemy, and every season of bitter weeping, have all been necessary. Out of the countless number of sighs, groans, tears, waitings, supplications, cries out of the belly of hell, fears, doubts, and anxieties which have been found in and pressed out of the living hearts of the millions of the Lord's redeemed here upon earth,—not one could be left out. *All* of them were needful to the "*fitly joining together.*" Yea, every link in the chain of providence, as well as every agonizing pain of body, will be seen to have been necessary.

Sometimes the Lord is pleased to reveal a little of these mysteries to faith, but how very little; and how beclouded is the view. It is "*through a glass darkly*" now; but then it will be in open vision. So it is also with a faith's view of a precious Christ. How little we know of him; and how feeble are our desires after him! Yet the feeblest members with their feeblest desires are necessary.

The Lord in his mercy has, in days gone by, indulged me with some sweet visits in times of extreme need; but now I am led not to expect much more than sighing and groaning after him; and hungering and thirsting for bread and water; nor do I expect to get much beyond David,—"*As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks,*" &c. (Ps. xlii.) I am fully persuaded that if I ever do get much beyond this, it will be in the depths; in the furnace; or at wit's end; and this way the flesh dislikes,

"Though faith approves it well."

Since I was with you on the 10th, and speaking from those words: "He shall testify of me;" my mind has been much led out in meditation on the work of the Spirit in the hearts of the people of God, and how very little we can understand of what that work is. How faint are our perceptions of what the "witness of the Spirit" is; the "sealing" and "anointing" of the Spirit. Paul evidently means in Ephesians that every believer is "sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of the inheritance." But I want to find the simplicity of the matter, with

regard to my own interest in the things of the Spirit. And as it is he who testifies of Christ, is it not all manifested in believing hearts, by their longing desires after himself; and their feeble, but real cries that the Spirit would satisfy them that they are in the "footsteps of the flock?"

What a secret, *personal*, and close matter it is—all real evidences must be from the Spirit personally. The Spirit does not witness to me that you are a child of God in order that I may communicate it to you. All we can attain to in communion with each other is to feel a union of heart in divine realities; but the confirming testimony is personal.

The Lord favour you, my dear friends, with much of his sacred presence, and the Spirit's sealing testimony that you are in Christ. We want it made over again and again; and can get it in no other way.

My dear wife joins me in kindest love to you.

Yours sincerely, and in best bonds,

South Brent, Devon, April 30th, 1881.

J. B. DENSHAM.

THE LORD IS GOOD.

Dear Friend,—I was glad to hear how the Lord had appeared for you. The Lord is good, indeed, to those that are brought to trust in him, and he hears the prayer of the destitute; for he is all ear to them as well as all eye; and if there is anything in heaven, faith and prayer will bring it down. I have ever found the most profitable trade is begging; and he will be waited upon and waited for. Some of my happiest hours have been in seeking his face by prayer—of all men I ought to speak well of it! and my tears before him, though they have held their peace, yet have made a loud cry. Follow hard after him in secret, and spend more time with him than with any one else.

Yours truly,

Wandle Road, Croydon, Dec. 9th, 1877.

F. COVELL.

Dear Friend,—I was glad you had a good hearing time; prize it. The time may come when you may desire it and not have it; therefore be thankful, and do not let Satan rob the Lord of his glory. For if you grieve him by abusing his comforts, he may withhold and make you rue your folly. Whatever endears the Lord to us and makes us sick of ourselves, is not the work of Satan; for how would his kingdom stand?

I shall be at home on Monday, and shall be glad to see you.

Keep close to the Lord by secret prayer; for it is God's blessing, not our wisdom or ability, that makes the word effectual.

Yours truly,

Dec. 21st, 1875.

F. COVELL.

Dear Friend,—The good Lord still keeps me pressing on, though I cannot attain that which I am in pursuit of; and in my judgment I know I never shall. I am not what I would be—so many shortcomings, &c. Am I that I desire to be—ab-

horring what is evil, and cleaving only to that which is good? Oh! I sorely feel the fall, and this makes me truly say, "Blessed be God for Jesus Christ." I never saw and felt the suitability of him more than I do now, nor do I know that he was ever more gracious to me than now. He seems to bear with my manners, and to pity my weakness; and this so endears him to my heart that it makes my soul desirous to speak well of him, and try to lift him up.

Yours truly,

Wandle Road, Croydon, Dec. 27th, 1878.

F. COVELL.

SUSTAINED TO THE END.

My dear Friend,—Through mercy I am brought on thus far. It is a mercy that I am on my feet in the great battle against the world, the flesh, and the devil. It will be 88 years next Saturday, since I was "ordained" at Wells. Hitherto I have been held up. For more than 37 years I have professed to fear God. Many have been the Lord's blessings on a sinful worm. What a debtor I am to saving grace, and what a debtor to restraining grace. What little gratitude does God reap, in proportion to the mercies and blessings God has bestowed upon sinful worms, like ourselves. God is a merciful God. What a mercy to have the work of grace renewed in our souls. The way to heaven is not smooth; crosses and trials will attend all the followers of the Lamb.

I have had a long and lingering illness; on the 13th I was at chapel once, but never coughed more at chapel than on that day. I walked out two fine days in the garden last week, and the throat was worse. Yesterday I went to chapel once. You wish to come and see me again. I should be glad to see the friends at Abingdon, if better. I hope that I may. Friend Philpot has not preached the last four Lord's days, and is still quite ill with his old complaint, although he hopes that he is a little better. There will be reading here on Friday morning and next Lord's day. They have not obtained a minister here; they have applied to ministers previously engaged. May the Lord raise up ministers to preach his glorious gospel. May the Lord be with friend Philpot in his affliction. What long sicknesses he has had since I have known him. It will be 35 years in June since I first met him. Sicknesses, crosses, and trials are profitable to the ministers, as well as the hearers. Real prayer and real humility come out of the fires and furnaces.

I hope that the Lord will be with friend Hammond on next Lord's day; and that the preachers and hearers may be blest together. If the ministers are blest and well attended they will be willing to come again. What a great work is the work of the ministry. The Lord will have the treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be known to be of God.

May the Lord raise me up again to speak—a worthless worm!

Give my love to friend Hicks, friend Vinn, friend Doe, and inquiring friends, specially the sick.

May the Lord bless those who love and fear his Name that go to the Abbey chapel. Greet the friends by name.

Yours affectionately,

Oakham, March 21, 1864.

WM. TIPTAFT.

To Mr. Porter.

BLESSED ARE THEY THAT KNOW THE JOYFUL SOUND.

Dear Friend,—I received yours, and was glad to hear the joyful tidings. I can assure you it did my heart good to read it, for it caused a soft contrition to rest upon my spirit, and after reading it I fell upon my knees, and thanked God for his rich mercy, his kind care, and his undissembled love towards us, such unworthy worms as we are. I say *we*, for I feel I am one with you, and I feel your case to be mine. It made my heart truly to rejoice in his blessed name, to think he should bestow such love upon us, the vilest of all. For I do believe—did I say believe? O, more than that—I am confident that when the love of God is felt and enjoyed in the heart, it will bring us to be nothing in ourselves. The dear Saviour's love will take up all the room, and show us there is nothing good, only what is put there by the blessed Spirit of our covenant God; and this will bring us into the dust of self-abasement. We shall give him all the glory, and he will be crowned King of our affections. Bless his dear name, I have felt him to be precious to my soul since I saw you last; for in reading John Warburton's book, it was made precious to me, and I could go hand and heart with him. I could truly say with the editor that sometimes I laughed, and sometimes my eyes were full, so that I could hardly see to read, and I blessed and praised the Lord for such mercies. This was on the Tuesday, before I received yours on the Wednesday morning, when your letter moved me again to praise him. O, where shall I find an end of such love as this? But to sum it up in as few words as I can, I say it is a boundless sea of everlasting, eternal, and electing love. O, my dear friend, had not the Lord set his love upon us before the world was, what should we do? But, bless his precious name, that he *has* chosen us, and set us apart in the eternal counsels and settlements of divine love; in time to call us out, and separate us from the world, and to reveal his dear Son in us, the hope of everlasting love.

O, my dear Friend, my heart feels to rejoice at this moment "in God my Saviour;" for I know he has regarded me in my low estate, and delivered me from the lowest hell, from so great a death, and doth deliver and will yet deliver. I think you will rejoice with me and say, "Let us exalt his name together;" for he has heard our cry, and brought us up from the low dungeon of almost despair, and set our feet upon a rock. And, bless his dear name, we believe he will deliver us in all our straits and difficulties; for he has said that nothing shall happen to us more than is common to man. May you and I be kept humble at the footstool of Christ, there to make our supplication unto

him for all we need. I am sure you have great encouragement to do so from the blessings you have lately enjoyed. I well know it is a glorious hour, and it comes with speed, when you and I are to be delivered from all darkness, doubts, and fears.

You say, "If you can feel a heart to write me a line, I shall be glad." I bless God, it is a pleasure to do so. I remember when I wrote to you last, it was with a desire that the blessing of the Lord might rest upon you, with the "precious dew of heaven," and of the "lasting hills," and of the "fulness thereof." And may the blessed rays of the Sun of righteousness shine into your heart with its heavenly glory, so that it may overcome you, and set your soul on fire for God, with his everlasting love kindled up in your heart. Then I know that this world, with all its deceitful charms, will be cast out of your heart and affections, and the dying love of Christ will sweetly fill your heart and soul. O, my dear friend, these are tidings of great joy indeed. Then neither Satan nor any of his hellish crew will dare to show themselves; and this, I hope and feel a firm persuasion, will be our happy lot when this life is ended. Then farewell, world, for ever; I have had enough of you. May God the Holy Ghost seal it home to your soul.

Yours in covenant love,

Paddockwood, May 15th, 1840.

THOS. BEECHER.

[Thos. Beecher was an old member of the late Mr. Crouch's, and the same to whom some of Mr. Philpot's letters are addressed in his Memoir and Letters.]

THE REFINER'S FIRE.

My dear Friends,—I am sure you must think me unkind not to drop you a line. I have thought of doing so for a long time; but since I was with you, the furnace has been so hot, and the waters so high, that they have greatly interfered with my correspondence with friends; for in trouble I want to go to God alone. I am led in such a trying path that I want a deliverance before I write to a friend. My poor wife has been very ill this last three weeks. I desire to be thankful that she is better now, though very weak.

As for myself, I am plagued with the leprosy, a disease of the heart; and sin and Satan are watching for me at every turn. The Lord, too, is mostly at a sensible distance; so that I am surrounded with trials of various sorts, until I am terribly shaken, though now and then refreshed with the springing up of Bethlehem's sacred well."

I can bear sin, endure temptations, wade up to my chin in trouble; yea, through the fiery furnace itself, or seas of trouble, if the Lord is near to stir up faith, hope, meekness, patience, and to give me resignation to his will. Then the bitter things are sweet, darkness is light, and crooked things are straight, nor do I then fear being forsaken.

I have just had a little sweet feeling in contemplation that

Jesus sits as a "Refiner" and "Purifier" of silver. What a mercy! I hope he will not let the fire go out *too* soon. I mean, I hope I may profit by these things, for I fear losing my troubles the wrong way.

I want to cast my soul, body, family, circumstances, and all upon the Lord. For these are what compose my burdens,—a weak soul, a deceitful heart, a vile body, a tempting devil, and an absent God. I would not choose to be out of the fiery furnace to have the bastard's portion. But resignation, blessed resignation, almost a stranger art thou in the land of my heart! But not *quite* so; for I do know what it is

"To lie passive in his hands,
And know no will but his."

I hope my wife will be able to come with me. I am accepting, you see, your kind invitation. I trust your souls are fed with heavenly food. There is much of that falling in Israel's camp in our day, though the Lord does not forsake the work of his own hands.

Remember me to any inquiring friends. I shall be pleased to have a line.

"I seem forsaken and alone,
And hear the lion roar;
And every door seems shut but one,
And that is mercy's door."

That door will not close until the close of this mortal life *ends* our misery. "I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." I am, Yours in the Path of Tribulation,

London Road, Maldon, Essex, June 24th, 1881. ALFRED DYE.

MERCY REJOICETH AGAINST JUDGMENT.

My dear Friend,—I thankfully accept your sympathising letter, for I know it is from a sincere heart. I am wholly prevented writing myself; but that is a small matter. God has been and is so good to me in this affliction that I might rather account my usual life afflictive and this the season and time of healing. I never before equally understood experimentally, how the inner man could be "renewed day by day," while all around might seem decaying. You know my great aim has been, "Accept, accept;" and now, in a time when part of the suffering was severe, I found the profit. No touch of wrath in the sickness at its worst has yet appeared, but mercy upon mercy; till it is "mercy built up for evermore." I have looked wide for my sins, which have been innumerable, but I cannot find them, for they are blotted out. I now know that "the blood of Jesus Christ" does indeed cleanse "from all sin." As regards the outward part, I now feel there is a prospect that I may be raised up again after a bit. But in all the various turns, and checks, and drawbacks, there has been given to me such a sight of the wisdom of God in the overruling of them that I lie in the hands of perfect wisdom, power, and goodness,—not a par-

title of which could have ever reached us, were not God in Christ delighting to save.

Market Deeping, Oct. 27th, 1881.
To Mr. Prentice.

Yours very truly,

FRED. TRYON.

THE LORD'S GOODNESS.

My dear Friend,—I hope you will excuse me again troubling you, as I feel desirous to inform you of the dear Lord's goodness to me a poor, hell-deserving sinner,—a sinner of the deepest dye, a sinner who has no ground to cast a stone at the vilest sinner either in or out of hell, yet one who has a hope of eternal life through the Father's choice, the Son's blood, made known to my poor soul by the Holy Spirit, Three Persons in One God. My reason, then, for writing these few lines is to tell you how acceptable your kind present was, and that, in addition, I hope the dear Lord has granted me a grateful heart. O, may he abundantly reward you and your dear husband. This is the sincere desire of your unworthy friend. I was speaking on Thursday evening of the cruel enemy, unbelief, being stirred up within us by the devil, and I did not get through the night without being sorely beset again by this mighty foe; so much so that I lay on my bed and trembled; being again beset with this, that after all there was the real thing lacking in my religion, and that God had never called me by grace or to preach the gospel; but I trust this was to prepare me for another sweet time of drawing near to the Lord; for yesterday morning I came across the words of an old divine who said, "Lord, if I cannot see thy face and live, let me see thy face and die, so that I do see it." This was the means of breaking my heart and bringing tears into my eyes, and I directly said, Lord, thou knowest Satan sorely tries me, telling me I shall never see thy face in peace in heaven; and for a short season I did feel much humbled before the Lord and was able to tell him of my temptations and trials, as well as of my need in future; and here I once more felt the Lord did incline his ear unto me, and I again hoped he had saved me, and that he would be my strong habitation whereunto I might continually resort. I am a continual sinner, and I need continual salvation, an every day, every hour, and every moment Saviour,—a Saviour whose precious blood extends beyond the limits of all my sins. Nothing short of the blood of Almighty God could save me, I feel persuaded. O, then, let my mouth be filled with his praise and his honour all the day. Mrs. N. joins in Christian love.

Southborough, June 29th, 1878.

J. NEWTON.

THIS GOD IS OUR GOD.

Respected Friends in our ever-adorable Lord God and our dear Redeemer,—A worm greets you in his precious Name. Amen and amen. "Who can utter the mighty" and the strange "acts of the Lord" of hosts? is a question propounded by infinite Majesty, who alone can fully answer the same. Yet he

gives whom he will to proclaim some of them, though with comparatively stammering speech. Witness Lazarus whom the Lord of life raised from the dead; the man who was born blind, whom he made both to know that he was so, and that almighty Jesus gave him sight—yes, both natural and spiritual; the cripple at the pool; the madman with the legion; Saul the Pharisee, a Magdalene, a dying thief, with unnumbered others; and O, what a mighty act of love and mercy in him to put us among them whom he makes to “call upon his Name;” not only having made us fit for it, but also makes us do it, with love’s constraining power. Our God works in us both to will and also to do. See a company of fishermen preaching a most precious Jesus; and Saul the Pharisee, once an enemy to Jesus, but not behind or inferior to them now, either in preaching or in suffering for his dear Name’s sake.

Through the great mercy of our God, I felt some gratitude to him and thanks to you for your gift; but my soul rejoiced to hear you revered his sacred truth, and that he blessed you in the deed, but *not for it*. To me there appears a striking act of God’s kindness in this thing, though it might not have been premeditated upon; but as a sparrow cannot fall without his notice, so also could not any be willing to visit a poor worm at such a time, unless an all-wise Majesty make out a way. And through infinite grace I was made to say, as those before us yet of our company, have said, “This God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death.” He, all praise to his Name, when we were dead in trespasses and sins, gave us life, that all the powers of darkness cannot destroy, although constantly aiming thereat; our God makes the “wrath of man to praise” him. He sovereignly uses them as his snuffers, to remove the obstacles, so that spiritual and immortal life may more sound forth his praise; for he has, in incomparable love to us, made and makes the wrath of men and demons to praise him, and the remainder our God restrains. The use of snuffers is for black work, and often to make a blaze. And “because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.” But our God will do his work in his own way while his poor people stand still, and see, hear, and know he is God, and will be exalted among the heathen and in the earth. Our God gives us his Word, others borrow or steal it, or both, by it he feeds our immortal spirits and so strengthens us that, leaping over a wall, overcoming a Goliath of Gath, or fat bulls of Bashan have no difficulty in them. “The righteous are bold as a lion; but the wicked fleeth when no man pursueth.” O, to rejoice in Christ Jesus with faith that works by love in the soul, and to feel a blessed freedom from a confidence that is vain! How vast the mercy! Ay, how great the blessing! David had conquered Goliath by faith before Goliath fell; and Hezekiah, the huge host, and many others in the blessed Scripture records. And there may be not a few now, if put to-

gether, that are blessed with God's record according to the Scriptures by him engraved upon their spirit, and lined with the merits of Christ, which shine brightly and show forth his praise even in our day. But be they few or many, a God of grace has, in his righteous sovereignty, chosen and made William Collins one of that blessed number,—although cursed of men who pretend to love God whom they have not seen, and hate a brother whom they have seen. My friends, our God is not, nor can be, nor will be mocked; full weight and measure will he measure out to them in his time; "He that rewarded evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house." We that through grace have entered into rest, and that into us, must and shall be annoyed in the world; both to give increasing proof of its worth to us, and to feel, Why me? why me? and to see the dread delusions God hath hitherto left such in. But God says, "He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy." I am an old warrior and an old man, and no man knows much comparatively about it; but God my Saviour and righteous Judge does, who down to old age has borne me, and will never leave me nor any of his, entirely.

Yours in love and faithfulness,

Maldon, Sept. 23rd, 1853.

WILLIAM COLLINS.

Obituary.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF GEORGE WESTON.

(Continued from p. 49.)

He was again brought very low, both in providence, with an expensive family, and in soul matters; and walked many months in darkness and sorrow, being under the hidings of the Lord's face and the temptations of Satan. This was to prepare him for another manifestation of the Lord's love and power, which he describes in a letter as follows:

"Another special visit I had, occurred thus: I was very comfortable on Saturday night, being able to take my landlord £5 to rub off a part of my rent. I got up happy on Sunday morning, and walked upon the Lewes hills before breakfast, and sat on the steps of the Spital mill, reading Hart's hymns. I came to

"How high a privilege 'tis to know
Our sins are all forgiven;
To bear about this pledge below,
This special grant of heaven!

'To look on this when sunk in fears,
While each repeated sight,
Like some reviving cordial, cheers,
And makes temptations light!

'O what is honour, wealth, or mirth,
To this well-grounded peace?
How poor are all the goods of earth,
To such a gift as this?

‘This is a treasure rich indeed,
Which none but Christ can give;
Of this the best of men have need;
This I, the worst, receive.’

“Also the 103rd, especially the 3rd verse :

“‘Though, trav’ling through this vale of tears,
He many a sore temptation meet,
The Holy Ghost this witness bears,
He stands in Jesus still complete.’

“And while I was reading them, these words came again and again : ‘Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.’ Peace flowed into my soul, and I sang aloud for joy. Yea, the birds could testify if they were here, and had voices to declare it, how my soul was then blessing and praising God for his wonderful mercy to me ; but there was no mortal man near for me to annoy. The enemy of my soul was gone. For my Lord and Saviour had made ‘the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof’ were ‘still,’ and had brought me also to my ‘desired haven.’ I think this was in the month of May ; for the may-trees were full of blossom, and I took a branch and carried it home. It was certainly Spring in my soul, and ‘the time of the singing of birds’ was come. I went to chapel, and heard Mr. Gearing preach from Ezek. xvi. 8, 9. He showed the state we are all in by nature, and what the Lord Jesus does for and in us, by his sovereign grace and love. And I am satisfied this has been accomplished by his Spirit in your soul, as well as mine, for our comfort and salvation. But he will continually cleanse us, while we are travelling through this world ; and anoint us with the oil of joy and gladness—the oil of sanctification, and so set us apart for his own honour and glory. The priests, under the law, were anointed to that office. So our blessed Lord Jesus was anointed above his fellows ; and he anoints the souls of his people with grace, richer than the ceremonial oil. It was a time of refreshing with me, a Sabbath indeed. And I felt,

“‘When tired with toil, and faint thro’ fear,
The child of God can enter here,
And sweet refreshment find.’

“I must conclude, desiring you to remember me before the throne of grace.

“My dear child, when may we expect to see you here ? I hope, before long ; and, if possible, come on a week day, that we may have a whole Sabbath day together, without travelling. With our united love,

“From your loving Father, in twofold Bonds,

“GEORGE WESTON.”

Thus, while he had tribulation in the world, he at times drank of that peace in Christ Jesus which made his conversation savory and his company desirable ; and, through grace, profitable to the saints. He had cheerfulness, with soberness ; and sincerity and liveliness in the things of God ; and was blessed with judgment and discernment in divine things, above many. I had a great desire that he should record a few of the Lord’s mercies which had been manifested to him. At one time he seemed inclined to do so ; but, through age and increasing infirmities, it was never done. He often mentioned these things in my company, and frequently said :

“I am waiting now for my dissolution, when I must lay down this body. Blessed be God, it is without fear of death ; ‘I know whom I have believed.’”

The next special visit was in travelling by rail from London to Birmingham; he records it thus in a letter to his daughter:

“ My dear Daughter by natural generation, and beloved Sister in the covenant of grace, and fellow-citizen of Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, and city of the living God,—Thy father in the bonds of earthly ties, and brother in the free, electing, unchanging, and everlasting love of God, in and through our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, sendeth greeting. I left home on Friday for London, and found your brother well; and at 7 o'clock the next morning, I left by train for Birmingham. While on the road, my thoughts were deeply engaged about time and eternity, when these words forcibly entered my mind: ‘Adam, where art thou?’ It is thus recorded, Gen. iii. 9: ‘And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?’ And a sweet and comfortable time I had in my soul, for several days together, in meditating on the different stages of my pilgrimage, which were brought to my mind, with the question put to Adam by Almighty God, the sovereign ruler of heaven and earth. This question stands in full force to all Adam’s posterity down to the end of time; and blessed are those who have ears given them to hear, before death closes the scene of this life with them. The apostle’s admonition is, ‘Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?’ is, to my mind, in accordance with this question, ‘Where art thou?’ The thoughts and feelings of my heart answered, ‘Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee, and that my soul is resting in thy love; and, through thy beloved Son, I am resting in that great and glorious salvation wrought out on Calvary’s cross for poor perishing, lost, and undone sinners *like me*, who am resting alone in that pure and spotless righteousness of Christ Jesus as my justification in the presence of God. I am also resting in the Spirit’s witness in my own conscience; in his taking of the things of Jesus and revealing them unto me; so bringing sweet peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.’ These were the comforting meditations of my heart on my way; and although there were many passengers in the carriage, yet I was, as it were, alone; blessing and praising God for his goodness, mercies, and loving-kindness towards me. I kept answering the question put to Adam, ‘Where art thou?’ by saying, ‘Blessed be the God of my mercies, I am not without hope, as I formerly was; I have not the guilt of my sins, as I once had; I am not now labouring under a fearful looking for judgment, and fiery indignation of God, appearing an angry Judge, and a swift Witness against me; and my heart in desperate rebellion against his sovereign decrees and purposes, as I was at one time. Neither am I held by the power of unbelief and sin; that is,—viewing the all-sufficiency of the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ as a complete salvation for the church of God, but being myself without faith to believe my interest therein; longing, praying, and desiring that I might be blessed with faith, hope, and love in the Lord Jesus Christ, to the salvation of my soul, with peace in believing, and that I might have the witness of the Spirit that I was a child of God.’ No, my child; this trying state is not where I was when I had to answer the question put to Adam, ‘Where art thou?’ but I was blessedly enjoying faith, hope, love, joy, and peace in believing; and I could say with confidence, and quietness of mind, ‘Here I am, Lord, trusting in thy love and mercy, which is from everlasting to everlasting.’

“ But your letter was what I took up my pen to write about. On the Sunday morning after I arrived at your sister’s, I was in meditation

before daylight, and your letter was on my mind. I lighted a candle, and read it; and it was a sweet feast to my soul. My eyes were full of tears, my heart full of joy, and my soul singing praise and thanksgiving to the God of all our mercies. Surely out of the 'eater' we have found meat, and out of the 'strong' sweetness. I have been enabled to groan and mourn with you, and to rejoice with you; and thus we have borne each other's burdens in the various stages of our pilgrimage. I have been an eye-witness to the many changes your soul has passed through, and you have been both a blessing and reproof to me. I shall never forget the piercing of my soul from a few words you wrote to your sister about 13 years ago, when I was in a backsliding state, and filled with my own ways. In that state I prayed as earnestly for his delivering power (for I found I had none to deliver me out of that awful state, but my offended Lord), yea, I prayed as earnestly for it as I did for the salvation of my soul; and in this he likewise heard and answered me in his own due time, to the joy of my heart. So, my dear, we have no stones to cast at any soul living, whatever their state may be; but to say it is all of his mercy we are not consumed; and that it is by the grace of God we are what we are. Therefore let us unite together at this time in blessing and praising God for showing us our lost and undone estate; for revealing his loving-kindness and tender mercies to us; and for pardoning all our sins, and bringing us up from our backslidings, by his omnipotent arm, into rest and peace of soul, and to rely on the blood and righteousness of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; to whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, three Persons in one undivided Jehovah, be everlasting praises, honour, glory, and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

"I have no time to write more now; but there are endless treasures in the mercies of God to write about.

"Your loving Father,

"Jan., 1848."

"GEORGE WESTON.

After the above blessed visit and manifestation of the Lord's goodness, he sank again under sore trials, which so unsettled him at Lewes that he had many fears and sorrows lest the Lord should remove him to some part where he could not hear the preached gospel. How fully the following lines of Mr. Hart were realized by him:

"How strange is the course a Christian must steer!

How perplex'd is the path he must tread!

The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead.

"His fairest pretensions must wholly be waved,

And his best resolutions be cross'd;

Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved,
Till he finds himself utterly lost.

"When all this is done, and his heart is assured

Of the total remission of sins,

When his pardon is sign'd and his peace is procured,
From that moment his conflict begins."

He writes:

"I do know what it is highly to esteem the ministers of Christ for their work's sake. How often has the burden of darkness, losses, crosses, and disappointments been dispelled from my mind under the ministry of God's Word, and my soul lifted up with praise and thanksgiving to God for all his mercies to me, temporally and spiritually. I often think, with all my trials and afflictions, what a source of sorrow it would be to me,

if God in his providence should remove me where I could not hear the truth preached. In my unsettled state, the thought of it strikes me with great concern,—what should I do? It is a trial I richly deserve; but, blessed be God, he has never in any way dealt with me as I deserve, neither has my unbelief made his promise of none effect. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth,' so far have his thoughts been above my thoughts, and his ways above my ways. Yet I fear and tremble to know his will; but hope he will be with me."

He adds:

"In 1850 I removed to Brighton, under very trying and distressing circumstances, not knowing whom I should hear. Therefore I attended Providence Chapel, Robert Street; Mr. Sharp's, Union Street; and Mr. Grace's, West Street; but under Mr. Grace I had two or three most special seasons which bound me to his ministry as long as he lived."

One of those seasons he states in the following letter:

"To my dear Daughter in the ties of nature, and beloved Sister in the household of faith,—That grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost may rest and remain with you, in and through our Lord Jesus Christ, is the desire of your affectionate father, who now sendeth greeting. I have had a desire, my dear, for years to send you a minute account of the gracious dealings of God with me, both in providence and in grace. I never gave you a just return for the account you gave me a long time ago of the benefit you had received from the covenant of grace being manifested to you, in and through the dear Redeemer. I have always thought about your epistles with thoughts of self-condemnation for not writing a more particular account of the Lord's mercies to me, and the reason of my hope; but there is an appointed time of God for every purpose under the sun. My time has frequently been set; but has always been frustrated until now. But I do hope the Lord's time has arrived for me to begin. The paper I am writing on, I purchased for the purpose two years ago; at which time I fully intended to write; but trials and afflictions in mind and estate were such that I could not begin it. Besides all these things, the enemy suggested to my soul,—Let it alone, for it willst and as a testimony against you. God's hand is against you, and it will be still more manifestly against you; for you will one day fall to rise no more.' So, through these heavy seasons, my writing was passed by. My mind was still the same towards it last year; but the changes I had, and the trying circumstances I had to endure, caused it to be left undone as before. But as the Lord has, in his great mercy and faithfulness, by his almighty power, brought me through those great and trying afflictions that attended me, to the honour of his great Name and the good of my soul, I have the same desire to write to you now as I have had from the first. Blessed be his holy Name, I have found that nothing has been destroyed in the furnace but dross and tin. I have proved that when I passed through the waters he was with me; and through the rivers they could not overflow me. Yea, although I had to pass through the fire, the flame has not kindled upon me. I have again seen the Lord's blessed promise fulfilled: 'As thy days so shall thy strength be;' and that my unbelief has not made the promise of God of none effect; and that 'though we believe not, yet he abideth faithful.' Therefore here I am now with my faith strengthened, my hope renewed, and my soul drawn forth towards Israel's Three-One God, with sweet meditations on covenant love towards me, an unworthy, vile, base, guilty sinner, in and of myself. Surely in me dwelleth no good thing. All my rejoicing is in free, distinguishing, sovereign grace, in and through Christ Jesus, my Lord, my Saviour, my

Redeemer, my Surety, my Hiding-Place from the storm, my Covert from the tempest, the Shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and the great Atonement God has accepted for my sins and transgressions; and I do trust that I shall through him finish my course with joy, and enter into that rest he hath prepared for them that love and fear him. Boasting is excluded from the covenant of grace; for we should not have chosen him had he not chosen us. But if any one desires to glory let him glory in this, that he knoweth the Lord, which I desire to do more and more, to the honour and glory of his precious Name. For I shall never do so to the amount that I have dishonoured him by my unbelief, rebellion, and pride, while I am in this wilderness below.

"I had a good day yesterday; it was a Sabbath indeed to me. I heard Mr. Grace very comfortably; he becomes more and more prized by me. He preached from these words: 'For the oppression of the poor, and the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.' (Ps. xii. 5.) He spoke the truth very clearly, both in doctrine and experience; and I could sweetly follow him all through the two sermons. I know, with joy, what it is to be set on high from all my adversaries, and in safety from their puffing at me. I feel it this day with sweet peace on my mind; and I have comfort of soul in believing.

"This is the return of my natural birthday; I am now arrived to the age of 55; and the precious thoughts of my spiritual birth, which I trust is clearly manifested to me, make my natural birth sweet. When I feared death and guilt lay a burden on my conscience, and I was afraid I was destined to eternal woe and misery, where hope never comes, how frequently I looked on my natural birth with grief, and wished I had never been born, or that I could sink into a state of non-existence; but it is not so with me now. I am reconciled to his sovereign will, by his sovereign grace over sin abounding. Bless his holy Name, he hath performed the things that were appointed for me; and hath showed me the way he hath led me nearly forty years to 'humble' me, and to 'prove' me; so that the language of my heart now is, 'Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul,' in delivering 'my soul from death,' 'mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.' And he has 'set my feet upon the Rock, established my goings,' and 'put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God.'"

(To be continued.)

JOHN CHANDLER.—On Sept. 29th, 1881, aged 75 years, John Chandler, of Collingbourne, Wilts.

John Chandler was the son of poor parents, but his mother was a gracious woman. She was often heard by her dear boy John praying most earnestly for his salvation, and which had such an effect on his youthful mind that it never left him. As he grew up he was obliged to seek employment where he could. He was for some time engaged as a drover, &c. He had many very narrow escapes from death, which he has related to me. That precious hymn,

"Sovereign Ruler of the skies,"

was his delight, as he so often proved the truth of it in his long experience, "preserved in Christ Jesus," he truly was. He became a farm labourer, hedger, &c. His master being a carnal man, he was in the habit of paying his servants on the Sabbath;

but John refused going for his wages on the Sunday, and this stirred up his master's temper, as well as his own wife's at home. She complained, saying, "What are we to do for bread? There's none for the children;" but it was all to no purpose, for John would not go, but would take the matter and spread it before the Lord. The master was overcome, and let John go for his pay on a week day, while the rest were paid on the Sabbath. This very man moreover was so concerned for the welfare of his faithful servant that he wished him to become a woodman on his own account, and lent him money to begin with. This was the beginning of our dear brother's being a woodman on his own account. But a severe trial awaited him: being willing to do good, he became bondsman for another (not a stranger). This man failed, and the whole sum had to be paid by John out of his own pocket; which swept away all he had been labouring for night and day for years, so that he was left without a shilling. His poor wife, seeing his distress, was at last made acquainted with the cause; so that they were plunged into the greatest trouble. "But God who is faithful," did not suffer him to be tempted above what he enabled him to bear,—God sustained him.

As before stated, concerning divine things, he had impressions from a child, and was often made to feel a power working within him. He attended the ministry of some Wesleyans, but could not get what his soul thirsted after. Hearing of a Mr. Walcot who was then the Baptist minister at Ludgershall, he and a friend of his went to hear him; they both went from Collingbourne together, about two miles and a half, when they said to each other, "this must be our place;" and on April 1st, 1832, they were both baptized by Mr. W., the pastor. The cause of truth there was dear to him to the day of his death. It is 38 years ago that I first preached in that place, and for many years union of soul has existed between me and J. C. that has never been once broken. His desire for my comfort as a supply there has been known to many; he was indeed a peacemaker. Some few years ago he spoke to the people when no other minister was there, and was heard very well. About ten years ago (I think it is) he went out as one of our supplies, his name being published in the "G. S." list, and according to the testimony of many was well received. His manner was solemn, but fervent. The doctrines of distinguishing grace were his delight; he was made to feel his position, and oftentimes the tears were seen running down his cheeks. He was little in his own eyes; I never knew him thrusting himself forward, or trying to bring himself into notice.

On Feb. 3rd, 1875, he lost his dear wife. This was a heavy blow; he felt it very much, but was greatly helped by seeing her brought to the Lord. His dear wife had been the mother of a large family. Added to the list of his trials was an attempt to cast a blot on his reputation by professors who hate the doctrines of grace, but it did him no harm in the end, while it proved a witness against the slanderer. Referring to this trial, in a letter

which he wrote at the time, he says: "You may not be surprised if I am not at the meeting, for with fightings without and fears within I am driven to my wits' end. Surely I am set as a mark for his arrow. I am daily taunted by the world, set at naught by many professors, and a wicked heart, a sinful nature, and a tempting devil constantly to contend with. Kept on very short commons, without any stock, it seems all night, and uphill work, and I am led to fear it is presumption in me to stand up in the Lord's name. These lines meet my case:

"All my little strength is gone;
Sink I must without supply;
Sure upon the earth there's none
Can more weary be than I."

Also,

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

Dear brother, if you can feel for me, do pray for me; I feel quite resigned, either to go on or to stop my mouth, if the dear Lord will but make my way plain. I know my course cannot be long; therefore my desire is to be led aright.

March 19th, 1878.

JOHN CHANDLER.

Our dear brother was well taught his own helplessness, and where alone strength could be found. The last severe trial our dear friend had, was the death of a son in London. This was a cutting case indeed.

Our dear friend's illness, which ended in death, was a violent cold; he was for some time past very often taking colds on his chest, causing a distressing cough, and when supplying at Lavington in July last, it was renewed, and he believed from the first it would bring him to the grave. The disease gained strength, and his poor frame wasted away fast, but his soul was greatly blessed. It was a pleasure to be with him. His daughter (Mrs. Burgess) read to him the 91st Psalm, that, he said, has been, in thousands of instances, fulfilled in my experience, now I am waiting for the last line. The finished work of redemption by Christ was all his theme; he would sometimes exclaim, "O! the mercy and love of God to one so worthless as me," "a poor sinner, saved by grace alone." He loved to have his favourite hymns read to him, 412, 468, 472, Gadsby's; these were the language of his heart. I asked him if he could die, resting on the great truths he had preached to others. "Yes," he said, "I can, I can." "Then," I said, "it is not on John Chandler." He put out his hand, as if to thrust away such a thought, exclaiming, "O no, O no!" He told me in a most affectionate manner about his desire to be buried in the chapel yard at Ludgershall, and, he said, "You must come and do it." I said, "I will." A few days before his departure, his daughter said to him, "Is it well, father?" He replied, "Yes, my dear, all is

well; I am perfectly peaceful and happy; all is calm and bright as the noonday sun." At another time, he said, "Death is sometimes called a gloomy vale; but I can say, the sting is all removed, and for me it is paved with love, light, and glory." Not long before his departure, Satan set at him most furiously, bringing up all the accusations he could, even back to childhood; seeking to infuse into his mind even thoughts of blasphemy; but, pointing towards the foot of his bed, he challenged the devil and said, "There is my Surety, there is my Substitute." The tempter then left him alone. The desire to depart was so strong that when he woke up after a little dose, he would say, "Not gone yet." But the happy hour did come; and on the 29th Sept. he raised both arms as if to grasp something, and looking up and smiling he tried to speak, but could not be understood; and in about three-quarters of an hour after this, he raised one hand as a token of victory. Thus passed away the happy soul of our beloved brother to be with his Saviour for ever.

On the Monday following, he was taken to the chapel at Ludgershall, followed by about 40 friends. We sang one of his favourite hymns, after which I read a part of 1 Cor. xv., and made a few remarks; we then took his poor remains, and laid them in his grave, and sang over them,

"Earthly cavern to thy keeping
We commit our brother's dust."

We could, indeed, commit his body to the ground, in sure and certain hope of a better resurrection unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ROBERT MOWER.

MARY RAMSBOTTOM, of Limey Leach, Lancashire, aged 51.

Mary Ramsbottom was born on Sept. 5th, 1830. Like the rest of the fallen sons and daughters of Adam, she was born in sin, and in sin's dark maze she lived, until God by his infinite power broke her hard heart by the hammer of his holy law, which was in the year 1861, when the terrors of death and pains of hell gat hold upon her, and she found trouble and sorrow. Such were the agonizing smarts and the pains and stings she felt that she said she trembled like a leaf; her sins of bygone days came up like mountains of smoke to her view. She told some of her troubles and the state she was in, and that she feared she should be lost for ever. They told her she must work out her own salvation; but being sensible of her inability to do anything by way of merit to gain the divine favour, she said she could no more work out her own salvation than she could create a world. The soul-trouble she passed through at this time was almost unbearable. She said she should never forget it while memory retained its seat.

During her deep soul-trouble her dear father, who was a god-fearing man, came to see her (he has since gone home to glory), and seeing her in such trouble, he asked her if it was the sorrow of the world; for, said he, if it be only that it will leave you in a

perishing state. This pierced through her heart like a dagger, and though she read hymns and the Word of God, yet no comfort could she find. Passing at this time through nature's sorrow, she could not go to chapel, as the nearest place of truth was about four miles from where she lived. The people began to say she was going out of her mind; but the dear Lord in his infinite mercy had ordained it otherwise, for he was only bringing another stone from the quarry of nature, to form a part of "God's building." She went on in this state of soul-sorrow and trouble for some time, being often cast down by sin, but not destroyed, and having very little rest, night or day. Satan, the accuser of the brethren, tried to lead her astray, telling her she should take comfort in her children and the things of this life.

"But justice cried with frowning face,
This mountain is no hiding place."

Now the troubles of her heart were enlarged. She kept on working and working, but got filthier still in her own eyes, until at last she resolved to give it all up. She felt she could do no more. Thus two long years of gloom and sorrow passed away before the set time came to favour her soul, and to bring her out of prison into a large and wealthy place. The dear Lord broke in upon her troubled heart, with these words, "But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word." She said, such love, joy, and peace flowed into her soul that her burden was gone in a moment, and her darkness was returned into day. Such was the change that she thought it would never be night any more, so began to conclude all her trouble was over, and that now she would have an easy path all the way home; she knew nothing of the weaning time that was to come, but could sing with the poet,

"Jesus my all to heaven is gone,
He whom I fix my hopes upon.
His track I see and I'll pursue
The narrow way till him I view."

But this was soon taken from her, and the Lord soon began to show her that it was not such an easy path as she thought, for he taught her that the days of darkness were to be many, and that it was through much tribulation she was to enter the kingdom of heaven. The Lord permitted Satan to set in upon her soul, telling her she had not received the pardon of all her sins, which tried her to the quick, and made her pray for the Lord to appear again and tell her that her sins were pardoned, and that Satan was a liar. The Lord once more delivered her, by sending this truth into her soul, "I have blotted out as thick cloud thy transgressions and as a cloud thy sins; return unto me, for I have redeemed thee." As time went on, she began to be exercised about believer's baptism, and was led to see that it was the right way into the church. She went before the church at Haslingden, and was received, and baptized by Mr. G. Austin with two others, on the 4th of August, 1861. With this cause she continued a

consistent member till her death, walking worthy of the vocation wherewith she was called, and like Moses, esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. She was highly respected by the church and congregation, and is much missed by many. She was a great lover of the truth, also of the little cause at H.; it was her heart's desire to see Zion's cords lengthened, and her stakes strengthened. Very seldom was her seat vacant, although she had $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles to walk. She had very low views of herself, and knew well the real meaning of those words, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." Her hope was

"Built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

She loved an experimental ministry, that lays the sinner low and exalts a precious Christ.

But to return to her last days. It pleased the dear Lord to make short work of it. The last time she was at Haslingden was the third Lord's day in September last, when Mr. Whittaker spoke from the words, "And they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut." This was to her a sweet foretaste of the glory she was about to enter into. About a month previous to this she dreamt that she had safely landed home to glory, riding in a heavenly chariot with a few more friends, and in her dream she could hear the song of the redeemed, singing their praises, and it sounded so sweet that as soon as she was awake, the verse of one of our hymns came with sweet power to her mind:

"A few more days, or months, or years,
In this dark desert to complain;
A few more sighs, a few more tears,
And we shall bid adieu to pain."

Her disease, which was typhoid fever, very soon laid the poor body prostrate. She was only ill fourteen days. At the beginning of her illness she said, "The Lord did not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men." On another occasion she said, "I want to bless and praise the dear Lord more for all his goodness towards such an unworthy creature." At another time, when her husband went into the room and asked her what was the matter, as she was weeping, she said, "I must weep, for the Lord has come with these words, 'There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of our God.'" A few days afterwards a friend came in to see her, and asked how she was, when she mentioned the following lines as having come to her mind:

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

Also,

"How can I sink with such a prop
As my eternal God."

The following text was also applied to her soul, "If ye be with

our chastisements whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." After this she became very weak, not being able to mention many things that were passing through her mind. Her speech failed, and she seemed to take no notice of any one, but often seemed to be engaged in prayer and communion. She remained in this state till Friday evening, Oct. 7th, when she fell asleep in the arms of a loving Jesus, and her ransomed spirit took its flight to glory. The husband has lost a tender and loving wife; the family have lost a kind and praying mother; the church has lost a peacemaker and mother in Israel; but our loss is her eternal gain.

18, Syke Side, Haslingden.

JAMES HARLICK.

WILLIAM INSTONE.—On Aug. 5th, 1881, aged 80 years, 8 months, William Instone, of Ash, Surrey.

Having known the dear departed between three and four years previous to his being taken from this world of sin and misery, we feel perhaps a few things, concerning what God in rich grace and mercy did for him during his long pilgrimage, might be a means, in the gracious Holy Spirit's hand, of encouraging some poor, fearing, trembling pilgrims.

We cannot gather by what means he was called by the invincible grace of God. But it appears, both from what he himself has told us and from others also, that he was called in youth; and was baptized and joined a General Baptist Church at Blackwater, Hants, in 1823. In the course of a few years, a Strict Baptist church was formed at Yatley; where he became a member, and remained so until his death. Though living at Cove, and Yatley being several miles distant, he attended there for the most part for years, notwithstanding he, with others, had to bear great persecutions in so doing. The annoyance at times was very great, as his fellow-villagers would throw mud and filth into our friend's workshop. He was a country blacksmith; and having a large family, had to work hard. On one occasion the dear man got a piece of hot iron into one of his eyes, which caused the loss of the eye. His sufferings for 18 weeks must have been dreadful. Yet, how at times he would speak of God's sustaining goodness to him amidst these as well as other trials he had passed through; and how gratefully would he speak of the Lord's mercies, even of a providential kind; and of the Lord's forbearance with him in not dealing with him as he deserved, as he felt himself such a sinner. I have met with many men; but never with one that seemed to deplore his state as a sinner before God more than he did; and to extol the riches of free, eternal, sovereign grace in the Lord's taking him in hand, bringing him from the world, and bearing with him notwithstanding all his sins. Since he came into this neighbourhood (Ash, two miles from here), we have had a few times together, and the conversation of our friend was very savoury, whether in the detestation of sin, or in exalting the dear Lord Jesus. He was afflicted with a disease

which caused much pain. But whenever he mentioned it he would mostly say, "What are my pains compared with what the Lord of life and glory suffered?" We had observed some few months before the last struggle came his days were getting few. His strength was feeble, and his body drooped down almost, if not quite, to an angle of 60 degrees. We had the privilege of hearing him in prayer once or twice, and never shall we forget with what simplicity, child-like manner, and earnestness, he seemed to draw near to God, and breathe out his desires for God's own Zion, and for the little cause in our midst, and for the writer who speaks at the place. My soul was melted under a felt sense of goodness, to hear how he felt to desire that the Lord would bless us as a church, bless the ministry of the Word, and his own family. God had honoured him by giving him to see several of his offspring called to leave the hateful ways of sin, and follow the dear Incarnate God; and had made it manifest that the same grace which was given to the father had been bestowed on his dear children. Sometimes, as though under the sacred constraint of the Holy Spirit, he would burst out, "O, Mr. B., how good God is to me in every way; that I who deserve his wrath, should be so blessed as I am! I hope, notwithstanding all my fears, I have a good hope that I shall get safe home to heaven. I have been favoured to see some of my dear children called, and I am favoured with kind children to look after me in my old age; and now I am getting so feeble; blessed with so many mercies. O, I wish I could thank the Lord for the innumerable blessings of his hand!" The very last Sabbath but one that he remained on earth, his son and daughter brought him into chapel; and as he was obliged to sit in the vestry, my impression was that he would never meet with us many times more. After the service he addressed me, as he did often during the period of his meeting with us, "My dear friend, there are two things you can never do—you can never exalt a precious Christ too much, nor can you lay the sinner too low." This seemed deeply impressed in his soul. Although evidently blessed with the spirit of adoption many years ago, he had to prove what God by his Word declares, "The days of darkness shall be many." In a letter to his eldest son, in 1868, he says, "I have great reason to bless and praise my ever adorable covenant God and Father in a precious Christ, that it is no worse with me than it is, when I think of what I am—a poor, vile, guilty sinner, deserving nothing but everlasting banishment from his presence. O the boundless mercy of my unchanging Friend! It is beyond all comparison that I should have such wonderful grace bestowed on me; and that the Holy blessed Spirit should witness to my spirit, that all my sins are forgiven me. This is the highest privilege that we can have on earth. What a sovereign act! When I look round, and see my poor fellow-sinners so happy in their sins and in their blood—and I might have been there." Thus we find in his letters to

some of his dear children, the evidence of God's sweet teaching, in his being constrained to debase himself, and trace every atom of the internal operations of God up to its source, from the beginning onward.

I will come to the last week of the dear deceased on this sin-spilt earth. On July 29th he was seized violently with his long standing affliction; his soul being in dense darkness, his body in excruciating pain. On the Sabbath following, July 31st, news was brought me that he was in this distressing state. On Monday morning, I visited him as early as I could, and found him under the hidings of God's face; it seemed as though the devil and sin had struck all his comforts dead. We attempted to remind our dying friend of what God had done; and spoke a little of the faithfulness of him, who had given him some blessed satisfaction of his personal interest in the glorious merits, righteousness, and substitutionary work of the Lord Jesus. "Ah," said the dear pilgrim, "I believe all is right for God's people; but O, if I should be deceived, after all these years professing God's great Name—what an awful thing it would be!" We tried to talk as well as we could; but all seemed "dark, and vain, and wild," and my friend scarce could deem himself a child. "Now, can you," I said, "as before God—dare you say Christ has never been precious to your soul? and can you say you do not love his blessed truth?" "O no," he replied, "I dare not say so; for if I am not deceived, I had a blessed time one morning before it was light, in this very room. I *felt* the Lord Jesus; and I thought I saw him by faith in his sufferings, so that my soul felt as though I could talk to him. O, it was a sweet time! But—" "Yes; but what?" "Why, how many times I have feared I have been deceived." Thus it was painful to see how Satan was permitted to becloud his poor mind. Yet it was very blessed to hear that the Lord had blessed him. We quoted these lines:

"Did Jesus once upon thee shine,
Then Jesus is for ever thine;"

and thus left him between hope and fear. What a contrast between a dear child of God suffering the hidings of God's face, and heady professors, who "have no bands in their death; but their strength is firm." Visiting him again on the following Wednesday afternoon, we found him somewhat delivered from his gloomy fear; his countenance showing very clearly he had received something to eat the world knows nothing of. His daughter-in-law, being alone with him for a few minutes, had a little converse with him; and she soon gathered the Lord had appeared to break his heavy chains, and his doubts and fears were gone. One of his sons entered the room at the time, and asked, "Father, do you feel more comfortable now?" The dying man replied, with an emphasis that could not be mistaken,

"Comforts eternal they shall have,
And dwell for ever in his love."

Soon after this we joined the afflicted one, and found it plea-

sant to hold a little conversation with him. There was a vast contrast between his state on Monday and at present; and being not far from the "rest remaining," he spoke very blessedly; and we told him *he* must preach now. And to the honour of God he did, with a loosened tongue, speak well of the preciousness and glory of Christ to his soul; and while thus laboured, he put his dying hands together and exclaimed, "Who would ever have thought the dear Lord should have blessed such a vile sinner as I am in this way! O bless him! praise him!" The sweetness of Christ's dear presence abode with him, more or less, for about 18 or 20 hours. Then he fell into an unconscious state, and scarcely moved hand, foot, or muscle for about 20 hours more; when his blood-washed soul took its flight from its tenement of sin and corruption, where for many years it had been a groaning prisoner, to be "absent from the body, present with the Lord."

We have lost in him one whose prayers we valued; believing the prayers of fellow-pilgrims for poor ministers are very valuable, and the dear man often dropped a word of encouragement to me, that the Word had been blessed to him, to help him, to strengthen and encourage him. What a contrast between the thoughts of the Lord and of poor finite mortals! These think as the church gets nearer home they get more holy and more strong. But God teaches his people to feel more of their own weakness and sinfulness; and all to wean them from self, sin, the world, and the devil, and constrain them to cleave to Christ. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright (in a precious Christ), for the end of that man is peace." And my desire is that my life and death may be like dear Mr. Instone's. By the grace of God he was what he was.

I sincerely hope this short memorial of God's mercy to one whom I loved for Christ's sake may be made useful to some poor trembling sinners, who like others have been subject to much bondage through the fear arising, How will it be with me when I come to die? Yours sincerely for the truth's sake,

Aldershot.

JOHN BENNETT.

As it is with the miller, first he prepares the mill fitly and orders all the occasions thereof; and when the stones are fitted and laid to go, yet it will not, till the sluice be pulled up and the water runs that drives the mill. So the soul is humbled, and lies level with the Lord and his truth, and is content to yield to his conditions; but now the soul of itself, in itself, cannot go; it hath not the principle of going. But let down the sluice of the promise, and let that come to thy heart, and it will bring thy soul home to the Lord. "This day is salvation come to thine house," not to the walls of thy house, but to men that are in thy house. They did not come to salvation; but salvation came to them. The Lord sent salvation to salute the house of Zaccheus.—*T. Hooker.*

A CORRESPONDENT has pointed out to us that the letter by Mr. Huntington in our last is in "Gleanings of the Vintage." Friends who forward letters to us, assuring us they have not been published, should be careful. It is impossible for editors to know everything.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

MARCH, 1882.

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

CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS LIKE THE GREAT MOUNTAINS.

NOTES OF TWO SERMONS PREACHED BY THE LATE MR. SAMUEL TURNER, SEPT. 1ST, 1850, AT SUNDERLAND.

"Thy righteousness is like the great mountains."—PS. XXXVI. 6.

(Concluded from p. 60.)

I WISH to remind you that the mountains are figurative of eminence, stability; but I believe it is to show the immutability of God's righteousness that the psalmist has compared it to the great mountains. In the forenoon I endeavoured to prove that there is a righteousness ascribed to God's supreme dominion over all his creatures, or what is properly called his sovereignty, on account of which it is impossible that he should act unrighteously.

I have now to treat of his righteousness as Judge, for the church acknowledges, "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king, he will save us;" and all judgment is committed to the Son of God as Mediator. Also it is said that "a king shall reign in righteousness;" and to show who that king is, it is written, "A man shall be a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." (Isa. xxxii. 2.) But were he not "Immanuel, God with us," he could not protect poor sinners from the many dangers to which they are exposed.

God as our Creator is also our Lawgiver. He gave a law to man which is thus expressed: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. ii. 16, 17.) Here is a threatening expressed and also a promise implied; that is, if he did not eat of the forbidden tree, he should continue in that happy state, a holy and happy creature as he came out of the hands of his Maker. The Scripture says he did eat, and transgressed the command of God; and the apostle Paul, in Rom. v., shows that this was imputed to all his posterity, by which they were all brought

under the curse of law, and all made to inherit a depraved nature by the fall of Adam. Thus it is clearly revealed in Scripture, that every one comes into the world entirely destitute of all true knowledge of God, and of the love and fear of God, together with a totally depraved nature, which shows itself at a very tender age, and manifests itself more and more as we grow up; for we go on adding sin to sin. Here is a solemn and awful part of God's righteousness; he is so perfectly holy that for whatever his law condemns his righteousness constrains him to execute the sentence of the law upon the offender; besides, he is the Searcher of hearts, and perfectly knows all that is in the hearts of the children of men. A just judge upon earth may be deceived by false witnesses, but this cannot be the case with the omniscient God, because every thought, word, and action is naked and open to his all-seeing eye. I might bring many Scriptures to prove this, but one will be sufficient: "Every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Now we all know that there have been thousands of idle words that have passed our lips, of which we have no recollection, therefore we cannot be witnesses against ourselves; if the Lord did not know them, if they were not written in his book, how would it be possible that we should give an account of them ourselves? Hence they must be perfectly known to God. What reason, then, have we to say in the language of Scripture, "Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth;" for that that very justice of God is one cause of the Redeemer's suffering, "the just for the unjust." For so stable is God's justice that he found it necessary that his infinite wisdom should devise a way, in which, with the strictest righteousness, he could pardon and save a number whom no man can number, of the fallen sinful race of Adam. I have often been led to admire the wisdom of God in this deep and glorious truth, that what was the most awful attribute of Jehovah to a sinner out of Christ, is the source of the greatest happiness to those brought to Christ by faith in him.

Observe how Paul treats of this. He is proving that all flesh, every individual of Adam's race, is in a fallen, condemned state, for "All" as he says, "have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." But that the holy God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, should acquit his people from every charge, and pardon all their sins, that they might not appear against them in judgment, herein is manifested in the highest degree the manifold wisdom of God. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." So firm and stable is God's justice that in carrying out his purpose to save his people, there was a necessity for the Son of God to take their nature, to bear their sins, to endure the punishment they were exposed to, to undergo the sentence of the law they deserved, and so to satisfy perfectly the justice of God. God sent forth his Son "to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the

remission of sins." Therefore he acquits none but those whose sins were, by the grace of the Father, transferred to the Son of his love, the Son engaging in the counsels of old which are faithfulness and truth, to take them upon himself, and to make perfect satisfaction for them to the uttermost. He was able to cry before he gave up the ghost, "It is finished;" and the Father could testify that he offered himself as a sweet-smelling sacrifice to God. This shows the inflexible justice of God, and that no sinners could escape punishment, unless the Son of God had engaged to stand in their law-place, and be answerable for all the law's requirements. How exceedingly precious is this truth to those highly-favoured souls whom it has pleased God to bless with precious faith in Jesus; and how it sets forth the awful justice of God in the destruction of all those who live and die destitute of that faith. Yet how thoughtless, unconcerned, and careless are men. Some may profess to believe such solemn truths; but if they have not life in their souls, as well as light in their judgments, they will live and die unconcerned about the same. But to such as are spiritually taught the holiness and justice of God, and the desert and punishment of sin through faith in a crucified Saviour, how comforting to know from Scripture that, "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." This is the greatest encouragement to a soul burdened with sin, the guilt of which lies heavily on his conscience, that the holy God can, in justice as well as mercy, pardon his sins, he having made his Son a propitiation.

O the blessed alteration that was made in my soul when the substance of that passage was applied to my heart! Before this time I concluded I should be damned as surely as God was just. Although I had some glimmering sight of his mercy, yet this was so opposed by my sight of his justice that I could not conceive how God could acquit a guilty sinner, and still be just and righteous. But when his blessed way of salvation by a crucified Saviour was revealed to me, I had the sweetest meditation upon that very justice of God which once I thought sealed my everlasting destruction; I then saw that it secured my everlasting salvation. For our blessed Redeemer has a just and equitable claim upon his Father. He can say, "Father, I suffered for those sinners that they might not suffer; sin was condemned in my flesh, that it might not be condemned in them; I was accursed that they might be blessed; I died a cursed death that they might have life. Therefore, 'Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am.'" It is therefore nothing but justice that he should have all those for his portion for whom he laid down his life.

"What right can my tormentors plead,
That I should not be free?
Here's an amazing change indeed!
Justice is now for me."

For pleading the atonement of Christ, the sinner has a claim

upon God upon his own ground, for had he not furnished us with it, we could not have dared to make it; but now we may "come boldly to the throne of grace." It is impossible, God being so infinitely just, but that sin must be punished; but here is the glorious mystery of redemption, that God in his sovereignty, having a right to do what he pleased, according to the riches of his grace was pleased to appoint his Son to be the Surety of his people, that all their debts might be placed to his account, that he might obtain their discharge by his payment of all. He perfectly knew that those for whom he undertook to become surety were absolutely insolvent, that they had neither will nor power to pay, but were so depraved that they could not discharge a fraction of debt as God required. We sinners, being by nature so dark in our mind, so dead in soul, our feeble light being so obscure, we cannot perceive the exceeding sinfulness of sin; for it is the perfect righteousness of God's nature that makes it so exceedingly sinful, and its being against his sole authority, and defying his threatenings. Nothing can account for the awful insensibility of men to eternal things, but that they are dead in sin and have no feeling, but are like a corpse in the grave. "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king: he will save us." Some years ago if I had read this, then I should have said, I am damned for ever, for if he is just as a lawgiver, I have transgressed his laws, therefore I am under his curse; if he is just as a king, I have rebelled against his authority; and therefore by nothing less than an act of sovereign mercy could I have concluded he would save me.

What is called the righteousness of God is shown by the following passages to be the obedience of the Son of God: "He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. v. 21.) That cannot mean the righteousness of God's nature, for that is incommunicable. "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Rom. v. 19.) The righteousness of God is "unto all and upon all them that believe." (Rom. iii. 22.) "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." (Rom. i. 16, 17.) Now the righteousness of God's nature cannot go from one to another; it is the same from everlasting to everlasting, and would have been the same if neither angels nor men had been created; he is eternally righteous. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness." (Rom. x. 4.) It is called "the righteousness of faith" (Rom. x. 6), and "the righteousness of God" (Rom. x. 3), because he who wrought it was "over all, God blessed for ever." It is of God's appointing, of God's producing, of God's revealing, and of God's imputing; therefore may well be called the righteousness of God. It is termed everlasting righteousness, as these mountains are called everlasting hills. The figure is to convey the firmness and stability of it,

and it is but a faint figure, for these will be destroyed, but that shall be to everlasting. The eternal acquiescence of the will of the Son of God to the purpose of the Father, was an act of righteousness. His delights were with the sons of men before the earth was formed, and he came into the world with delight to do his Father's will. Under the former dispensation he carried on his work, bestowing his spirit and grace according to the will of his Father. The angel told Daniel that Messiah the Prince should "bring in everlasting righteousness;" and the prophet says, "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness, and assurance for ever." Our defect is, our faith is not always in exercise; we look for a righteousness of our own, and because we do not find it, we sink. Losing sight of our completeness in Christ, we wish to be almost complete in ourselves; and because we come so very far short, this is a great part of our mortification; and as Erskine says,

"Before he suffers pride that swells,
He'll drag thee through the mire
Of sins, temptations, little hells;
Thy husband saves by fire."

By this he purifies us from that legal spirit which is so natural to us. This righteousness of Christ is "like the great mountains," stable, fixed, eternal.

Then there is the righteousness which is wrought in his people by the blessed Spirit. "Thy people also shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands." But this will not do to stand before God in; it is the effect of free justification, through the obedience of that One who was the last Adam, the "Lord from heaven," the covenant Head of all his people. And what he is, that they are considered in him,—as free from sin, and as just in the sight of God as their blessed Surety; and when their faith is in action to perceive this, then their rejoicing is alone in him, and the language of their souls is, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Gal. vi. 14.)

In the next place, by the righteousness of God is meant his never-failing faithfulness to execute his threatenings, and to perform his promises. "If our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?" Nay: "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" The Lord has threatened every sinner who lives and dies out of Christ with destruction from his presence, and his faithfulness engages that this shall be their lot to eternity. That stands firm as the great mountains. God will as surely execute his threatenings to the wicked as he will fulfil his promises to the heirs of promise. "Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; to show that the Lord is upright; he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him." My poor soul is

continually pleading this, yet I am often puzzled to find myself in the psalmist's state: "Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore?" But this is our infirmity. We yearly witness his faithfulness to his covenant with all flesh that "Seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." All these changes pass through the soul; and we can say at times that the heavenly showers descend, the Sun of righteousness shines with healing in his wings, the blessed Spirit as the south wind blows gently and warmly; and these bring forth the fruits of faith, love, godly sorrow, repentance unto life, rejoicing in the Lord, and we offer the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving unto his Name, which is the fruit of our lips. But we look in vain for fruit in winter, or in the dark; we must have warmth and light. We read of bringing forth fruit in season, and even to old age, to show that God is upright, and that there is no unrighteousness with him. I take unrighteousness there to be unfaithfulness to his promises, of course the reverse is faithfulness to perform them. When the psalmist pleads his promises, and appeals to the righteousness of God, it is to his faithfulness to his word of promise. How is it possible for a sinner to plead the righteousness of God, but from his promises which are free and unconditional. We may make a promise, but it may be out of our power to perform it; we may honestly mean to do what we promise, but we are not masters of events; circumstances may take place that may render the performance out of our power. But is this failure to be ascribed to the Almighty Jehovah, with whom nothing is too hard? there is nothing that can prevent him accomplishing his will, and his righteousness secures the performance of every promise he has made. This is like the great mountains, for he says, "I will not suffer my faithfulness to fail." "It is impossible for God to lie." "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful." What he has spoken, his honour, his glory, his righteousness, his faithfulness, are all bound to make good. Here is God's condescension and kindness to us, poor creatures, and a security that cannot possibly fail.

"The Lord shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the hope of his people and the strength of the children of Israel." Christ is called the hope of his people, because of the impossibility of a fallen creature having any ground of hope in God apart from Christ; it is only in and through Christ Jesus that God reveals salvation from sin, death, and hell; but he being willing to save these heirs of promise, they are made to fly to that blessed refuge, for the Lord works all things in them according to his will.

May the good Lord bless these precious truths to our good and his glory. Amen.

DIVINE CHASTENING.

A LETTER TO OUR SPIRITUAL READERS.

The chastening of the Lord is said to be for our "profit." (Heb. xii. 10.) The end God has in view is to humble his people and cause them to walk in *his* ways, for his ways are not ours. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. lv. 8, 9.) If, then, his "ways" are not our "ways," nor his "thoughts" our "thoughts," all the ways and thoughts of men are vain, and must be unlearned, and right ways and thoughts be taught them by the Spirit of God, before any one can please the Lord.

To this end the Lord sanctifies the various afflictions of his people, to stain their pride, and bring them in the dust. He lays his hand on them, hides his face from them, keeps them at a distance, and, in a word, makes them know that there is salvation in none other. These chastenings ground them in the truth, deeply implanting it by his Spirit in the heart, from whence neither men nor devils can pluck it up. After these storms it appears freshened up; but, through lack of God's chastenings, thousands show that they never had any portion in the kingdom of God. They appear to start well; but no humbling grace attends them; and at length they preach or believe another gospel. For the tendency of God's teaching is to humble the hearts of his people, that they may walk in his ways and fear him. (Deut. viii. 3-6.) There is also an "afterward" to all his chastening: "Afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them which are exercised thereby." (Heb. xii. 11.) Here we have an unerring guide as to what is the nature of the "afterward;" for it is said therein is yielded the "peaceable fruit of righteousness"—humility and walking in the fear of the Lord. Hence, whatever fails to produce these results is not the divine chastening. If it does not make a person less in his own eyes, and empower him to cleave closer to God, whatever trial he may pass through, it is not divine chastening, neither has he passed under the Fatherly hand of God.

I am induced to offer these with other remarks relative to my late affliction; for it may be asked, "What have you gained or lost?" I can reply, It has not been lost time, neither do I regret it, having now arrived at the "afterward." For when I lay down to rest on Monday evening, Nov. 21st, in charge of my friend, Mr. Moses Burton, as I lay on my pillow, the most perfect quietude of mind came upon me; and O how helpless I saw every human being to be; and saw clearly confirmed to my mind the truth that God must be the only Author of all good. How clearly the emptiness of the creature stood before my mind! The calm, peaceful state I was in enabled me to survey the scene with much coolness, and much instruction was derived there-

from. I felt the renewing testimony of God to the truth of his word: "Without me ye can do nothing." I asked myself, "What good am I or any one else, except God work in us 'both to will and to do of his good pleasure?'" But if God work the *willing*, then all willingness is of God, and we are indebted to him for every act of willingness to serve and love his dear Name. But he is the Author of the doing also. Here, then, is the cause of the whole success of God's work—he undertakes to secure the willing and the doing of all spirituality. It is on this account that there are no impossibilities to him who believeth. For where there is the power to *will* and to *do*, what can prevent the thing being done? Here lies the secret of all true obedience and uprightness,—there is a willing mind to obey God, seek his face, love him, and serve him. The willingness is manifested in the longing mind and earnest desire after God. The mind is Godward. Power is found in whatever tends Godward, be it in the faintest sigh, or the most rapturous joy of salvation, felt and enjoyed. For the Lord says, "Without me ye can do nothing." If words mean anything, then, whatever is done acceptably to God must come from him. All I plead for is that glory is to be given to God for every gracious gift and saving benefit. This affliction has confirmed me in the truths I have believed, and on which I rely for eternity. The whole nature of the instruction became turned to this one point: "Power belongeth unto God." Therefore I hope I may inform our readers that I have gained strength in the truths I hold; and my fellowship with God has been principally with him in the truths we advocate. The benefit I hope our readers may enjoy. We judge of the chastening by the profit.

Yours affectionately,

THE EDITOR.

Evil men are rightly said not to "joy;" for the Lord saith, "There is no joy to the wicked."—*Augustine*.

As it is our preacher and tutor, "Hear ye the rod." (Mic. vi. 9.) Luther said he could never rightly understand some of the Psalms till he was in affliction. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." (Ps. cxix. 71.) In the word preached we hear what a dreadful thing sin is; that it is both defiling and damning; but we fear it no more than a painted lion; therefore God lets loose affliction, and then we feel sin bitter in the fruit of it. A sick bed often teaches more than a sermon. We can best see the ugly visage of sin in the glass of affliction. Affliction teaches us to know ourselves. In prosperity we are for the most part strangers to ourselves. God makes us know affliction, that we may better know ourselves. We see that corruption in our hearts in the time of affliction which we would not before believe was there. Water in the glass looks clear; but set it on the fire, and the scum boils up. In prosperity a man seems to be humble and thankful; and the water looks clear, but set this man a little on the fire of affliction, and the scum boils up,—much impatience and unbelief appear. O, saith a Christian, I never thought I had such a bad heart as now I see I have; I never thought my corruptions had been so strong, and my graces so weak.—*Harris*.

PRAYER INDITED—PRAYER ANSWERED.

Dear Friend,—Will you kindly insert the enclosed letter in the "Gospel Standard"? It was written twelve years since by a dear sister in the faith and a mother in Israel. As I was looking over a quantity of letters, I felt it might prove a word of exhortation and a word in season to any churches wanting the Lord to raise them up pastors, that they might be led unitedly to pray to the great Shepherd to send them under-shepherds, men after God's own heart; and my prayer will be that the result will prove a great blessing both to the ministers and to the church of God, in quickening sinners and comforting saints, and building them up on their most holy faith.

Yours very sincerely,

Hayward's Heath, Feb., 1882.

W. K.

Dear Sir,—I hope you will forgive the boldness of a poor woman in writing to you, as I am but a poor woman in every respect; but as the poor are invited, and made welcome to all gospel blessings, and made partakers of gospel benefits and privileges, this makes me take the liberty of writing to you. Now I hope I do love sincerely the gospel and gospel ministers, and can say truly before God,

"One day within thy courts, Where my dear God has been,
Is better than a thousand days Of pleasurable sin."

Now, dear Sir, that dear man Mr. V., the gift of God to us, we dearly love, and can truly say, many of us, we have travelled in birth for him, and wrestled and prayed for him, believing God would raise him up to be our pastor. We have carried him in our hearts to a throne of grace; and the first time he came to speak before us, we did not know which it would be, whether to die and go home, or live and go into the pulpit, and declare the works of the Lord. When the church met to hear him the second time, he said he could not speak to us, but sent out word, as he was in the vestry, for us to sing the 838th hymn in Gadsby's selection. Now, dear sir, read that hymn, and form some idea how we felt. Our hearts were broken that we could scarce sing it. At last he came out, poor dear man, like a little child, helpless, weak, and entirely dependent on the Lord, and O, how did we feel for him! My cry was, Lord help him, Lord help him! We were there when he was born an infant in the ministry, when we had to bear him up by prayer, as the children of Israel did Moses, and I could feel in my soul that it was the Lord who helped him to speak. I believe it was the Holy Spirit that brought him forth as a spiritual minister in the cause of God and truth, and he keeps growing in the truth and experimental knowledge; and now we have to pray that the Lord will teach him to teach us, and can truly say, while the Lord's awful voice in and through him is sounded out, we as poor sinners tremble and rejoice. It makes me truly afraid that I never tasted

that the Lord is gracious, and that I never was rightly converted, which makes me cry to be rightly converted, and then he is so led to speak of the fear of the Lord being put into the heart, and of a quickened, tender conscience, and of the first love to Christ that it carries me back, strengthens my faith, fires my love, and my hope revives, and I can say I feel almost young again in the things of God, and am enabled to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." His ministry is profitable and edifying; it breaks our hearts all to pieces, and I can say, "How beautiful are the feet of them that bring good tidings," and I love him for Christ's and his work's sake. The very Spirit of Christ, which is in him, makes it manifest that the Lord has lit him up as a candle in our place, when we looked for darkness. O, may we ever esteem him highly for his work's sake, and on the other hand may we never put him in Christ's place! The hymn says, "God gives what he teaches, and guards what he gives." This is our mercy; the Holy Spirit alone can keep us right in this matter. Now, dear sir, may the Lord raise you up a godly man, and may you travel in birth till the Lord shall bring him forth! We like Mr. V. to go and speak to you sometimes, and see you, but not to leave us, unless you would make us believe that the Lord has not given him to us, and that the Lord has not heard our prayers. If he should go to you and leave us it would greatly strengthen our unbelief, undo our hope, and encourage infidelity, and sink us in despair. As we have received him as a free gift from God to us, and as the law says, and the gospel says, "Love is the fulfilling of the law," you should not covet your neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his; so surely, dear sir, you would not covet our pastor; for we own him as such, and love him as such. He stands in our hearts before all other ministers, though we love them. We are about to take him as our under-shepherd, and may the Lord bless him, honour his own Word by him, and give us tender loving hearts to still bear him before the Lord; and do, dear Sir, try to pray for us, that we may use him as it becomes us to use a godly pastor; that we may never grieve him nor sink his spirits, nor weaken his love and zeal; but may the Lord still bless him and us, as he has done, that we may say still,

"How charming is the place
Where my Redeemer God
Unveils the beauties of his face,
And sheds his love abroad."

Forgive a poor woman for writing to you. I never should, only I could not bear losing one whom I love so dearly in the truth. I am now nearly 60 years old, and what little time I have on earth I want the company of God's people. I cannot bear to lose one of the best of our people. We will let you have him sometimes, as we loved your dear pastor, and you also, though unknown in person. I do not want to be selfish, nor do I want to love others and go without myself. I want an interest in the

blessings of the gospel. If it were not for a hope in Christ, I could not get through this wilderness world. It is

“The gospel bears my spirits up;
A faithful and unchanging God
Lays the foundation of my hope
In oaths and promises and blood.”

Now, dear sir, may the Lord bless you, and keep and protect you, and uphold you, and settle your hearts in his love, and bless you altogether. If you feel inclined to write a few lines I should be glad to hear from you. Your soul's Well-wisher.

Chiddingly, Jan. 1, 1870.

J. G.

A PASTOR'S PRAYER FOR HIS FLOCK.

Hear, O Lord! Thy servant's prayer,
For the people of his care;
Save the young, and save the old,
Bring them all within thy fold;
Seal the Word to each one's heart,
From them may it ne'er depart.

Hear, O Lord! Thy servant's prayer;
Keep the flock from every snare—
Snares attend them every day,
Gins and traps bestrew the way;
Keep the sheep and shepherd too;
Jesus! bring us safely through.

Hear, O Lord! Thy servant's prayer;
Do thou make the careless care;
Some as yet are dead in sin,
O! Implant thy life within!
If it be thy gracious will,
This, his earnest cry, fulfil.

Hear, O Lord! Thy servant's prayer;
On his heart his charge he'd bear
Daily to the throne of grace;
Jesus, Lord! Reveal thy face!
Save them now, and save them all,
Teach them on thy Name to call.

Hear, O Lord! Thy servant's prayer;
May the flock these blessings share;
May they love thy Name and ways,
Love thy truth, thy house, thy praise.
May they all united be
To each other and to thee.

Sleaford.

E. C.

THE light of faith is a certain testimony of God, by which it is said to the secret cogitations of our hearts, “It is true; thou needest not to doubt thereof.”—*Augustine*.

THE OLD LAMP LIT UP AFRESH.

No. III.

My dear Friend,—Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ our Lord, who has saved us by his own blood, and renewed us by the regenerating power of the Spirit.

I feel a desire to write a few lines to you. How strange it is, a few weeks ago you and I were almost strangers; we only knew each other by sight. O how much do God's children lose in Christian fellowship for want of communion with each other. We are told to bear each other's burdens, to mourn with those who mourn, to sympathize with those who weep, and joy in the Lord together. But how can that be if there is no communication? Two or three months ago, as you got out of your chaise and I was standing at the chapel gate, you said to the man, "I shall stay all day." That word, "stay all day," caught my attention; for I had observed you did not come to the chapel as often as formerly, and your look did not indicate to me that your soul was alive in the things of God. On the contrary, I believed there was a great declension in your feelings, and in your walk too. I do not mean in your outward conduct; no; but that love had waxed cold, and deadness and barrenness had succeeded. Dr. Watts says:

" 'Tis love that makes our cheerful feet,
In swift obedience move."

From that time, I felt a greater interest in your welfare.

A few weeks after this you had the poor scribble of my experience. The goodness of God, O how sweet! And O how wonderful was the voice when he spake peace to my soul, now 40 years ago! I have heard it again and again since then; yet how many times have I called in question its reality, when corruptions have risen, and deadness and barrenness have been the state of my soul;

" And oftentimes when the tempter sly
Affirms it fancied, forged, or vain,
Jesus appears, disproves the lie,
And kindly makes it o'er again."

Yes, he has spoken words of comfort to my soul, allayed my fears and soothed my sorrows, and joy and peace have returned. O how especially did he appear under the preaching of my old friend T. G., on the first Sunday in May, 1862, as I related in my experience; and the same peace and joy in the Lord has remained almost unabated to the present time. I am vain enough sometimes to believe it has been so that I might

" Tell to sinners round,
What a dear Saviour I have found,
And point to his redeeming blood
And say, 'Behold the way to God.'"

Yes, I believe he intended it to be so, in a small measure; and

I do think, if my heart does not deceive me, the Lord has given you a little reviving through our correspondence. That he should in any way make use of such a poor thing as I am, is beyond my comprehension. I have had some communication with my old friend Mrs. —, who had got into a very backsliding state; but the Lord has appeared for her, and now she can speak to the glory of his grace.

I send you a copy of part of a letter I received a few days ago from Mr. Covell; take to yourself what he sent to me: "I am glad you are crying out for the living bread. O how many, my friend, have we seen live their religion out, because there was no root in them. We have been in low places and feared our religion was all gone; but it has sprung up again, and we have lived to prove the root of the matter was in us."

Yours in Christ Jesus, and one that loves you for his sake,

Penshurst, April 1st, 1863.

HENRY CONSTABLE.

REPLY.

My dear Friend,—Many thanks for your kind letter, received this morning. I had been thinking I should like to hear from you again; so you need not fear to weary me. I really did fear my soul would never feel the quickening influence of the blessed Spirit again. I sometimes hoped I had known it in days gone by; and now that he has used you as an instrument, as I believe he has, and given me sweet joy and peace in believing, shall I cease to value your letters? No; I trust not. I bless God he has brought me into a low place; I am content to take the lowest place, if I may but enter in. My faith is weak, and many doubts and fears arise. This was particularly my case on Monday and Tuesday, when I did not feel so well as usual. And often, when I know the disease is advancing, fears grow strong as to how it will be in the swellings of Jordan. The Lord has been so very merciful in my affliction; as yet I have suffered very little pain, much less than my friends expected, but I am convinced my time is short.

I well remember your speaking to me at the gate, and I wondered why you should take any interest in my "staying all day." I am glad you enjoy so much of the presence of Jesus; there is nothing to be compared to it. What will it be to see him as he is, and to be with him, freed from sin! O what manner of persons *ought* we to be in all holy conversation and godliness! I thank you for the little bit of Mr. Covell's. How I did love that man, as a servant of God, years before I ever spoke to him. I do not often hear him, but I do value his earnest prayers.

I meant to have told you a little how the Lord wrought upon my soul when quite a child; but must leave that for another time.

With Christian love, I remain,

Yours, I trust, in the Love of a Triune Jehovah,

Blackham, April 3rd, 1863.

S. RICHARDSON.

A BROKEN HEART.

BY JOHN BUNYAN.

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart O God, thou wilt not despise.”—Ps. li. 17.

THIS psalm is David's penitential psalm. It may be fitly so called, because it is a psalm by which is manifest the unfeigned sorrow which he had for his horrible sin, in defiling of Bathsheba, and slaying Uriah her husband; a relation at large of which you have in the 11th and 12th of the Second of Samuel.

Many workings of heart, as this psalm showeth, this poor man had, so soon as conviction did fall upon his spirit; one while he cries for mercy, then he confesses his heinous offences, then he bewails the depravity of his nature; sometimes he cries out to be washed and sanctified, and then again he is afraid that God will cast him away from his presence, and take his Holy Spirit utterly from him; and thus he goes on till he comes to the text, and there he stayeth his mind, finding in himself that heart and spirit which God did not dislike: “The sacrifices of God,” says he, “are a broken spirit;” as if he should say, I thank God I have that. “A broken and a contrite heart,” saith he, “O God, thou wilt not despise;” as if he should say, I thank God I have that.

The words consist of two parts:

I. An *assertion*.

II. A *demonstration* of that *assertion*.

The *assertion* is this, “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit.”

The *demonstration* is this, “Because a broken and a contrite heart God will not despise.”

In the *assertion*, we have two things present themselves to our consideration: 1. That a broken spirit is to God a sacrifice. 2. That it is to God, as that which answereth to or goeth beyond all sacrifices: “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit.” The demonstration of this is plain, for that heart God will not despise; “A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.”

Whence I draw this conclusion, that a spirit rightly broken, a heart truly contrite is to God an excellent thing; that is, a thing that goeth beyond all external services whatever; for that is intended by this saying, “The sacrifices,” because it answereth to all sacrifices which we can offer to God: yea, it serveth in the room of all: all our sacrifices without this are nothing; this alone is all.

There are four things that are very acceptable to God. The

First is—The sacrifice of the body of Christ for our sins; of this you read (Heb. x.); for there you have it preferred to all burnt offerings and sacrifices; it is this that pleaseth God; it is this that sanctifieth and so setteth the people acceptable in the sight of God.

Secondly. Unfeigned love to God is counted better than all

sacrifices, or external parts of worship: "And to love the Lord thy God with all the heart, with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices." (Mark xii. 38.)

Thirdly. To walk holily and humbly and obediently towards and before God, is another. (Mic. vi. 6, 8.) "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice; and to hearken, than the fat of rams." (1 Sam. xv. 22.)

Fourthly. And this in our text is the fourth, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

But note by the way, that this broken, this broken and contrite heart, is thus excellent only to God: "O God," saith he, "thou wilt not despise it;" by which is implied, the world has not this esteem or respect for such a heart, or for one that is of a broken or contrite spirit; no, no: a man, a woman, that is blessed with a broken heart, is so far off getting by that esteem with the world, that they are but burdens, and trouble houses wherever they are or go; such people carry with them molestation and disquietment; they are in carnal families as David was to the King of Gath, "troublers of the house." (1 Sam. xxi.)

Their sighs, their tears, their day and night groans, their cries and prayers and solitary carriages, put all the carnal family out of order: hence you have them brow-beaten by some, contemned by others; yea, and their company fled from and deserted by others. But mark the text, "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise," but rather accept; for not to despise is, with God, to esteem and set a high price upon.

But we will demonstrate by several particulars that a broken spirit, a spirit rightly broken, a heart truly contrite, is to God an excellent thing.

First. This is evident from the comparison, "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt-offerings: the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit," &c. Mark, he rejecteth sacrifices, offerings and sacrifices; that is, all Levitical ceremonies under the law, and all external performances under the gospel; but accepteth a broken heart. It is therefore manifest by this, were there nothing else to be said, that proves, that a heart truly broken, truly contrite, is to God an excellent thing; for, as you see, such a heart is set before all sacrifices, and yet they were the ordinances of God, and things that he commanded. But, lo! a broken spirit is above them all, a contrite heart goes beyond them, yea, beyond them, when put all together. Thou wilt not have the one, thou wilt not despise the other. O brethren! a broken and contrite heart is an excellent thing. Have I said, a broken heart, a broken and a contrite heart is esteemed above all sacrifices? I will add,

Secondly. It is of greater esteem with God than is either heaven or earth; and that is more than to be set before external performances. "Thus saith the Lord, heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build me, or where is the place of my rest? For all these things hath mine hands made, and all these things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." (Isa. lxvi. 1, 2.)

Mark, God saith, he hath made all these things; but he doth not say that he will look to them, that is, take complacency and delight in them; no, there is that wanting in all that he hath made, that should take up and delight his heart: but now, let a broken-hearted sinner come before him, yea, he ranges the world throughout to find such an one, and having found him, "To this man," saith he, "will I look." I say again that such a man to him is of more value than is either heaven or earth: "They," saith he, "wax old," they shall perish and vanish away; but this man, he continues, he (as is presented to us in another place, under another character), "he shall abide for ever." (Heb. i. 10, 12; 1 Jno. ii. 17.)

"To this man will I look," with this man will I be delighted; for so to look doth sometimes signify. "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse," saith Christ to his humble-hearted: "thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes," (while it is as a conduit to let the rivers out of thy broken heart); "I am taken," saith he, "with one chain of thy neck." (Song iv. 9.) Here, you see, he looks and is ravished, he looks and is taken; as it saith in another place, "The king is held in the galleries." (Song vii. 5.) That is, is taken with his beloved, "with the dove's eyes" of his beloved (i. 15), with the contrite spirit of his people.

But it is not thus reported of him with respect to heaven or earth; them he sets more lightly by; "them he reserves unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men." (2 Pet. iii. 7) But the broken in heart are his beloved, his jewels.

Wherefore, what I said as to this must go for the truth of God, to wit, that a broken-hearted sinner, a sinner with a contrite spirit, is of more esteem with God than is either heaven or earth. He saith, he hath made them; but he doth not say, he will look to them: he saith, they are his throne and footstool; but he doth not say, they have taken or ravished his heart; no, it is those of a contrite spirit do this.

But there is yet more in the words, "To this man will I look;" that is, for this man will I care; about this man will I camp; I will put this man under my protection; for so to look to one, doth sometimes signify; and I take the meaning in this place to be such. (Prov. xxvii. 23; Jer. xxxix. 12; xl. 4.)

"The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all that are bowed down." (Ps. cxlv. 14.) And the broken-hearted are of

this number; wherefore he careth for, campeth about, and hath set his eyes upon such an one for good. This, therefore, is a second demonstration to prove that the man that hath his spirit rightly broken, his heart truly contrite, is of great esteem with God.

Thirdly. Yet further, God doth not only prefer such a one, as has been said, before heaven and earth, but he loveth, he desireth to have that man for an intimate, for a companion: he must dwell, he must talk with him that is of a broken heart, with such as are of a contrite spirit. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." (Isa. lvii. 15.)

Behold here both the majesty and condescension of the high and lofty One; his majesty, in that he is high, and the inhabiter of eternity. "I am the high and lofty One," saith he; "I inhabit eternity." Verily, this consideration is enough to make the broken-hearted man creep into a mouse-hole to hide himself from such a majesty. But behold his heart, his condescending mind: I am for dwelling also "with him that hath a broken heart, with him that is of a contrite spirit:" that is, the man with whom I converse, that is the man with whom I will cohabit, that is he, saith God, I will choose for my companion. For to desire to dwell with one, supposeth all these things; and verily, of all the men in the world, none have acquaintance with God, none understand what communion with him, and what his teachings mean, but such as are of a broken and contrite heart: "He is nigh to them that are of a broken spirit." (Ps. xxxiv. 18.) These are intended in Ps. xiv., where it is said, "The Lord looked down from heaven, to see if any did understand and seek God," that he might find somebody in the world with whom he might converse; for indeed there is none else that either understand, or that can attend to hearken to him. God, as I may say, is forced to break men's hearts, before he can make them willing to cry to him, or be willing that he should have any concerns with them; the rest shut their eyes, stop their ears, withdraw their hearts, or say unto God, "Begone." (Job. xxi.) But now the broken in heart can attend it; he has leisure, yea, leisure and will, and understanding and all; and therefore he is a fit man to have to do with God. There is also room in this man's house, in this man's heart, in this man's spirit, for God to dwell, for God to walk, for God to set up a kingdom.

Here, therefore, is suitableness. "Can two walk together," saith God, "except they be agreed?" (Amos iii. 3.) The broken-hearted desireth God's company: "When wilt thou come unto me?" saith he. The broken-hearted loveth to hear God speak and talk to him. Here is a suitableness: "Cause me," saith he, "to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice." (Ps. li. 8.)

But here lies the glory, in that the high and lofty One, the

God that inhabiteth eternity, and that has a high and holy place for his habitation, should choose to dwell with, and to be a companion of the broken in heart, and of them that are of a contrite spirit: yea, and here is also great comfort for such.

Fourthly, God doth not only prefer such a heart before all sacrifices, nor esteem such a man above heaven and earth, nor yet only desire to be of his acquaintance; but he reserveth for him his chief comforts, his heart-reviving and soul-cherishing cordials. I dwell, saith he, with such to revive them, and to support and comfort them; "to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." (Isa. lvii. 15.) The broken-hearted man is a fainting man; he has his qualms, his sinking fits; he oftentimes dies away with pain and fear; he must be stayed with flagons and comforted with apples, or else he cannot tell what to do. He pines, he pines away in his iniquity; nor can anything keep him alive and make him well, but the comforts and cordials of Almighty God." (Ezek. xxxiii. 10, 11.) Wherefore with such a one God will dwell, to revive the heart, to revive the spirit: "To revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

God has cordials, but they are to "comfort them that are cast down." (2 Cor. vii. 6.) And such are the broken-hearted: as for them that are whole, they need not the physician. (Mark i. 17.) They are the broken in spirit that stand in need of cordials. Physicians are men of no esteem but with them that feel their sickness; and this is one reason why God is so little accounted of in the world, even because they have not been made sick by the wounding stroke of God. But now when a man is wounded, has his bones broken, or is made sick, and laid at the grave's mouth, who is of that esteem with him as is an able physician? What is so much desired as the cordials, comforts, and suitable supplies of the skilful physician in those matters? And thus it is with the broken-hearted; he needs, and God has prepared for him, plenty of the comforts and cordials of heaven, to succour and relieve his sinking soul.

Wherefore such a one lieth under all the promises that have succour in them, and consolation for men sick and desponding under the sense of sin and the heavy wrath of God: and they, says God, shall be refreshed and revived with them.

Yea, they are designed for them; he hath therefore broken their hearts, he hath therefore wounded their spirits, that he might make them apt to relish his reviving cordials, that he might minister to them his reviving comforts.

For, indeed, so soon as he hath broken, his bowels yearn, and his compassions roll up and down within him, and will not suffer him to abide afflicting. Ephraim was one of these; but so soon as God had smitten him, behold his heart, how it works towards him: "Is Ephraim," saith he, "my dear son?" that is, he is so; "is he a pleasant child?" that is, he is so; "for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still

therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord God." (Jer. xxxi. 18, 20.) This, therefore, is another demonstration.

Fifthly. As God prefers such a heart, and esteems the man that has it above heaven and earth; as he covets intimacy with such a one, and prepares for him his cordials; so when he sent his Son Jesus into the world to be a Saviour, he gave him in special a charge to take care of such; yea, that was one of the main reasons he sent him down from heaven, anointed for his work on earth. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me," saith he, "because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted," &c. (Isa. lxi. 1.)

Now that this is meant of Christ is confirmed by his own lips; for in the days of his flesh he takes this book in his hand, when he was in the synagogue at Nazareth, and read this very place unto the people, and then tells them that that very day that Scripture was fulfilled in their ears. (Lu. iv. 16, 18.)

But see, these are the souls whose welfare is contrived in the heavens; God consulted their salvation, their deliverance, their health, before his Son came down thence. Doth not, therefore, this demonstrate that a broken-hearted man, that a man of a contrite spirit, is of great esteem with God? I have wondered at David, that he should give Joab and the men of war a charge, that they take heed that they carry it tenderly to that young rebel Absalom, his son. (2 Sam. xviii. 5.)

But that God, the high God, the God against whom we have sinned, should, so soon as he has smitten, give his Son a command, a charge, a commission to take care of, to bind up, and heal the broken in heart—this is that which can never be sufficiently admired or wondered at by men or angels.

And as this was his commission, so he acted; as is evidently set forth by the parable of the man who fell among thieves; he went to him, poured into his wounds wine and oil; he bound him up, took him, set him upon his own beast, had him to an inn, gave the host a charge to look well to him, with money in hand, and a promise, at his return, to recompense him in what further he should be expensive while he was under his care. (Lu. x. 30, 35.)

Behold, therefore, the care of God which he has for the broken in heart; he has given a charge to Christ his Son, to look well to them, and to bind up and heal their wounds. Behold, also, the faithfulness of Christ, who doth not hide, but read this commission as soon as he entereth upon his ministry, and also falls into the practical part thereof; "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up his wounds." (Ps. cxlvii. 3.)

And behold, again, into whose care a "broken heart" and "a contrite spirit" hath put this poor creature; he is under the care of God, the care and cure of Christ. If a man was sure that his disease had put him under the special care of the king and

the queen, yet could he not be sure of life; he might die under their sovereign hands. Aye, but here is a man in the favour of God, and under the hand of Christ to be healed; under whose hand, none yet ever died for want of skill and power in him to save their life. Wherefore this man must live; Christ has in commission not only to bind up his wounds, but to heal them. He has of himself so expounded it in reading his commission: Wherefore he that hath his heart broken, and that is of a contrite spirit, must not only be taken in hand, but healed; healed of his pain, grief, sorrow, sin, and fears of death and hell-fire. Wherefore he adds, that he must 'give unto such beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, and must comfort all that mourn. (Isa. lxi. 2, 3.)

This, I say, he has in the commission; the broken-hearted are put into his hand, and he has said himself he will heal them. Hence he says of that same man, "I have seen his ways and will heal him; I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him, and to his mourners; and I will heal him." (Isa. lvii. 15, 19.) And this is a fifth demonstration.

Sixthly. As God prefers such a heart, and so esteems the man that has it, as he desires his company, has provided for him his cordials, and given a charge to Christ to heal him; so has he promised in conclusion to save him: "He saveth such as be of a contrite spirit;" or as the margin has it, that be contrite of spirit. (Ps. xxxiv. 18.)

And this is the conclusion of all; for to save a man is the end of all special mercy: "He saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." To save is to forgive, for without forgiveness of sins we cannot be saved. To save is to preserve one in this miserable world, and to deliver one from all those devils, temptations, snares, and destructions that would, were we not kept, were we not preserved of God, destroy us, body and soul. To save is to bring a man, body and soul, to glory, and to give him an eternal mansion-house in heaven, that he may dwell in the presence of this good God and the Lord Jesus, and to sing to them the songs of his redemption for ever and ever. This is what it is to be saved; nor can anything less than this complete the salvation of the sinner. Now, this is to be the lot of him that is of a broken heart; and the end that God will make with him that is of a contrite spirit, "He saveth such as be contrite of spirit." He saveth such: this is excellent.

But do the broken in heart believe this? Can they imagine that this is to be the end that God has designed them to, and that he intended to make with them in the day in which he began to break their hearts? No, no; they, alas! think quite the contrary! They are afraid that this is but the beginning of death, and a token that they shall never see the face of God with comfort, either in this world or that which is to come. Hence they cry, "Cast me not away from thy presence;" or,

“Now I am free among the dead, whom God remembers no more.” (Ps. li. 11; lxxxviii. 4, 5.)

For, indeed, there goes to the breaking of the heart a visible appearance of the wrath of God, and a home-charge from heaven of the guilt of sin to the conscience. This to reason is very dreadful; for it cuts the soul down to the ground. For a wounded spirit none can bear. (Prov. xviii. 14.)

It seems also now, to this man, that this is but the beginning of hell; but, as it were, the first step down to the pit, when, in reality, all these are the beginnings of love, and that which makes way for life. The Lord kills before he makes alive, he wounds before his hands make whole. Yea, he does the one in order to, or because he would do the other; he wounds, because his purpose is to heal. “He maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole.” (Deut. xxxii. 39; 1 Sam. ii. 6; Job xv. 18.)

His design, I say, is the salvation of the soul. He scourgeth, he breaketh the heart of every son whom he receiveth; and woe be to him whose heart God breaketh not.

I have thus proved what at first I asserted, namely, that a spirit rightly broken, a heart truly contrite, is to God an excellent thing. “A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” For thus say I,

1. This is evident, for that it is better than sacrifices, than all sacrifice.

2. The man that has it is of more esteem with God than heaven and earth.

3. God coveteth such a man for his intimate and house-companion.

4. He reserveth for them his cordials and spiritual comforts.

5. He has given his Son a charge, a commandment, to take care that the broken-hearted be healed; and he is resolved to heal them.

6. And concluded that the broken-hearted, and they that are of a contrite spirit, shall be saved; that is, possessed of the heavens.

(To be continued.)

A GODLY man best knows what true and solid pleasure is. (Ps. cxix. 165; Prov. iii. 17.)—*Fleming.*

SEARCH out the feelings of the flock, and insist upon experience; and if any laugh at feeling, they never were quickened at all.—*Huntington.*

JACOB would not believe that Joseph was alive, or thought if he was alive, he had but little means and was poor. But when he saw the waggons that Joseph had sent him, then he believed and said, “It is enough; Joseph, my son, is yet alive.” The waggons sent from Joseph to Jacob brought Jacob to Joseph. So every believing soul is poor, and feeble, and disabled to go to God, and to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; therefore look thou unto the chariots of Israel first, and that will convey thee to the promise.

“THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS.”

My dear Mr. H.,—I thought I should like to tell you how comforting your sermon last Wednesday evening was to me. I went to chapel very much pressed with trouble, and at first seemed almost too burdened with grief to listen; but soon my attention was fixed on the subject, and I was led to see that my sorrows came not by chance, but were all ordered by an all-wise and gracious God; and I came home with a deep sense of the greatness and majesty of God, and with it a comfortable persuasion that “this God” was my God, and would be my guide and protector and friend even to the end of my life.

I could not fully tell any one the deep and various exercises of my mind since we came to C. for a few weeks during Nov. and Dec. I passed through a dark night indeed. I carried my burden quite alone, and it pressed so heavily that I thought it would have crushed me; the Lord hid himself from me, and I could not find him, though I sought him earnestly, night and day, for I could not rest. The darker the night appeared, the more alarmed I felt, till at last I began to suspect that there was something wrong altogether. I thought I could bear my outward troubles if only I could realize the Lord's gracious presence, as I hope I have proved in other trials. How many times, when poring over things that grieved me, has my mind turned to the Lord's own life on earth, who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself. Once in particular my mind was led to see how much more time I spent in thinking over my troubles than in meditating on the Lord's gracious and wonderful works, and the thought came, “Surely the Lord claims the first of my affections and thoughts,” and I was for a time enabled to leave it all in his hands, feeling I could accept all his will, however painful; not with submission merely, but with joy, having a sense of his wisdom and care manifested towards me.

Sometimes amidst the darkness a part of his blessed Word has been very comforting to me, especially the Lord's own words to his disciples. One morning I felt so overcharged with sorrows of various kinds, and my mind so dark, I could not understand the Lord's distance, when I felt at the same time so anxious for his presence. I felt, too, in every way that I needed more strength to endure with patience; when these words came so softly: “For the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” O, I felt so ashamed to have fainted under so slight a burden as it then seemed. I thought, what must the joys of heaven be when this suffering which threatens to crush me is not worthy to be compared; and with such thought there was a sweet feeling that such a blessed state is awaiting me, even me. How plainly I see that to have any measure of fellowship with the Lord in his sufferings is a very different thing from reading the account in the Bible, and meditating upon it. How often I have thought

lately that what the Lord felt of the hidings of his Father's face, was the most bitter part of his cup, and truly in my small measure, the Lord being out of my sight was the part that alarmed me most. Truly I can say,

"I could from all things parted be,
But never, never, Lord, from thee."

I cannot tell what I should have done, but for the ministry. The Lord's servants are very dear to me, for they have wonderfully met my case of late, and raised me for a time out of my distresses and encouraged me still to press forward. The sermons you preached in November were particularly helpful to me, especially the one from the words, "O that thou would'st rend the heavens, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence." Had you known all my exercises you could not have met my case more clearly. Your ministry has been more valuable to me than I shall ever be able to tell you.

My dear Sir, I trust you will pardon me the length of this letter. I am sure your labours are not in vain in the Lord, but are much esteemed by many, very many who are strangers to you.

With very kind regards, believe me, Very sincerely Yours,

71, St. James' Road, Croydon, Jan. 23rd, 1882.

A. F.

BREATHING AFTER THE HOLY SPIRIT.

O how cheering is that voice
That bids the aching heart rejoice,
Binds the broken spirits up,
Fills the soul with peace and hope,
Breaks the clouds of unbelief,
Dries the eyes suffused with grief,
Whisp'ring,—“All thy sin's forgiven,”
Shows the certain road to heaven,
Tells my faith that Christ is mine;
Holy Ghost, this work is thine.

May I feel thy quick'ning voice,
Thee as God alone adore,
With the Father, and the Son,
One in power, in glory One;
One Jehovah,—Sov'reign Lord,
Through all heaven and earth adored.
I would fain adore thee too,
Pay to thee the worship due.
Live to thee while life shall last,
Love thee when this life is past,
And behold my Saviour's face,
Shining with endearing rays,
Through eternity to know
Bliss I can but taste below—

Spotless innocence and peace,
 Pure and perfect righteousness.
 Seal these heav'nly blessings mine;
 Holy Ghost, the work is thine.

Grant I may at last behold
 Glories that can ne'er be told.
 Wonders still on wonders rise,
 Fresh delights, to feast the eyes;
 Perfect love,—unfading bliss,
 Pleasures that will never cease,
 Height'ning still in rapturous joy,—
 New delights that never cloy;
 While fresh glories strike the sight
 With ineffable delight.
 Make these endless blessings mine;
 Holy Ghost, the work is thine.

May my faith on eagle's wings
 Ever to thy throne arise;
 Heal the serpent's painful stings,
 Ease my heart, and dry mine eyes.
 Thou hast promised, indeed,
 Thou wilt help in time of need;
 And thou art a faithful God.
 Give me faith to trust thy Word.
 Lord, to thee for help I cry,
 Send deliv'rance now with speed;
 Sure I am, thy piercing eye
 Sees it is a time of need.
 Shall I seek thy grace in vain?
 Break the tempter's galling chain.
 Gracious God, my soul uphold,
 Lest thine enemies grow bold;
 Seal a pardon all divine;
 Holy Ghost, the work is thine.

May 25th, 1844.

A SOLITARY ONE.

HE who, by investigation of truth, is enabled to make it his chief care to have his mind and will rendered subject to the faith and obedient to the Father of lights, and who waits upon him whose throne is in the heavens,—he alone is blessed with true wisdom. The others walk in a vain show. It has been my principal object—in tracing the depths and secret nature of the subject in question (a "Dissertation on the Justice of God"), while I, a poor worm, contemplated the majesty and glory of him concerning whose perfections I was treating—to attend to and obey with all humility and reverence what the great God the Lord hath spoken in his Word; not at all doubting but that, whatever way he should incline my heart by the power of his Spirit and truth, I should be enabled, in a dependence on his aid, to bear the contradictions of a false knowledge, and all human and philosophical arguments.—*D. Row.*

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

THE GOOD PHYSICIAN.

My dear Friend,—I feel very much inclined to write to you, and tell you my thoughts respecting your last note, which I had not opened when I sent you the almanac.

You may assure yourself that the same searchings of heart which take place in you, have been continually my lot. And I can say with you, I do not wish to shun the inquiry; but we should do as David did,—beg of the Lord to search us, and give us ability to form a right judgment of ourselves; or else we may form a very, wrong one. The ways of the Holy Spirit are not made out by natural light. It is only “in thy light shall we see light,” says David. (Ps. xxxvi. 9.) I remember Mr. Huntington coming out of his bedroom into his study, where I was sitting; and saying, “What is put into every child’s mouth in the catechism of the Church of England is very difficult for even a real child of God to say,—‘I believe in God the Holy Ghost who sanctifieth me and all the elect people of God.’” That which makes it so difficult to me is the extreme pollution which is seen and felt, which makes us say we resemble a devil more than a saint. So I feel it constantly, unless under some peculiar influence of the blessed Spirit, when all these evils are hid for a time, but it is only for a time. Mr. H. once put this question to me: “What are we to say to David’s words, ‘If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me?’” (Ps. lxvi. 18.) I knew his meaning was that evils often find entertainment in our wretched souls. What says Mr. H. in his “Posthumous Letters,” vol. ii., 86? “I seldom go long without some soul-exercise, nor have I any room to expect it, knowing that *I am full of evil*, and have need of trials to keep it down that it reign not.” What says Dr. Goodwin in his “Child of Light Walking in Darkness?” “A man’s heart is like those two-faced pictures; if you look one way towards one side of them, you shall see nothing but some horrid shape of a devil, or the like; but go to the other side and look again, and you shall see the picture of an angel, or of some beautiful woman, &c. So some have looked over their hearts by signs at one time, and have to their thinking found nothing but hypocrisy, unbelief, hardness, self-seeking; but not long after, examining their hearts again by the same signs, they have espied the image of God fairly drawn upon the table of their hearts.” (P. 179.)

I would wish you to read the “Coalheaver’s Scraps,” p. 57. He says, “When believers find rebellion working in their will, and carnal enmity in the mind, and unhallowed desires discovering themselves in the affections, this they think (and I once thought the same) can never stand with a genuine work of grace. And finding that neither prayers nor tears, resolutions nor vows; the deepest humility nor highest felicity; no, not the furnace of affliction; nor the mount of transfiguration will either root up or eradicate these things; no, neither subdue them nor abolish

them; not hide them from our sight, nor chase their bane from our senses,—we conclude that the work of sanctification is not begun, much less is going on within us."

Goodwin in his work on the Holy Spirit, folio 322, says, "The soul saith, 'My heart hath a world of thorns in it, and more of thorns than of what I can ever hope to be good herbs.' Answer, so hath every regenerate man a world of thorns in him; 'Ay,' (says Calvin) 'thick-set copses of them.' Every one's grace is sown and continues in a wood of thorns. Yea; but yet there is another root of something that grows up in thy heart, that bears not thorns; and there is a conflict against the thorns, an endeavour to root them up, and they are thorns in thy side. Therefore there is another principle in thee." Again, he says, "Such things as good and holy men have given us by the Holy Ghost, these the Holy Ghost must by a supernatural act enable conscience to discern, or we cannot, do not discern them."

I do believe there is a great deal of truth in what Owen says: "We have so much of the Pharisee in us by nature that it is sometimes well that our good is hid from us." You know what Dr. Goodwin says of himself in his life: "I am come to this pass, that signs will do me no good alone. I have trusted too much to habitual grace for assurance of justification; I tell you, Christ is worth all." And on his death-bed he said, "I shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye; all my lusts and corruptions I shall be rid of, which I could not be here; these croaking toads will fall off in a moment."

I can assure you I do not wish to hinder either you or myself from coming to the light; it is what I wish. But if I measure myself by another, I believe I shall not come to a satisfactory conclusion. I wish to know in what the sanctification of Scripture consists. Paul, more than once in his Epistle to the Hebrews, declares that the church is sanctified by the blood of Christ: "That he might sanctify the people with his own blood" (xiii. 12); "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one" (ii. 11); "By the which will we are sanctified" (x. 10). And he speaks to the same effect in Eph. v. 26: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word," which word is the word of reconciliation. Peter speaks to the same effect when he describes sanctification as issuing or being declared in the obedience of faith, followed by the blood of sprinkling: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto (or for) obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." There is something here very clear and decisive. Faith is declared to be the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, and cleansing of the conscience, the fruit of faith. Peter calls it *purification*: "Purifying their hearts by faith." (Acts xv. 9.)

I like very much what my dear friend, Mr. Matthews, wrote to me in 1836. "Satan used to foil me by causing me to try to

come to God as a *saint*, instead of as a *lost, ruined, and helpless sinner*." Here it is, as Mr. Hart says,

"Buts, ifs, and hows are hurl'd
To sink us with the gloom
Of all that's dismal in this world,
Or in the world to come."

But I have always found that the best way, in going to God under heavy temptation, is to forget the things that are *behind*: to let it all go; to let it be that I have been deceived and have deceived others (and indeed in many things I have been so); that I have returned like a dog to his vomit, and as the "sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire;" that I have vexed and grieved his Holy Spirit, and pierced myself through with many sorrows. But that he came to call not the righteous but *sinners* to repentance; to save that which was *lost*, and to heal them that are *sick*; that he knew I was *sick* of sin and of myself too; that I *hated myself* and the *life I led*; that he had said, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in *no wise* cast out;" that I was come with all my sin and misery, and had nothing to plead, but his own blood and righteousness, why he should have *pity* and *compassion* upon me. And no sooner have I gone this way to work, but I soon found Satan's fierce assaults abate; and my heart has taken courage, as the Doctor says of Prodigalis, to discharge the arrow that would fly. Mr. Matthews has frequently told me that he has gone out to walk on purpose to pray, and has returned without uttering a syllable, merely because he wished to come as a saint before God; but when he, in time, was enabled to go as a sinner, he found access. Another thing he has often suggested to me has done me much good, namely, that it is the Holy Spirit's constant work to discover to us our vileness that we may know our need of the Lord Jesus. This I firmly believe is true; we would like much to be something in ourselves, but he could not have it.

I allow it is good counsel that the Doctor gives in some letter: "Never rest as long as you have one scruple, doubt, or fear about your state, remaining on your mind." This I must approve of, and I know it has been and is my aim. Satan will foil us if he can. Everything that I read which made against me, I took to myself; but now I go to him as a Physician to cure me, and as a Refiner to purge my dross. I feel my need of him, and I find peace often sweetly spoken. The discoveries of our polluted state are meant to enhance the value of the Redeemer's blood; and whatever does that is good. I find it best to go to him for mercy for what is wrong, and for grace to help. And by keeping close to his Word, willing to be empty that he may fill me; by praying constantly that I may have right views of the Saviour, and that I may not be deterred by the evils of my heart from coming to him, I find relief and peace. It is the Holy Spirit's work to discover Christ to us, and to speak peace by him. My misery endears him to me; and though it is hard work to break through all

discouragements, yet the good Spirit enables me to do it at times. To make us hate ourselves and abhor ourselves is the work of the Holy Spirit; and the Lord says, "If a man hate not his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Hatred of self and high esteem of the Lord Jesus go together. Beg instruction of the Holy Spirit and he will give it, and satisfactorily answer every fear and doubt. What should hinder us from going to him who has as kind a heart towards us now he is in heaven as ever he had upon earth. He loves to be importuned, and bids us open our mouth wide that he may fill it. May you and I make use of this blessed privilege, that we may thrive as the corn, and "grow up as calves of the stall." A door is set before us, and we have a violent adversary.

The Lord bless you and me with that faith which worketh by love.

Yours very truly for the truth's sake,

Cranbrook, 1848.

HENRY BIRCH.

THE HOUSE OF CLAY AND ITS TENANT.

Dear Christian Friend,—Grace, mercy, and peace be with you and yours. I would come over to see you, but I am unable to walk any distance. I feel that age and infirmities are telling upon me, and, as you are several years in advance of me, I feel persuaded that with age, infirmities, and your present illness, your tabernacle must be in a tottering state. Were it not for divine preservation, houses of clay could not stand so long, seeing there is the leprosy within, and many heavy storms without. I trust, notwithstanding the decaying state of the old house, that the tenant is in good health, and at times in full expectation of a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. No doubt but there are times when darkness and dense fogs will hardly allow you to look out of your clay dwelling, and when this is the case there appears nothing within worth looking at; but even then you are complete in Christ, and are kept by the power of God; and that promise stands good: "Unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." Then, again, we have light in our dwellings. The Lord help you to remember all the way that he has led you these many years; where he met with you, and what he has done for you, and thus help you to review the many Ebenezers he has enabled you to set up; with the way-marks and high heaps you have raised, as you have journeyed onward to your house of rest above; yea, may he now say to your soul, "I am thy salvation." May you now feel that the everlasting arms are underneath, and sing with unspeakable joy,

"How can I sink with such a prop
As my eternal God?"

May you so drink of the streams of love and mercy that you may long to be at the fountain head. I hope the Lord will raise you up again, that you may yet be useful in his vineyard, as faithful labourers are few, and according to our views are much

needed in our days. We know that there is an appointed time to God's servants upon earth, as well as to others. Our time and places of labour are ordered by him who cannot err. So also the when, the where, and the how, we shall finish our course below. The Lord grant that our end may be peace. The longer I live the more I feel the needs-be of looking away from all that I am in and of myself, from my preaching, and from usefulness to his people, to look wholly to, and to rest solely upon a precious Christ, and to hope for eternal life only as a poor sinner saved by free and sovereign grace through him. All we are as Christians, as ministers, and as being useful to the souls of others, we are by the grace of God. To that grace be all the praise! May the precious truths you have been enabled to preach to others, and the every-way suitable Saviour you have so long proclaimed, be the stay and comfort of your soul in your declining days, and waft you safely over Jordan's swelling stream to your final rest.

Hope that Mrs. P. is well, and is enabled to look by faith to him who sits upon the flood, and who can calm at will the swelling tide.

Yours in Christian Love,

Wadhurst, Feb. 15th, 1878.

J. J.

THE RIGHTEOUS MADE GLAD.

My highly esteemed Friend,—I write these few lines to tell you a little of the Lord's gracious dealings with my poor weary and heavy-laden soul. On Friday morning I hope the dear Lord in much mercy, pity, and tender compassion for his dear Son's sake, gave me a sure token that he has heard the groaning of the poor prisoner and the sighing of the needy, by speaking a word in due season to melt my poor sorrowful heart, and to bring me down at his dear feet in love and gratitude for such unspeakable mercy. He hath declared in his holy Word, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Again: "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; and I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him." And now I, a poor sinful, vile, unworthy wretch, am made a witness of his being a promise-fulfilling God in my very soul's experience, by his speaking with power divine to my poor sin-burdened soul from Isa., lii. 1, 2: "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." This beautiful garment I saw to be the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, put on by faith, and brought into the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost; and which purifies the heart from all uncleanness and all sin, and enables the poor soul to rejoice in Christ, and have no confidence in himself. "Shake thyself from the dust; arise and sit down. O Jerusalem; loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." This came with that divine power that melted my very soul at his dear and blessed feet, and so raised up

my hope that I was enabled to cast my anchor within the veil, whither Jesus is for us entered as Advocate, Mediator, and Intercessor for the vilest of sinners. I trust my friends will be glad to hear that the dear Lord, with much mercy, has in some blessed measure brought my poor soul out of darkness and the shadow of death, and broken my bonds asunder, and hath caused me to cry out in my very soul, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works unto the children of men." My poor soul seemed melted and crumbled within me at the mercy and goodness of God yesterday on the road; sweet and gracious promises flowed into my soul, and melted my heart, and made my eyes overflow with tears at the mercy and goodness of God to me, the chiefest of sinners. Such as: "Fear not, worm Jacob, I will help thee." Also: "He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." Also: "He will bring thee forth to the light, and thou shalt behold his righteousness."

You may see, then, that I have been enabled through grace, and love, and power divine, to shake myself from the power of sin, which had gone over my head as a heavy burden; so that I desire to speak to the honour and glory of his worthy Name. I feel, too, a sweet persuasion that he will in great mercy grant me my heart's desire, and restore more and more to my poor soul the joys of his great salvation. My dear Friend, I desire an interest in your prayers, and if his heavenly pleasure, may we join together to bless and praise his Name, whose love is everlasting, and whose mercy endureth for ever, and whose blood cleanseth from all sin. "Now unto him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

J. HEWETT.

[The above letter was found among other papers after the death of the writer.—ED.]

THE LORD WILL APPEAR.

Feeling a little touch, unexpectedly, this evening, which seems quite apart from and above myself, and something from the Lord—wonderful in the midst of that darkness, misery, and fear in which I am so used to walk—I wish to try to speak of the Lord's goodness to me. I think very few can enter into that real feeling of sinful wretchedness I have been under, so that I have felt as if I could not possibly be the Lord's; the course I seemed left to in trials and perplexities seeming like the slippery "paths of darkness," in which the wicked shall be driven, and stumble, and fall into destruction, and how I have been made to cry to the Lord, "even to the Lord, but he answered not." Often while I have been feeling so depressed, I have felt everything looked most black, spiritually as well as outwardly, on me. O, how I knew my own sin only was the cause; sin in all my past profession, sin in the beginning, and again and again continually re-

turning in my very nature, in heart, thought, and deed. Thus "as a beast I was before him," obstinately going my own way; and as a beast I was made to go down into the valley; where I cannot tell you what a sight seemed to be given me, by a ray of light, as it were, from him (quite apart from and beyond all the ways, thoughts, and feelings I have been nailed to, as it were); a sight of God's ways far above my own, a power to believe that his eye is upon me for good, as if it said, "Verily, it shall be well." O, how it shines in the midst of all that is contrary; so that I believe, wonderful for me to say, that he has heard my prayer, that he is a forgiving God, that his mercy is freely bestowed upon me. I am utterly unable to set forth this aright; but truly I would rather have one touch of that sweet power for a moment (nothing to boast of or to glory about, but in him) than I would be able always to hold that I am right, from a doctrinal knowledge, or from the mere recollection of any past experience. These things are divine—God's time comes, though for long, as a Sovereign, he has refused to speak, and has seemed sensibly to shut out our prayer. What trouble has been occasioned by outward things, which I will not now talk about; all very trifles, nothing compared with these divine realities; but the Lord has used them to show me what I am, what an earth-worm, what a beast! I allude to nothing new, but the old cares, which I can in this blessed power most willingly bear, and trust him with them all. I could lie down for all trials to pass over me. O, may we all be more deeply taught! "One thing is needful." May the Lord Jesus be that to us! May we be as he was on earth, walking with his Father! This is all; there is nothing in us, and I feel at the point of returning to my own place. Truly, "the people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while;" the enemies so soon tread down his sanctuary, but "look down." (Isa. lxiii.) Why hast thou made us to err? "Return;" there is a returning mercy to be found. "O that thou wouldst rend the heavens!" I could go through the chapter, for there is a depth and fulness in the whole which words cannot convey.

I was yesterday (Sunday) at Mr. S.'s, I felt the things he said truly profitable and deeply searching; and I was really made to see myself nothing, and to fear I had not a spark of true religion. It was very nice to hear the sweet words of truth, in the love of it spoken by dear old Mr. L., also to witness the closing scene at that little place (the late Mr. Cowley's). The Lord's sufferings and death and blood-shedding were commemorated with that brokenness of heart and melting power which I have seldom, if ever, witnessed. I loved it and I loved the people, little as I knew of them individually, but I felt it was a true company; and though now dispersed outwardly (for the Lord has not sent a minister to continue their assembling together), may he be with them. As one used to say, "Tares and wheat"—such are all the assemblies, and such are we each, if, through rich mercy, we are wheat at all. But may the Lord be with all the little

churches, wherever he has a people, and may all their follies, self-seeking, self-judgment, wars, and fightings not hinder his work; but may they all be humbled on account of these things, and be brought each one with his mouth in the dust before the Lord, and there they will be agreed. I can truly say I loved the sermon of Mr. Philpot's on Phil. iii. 12, read yesterday at Gower Street, in consequence of the illness of Mr. Marsh. O! What a mercy to be reaching forth after these things by his power working in us; in the midst of all our helplessness to have faith to stand still, and see his work in us and for us, in grace and in providence, and to feel he does all things right and all things well, to care nothing for the things that perish, but for him only.

London, March, 1878.

J. B.

SYMPATHY.

My dear Friend,—I have received from a kind but unknown friend in Australia a little sum of money which he has sent me to be distributed amongst the poor children of God in this country. I have felt, therefore, disposed to send a portion of it for the benefit of your poor afflicted husband, and therefore enclose a post-office order, which I have made payable to J. M. He must sign his name, or you must do it for him, where I have marked a little cross (+) in pencil.

I was sorry to learn from your last letter that you have such an addition to your trials and afflictions in the illness of your eldest son. What a scene of trial and sorrow is this world to those who desire to fear God, and walk in the path which leads to eternal happiness! What family troubles, what bodily afflictions, what distress in circumstances, what temptations of soul, what doubts and fears and desponding sensations many of the Lord's dear people have to wade through; but all are appointed, in weight and measure, by their heavenly Father, and they all work together for good to those who love God and are called according to his purpose. Poor Morse has, indeed, had a large share of temporal trials, and also a very heavy and prolonged bodily affliction. I hope that the Lord is blessing the affliction to his soul, sanctifying it, and communicating through it by his Spirit and grace submission to his holy and sovereign will. When the Lord is pleased to lay affliction upon either body or soul, there is no way whereby it can be borne to his glory and to our good but by submission to his will. None of our struggles can get the yoke off our neck, though they may increase its weight by galling the shoulder. Prayer and supplication, and committing our way unto the Lord, are the true means of obtaining help from the sanctuary. The Lord help my poor afflicted friend to trust in him, and to enable him to bless his afflicting hand as a gracious means of bringing his soul into an experimental enjoyment of his presence and his love.

Yours very sincerely in the Truth,

Stamford, Dec. 20th, 1861.

J. C. PHILPOT.

REVIEW.

Substance of Sermons on the Fifth of November, 1881. By Edward Wilkinson, D.D., Incumbent of Christ Church, Leamington. Price One Penny. Leamington: Beck, Parade.

WE gather from one of the above sermons that Dr. Wilkinson has given up somewhat recently his church living at Snargate and Snaive, in order to accept the incumbency of Christ Church, Leamington. Some of our readers will remember that Dr. Wilkinson was the compiler of the "Memorials of Mr. Charles Rolfe;" which book was reviewed in our pages at the time of its publication. Perhaps there are few more outspoken men on the side of God's discriminating truth to be found in the Established Church in the present day than Dr. Wilkinson. If people do not understand what his sentiments are, that is more their own fault than his; for no man could contend more boldly for the free and sovereign grace of God in the election and predestination of all who are saved than himself.

We are told by the reporter of the "Beck's Leamington Advertiser," from which paper the "Substance of Sermons," in tract form, at the price of a penny, is reprinted,—that the evening sermon "was extempore, and lasted over an hour." With such scanty notes, then, of both sermons as have been reprinted, we should have preferred if the same had been called *notes*, instead of "substance" of sermons. Titles of books are sometimes apt to mislead, and when a book, whose title has led us to purchase it, has cost us 2s. 6d. or 5s., it is very vexatious to find it in the bulk of its matter altogether a different compilation to what we expected.

Dr. Wilkinson's sermons being preached on the fifth of November, and before the members of the "Orange Lodge," he took occasion to make the never-to-be-forgotten Popish plot to blow up the king and the royal family, and the Lords and Commons, a key-note for defending the Protestantism of the nation. Referring to the coming of the Prince of Orange to restore the Protestant religion, he said:

"There never was a time in the history of the Church of England when there was more need for true, staunch Protestantism than at the present time. Would to God that another Luther were raised up to restore what the enemy within the camp are endeavouring to destroy—the blessing of a true, scriptural religion, for which our forefathers died at the stake. He then went on to show from God's Word and secular history that God's blessing has always rested upon the nations which acknowledged and served him, and that put away idolatry, but that where God was dishonoured, and idolatry was practised, his judgments were manifested, and his curse rested upon the people. As examples of both from Jewish history, he cited Hezekiah, Josiah, Ahab, and Jezebel; and commenting on Hezekiah destroying the brazen serpent Moses made in the wilderness, because the children of Israel had burnt incense to it, and his calling it Nehushtan, he said that the cross had become the modern Nehushtan. There was too much wearing of the cross instead of the bearing of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. This recalled to his mind that, when he

took possession of that edifice, there was at the end of it something like a stone cross, which was supposed to have formed part of the edifice. He had it taken down, because he desired to know nothing of the Lord Jesus Christ but him crucified, and not anything material."

In speaking in the course of the evening sermon of his having complied with a call to labour in the fashionable town of Leamington, he said he would have nothing of Popery or Ritualistic mummeries in his church there.

"Thousands of pounds," he said, "had not been given by the patron to make it either a concert-room or a flower-show, and he had not voluntarily resigned a beloved little flock, two beautifully restored churches, a newly-enlarged house, and a living now worth about £500 a year, in order to become a mere performer and entertainer. He had come as a minister of Christ, to preach the gospel of the grace of God, and not to be a man-pleaser. He desired none of the friendship of the world, opposed to the truth of God. He preferred living alone, and belonging to 'the sect everywhere spoken against.' He had not come to that church to make a living, for he had resigned one, but to show men the way of life."

Whilst then we have no attachment to the Church of England, believing it to be in its system contrary to Scripture; and whilst we may wonder how really godly men can labour within its walls, and especially at the present time, when the formalities and corruptions with which it is becoming literally choked up are more than ever making manifest its origin to be a human device; yet we are glad to find in Dr. Wilkinson a man who, in his preaching, is bold and unflinching in declaring the distinguishing truths of free and sovereign grace, and a minister moreover who possesses, with the grace which God has given him, such gifts and abilities as qualify him to cope with the many adversaries which his peculiar sentiments will be certain to raise about him. It might be thought a strange thing that men who are all for setting forth nothing but God's truth—preaching Christ, and salvation for sinners, who have faith given them to believe in him—telling poor lost sinners the only way in which they can be saved, yet that such men should have such fierce opposition raised against them, and that their testimony should be so contemned and hated as we know is the case. But then whatever opposition the Lord's servants may meet with in the world, yet there is this comfort for them to fall back upon; viz., that the whole pre-determinate counsel of God by the gospel must and shall be fulfilled to the very letter. "My counsel," saith God, "shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

This is one thing which we believe God makes his real servants thoroughly to understand, as much so as the very apostles of Christ. The apostles knew not what might befall them, whether death, or imprisonment, any day they went forth. They knew nothing beforehand of what opposition might stand like brazen walls against them, in either the one place or the other; neither did they know whether their doctrines would be received through the power of God making their testimony effectual in turning men from darkness to light, or whether they would be

rejected by the one people or the other before whom they might have to proclaim them. But they knew that God would accomplish his own will, and that adversaries would be suffered to go no further in opposing them than what God had secretly resolved in his own mind to permit. So, we repeat, it has been with the real ministers of Christ in all subsequent periods of time. Look at Bunyan, called as he was to preach the gospel when, for the more complete subjugation of Nonconformist ministers, that cruel Act was passed, called, "The Five Mile Act," an Act which cast godly preachers out of their "meeting-houses," because they were considered seditious conventicles. Yet, whether it was liberty to preach, or restraint, whether freedom or imprisonment, Bunyan knew that neither men nor devils could frustrate the will of God in accomplishing whatsoever "his hand and his counsel had determined before to be done." "I was rather glad," he said (referring to his being compelled to go back to gaol because bail could not be found); "for, before I went down to the justice, I begged of God that if I might do more good by being at liberty than in prison, then I might be set at liberty; but if not, his will be done." "You must," said Justice Keelin, "be had back to prison, and there lie for three months following. And at three months' end, if you do not submit to leave your preaching, you must be banished the realm; . . . or stretch by the neck for it, I tell you plainly. Jailer, take him away." "If I was out of prison to-day," replied the prisoner, "I would preach the gospel again to-morrow, by the help of God." Being haled away to prison he says, "Verily at my return, I did meet my God sweetly in the prison again, comforting of me, and satisfying of me that it was his will and mind that I should be there." Neither did his twelve long years of being silenced as a witness for God have any effect in making him less "ashamed of the gospel of Christ," or less confident of the fulfilment of God's counsel. "Let my enemies," he said, "be judges if anything that any man hath heard me preach, doth, or did, according to the true intent of my words, savour either of heresy or rebellion. I say again let themselves be judges, if aught they find in my writing or preaching doth render me worthy of almost twelve years' imprisonment, or one that deserveth to be hanged or banished for ever according to their tremendous sentence. But if nothing will do unless I make my conscience a continual butchery and slaughtershop; unless, putting out my own eyes, I commit me to the blind to lead me, as I doubt not is desired by some; I have determined, the almighty God being my help and shield, yet to suffer, if frail life might continue so long, *even till the moss shall grow on mine eyebrows*, rather than thus violate my faith and principles."

But then we are living in very different days to those of Bunyan. We are living, indeed, so far as having no tyrannical laws in force against us, on account of our nonconformist principles, in remarkably smooth times; all sects and denominations of pro-

fessed Christians throughout the nation being allowed full liberty of conscience in the sentiments they hold, and the forms of worship they observe. People, in fact, may believe nowadays what they please, be what they please, and worship where they please, in church, chapel, barn, or room. And yet for all this, smooth as the times are, "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." The real servants of Christ and people of God, and especially such as are decided for the distinguishing truths of the grace of God, and outspoken in contending for the same, will be sure to meet with plenty of opposition, and be held with scorn by the general professors around them. This being a refined and flesh-pleasing age, not with the world only, but with the bulk of professors of religion, the devil adapts his delusion to the age, and brings into the professing church a flood of novelties and attractions of the most bewitching kind. Everything that is calculated to lay hold upon the natural passions of men, whether it be music, pictures, flowers, or aught else, is brought into the so-called worship of the Lord, and poor deceived mortals by tens of thousands go away from both church and chapel, believing, as Dr. Wilkinson says, "that they have been worshipping the living God in spirit and in truth." It is then a satisfaction to know that there is here and there a good man to be found, who, though he be in the Established Church, yet is ready, on all occasions of his standing up in the name of the Lord, to denounce such mockeries in religion, and to tell his people that "such things had nothing to do with a religion in spirit and in truth, and were as offensive to God as to all serious spiritually-minded men. He was a plain-spoken Yorkshireman, and so could call 'a spade a spade,' and he called all these sensuous attractions a substitute for spiritual worship, and a means of getting money."

Before closing our remarks, we wish to say a word more. Nothing has sometimes of late impressed our mind with more solemn reflection than what appears to us to be a most rapid decreasing of the real godly, both ministers and people, in the world; whilst "evil men and seducers" are as rapidly multiplying, and "waxing worse and worse."

Further, if we speak of our own denomination, what a visible diminishing in the congregations there is at many places, where 20 years ago, to our own knowledge, such chapels were well filled. What the state of things in such places of worship will be in a few years hence, unless the Lord in his providence brings more people under the Word, and unless he works more effectually by his precious truth than he seems to be doing now, in calling sinners by his grace, it is impossible to tell. But to see so many old steadfast friends and adherents to the discriminating truths of a free grace gospel dropping off the stage of life, and so few being raised up to fill their room, has given rise to many surmises in our own mind.

Besides, it is not only the hand of death that makes many

places, where the truth of God is maintained, look so thin and bare; but it is the very truth itself; people hate it. Professors who only have the "form of godliness," but deny the power, look upon those churches and chapels, where the discriminating doctrines of grace are regularly preached, with such a suspicious eye that they regard them with disdain; and the consequence is that such places get much less filled up with what we may call "the rolling stones" among professors than other places do. Neither can the real servants of God comply with the customs and practices which are adopted at most places of worship, to keep their congregations up. They have not so learned Christ. If the *gospel* bait fail to catch fish, they dare not lay carnal baits in their way to entice them. The Lord makes his servants honest; and in the discharge of their stewardship they have a conscience in wishing to act faithfully to God and to the souls of men. Through grace they will let nothing move them from the truth which they have been taught of God. Neither will they trim truth, smooth it down, or keep it back, through fear of driving people away; nor attempt to win and entice people over by anything but the truth. If the gospel alone fails to keep people together, and to draw in others to hear it, they will discard the thought of adopting artificial means and fleshly subterfuges to allure them. Of the "five points" as they are called, viz.:

I. The Fall of Man—Spiritual Death.

II. Election and Predestination.

III. Particular and Eternal Redemption of all God's Elect.

IV. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit and Effectual Calling.

V. The Final Perseverance of the Saints,

we can say they are the points on which our soul rests for eternal salvation; and we believe with our author that

"These scriptural and experimental doctrines, God has always preserved in his church; and always will do. They were rejected by the unconverted and opposed by mere professional religionists; but they were beloved by all the elect people of God. They separated these from mere professors; and united them closely in brotherly love to each other. They identified them with the "sect every where spoken against;" and this, with the hatred of the world and the love of the brethren, was to them a proof that theirs was the faith of God's elect. God had made them his witnesses, and it was for this faith, once delivered to the Saints, that they contended."

THEREFORE, when you come into the congregation, and see the minister giving and parting to every one his dole, reproof here, and instruction there; may you look up to heaven and say, "Something for me, Lord; something for me." Instruct me, improve me, make known my sins, and discover my abominations. When the dainties of salvation are distributing, you that are at the lower end of the table should think with yourselves, "Will the dish never come to the lowest end?" O that the Lord would guide the minister to lay his hand on the sore of this cursed infidelity of mine! O that the Lord would knock down that sin of mine this day!—*Hooker*.

Obituary.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF GEORGE WESTON.

(Concluded from p. 91.)

Though the Lord removed him to Brighton in the midst of trials and cross-handed providences, yet he soon manifested mercy and kindness to him. After Mr. Grace's death, which he keenly felt, he, with others, left West Street Chapel to sit under the late Mr. White's ministry. In 1868 Galeed Chapel was built, where he afterwards attended until the close of his days, or as long as he could leave the house. In speaking of the Lord's mercies to him, in hearing the word at Galeed, he says,

"There is not a particle of my experience, nor an exercise of my mind for 64 years, that has not been traced out under the ministry at Galeed these last eight years, and been proved by the Scriptures of truth to have been wrought by the operation of the Holy Ghost in the heart; and it has been the means of strengthening, comforting, and establishing me in the faith, as it is in the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer. Blessed be God."

In Aug. 1869, it pleased the Lord to remove his dear wife, who had shared in his troubles, sorrows, and mercies for 53 years; and though a poor fearing one all her days, yet in her last illness the Lord appeared on her behalf, and granted her joy and peace in believing. She died in peace, Aug. 30, 1869. The loss of his wife was a heavy stroke to him; but the Lord's mercies to her seemed to overtop all his troubles, and caused him to say, earth."

"Blessed be the *God of my mercies*, for he doeth as it pleaseth him 'in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the

His mind now became much exercised about the ordinances of the Lord's house, so much so that he greatly desired to be baptized, and walk in the ordinances of the gospel. After speaking to the deacons, it was some time before it was arranged for him to come before the church; and during this time he was much tried and cast down, fearing he should not be received, until the following verse was brought with some power to his mind, and gave him great quietness :

"Though faithful Abra'm us reject,
And though his ransom'd race elect
Agree to give us up,
Thou art our Father, and thy Name
From everlasting is the same;
On that we build our hope."

But at length the time arrived, and a solemn, heart-melting time it was when he gave in his experience, as many of the saints can testify; and he was cordially received. He says:

"I was baptized by Mr. Godwin, that servant of Christ, in March, 1870, in the 75th year of my age. I believe it to be one of the ordinances of the house of God, as well as preaching the gospel, and the Lord's Supper; and, where it is not performed, I consider the order

of the church to be imperfect, according to the Scriptures. But blessed be God for faith, and a heart and opportunity to walk in his truth as revealed in the Scriptures."

He was now favoured to walk in union and church fellowship with the Lord's people, which added to his comfort in his declining days; and his seat was never empty, when the doors were opened, except in illness, or when away from home. His quiet deliberate words at the church meeting were heard and valued both by the deacons and members.

The following letter will show his trust and confidence in God, and that, like Jacob, his last days were more quiet, although he was not without some heavy trials :

"Dear Mr. and Mrs. Ashdown, Brother and Sister in the everlasting covenant, love and grace of Israel's Three-One God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,—Trusting in the pure and matchless righteousness, the death, blood, and glorious resurrection, ascension, and intercession of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for our eternal salvation, through his merits, may grace, mercy, and peace be with and rest upon you, is the desire of my soul before God.

"If the Lord in his infinite wisdom spare my life in this time-state through this day, I shall pass from the 78th year into the 79th of my age. O, how amazed I am this morning at the mercy and goodness of God that has followed me all my days. Surely he hath not dealt with me after my sins nor rewarded me according to my iniquities.

'Thy goodness how immense
To those that fear thy Name!
Thy love surpasses thought or sense,
And always is the same.'

"Yes, I have proved that the Lord's mercies endure for ever. I awoke this morning at half-past three with a sweet calm on my spirit, meditating on the Lord's favours and goodness to me both in providence and grace, through life; and the blessed hope I have, resting on the merits of a crucified Saviour—our Lord Jesus Christ, the Rock of eternal ages—for my eternal happiness. The Lord knows I have no other hope; for I have nothing in and of myself that can be acceptable in his sight. I have thought on the way the Lord has led me for 50 years in the wilderness, and the fulfilling of his promise wherein he hath said, 'Thou shalt remember all the way the Lord thy God hath led thee these 40 years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no.' (Deut. viii. 2.) After thinking these things over awhile with prayer and supplication for the Lord's protection and blessing on the anniversary of my birth, I dropped into a sweet sleep again, and awoke at seven o'clock with a thankful heart for all God's mercies to me both temporally and spiritually. My mind was without any distressing thoughts, considering the short time I have to remain here below, and that the notice of my death may be very short. For I see it to be so with others around me day by day. O, may I be, by the Holy Spirit of God, fully prepared to meet the heavenly Bridegroom, at whatever hour or day he may come to remove me from this time-state. I got up, and was led to take a book which I had read a year ago—the work of a French Protestant minister, Charles Drehncourt. He was a minister in Paris, and died Nov. 3rd, 1669, aged 74 years, and in the 52nd year of his ministry. Therefore the work is between 200 and 300 years old. It was translated into English, and published

in London, 1716. I have found much comforting and establishing truth in it this day, proving it to be the same Spirit's work in all ages of time in the hearts of the Lord's people. It brings to my mind the desire I had this day twelve months ago, that with comfortable submission to the will of God, his prayer at the time of his death, and the manner of his death may be mine also. Although I am not blessed with natural abilities to put it in words and order as he has been able to do, yet in substance it is my prayer, as it was his. I therefore am inclined to employ my time in writing it, as follows:

“A Prayer and Meditation upon the Time of Death.—O most merciful Lord, who dost govern all things by thine infinite wisdom, and hast reserved times and seasons in thine own power, thou hast not only written my name in the book of the living, but hast also measured the length of my days, and prescribed my days that I cannot pass beyond. This body is but a weak tabernacle, made up of earth, subject to all manner of infirmities; nevertheless, none is able to destroy it without thy divine permission. The same hand that hath fashioned and formed it, must break it to pieces. If a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without thy permission, it is not possible my soul should fly away into heaven without thy warrant. My God and Father, give me daily apprehensions of death; but let me trust thee, who dost kill and make alive; and bring to the grave and raise up again. Neither can Satan, nor all the enemies of my soul, do anything but what thy wisdom hath ordained and appointed before the foundations of the world. Without thy permission, they cannot pluck one hair from my head, or diminish one moment from the time thou hast appointed for me in this earthly tabernacle.

“Most gracious God, I desire to commit my soul unto thee, as into the hands of my faithful Creator; and may thy will be accomplished in me and by me to the honour and glory of thy great Name. O Lord, my God, I know that every kind of death of thy children is precious in thy sight; and whatever may transpire, thou wilt take care of my soul.

“What matters it whether my lamp goes out, or is blown out by some enemy's blast, so that it be illuminated by the immortal beams of the Sun of righteousness, and continues glorious in heaven through a precious Redeemer. I shall be happy if I die in the Lord, and enter into thine eternal rest from all my labours and sorrows, in what manner soever death comes to me. From all eternity, O Lord, thou knowest all thy works; and with a glance of thine eye, thou discoverest depths and seeest unto an endless eternity. And as thou hast marked out and appointed the moment of my death, thou hast also ordained the manner of it. I must, O my gracious God, resign myself unto this wonderful and wise providence, and be content with thy uncontrollable decrees. But, O my God and Father, if thou wilt grant me, who am but dust and ashes, to breathe out my desires before thee, I beseech thee to be so gracious as to let me know my end that I be not surprised by a sudden and unexpected death, as Job's children were; or as good old Eli was; but be so merciful as to grant me timely notice of my departure, as thou didst to thy servant Hezekiah. I desire not the notice of many years; but a few days, or at least a few hours immediately before; that my soul be not disturbed with evil thoughts, or false conceits and evil suggestions of the devil; but, if thy blessed will, that I may end my days with all tranquillity and satisfaction of mind; and that the Holy Comforter may comfort my soul; and that I may have my senses and understanding and the influence of thy grace; that I may glorify thy Name for thy mercy, and edify those around me until

the last moments of my departure; and that I may have time again to commit my soul into thy blessed hands, for thy Name and mercy's sake. Amen.'

"My dear friends, this is a day of earnest thought, a day of consideration, a day of examination, a day of praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God; not a day of great trouble, although there is plenty in myself, in my house, in my family, and about me, if the Lord permitted it, to be a great trouble to me this day, the anniversary of my birth. I am in no outward joy or rejoicing, such as the world calls joy or pleasure, but in my room with pen in hand, thinking over what is past and what may be to come. Some things I know will take place; for, 'It is appointed unto all men once to die,' and enter into eternity. I am thinking my life might be divided into four stages; the first, childhood and youth, when I had no right consideration of eternity, or what would become of my never-dying soul. The second, the years I was under the sensibility that I was a sinner before a holy, just, and righteous God, knowing that without holiness, no man could be accepted before the Lord. This I believed I was entirely destitute of, but earnestly desired it. Therefore I was travelling, as I consider, without hope and without God (as a God of mercy), having no hope from the law as a covenant of works, and no appropriating faith to believe in the gospel, as the covenant of grace, to the comfort of my soul. Therefore, in that state I was dumb, opening the state of my mind to no soul living; all transpired between God and my own soul. The third stage of my life began when, by the ministry of the truth, light shone on my path, giving me to see that I was in the footsteps of the flock, and creating hope and expectation that I should find that full enjoyment of soul, and acceptance with God, that my soul earnestly desired. What thankfulness, what melting of my hard heart with tears rolling down my cheeks, did I experience then! What a gradual rising to a good hope I felt, and a looking forward to the Spirit of adoption. There was faith labouring up and down in my soul against unbelief; and hope against despair. Mr. Huntington called this change in the soul, 'crossing the line.' So I continued for years looking forward for the set time to come to favour Zion, that is, for the full manifestation of the love of God to be shed abroad in my heart, bringing sweet peace into the soul, to the removing of the guilt of my sins and the fear of death; which God granted me in his own due time. Then I could love God, because he first loved me. Then I could render praise and thanksgiving with a heart melting like wax before the sun; and at the same time tears flowed like a river so that I could hardly see to attend to my employment for three days. This brings me to the fourth stage of my life—to the present day. How many changes have I passed through since then, both in providence and grace; but God has been faithful to his promise, not one thing has failed of all that he has promised; but all is come to pass, as it is this day.

'The oath and promise of the Lord
Join to confirm the wondrous grace;
Eternal power performs the word.'

And WILL 'fill all heaven with endless praise.'

I have nothing to complain of, but myself. O the departures and backslidings of my heart, what an unworthy, base, hard-hearted sinner I am!

'O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!'

'His mercy endureth for ever,' therefore I am not consumed; but I am often like Mr. Hart, wanting the Lord to 'kindly make it o'er again.'

Many times I have had a sweet revival of it in reading, hearing, and in meditation. Therefore my soul rests on the merits of the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ; for I have no other hope, and I look for no other. I can say from my heart, 'To whom else shall I go? For thou hast the words of eternal life.' There I trust; there I depend; and I hope I am not deceived. I have not gone into the minute exercises of my soul, throughout the many years of my life, nor into the evils of my heart; I am ashamed of them. 'Let them be ashamed which transgress without cause,' says the Scripture, and I am sure I have no just cause for any of my transgressions; but must say, 'I am the chief of sinners, and the least of all saints.'

"If I have written anything on this my anniversary that is not according to the Lord's will, I desire the Lord to pardon and forgive me, and 'lead me in the way everlasting.' What you see amiss, cover with the mantle of love. I desire to leave it in the Lord's hand.

"May the good Lord strengthen, comfort, and establish you in all that he calls you into, and bless your souls with sweet peace in thinking over his loving-kindness and goodness towards you, in and through the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"I remain, your brother in the bonds of covenant love,

"Brighton, July 1st, 1873."

"GEORGE WESTON.

On his 80th birthday he wrote to his daughter; and after speaking of his age and past days, he says:

"I do not know why I should be spared so long, unless it is to see the goodness of God towards my family in his providence and grace. See the number that are blessed with his special grace; not only of my children, but my grandchildren. His blessing has indeed been on children's children. F. and her husband, and E.'s eldest son have made a profession of their faith in Christ Jesus, and have been baptized. O the goodness of my God to me and mine! 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name.' Now that I am 'old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not' when my strength faileth."

On Aug. 17th, 1880, a few days before he was confined to his house, he writes:

"I am very weak, and I think it is the breaking up of my constitution; but I desire to be wise, by the Lord's help, and consider my latter end. I am not distressed about it; but desire to wait patiently until the appointed time cometh. Being in my 86th year, it cannot be very long. My only trust for eternal salvation is in the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ; and I desire the blessed evidences of divine life in my soul to go hand in hand with the faith I have in Israel's Three-One covenant-keeping God, who hath promised never to leave nor forsake those that trust in him. I have been able to get to the house of prayer regularly, being so near."

On Monday evening, Aug. 23rd, he went to chapel for the last time, and was much comforted; and he went to bed that night refreshed in soul, but never left his room again. During his illness these words were blessedly fulfilled in him: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." He frequently said, "I want to be like clay in the hand of my heavenly Potter." On Oct. 27th, he said:

"I feel my mind reconciled to the Lord's will, whether this affliction is to end in death, or I am to remain a little longer in this state,

—the Lord's will be done. He is dealing very gently with me in not permitting me to labour under severe pains of body, or distress of soul. 'He hath done all things well.' My hope and confidence are alone in the merits of a precious Redeemer. The apostle says, 'Cast not away therefore your confidence;' and our blessed Lord says, 'I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.' Bless his holy Name, remembering the many trials, afflictions, and temptations he has brought me through, he is dealing kindly with me in the last days of my pilgrimage here below."

When I called to see him, I found him always in the same frame of mind. While I was reading to him, he usually made some comment on the Word and the preciousness of the Scriptures; and immediately I ceased in prayer, he added,

"O thou great and eternal God, do thou hear the prayer and thanksgiving that has been offered up on my behalf, and bless my friends, whom I love in the truth; and bless thy church and people in this time-state. O Lord my God, do thou bless me with strength and patience to wait for my departure through the merits of the life, death, resurrection, ascension, and blessed atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen, and amen."

When the deacons called he did in like manner. But as he drew nearer his end, his words were few and solemn. The last time I called, a few days before his end, he said,

"I am lying like clay in the hand of the potter, waiting: I don't know why the Lord keeps me here so long; but may thy will be done."

After prayer, he again very solemnly began thus:

"O thou great and eternal God, do thou hear and answer through the Name and merits of Jesus Christ. Amen. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us, and all the Israel of God. Amen, and amen."

The day before he died a friend called to see him, who said, "Ah! you will soon be home now." He lifted up his arm as high as he could, and said, "All is well." During the night preceding his death, although his voice was nearly gone, he kept repeating again and again, "Bless the Lord! bless the Lord!" So he fell peacefully asleep in Jesus on Jan. 21st, 1881, at 7.40 a.m., in the 86th year of his age.

"In vain our fancy strives to paint
The moment after death,
The glories that surround the saints
When they resign their breath.
One gentle sigh,—their fetters break,
We scarce can say, 'They're gone,'
Before the willing spirit takes
Her mansion near the throne."

Burgess Hill, July 11th, 1881.

E. ASHDOWN.

MARIA MATHER.—On Dec. 21st, 1881, aged 76, Maria Mather, a member of the church at Bolton, Lancashire, over 80 years.

When the Lord began the good work of grace in her heart I do not know, but it must have been many years ago, according to the account which several of us have heard her relate. When a

young woman she used to attend sometimes the Established Church, and at other times dissenting places of worship. But one night when in a dissenting place (Independent, I think), in company with another young woman, the preacher's text was so fastened on her heart, that when she came out she left her companion and went home, feeling herself to be a poor, guilty, condemned sinner, and went into her chamber on her knees, and implored the Lord to have mercy upon her. From that time she began to see and feel sin to be a bitter thing, and began calling those who were employed with her in the mill by their proper names, instead of as before, by nicknames.

She went on in this way for some time, and the Lord kept deepening his work in her heart, until the time came, to use her own words, when being much bowed down in the mill as a guilty sinner before God, such a light shone into her heart, that by the eye of faith she saw a bleeding Saviour, and felt the power of his precious blood applied to her soul by the Holy Ghost, in taking away thereby all her sins and guilt. She clasped her hands together, and exultingly exclaimed, "I have found Christ."

After this, she began to attend Dr. Hewlett's church at Astley, and while there, the Lord began to enlighten her mind upon the ordinance of believer's baptism. Soon after she came to a point about being baptized, she and others went to hear Mr. Gadsby, of Manchester; when she requested Mr. Gadsby to baptize her, and after some conversation, he assented, and she was baptized. But being ignorant of the rules of Mr. Gadsby's church, to her surprise, when she sat with Mr. Gadsby's people at the ordinance of the Lord's supper in the afternoon, they informed her that she could not be allowed to do so, not having gone before the church, in the usual way, to give an account of what the Lord had done for her.

Living at or near Tyldersley, about nine miles from Manchester, she used to attend Dr. Hewlett's place at Astley, sometimes, and at Manchester at other times. Mr. Gadsby's ministry suited her so well that she resolved to move to Manchester, anticipating the blessedness she should receive under his preaching, but to her grief and surprise she found it quite the reverse; for, after living in Manchester over three years, and constantly attending his ministry, she was only specially blessed about twice. Her health also being very bad, she was brought to the conclusion that it was not the Lord's will she should abide there, so that she returned again to Tyldersley.

She then became a member at the little place at Bolton, and was an ornament and a real blessing to the church for over 30 years, being a real peace-maker, and of a kind, benevolent spirit, and being dearly loved by the Lord's people and ministers that knew her. Her place at the chapel was seldom empty. From the time she was laid aside to her death, it was about seven weeks. Her request was that Mr. Chandler should bury her, and that myself and other members of the church should carry her to

the grave, which was followed out. On the Lord's day evening following the week she was interred, Mr. Chandler preached a very suitable discourse from Jno. x. 27. May the dear Lord fill the waste places made by taking his dear saints to glory, is the prayer of

133, Crook Street, Bolton.

GEORGE NEWMAN.

MARTHA EVANS.—On Sept. 21st, 1881, aged 74, Martha Evans, a member of the church at Bolton, Lancashire.

She was brought out from the Church of England, and after attending the little place here for some time, she fought in her mind desperately against God's discriminating truths, until the Lord brought her down at his feet, and made her see and feel something of the glory and power of his truth in her own soul. She was confined to her home nearly six months before her death. I went to see her several times, and although she could not express herself like some, yet she was evidently resting upon a precious Redeemer's blood and righteousness as her only hope.

Hearing that she had improved, and living myself some distance from Bolton, I had not been to see her for several weeks previous to her death. But when informed of her being worse, I fixed to go at once, and accordingly went on Saturday evening, Sept. 24th, when the person answering the door informed me that she had been buried that afternoon at Tyldersley. What a rebuke I felt it to be to us as a people, and how dishonourable of her friends, not to have informed us of the event that we might, out of love and esteem, have seen her laid in the grave.

But the fact is, her family hated their mother attending our little place, and no doubt hated us too, on account of the sentiments that we hold and contend for. How I have begged of God to give me grace when I have gone to see her, and have read and prayed and spoken to her a little of the precious things of God, and his faithfulness to his dear people. I knew that *she* prized these things, whilst those of her household hated both them and us. When I was invited in after her death, I asked whether they wished to have her hymn-book from chapel. "No, we don't want it," was the reply, "let it keep there, it is of no use to us." Thus our dear Lord told his disciples not to wonder if the world hated them, but to remember that it hated him likewise. Bless the Lord, he will have his own dear people, and neither professors, parents, nor children shall ever hinder or prevent it.

133, Crook Street, Bolton.

GEO. NEWMAN.

THOMAS HICKS.—My dear father was born at Hailey, near Witney, Feb. 14th, 1806. When he was about 19 years of age he came to Abingdon for a few days on a visit to his sister. A master cabinet-maker called on business, and my aunt asked him if he could employ her brother. He said, "Yes;" and he was to go to work at once. He had been brought up to carpentering; and as

he was always very persevering and quick at work, in a few years he was a first-class workman.

He was a very moral, steady young man. Soon after he came to Abingdon he joined a band of music, and took great interest in writing out the music, and attended very regularly on a Monday evening for practice.

After a few years he was very poorly, and some thought he would go in a decline. I have heard him say this affliction was the means, in the Lord's hands, of bringing him to a concern about his soul. One day about this time, he was passing through the churchyard, when he saw a human skull. It made a great effect on him, and I have heard him say he thought, "How soon I may be like that!" After a time he got better; but the good work was begun, and, like others, he tried to work out a righteousness of his own. He went to church very regularly, and thought he was a great Christian. I have heard him say he used to think, at this time, that if he died in his sleep how sure he was that he should go to heaven.

Soon after this, that dear man of God, Mr. Tiptaft, came to Sutton Courtney, and my dear father went occasionally to hear him. When the chapel was opened at Abingdon he was there, and used to go in the evening afterwards, when he could not be seen by others. He used to stand at his door and look both ways, to see if any one was coming that would see him go down the Abbey. It was not so easy to go to the Abbey Chapel in those days as it is now.

About this time the Lord began to deepen the work he had begun in his soul, and he had to give up meeting with the band on a Monday evening; and the consequence was the band was broken up, and dear Mr. Tiptaft had all the blame for it. After a time he was raised to a hope; and when Mr. Tiptaft published his 15 Reasons for leaving the Church of England he was more than ever convinced that the Establishment was wrong, and that what Mr. Tiptaft contended for was right and the truth; and I have heard him say about this time how the truth was manifested to him and he rejoiced in it. But after this he sank lower and lower, until he got near despair. About this time also he had some very solemn feelings and thoughts about the doctrines of Election and Predestination; but in the Lord's own good time he appeared for him and set his soul at a happy liberty, in the street, as he was going home from work. He gave a very nice account of this in a letter to a friend, which was published in the "G. S." for May, 1845.

After this he had a path of tribulation for many years; my dear mother was much afflicted, and three of my brothers and a sister died young.

About the year 1855 the Sunday-school was opened here. I have heard dear father say how things began to revive in his soul.

I must now come to his last days. In the spring of last year his health began to fail. In the autumn he had medical advice;

the doctors said it was tumour, or cancer, in the bowels. He got gradually worse; but it was evident to all that he was getting ripe for glory, and that it was for his end. He was calm and comfortable in his mind, went to chapel as long as he could get there, and gave out some very blessed hymns. The last time he went to chapel was on the first Lord's day in December. He opened the morning service with hymn 9, and the afternoon with 1085. He read two of Mr. Covell's sermons, and to the surprise of all he got through very well.

After this he began to get worse very fast. On Dec. 6th he looked at me, and said, "I can say one of Dr. Watts's verses to-night which I never could say before with a good conscience:

"Let worldly minds the world pursue;
It has no charms for me," &c.

Last Lord's day he told us in the vestry that he had been praying for many years that he might be made fit and willing to die, and he said he hoped he was willing to die.

Dec. 18th. This was the second Sunday dear father was at home. I went up to see him before going to chapel. He said, "I have been thinking this morning about Toplady's hymn:

'Yes, I to the end shall endure,' &c.,

and I hope I have the earnest."

Dec. 29th. This evening he repeated part of hymn 160. The last two verses he could hardly get through, his voice faltered so.

Dec. 30th. At bed-time he said,

"Whoso lives upon his promise,
Eats his flesh and drinks his blood,
All that's past and all to come is
For that soul's eternal good."

Dec. 31st. Mr. Bond came to see him, read Isa. xii., and prayed with him.

Jan. 1st, 1882. I went up to see dear father. As soon as he saw me he said, "Ah, Charles! It is all well. I hope that dear man's prayer has been answered." And then he told me how he had been blessed in the night. I cannot think of all that he said; but, "Unto you that believe he is precious;" and several hymns were very sweet to him. He said what love he felt to all the friends. He wished us to sing at the chapel hymn 174.

Jan. 2nd. Dear father was not so well. When he saw me, he said, "As dead as a stone; but the Lord does not alter; he is the same; there is no change in him."

Jan. 3rd. We never saw dear father in such a blessed state as he was in this morning. He was full with the blessing of the Lord; his cup did indeed run over. He said, over and over again, "To be for ever with the Lord, to see him as he is;" "My beloved is mine and I am his;" and "I have fought a good fight," &c. He said to his sister, "I have been fearing for 50 years that when I came to die, if I should be wrong after all." He said much that I cannot remember, nor can I convey to any one in writing the blessed state he was in, there was

such sweetness in what he said. He said how he had been praying for the church that we might be kept in peace.

Jan. 4th. Dear father said to-day that he had a sweet and blessed confidence, but did not feel as he did yesterday morning.

Jan. 5th. To-night he said he had no doubts or fears, but could not get what he wanted; as the end was near he wanted communion.

Jan. 6th. Dear father told me how he had been tried in the night. The tempter told him he had no room for Christ in his heart. Poor dear father! I shall never forget him; he cried like a child; but after a time he said, "These words came: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee!" He said, "No room for Christ in my heart! I told the Lord there *was* room for him in my heart."

Jan. 7th. Dear father said to-night, "I cannot get near to-day.

"How sovereign is the love of God
To Israel's favour'd race."

And he repeated, "These light afflictions which are but for a moment," &c. When I went up the last thing at night, he said he was better in body and mind. I said, "What! Is he come again?" He said, "A little. I have been dark all day. What should I do now without my blessed Saviour? O to think of the way the Lord has led me, how he brought me out of that little dark village! Where are my companions now? These things that we profess and know will stand the test, and no other will."

Jan. 11th. Dear father is very ill to-night. He said to me, "Ah, Charles! I am so low and weak that I cannot pray, or think. What should I do now if it was not all done?"

Jan. 15th. This evening was the last time I saw my dear father alive. I said, "Shall I say a few words?" He said, "Yes, a few; I cannot stand much now." He heartily responded, and said, "Amen!" three times; and, "The Lord answer prayer!" I took my leave of him for the night, little thinking it would be his last. He entered into his eternal rest early on the morning of the 16th.

The Lord was very merciful to my dear father. He took him so gradually, and by what the doctor said if he had lingered a little longer he would have suffered very much with the cancer, or tumour. As he so longed to go home, the Lord granted his request. Erysipelas and bronchitis came on, and were the means, in the Lord's hands, of saving him from much suffering. He was very quiet all through his illness and very patient.

CHARLES HICKS.

[We hope to give in our next the letter referred to in the above Obituary.]

Errata.—Page 67, five lines from the bottom, for *horse* read *house*. Pages 96, last line, and 97, first line, *with-our* ought to be *without*. These blunders are entirely the fault of the printer's reader.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

APRIL, 1882.

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

A BROKEN HEART.

BY JOHN BUNYAN.

(Continued from p. 121.)

I COME now, in order, to show you what a broken heart and what a contrite spirit is. This must be done, because in the discovery of this lies both the comfort of them that have it and the conviction of them that have it not.

Now, that I may do this the better, I must propound and speak to these four things:

I. I must show you what a one that heart is that is not broken, that is not contrite.

II. I must show you how, or with what the heart is broken, and made contrite.

III. Show you how and what it is, when broken, and made contrite. And

IV. I shall, last of all, give you some signs of a broken and contrite heart.

For the first of these, to wit, What a one that heart is, that is not a broken, that is not a contrite heart.

1. The heart, before it is broken, is hard and stubborn, and obstinate against God and the salvation of the soul. (Zech. vii. 12; Deut. ii. 30; ix. 27.)

2. It is a heart full of evil imaginations and darkness. (Gen. viii. 12; Rom. i. 21.)

3. It is a heart deceitful and subject to be deceived, especially about the things of an eternal concernment. (Isa. xlv. 20; Deut. xi. 16.)

4. It is a heart that rather gathereth iniquity and vanity to itself than anything that is good for the soul. (Ps. xli. 6; xciv. 11.)

5. It is an unbelieving heart, and one that is turned away from God to sin. (Heb. iii. 12; Deut. xvii. 17.)

6. It is a heart not prepared for God, being uncircumcised, nor for the reception of his holy Word. (2 Chron. xii. 14; Ps. lxxviii. 8; Acts vii. 51.)

7. It is a heart not single, but double; it will pretend to serve God, but will withal lean to the devil and sin. (Ps. xii. 2; Ezek. xxxiii. 81.)

8. It is a heart proud and stout; it loves not to be controlled, though the controller be God himself. (Ps. ci. 5; Prov. xv. 5; Mal. iii.)

9. It is a heart that will give place to Satan, but will resist the Holy Ghost. (Acts v. 8; vii. 51.)

10. In a word, it is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; so wicked, that none can know it. (Jer. xvii. 9.)

That the heart before it is broken is such, and worse than I have described it to be, is sufficiently seen by the whole course of the world. Where is the man (whose heart has not been broken, and whose spirit is not contrite) that, according to the Word of God, deals honestly with his own soul?

It is one character of a right heart that it is sound in God's statutes, and honest. (Ps. cxix. 80; Lu. viii. 15.)

Now, an honest heart will not put off itself, nor be put off with that which will not go for current money with the merchants; I mean, with that which will not go for saving grace at the day of judgment. But, alas! alas! None, how honest soever they are to others, have honesty towards themselves; though he is the worst of deceivers who deceiveth his own soul, as James has it, about the things of his own soul. (Jas. i. 22, 26.) But,

Secondly, I now come to shew you with what, and how the heart is broken, and the spirit made contrite.

The instrument with which the heart is broken, and with which the spirit is made contrite, is the Word. "Is not my word," says God, "like a fire, and like a hammer, that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jer. xxiii. 29.)

The rock in this text is the heart, which in another place is compared to an adamant, which adamant is harder than flint. (Zech. vii. 11, 12; Ezek. iii. 9.)

This rock, this adamant, this stony heart, is broken and made contrite by the Word. But it only is so when the Word is as a fire, and as a hammer to break and melt it; and then, and then only, it is as a fire, and a hammer to the heart to break it, when it is managed by the arm of God. No man can break the heart with the Word; no angel can break the heart with the Word; that is, if God forbears to second it by mighty power from heaven. This made Balaam go without a heart rightly broken and truly contrite, though he was rebuked by an angel; and the Pharisees die in their sins, though rebuked for them, and admonished by the Saviour. Wherefore, though the Word is the instrument with which the heart is broken, yet it is not broken with the Word, till that Word is managed by the might and power of God.

This made the prophet Isaiah, after long preaching, cry out that he had laboured for nought, and in vain; and this made him cry to God to rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains, or rocky hills, or hearts, might be broken, and melt at his presence. (Isa. xlix. 4; lxiv. 1, 2.) For he found by experience that as to this, no effectual work could be done, unless

the Lord put to his hand. This also is often intimated in the Scriptures, where it saith, when the preachers preached effectually to the breaking of men's hearts, the Lord wrought with them; the hand of the Lord was with them; and the like. (Mark xvi. 20; Acts xi. 21.)

Now, when the hand of the Lord is with the Word, then it is mighty; it is "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." It is sharp, then, as a sword, in the soul and spirit; it sticks like an arrow in the hearts of sinners, to the causing of the people to fall at his feet for mercy. Then it is, as was said afore, as a fire, and as a hammer, to break this rock in pieces. (2 Cor. x. 4; Heb. iv. 14; Ps. cx. 3.)

And hence the Word is made mention of under a double consideration :

1. As it stands by itself.

2. As attended with power from heaven.

1. As it stands by itself, and is not seconded with saving operation from heaven, it is called the word only, the word barely, or as if it was only the word of man. (1 Thess. i. 5, 7; 1 Cor. iv. 19, 20; 1 Thess. ii. 13.) Because then it is only as managed by men, who are not able to make it accomplish that work. The Word of God, when in a man's hand only, is like the father's sword in the hand of the sucking child; which sword, though never so well pointed, and though never so sharp on the edges, is *now* unable to conquer a foe, and to make an enemy fall and cry out for mercy, because it is but in the hand of the child.

But now, let the same sword be put into the hand of a skilful father (and God is both skilful and able to manage his word), and then the sinner, and then the proud helpers too, are both made to stoop and submit themselves. Wherefore I say, though the Word be the instrument, yet of itself it doth do no saving good to the soul. The heart is not broken, nor the spirit made contrite thereby. It only worketh death, and leaveth men in the chains of their sins, still faster bound over to eternal condemnation. (2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.)

2. But when seconded by mighty power, then the same Word is as the roaring of a lion, as the piercing of a sword, as a burning fire in the bones, as thunder, and as a hammer that dashes all to pieces. (Jer. xxv. 30; Amos i. 2; iii. 8; Acts ii. 37; Jer. xx. 9; Ps. xxxix. 3, 9.)

Wherefore, from hence it is to be concluded that whoever have heard the Word preached, and have not heard the voice of the living God therein, have not, as yet, had their hearts broken, nor their spirits made contrite for their sins.

And this leads me to the second thing, to wit, to show how the heart is broken, and the spirit made contrite by the Word; and verily it is when the Word comes home with power. But this is but general. Wherefore more particularly,

1. Then the Word works effectually to this purpose, when it findeth out the sinner and his sin, and shall convince him that

it has found him out. Thus it was with our first father. When he had sinned, he sought to hide himself from God. He gets among the trees of the garden, and there he shrouds himself; but yet, not thinking himself secure, he covers himself with fig-leaves, and now he lieth quiet. Now God shall not find me, thinks he, nor know what I have done. But, lo! By-and-by, he hears the "voice of the Lord God walking in the garden;" and now, Adam, what do you mean to do? Why, as yet, he skulketh, and hides his head, and seeks yet to lie undiscovered; but, behold the voice cries out, "Adam!" And now he begins to tremble. "Adam, where art thou?" says God; and now Adam is made to answer. But the voice of the Lord God doth not leave him here. No, it now begins to search and inquire after his doings, and to unravel what he had wrapt together and covered, until it made him bare and naked in his own sight before the face of God. (Gen. iii. 7, 11.)

Thus, therefore, doth the Word, when managed by the arm of God. It findeth out, it singleth out the sinner; the sinner finds it so. It finds out the sins of the sinner. It unravels his whole life, it strips him, and lays him naked in his own sight, before the face of God; neither can the sinner nor his wickedness be longer hid and covered; and now begins the sinner to see what he never saw before.

2. Another instance of this is David, the man of our text. He sins, he sins grossly; he sins and hides it; yea, and seeks to hide it from the sight of God and man. Well; Nathan is sent to preach a preaching to him, and that in common, and that in special; in common, by a parable; in special, by a particular application of it to him. While Nathan only preached in common, or in general, David was fish-whole, and stood as right in his own eyes as if he had been as innocent and as harmless as any man alive; but God had a love for David, and, therefore, commands his servant Nathan to go home, not only to David's ears, but to David's conscience.

Well, David, thou must fall. Says Nathan, "Thou art the man;" says David, "I have sinned." (1 Sam. xii. 1, 5, 7, 13.) And then his heart was broken, and his spirit made contrite, as this psalm and our text doth show.

3. A third instance is that of Saul. He had heard many a sermon, and was become a great professor; yea, he was more zealous than many of his equals; but his heart was never broken, nor his spirit ever made contrite, till he heard one preach from heaven, till he heard God, in the Word of God, making inquiry after his sins. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" says Jesus; and then he can stand no longer; for then his heart breaks; then he falls to the ground; then he trembles; then he cries out, "Who art thou, Lord?" and, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts viii.)

Wherefore, as I said, then the Word works effectually to this purpose when it findeth out the sinner and the sin; and also

when it shall convince him that it has found him out. Only I must join here a caution, for every operation of the Word upon the conscience is not saving; nor does all conviction end in the saving conversion of the sinner. It is then only such an operation of the Word that is intended, when it shows the sinner not only the evil of his ways, but brings the heart unfeignedly over to God by Christ. And this brings me to the third thing.

Thirdly. I am, therefore, come to show you how, and what the heart is, when broken and made contrite; and this I must do by opening unto you the two chief expressions of the text:

1. What is meant by this word *broken*.

2. What is meant by this word *contrite*.

1. For this word *broken*, Tindal renders it a *troubled* heart; but I think there is more in it. I take it, therefore, to be a heart *disabled*, as to former actions; even as a man whose bones are broken is *disabled* as to his way of running, leaping, wrestling, or aught else, which vainly he was wont to do. Wherefore, that which is called a *broken heart* in the text, he calls his *broken bones* in verse the eighth: "Cause me," saith he, "to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice." And why is the breaking of the heart compared to the breaking of the bones, but because, as when the bones are broken, the outward man is disabled as to what it was wont to do? So when the spirit is broken, the inward man is disabled as to what vanity and folly it before delighted in. Hence feebleness is joined with this brokenness of heart. "I am feeble," saith he, "and sore broken." I have lost my strength and former vigour, as to vain and sinful courses. (Ps. xxxviii. 8.)

This, then, it is to have the heart broken,—to have it lamed, disabled, and taken off, by sense of God's wrath due to sin, from that course of life it formerly was conversant in. And to show that this work is no fancy, nor done but with great trouble to the soul, it is compared to the putting the bones out of joint, the breaking of the bones, the burning of the bones with fire; or as the taking the natural moisture from the bones; the vexing of the bones, &c. (Ps. xxii. 14; Jer. xx. 9; Lam. i. 13; Ps. vi. 2; Prov. xvii. 22.)

All which are expressions adorned with such similitudes as do undeniably declare that to sense and feeling a broken heart is a grievous thing.

2. What is meant by the word *contrite*. A contrite spirit is a penitent one, one sorely grieved and deeply sorrowful for the sins it has committed against God and to the damage of the soul; and so it is to be taken in all those places where a contrite spirit is made mention of; as in Ps. xxxiv. 18; Isa. lvii. 15; lvi. 2.

As a man that has by his folly procured a broken leg or arm is heartily sorry that ever he was so foolish as to be engaged in such foolish ways of idleness and vanity, so he whose heart is broken with a sense of God's wrath due to his sin hath deep

sorrow in his soul, and is greatly repentant that ever he should be such a fool as, by rebellious doings, to bring himself and his soul to so much sharp affliction. Hence, while others are sporting themselves in vanity, such a one doth call his sin his greatest folly. "My wounds stink, and are corrupt," saith David, "because of my foolishness." And again: "O God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are not hid from thee." (Ps. xxxviii. 5; lxix. 5.)

Men, whatever they say with their lips, cannot conclude, if yet their hearts want breaking, that sin is a foolish thing. Hence it says, "The foolishness of fools is their folly." (Prov. xiv. 24.) That is, the foolishness of some men is, that they take pleasure in their sins, for their sins are their foolishness, and the folly of their soul lies in their countenancing of this foolishness. But the man whose heart is broken, he is none of these. He cannot be one of these, any more than he that has his bones broken can rejoice that he is desired to play a match at football. Hence, to hear others talk foolishly is to the grief of those whom God has wounded; or, as it is, in another place, "Their words are like the piercings of a sword." (Ps. lxix. 26; Prov. xii. 18.)

Thus, therefore, I take to be the meaning of these two words, *a broken and a contrite spirit.*

Fourthly, and lastly. As to this, I now come more particularly to give you some signs of a broken heart, of a broken and contrite spirit.

1. A broken-hearted man, such as is intended in the text, is a sensible man. He is brought to the exercise of all the senses of his soul. All others are dead, senseless, and without true feeling of what the broken-hearted man is sensible of.

(1.) He sees himself to be what others are ignorant of; that is, he sees himself to be not only a sinful man, but a man by nature in the gall and bond of sin. In the gall of sin. It is Peter's expression to Simon, and it is a saying common to all men; for every man, in the state of nature, is in the gall of sin. He was shapen in it, conceived in it. It has also possession of, and by that possession has infected the whole of his soul and body. (Ps. li. 5; Acts viii. 23.)

This he sees, this he understands. Every professor sees not this, because the blessing of a broken heart is not bestowed on every one. David says, "There is no soundness in my flesh." And Solomon suggests that a plague or running sore is in every heart; but every one perceives not this. (Ps. xxxviii. 3; 1 Ki. xiii. 38.)

He saith again, that his wounds stank, and were corrupted; that his sore ran, and ceased not. (Ps. xxxviii. 5; lxxii. 2.)

But these things the brutish man, the man whose heart was never broken, has no understanding of; but the broken-hearted, the man that has a broken spirit, he sees, as the prophet has it, he sees his sickness, he sees his wound: "When Ephraim

saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound." (Hos. v. 13.) He sees it to his grief, he sees it to his sorrow.

(2.) He feels what others have no sense of. He feels the arrows of the Almighty, and that they stick fast in him. He feels how sore and sick, by the smiting of God's hammer upon his heart to break it, his poor soul is made. He feels a burden intolerable lying upon his spirit. "Mine iniquities," saith he, "are gone over my head; as a heavy burden, they are too heavy for me." He feels also the heavy hand of God upon his soul; a thing unknown to carnal men. (Ps. xxxviii. 2, 4; Hos. v. 13.)

He feels pain, being wounded, even such pains as others cannot understand, because they are not broken. "My heart," says David, "is sore pained within me." Why so? Why, "The terrors of death are fallen upon me." The terrors of death cause pain; yea, pain of the highest nature. Hence, that which is here called "pains," is in another place called "pangs." (Ps. lv. 4; Isa. xxi. 3.)

You know broken bones occasion pain, strong pain; yea, pain that will make a man or woman "groan with the groaning of a deadly wounded man." (Ezek. xxx. 24.)

Soul-pain is the sorest pain; in comparison to which the pain of the body is a very tolerable thing. (Prov. xviii. 14.)

Now, here is soul-pain, here is heart-pain, here we are discoursing of a wounded, of a broken spirit. Wherefore this pain is to be felt to the sinking of the whole man; neither can any support this but God. Here is death in this pain; death for ever, without God's special mercy, this pain will bring the soul to; and this the broken-hearted man doth feel. "The sorrows of death," said David, "compassed me about, and the pains of hell got hold upon me, and I found trouble and sorrow." (Ps. cxvi.)

Aye, I'll warrant thee, poor man, thou foundest trouble and sorrow indeed; for the pains of hell and sorrows of death are pains and sorrows the most intolerable. But this the man is acquainted with that has his heart broken.

(8.) As he sees and feels, so he hears that which augments his woe and sorrow. You know if a man has his bones broken, he does not only see and feel, but oftentimes also hears what increases his grief; as that his wound is incurable, that his bone is not rightly set, that there is danger of a gangrene, that he may be lost for want of looking to. These are the voices, the sayings that haunt the house of one that has his bones broken. And a broken-hearted man knows what I mean by this; he hears that which makes his lips quiver, and at the noise of which he seems to feel rottenness enter into his bones. He trembleth in himself, and wishes that he may hear joy and gladness, that the bones, the heart, and spirit, which God has broken, may rejoice. (Hab. iii. 16; Ps. li. 8.)

He thinks he hears God say, the devil say, his conscience say, and all good men to whisper among themselves, saying, "There is no help for him in God." Job heard this, David heard this,

Haman heard this; and this is a common sound in the ears of the broken-hearted.

(4.) The broken-hearted smell what others cannot scent. Alas! sin never smelled so to any man alive, as it smells to the broken-hearted. You know wounds will stink; but no stink like that of sin to the broken-hearted man; his own sins stink, and so do the sins of all the world to him. Sin is like carrion, it is of a stinking nature; yea, it has the worst of smells, however some men like it. (Ps. xxxviii. 5.)

But none are offended with the scent thereof but God and the broken-hearted sinner. "My wounds stink, and are corrupt," saith he, "both in God's nostrils, and mine own."

But, alas! Who smells the stink of sin? None of the carnal world; they, like carrion-crows, seek it, love it, and eat it as the child eats bread. "They eat up the sin of my people," saith God, "and set their heart on their iniquity." (Hos. iv. 8.)

This, I say, they do, because they do not smell the nauseous scent of sin. You know that what is nauseous to the smell cannot be palatable to the taste. The broken-hearted man doth find that sin is nauseous, and therefore cries out, "It stinketh." They also think at times the smell of fire, of fire and brimstone is upon them; they are so sensible of the wages due to sin.

(5.) The broken-hearted is also a tasting man. Wounds, if sore and full of pains, of great pains, do sometimes alter the taste of a man; they make him think his meat, his drink, yea, that cordials have a bitter taste in them. How many times do the poor people of God, who are the only men who know what a broken heart doth mean, cry out, that gravel, wormwood, gall, or vinegar, was made their meat. (Lam. iii. 15, 16, 19.)

This gravel, gall, and wormwood, is the true temporal taste of sin; and God, to make them loathe it for ever, doth feed them with the curse of it till their hearts both ache and break therewith. Wickedness is pleasant of taste to the world; hence it is said, "They feed on ashes, they feed on wind." (Isa. xlv. 20; Hos. xii. 1.) Lusts, or anything that is vile and refuse, the carnal world think relish well; as is set out most notably in the parable of the prodigal son. "He would fain have filled his belly," saith our Lord, "with the husks that the swine did eat." But the broken-hearted man has a relish that is true as to these things; though, by reason of the anguish of his soul, it also abhors all manner of dainty meat. (Job xxxiii. 19, 20; Ps. cvii. 17, 19.)

(To be continued.)

HE that knows the worth, and that feels the benefit, of a preached gospel does not need the bells to ring him to church.—*Huntington.*

WE have continual need of the power of God to work all our good works in and for us; of the pardoning mercy of God to cover the defects of all we do; of the righteousness of Christ, God-man, to make us accepted in all.—*Thos. Bischo.*

A VESSEL OF MERCY ;

OR,

THE EARLY EXPERIENCE AND LIFE OF WILLIAM ASKER,

A MEMBER AT GOWER STREET.

I was born of very poor parents in the small village of Houghton, in Norfolk, Oct. 6, 1806. My father was a shepherd, and died ten weeks before I was born, which plunged my dear mother into much sorrow and distress. I had one sister, four years old at the time of my birth, and three other sisters; also one brother from home, but not able at that time of trouble to render any assistance to the poor widow. As soon as my dear mother could get about she put me out to a neighbour, and my sister with me; and went out as nurse till I was about 12 years of age. At length she was obliged to give it up, being seized with dropsy and jaundice. From ten to fourteen years of age I was put to an uncle, my mother's brother. My mother paid for my food, and found me in clothes; but he proved to be another Laban; which was a great grief to her, for she was one of the tenderest of mothers. By this time, through her affliction, it pleased the Lord to dry up that brook; and I was conveyed to the parish authorities, and taken into an old squire's garden. The first week I received one shilling and sixpence as wages; the next week two shillings. After a time it amounted to two shillings and sixpence; and when I was sixteen years of age he was generous enough to give me five shillings per week. I stayed with him for a year and a half after this rise of wages; but by that time I began to feel the oppression; and I knew enough of the Scriptures in theory, by reading them frequently to my mother at her request, to know that God was a God of providence. So I thought, if it were his pleasure he could provide me with another place. I had gained some information that a head gardener who had left the squire's where I then was, was in the Marquis of Salisbury's gardens at Hatfield, Herts; and without further hesitation, I wrote a note begging him, if possible, to procure me a situation with him, and stating my oppression with the squire, to which he was not an utter stranger. In the space of a fortnight I received an answer to come to him. At this I was not a little pleased, and immediately gave notice to the squire of my intention of leaving his employ. He was at that time a shareholder in the American slave trade, and also a slave master at Bagthorpe, in the county of Norfolk; and I was glad, at the time, to be delivered from under his yoke. But I am sorry to say I have every reason to believe he is now, and has been for many years, reaping the just reward of such cruel deeds; for he died an awful death, with oaths and curses on his lips. My own sister was in his service at the time, and was both an eye and ear witness to the solemn scene. I wish from the bottom of my heart I could give a better report of his end.

This change of providence brought me into quite a new position in life, my week's wages being doubled, from 5s. to 10s. per week; and the vanity of my mind rose much more than my wages. Many projects came into my mind, which I was never able to carry out, and must now pass over.

I was at that time a very moral lad, and, as people call it, rather religiously inclined. But, alas! my morals soon became corrupted, which I painfully recollect. Innocent amusements, falsely so called, soon led me to ruin and disgrace. In two years' time I exceeded my ungodly companions in sin and folly; and in less than three years' time my companions would cry out shame on me for my filthy conversation. When some of them would rebuke me for my swearing and other ungodly habits, all they would get from me was, "Never mind, a short life and a merry one; I shall leave it off when I die." I was suffered to go on in this mad course for three years and a half, but not without three or four checks of conscience in my solitary moments; which I kept a secret from my companions, braving it out as well as I could, with a secret promise to be better for the future. But, after each of these times, I confess with shame, I launched out into more ungodliness than before, as if "taken captive by the devil at his will."

I shall not say more relating to my bad course. One verse from dear Hart will tell all the rest:

"A forward fool, a willing drudge,
I acted for the prince of hell;
Did all he bade without a grudge;
And boasted I could sin so well."

But, as dear Kent says in one of his hymns,

"The appointed time rolls on apace,
Not to *propose*, but *call* by grace;
To change the heart, renew the will,
And turn the feet to Zion's hill."

One Saturday evening about the end of August, 1827, I went to a village three miles off to fetch a pair of shoes; and on my way back, while crossing a large field, a very severe tempest came on, and the lightning was fearful to behold. It came with great force and power to my mind that it was the day of judgment, and that the end of the world was come; and I verily believe, at the moment, I knew what the feeling of those poor sinners will be at the great and terrible day of the Lord, who will call upon the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from "him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." For I thought that the wrath of the Lamb was come, and I was not able to abide it; and if it could have been possible to have sunk into a state of non-existence, I would have given a thousand worlds, if I had them in possession, to have done so. But, alas! it could not be. I stood still; not knowing where to flee, nor what to do. I was speechless; for I thought it was too late to pray, and the judgment was set, and

I must soon hear that solemn sentence: "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." I was near two or three houses, in one of which one of my former companions lived. There I ran in for shelter from the tempest and rain, which was very heavy; but in doing so, I feared God would cut me down with a thunderbolt. Nevertheless I entered the house and said nothing, but sat down opposite a window. So terrible was the lightning, that it kept up a continual light, flash after flash; and no small tempest was raging in my poor mind; for I felt as much the sentence of death in my distressed soul as any poor criminal at Newgate in a literal sense.

"To see sin, smarts but slightly;
To own with lip confession, is easier still;
But oh! to feel, cuts deep beyond expression."

After a while the storm abated; and glad I was it was but a tempest, and not the end of the world. I hope I can say, I felt a thankful heart that my forfeited life was spared and I was out of hell, which I felt to have deserved. But I never lost my guilt till the time when pardon and peace were proclaimed in my conscience. I then prepared to go home, about a mile and a half, begging all the way for mercy, with many solemn vows and promises of future amendment. The next day I repaired to church; and having a prayer-book in my clothes-box, it must come out; and I could feelingly say after the parson, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." What was spoken in the pulpit I never knew. This text was one day given out by the curate: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." (Eccl. xi. 9.) I entered feelingly into the text, and the text into me; every word was as clear to my mind as the sun at noon-day. What the man said upon the words, and the character thus brought into judgment, I know not; for I do not recollect one single sentence more than the words, as he read them over twice; but I know this, I came out of the church a great deal more miserable than when I went in. The misery and anguish, which for the first few weeks I had been trying to conceal from those I had to work with in the garden, began to show itself in my countenance. The strange and striking difference in my conduct became too plain to be concealed any longer. For the devil to lose such an active and willing subject caused no small stir in the town of Hatfield; and, in a few more weeks, it was noised abroad for miles round the town, that Bill the gardener was gone raving mad.

I shall not enlarge here upon what I passed through during six months of hard travail, labour, and sorrow of heart; it is better known between God and my own soul. I had scarce a gleam of hope all the time of my distress, till God graciously delivered my soul. I think no poor sinner strove harder to gain

the favour of God, and appease his wrath, than I did. I read much; but in every line I read, condemnation appeared pointed towards me. And when the spirituality of the law was more and more opened to my understanding, wrathful feelings rose up in my poor mind against the God of heaven, because he had created me a living soul instead of one of the brute creation; and I cursed the day of my birth. Not one night's rest did I get for the six months. Every threatening against the ungodly appeared to be mine; and I believed that God had set a mark upon me, as he did upon Cain. If I fell asleep for a little while through weariness of body, my dreams were fearful and very painful; so that when night came I wished for morning, and when morning came I wished for night. Many passages of Scripture would cut me through and through, and yet I could not give up reading it altogether. I well recollect reading Prov. i., under very painful feelings; especially the following verses: "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me." Now I thought it was all over, that there could be no mercy for me, and I sank in my feeling near to black despair; but yet, in the agony of my mind, I was obliged to cry for mercy. Then to sink me lower, if possible, it would come into my mind: "But you have sinned against the Holy Ghost, which will never be forgiven, neither in this world nor in the world to come; for God hath said it, and you believe what he hath said must be fulfilled." Then my poor mind was directed by the enemy to my youthful days, to the time when I was very moral and religiously inclined; and it would come to my mind: "That was the time when God would have saved you, but now it is too late, the day of grace is passed with you—you have sinned beyond the reach of mercy; and therefore there remains nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment." This was painful work indeed for me; but now, after many years, I have to look back to that very spot and say, with dear Jeremiah, "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me; this I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope." (Lam. iii. 19-21.)

But to return. I tried hard to save myself by legal performances; but the wrath of God in a broken law lay heavy on my conscience; and I thought it very hard that the more I strove to appease the wrath of God, the worse I felt myself to be. Then hard thoughts of God would rise again and again, till my heart was sick and faint, fearing every step I took the earth would open and swallow me up; and once the enemy of souls so

wrought upon my poor mind, taking advantage of my nervous debility, that I thought I felt the earth move under my feet quite plainly, and he suggested that in a minute I should be in hell. O the horror and trembling that seized my poor guilty mind! Many such like feelings had I after that, which I decline naming; but I thought there never was such a monster of iniquity in the whole world, nor could I find one like me in the whole Bible. I found here and there some who had been great sinners; still it would remain with me: "But they were not in such a desperate condition as you are, who have sinned beyond the reach of mercy; yours is a singular case." After striving hard for some time to gain the favour of God, and my case, instead of getting any better, grew worse and worse, such a spirit of fretfulness came upon me and hard thoughts of God, some of which are not to be named. One among the many was, that if God was in my wretched state, and I was in God's place, I would not let him suffer as I did, but would send him peace. O what a long-suffering God is the God of heaven! I had not the least idea at the time, that the dear Lord was waiting that he might be gracious; for my strength was not all gone as yet.

One evening about this time, while alone in my bedroom (for I chose solitude when I could get it, especially as I had not one soul in the whole town that I could speak to about the things I was passing through), this came into my mind: "Suppose you could, from this time up to the day of your death, keep the whole law, and never commit another sin in your life, what would become of all the sins you have committed from your childhood till now?" I shall never forget, while I retain my senses, the solemn weight of the sins of my youth. I think, according to my feelings at the time, I was as pale as death; my body trembled severely from head to foot. But, notwithstanding this solemn shock to my working for life and salvation, it did not kill me outright. For after I was a little recovered from this severe stroke, I must needs still try again. This thought came now to my mind, but from a wrong source, as the effect will prove: "You must double your diligence, so as to clear yourself for the future, and make reconciliation for all that is past." So to work I went again, as though spurred on by some Arminian proselytes, though I knew none at the time. In the evening I felt I must read a certain number of chapters in the Bible, and all the church prayers that were accustomed to be read on the Sabbath evening; and, for fear I should not have the opportunity to read the morning prayers before going to my work, I read them in the evening, in order to get my work forward, till my poor body and mind were tortured and worn out with "both lash and labour too." Then upon the back of all this, these words were continually coming into my mind: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. v. 20.) Then I pondered over those people, to know who they were, and

how far their righteousness reached, for at that time I was ignorant of them. One thing I knew, I was miserable enough, being sorely oppressed with guilt and condemnation, and became worse and worse, till at length my poor body sank under the trouble, so that I was obliged to give up my work; and what with the evil workings of my heart, notwithstanding all my reading and prayers, I was of necessity obliged to give all up for lost.

Now I felt myself to be in a hopeless condition, and "without God in the world." I looked upon myself to be in the same case as Esau, who "sold his birthright," and could find "no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." This was a time of sore trouble. What became of my prayer-book I never knew from that day to this; for I was obliged to abandon it, and breathe out my sore complaint in sighs and groans, with a heartfelt sense of the poor publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me, a sinner;" which prayer is not worn threadbare with me, though I have used it for these 36 years on special occasions. And I do believe it will be in use by me all my life long, although there are now and then particular seasons when "the prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended;" but these seasons are very rare and short.

My case had now become a case for the compassion of a God. "Deep," in my soul, "called unto deep;" and I felt the depth of my fall to a certain extent, both as to my state by nature and actual transgression. All hope of being saved was given up; but yet, somehow or other, I could as soon live without breathing as cease to breathe out the desires of my soul to God for pardon and mercy for Jesus' sake. The dear Lord had waited to be gracious, and now I had to wait till the set time was come to receive favour from his dear hands, which was not long. I felt myself exactly in the same condition as dear Hart describes, where he says: "It was not whether I would be saved, but whether God would save me." That dear man of God's salvation was a full, free, and sovereign salvation, and so was mine; and I can say with him:

"The fountain of Christ, assist me to sing,
The blood of our Priest, our crucified King;
Which perfectly cleanses from sin and from filth,
And richly dispenses salvation and health."

I was in lodgings at that time with three other young men in a poor old widow woman's house; and one Saturday night I retired to my bedchamber in a most deplorable state of mind, apparently near black despair. I paced the room for a considerable time, and at last threw myself down on the floor with this resolution formed in my heart; which now appears to me to have been a holy reverential violence, and not a presumptuous one. My feeling was, that if I must perish I would perish there at the feet of Jesus Christ, begging for mercy; believing that he had power on earth to forgive sins; while at the same time I felt myself fast sinking. The petition of David would have been very appro-

prate to me, had I known it at the time, which is this: "Let not the pit shut its mouth upon me."

"I look'd for hell, he brought me heaven."

This most important point, I well recollect, I was brought to, to make a solemn submission before a heart-searching God; and could, notwithstanding all my hard thoughts against him, feelingly justify him in my condemnation if he sent me to hell. I could sign my own death-warrant freely, but as it were with a trembling hand, while my soul was all the while panting deeply for pardoning mercy through a Saviour's blood. This was a painful spot to me at the time, and now while I write it I feel something of a solemn awe pervade my mind at the remembrance of it. I felt the meaning of the words of Isaiah, which afterwards I found in the Bible: "Enter into the rock and hide thee in the dust for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." (Isa. ii. 10, 11.)

I come now to speak of the way and manner in which the dear Lord was pleased to deliver my soul from the guilt and misery that I suffered for six months under the wrath of God in a broken law, after all hope of being saved was given up by me, and destruction and misery stared me in the face. This part, I confess, I have often tried to keep in the background, except when I could not avoid it; when a confession of my faith has been called for at particular times. The reason I assign for it is, that it was out of the ordinary way the dear Lord generally works for and with his living people. I have hundreds of times secretly wished that he had been pleased to have spoken to me by his written Word; and then I have felt a check for doing so, because I was as satisfied of my soul's salvation as Mary was in Simon's house, when she was face to face with her beloved Lord, and heard it from his own lips—the incarnate Word; the power and the effect were the same. I have often thought and proved the same, since that memorable time—what a necessity for the *personal application* of the power of divine truth, of which the "Lord the Lamb" is the sum and substance; and how this is proved in the case of that dear woman. The Lord told Simon that "her sins, which were many, were all forgiven her;" and I cannot help thinking Mary must have heard this; but I do not think she received the power till the dear Redeemer turned round to her, and spoke *personally* to her heart as well as her ears. What a love I feel to dear Mary, though she has been in heaven for eighteen centuries past.

But I suppose I must now give some brief account of the way I obtained mercy. I would rather feel it than tell it, for my own part; but I feel it now called for, as on other occasions. The way was this: As I lay on the floor, as before stated, in the deepest agony of soul, but as rational and perfectly awake as at this minute while writing, I saw with the *eyes of my mind* the heaven opened, and, as

I thought at first sight, the face of an angel; but when at a short distance from me, I felt a persuasion it was the Lord Jesus Christ; and as he looked upon me, the look bespoke compassion and love with a feeling of acceptance and reconciliation. The solemn change in my feelings I shall not attempt to describe. Suffice it to say that, one five minutes before that blessed look of love and mercy I felt myself perfectly lost, and that (as I thought) for ever; but the next five minutes perfectly saved, and that for ever. The feeling was with me, as with dear Simeon: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Yea, I went so far as to think I was going that same night to heaven; but in this I was sorely deceived. I could scarcely refrain from disturbing the whole house, it being midnight or early on the Lord's-day morning. That day was the first Sabbath my ransomed soul ever enjoyed; for on that day I had ceased from my own works as God did from his; and in my soul's feeling I had entered into rest. One of the young men who slept with me I did disturb by awaking him from his sleep, and telling him to tell my sister not to fret after me, for I was going to heaven. But in this I was deceived; for I had yet many painful lessons to learn.

After a comfortable sleep, with peace and quietness, I arose in the morning to my breakfast; and being Lord's-day morning, we four lodgers and the landlady were all together. I went down stairs that morning with a countenance no more sad. As soon as I had seated myself by the fireside, the poor old woman turned round and looked at me very hard, and said, "Why, William, your face quite shines;" and I, with all the simplicity of a child, told out all that had happened to me in the night; how the Lord Jesus Christ had appeared to me, and had pardoned all my sins; not thinking for a moment but that they would quite understand all I was telling them. Poor things, they looked one at the other with the greatest amazement; and no doubt, as it had been noised abroad that Bill the gardener had gone raving mad, this strange tale of mine was a confirmation of it. This strange circumstance was told about from one to another, while I was enjoying the sweets of pardoning mercy, till it reached the rector's ears; and for fear, I suppose, it should go any further, he came one day to see me, and did the best he could to put a stop to this terrible delusion, as he was pleased to call it. The poor man said to me, with as much solemnity as he could muster, "Why, Asker, there are none in the days we live in that know anything about the pardon of sin, as Peter, James, and John, and the rest of the apostles knew it; we must wait till we get to heaven."

I have often thought of that poor blind guide, and have said, "What an evident proof it is that he did not know it for himself!" We may justly say to such persons, "Art thou a master in Israel and knowest not these things?" After he had left me, I felt some reasonings come over me,—"Suppose he is right, and you are wrong; he is a learned man and you are unlearned;" and many

other things not worth naming. It set me searching in the New Testament to see if he was right; and, to my satisfaction, I found many more besides the apostles, and it so occurred that most of the instances had taken place on the Sabbath day, and had very much enraged the Scribes and Pharisees, just such poor blind guides as the poor man who had been to see me. Still, my peace of mind was preserved for that time; and although I tried to think upon my sin and guilt, that would not alter it; for the guilt and condemnation were as completely buried from my feeling as the Egyptians were from the sight of the poor Hebrews, when the God of Israel buried Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea; and here was the mercy, they were to see them "no more for ever."

(To be continued.)

SINFUL SELF.

O! Is there not a place for me,

Far, far from all mankind?

Nay; rather, whither shall I flee

To leave myself behind?

Where'er the monster self is found

Is found the monster sin;

They spread their baleful influence 'round,

And poison all within.

Lord, make me fly from all I am

To thy dear mercy-seat;

And hide me in that spotless Lamb

Where all perfections meet.

B. M.

THERE is a kind of glorying in the conscience, when thou knowest thy faith is sincere, thy hope certain, thy love without dissembling.—*Augustine*.

THE Lord God visiteth us with temporal and transitory misery, even for the very careful and fatherly heart that he beareth toward us, and not of any hatred or indignation against us. For God is at one with all his people, through his Son, and loveth them, even from the very ground of his heart."—*Wermullerus*.

I AM no great judge of ministerial abilities, as to that part of them which pleases the world in general. I have never been at an academy myself; and, indeed, I should think it would be even tempting God, if I were to attempt it. God can and often doth make a very unlikely tongue to be like the pen of a ready writer, without sending the quill to be cut at college. If God calls a fool to preach, it is to display his own wisdom in that fool. If he sends one who has long appeared base in the eyes of the world, it is to display his sovereign renewing grace to the confusion of the honourable. I was, I believe, made the father of near 30 souls before I could distinctly read any one chapter in the Bible. You are a living witness of this truth; the whole congregation to which you belong are all, two or three excepted, the seals of my ministry; therefore it is evident my want of human learning has been no impediment in the way of usefulness.—*Huntington*.

REVIEW.

SOME REASONS FOR ADHERING TO OUR PRESENT AUTHORIZED VERSION OF THE BIBLE.

Eight Letters by Pastor D. Allen, which have appeared in the "Witness." [Reproduced by request.] The New Version Viewed in the Light of the History of the New Testament for 1800 years.—S. E. Lees, Printer, 134, Pitt Street, Sydney.

It is written: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." (2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.) This is evidently the spirit of the present age—the age of infidelity; and everything is swiftly turning toward these evil ways of mocking God and his Word; and it appears to us that both its hour and power have arrived. Infidelity now rides forth with a high hand and unblushing face, and everything seems to be tending to lift it up on high.

We are much grieved to see that any who profess to receive the truth as held in this magazine should show but little reverence for the highly-honoured Bible, which has been so singularly owned of the Holy Spirit as to openly declare it to be the Word of God. He has used it in regenerating souls, and in bringing them through the whole of the checkered scenes of their lives up to their safe arrival in glory.

We can assure our readers that we are in real earnest, and do not write for strife. The times and seasons are too solemn for that. God has blessed the Bible, and made it his sword in the hands of those mighty champions for truth who have fought for it unto death. And we write because this very Bible, which has stood through many fierce conflicts, is now threatened with removal from its place as the pillar of our most holy faith.

It may be useful to some of our readers to bring before their notice a little of the history of our present Bible. We will go back to the first *printed* copy of the New Testament in English, 1526. It was translated by William Tyndale, a scholar of the highest rank, who took it, not, as others had done before him, from the Latin Vulgate, but from the original Greek. It must be remembered that up to this time—owing to the great price of copies before the invention of printing, and the severe punishments, amounting even to death, to which any person was liable who had one in his possession,—Wycliffe's translation had been very little known, and was entirely out of the reach of the poor. God then stirred up Tyndale's spirit to give his fellow-countrymen the Scriptures in their native tongue, that they might read for themselves the plain, simple word of God. Finding there was no place in all England where he could accomplish his object, he departed to Germany. He completed first his translation of the New Testament; afterwards, the five books of Moses, and

other portions of the Old Testament. He had scarcely carried on his work for ten years, before he was seized by Roman Catholic officers, and put to death. But his MSS. were saved, and fell into the hands of his friend, John Rogers, who finished the translation of the Old Testament; and it was printed and secretly imported into England about 1537. When Tyndale's works first came abroad in England, Foxe says, "It cannot be described what a door of light they opened to the eyes of the whole English nation."

The translation made by Tyndale has formed the basis of our principal subsequent versions, excepting only the late revision of 1881. Our present Authorized Version arose out of a proposal made by Dr. John Reynolds, of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, a Puritan minister, who recommended a new revision. To this task were appointed forty-seven men, famous for learning, and most of them good and gracious men, we believe. They adhered to the following rules given them for their guidance: "The ordinary Bible read in the churches, commonly called the Bishop's Bible, to be followed; and as little alteration to be made as the original will permit." "These translations to be used when they agree better with the text than the Bishop's Bible; viz., 1. Tyndale's; 2. Matthew's; 3. Coverdale's; 4. Whitchurch's (Cranmer's); 5. The Geneva." The translators met in six companies at various places. When finished, they chose two out of each company to revise the work; and, lastly, a final revision was made by Drs. Miles, Smith, and Bilson. It was printed 1611.

Thus, the present Authorized Version is the work of these good men, combined with that of the Reformers before them. The Bible they produced still remains a monument of God's goodness to the English-speaking people. Neither has any production been able to vie with it for simplicity, force, and purity of diction. Moreover, it is a marvel of fidelity to the original. We would appeal to the English-speaking people on behalf of this noble English Bible, which has been so eminently given them by God, and who has by it exalted the English people above all people. The new revision is in no way equal to the good Book sought to be removed. It has been the standard acknowledged by all parties, to which all have yielded,—and may it ever remain so. Yes, this old Book has stood the test of all the power of Satan, the criticism of infidels and papists, and every grade of error. All who believe in inspiration have admitted it to be *the* authority; but now-a-days men are aiding the infidel, by undermining the certainty of God's Word with questions as to its genuineness. We consider the omissions of words, clauses, and whole verses, and the marginal notes in the Revised Version, can accomplish no other purpose.

We believe all who are taught of God have good reasons for contending for the Bible as they have received it. They have an internal evidence of its truth by God's writing it in their hearts. Let us turn for a few minutes to look at our own individual case.

—Forty-five years ago I was reading the historical portion of the Word of God, and alighted on this part of it: "Sun, stand thou still" (Josh. x. 12), which fell as with a sudden flash of light on my understanding, bearing with it the solemn conviction that I had no God. For I saw that Joshua had a God to fly to, and I had none. It was the contrast between myself and Joshua that discovered my exceeding emptiness and lost estate. This felt emptiness I cannot describe. How awful the state, no God! For the first time in my life I fell on my knees and implored God to make me his child, and to be a God to me. To have the God of heaven for my own God became the one great object in view. Nothing short of this would do. To obtain this great favour I laboured night and day. I vowed, resolved, and did all I thought would please God, and gain this unspeakable mercy. But all went in an opposite direction. To be brief, at length these words were forcibly applied: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. ix. 13, 14.) This brought me suddenly to the tiptoe of expectation of obtaining the coveted blessing—"This God is our God." But no, it did not quite reach so far. Yet I was raised to hope; and made clearly to see that works never could help me—that hope perished, and a deeper felt need of God followed. Here I laboured for two or three years; until one day I crossed a street in Accrington, Lancashire, as full of condemnation as any poor wretch could well bear, when in a moment these words came: "When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. iii. 4.) The guilt, sin, and misery now fled and were removed out of sight and feeling; and in their stead sprang up love, joy, and peace in believing. I adored the Lord with all my heart, and fully believed I should do so to all eternity. I know, therefore, how God speaks the forgiveness of sins by his Word, and how effectual he makes it in a sinner's conscience both in its power and effects.

But at length the Lord withdrew; and one thing after another brought me to the verge of despair. For nine long years I walked in this dark path, until I gave up all idea, almost, of ever seeing the face of the Lord Jesus any more. These days of darkness can never be described.

After this long, dreary season, the Lord commenced a second conviction; but not like the first. This was a conviction of my utter helplessness to serve God apart from his power,—I was convinced that sin could and would overcome the strongest, if suffered to do so. Here I saw that power belongeth to God, and to him only. It appeared now as though the very belly of hell was opened against everything that was godly, and awful floods of blasphemy were poured into the mind so that I dared

not to read the Bible; and great fears of death followed me night and day, until I was afraid to move about, lest I should meet with something to put an end to my useless life. In this way I went on for some considerable time, when at length these words were savingly applied: "Whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." (Rom. xiv. 8.) I now felt that I had not only passed through death in law in my former soul-trouble, and a deliverance from it; but that this blessing had caused me to pass through death to all hope in self in a gospel point of view; and that it was impossible to perform vows, resolutions, or even to think a good thought apart from the entire grace of God. From henceforth I have been made to depend on Him who is able to save; which dependence has been tried again and again; and sore conflicts have succeeded each other until desperation has called for rebukes and stripes from God. Then he has "sent his Word and healed them." (Ps. cvii. 20.)

Having, then, received these things through our old Bible, we claim a voice in resisting the foolish attempt to mend it. We do so too, in following the example of the Lord and his apostles. Did they cast any doubt upon the Greek Bible (the Septuagint) on account of the verbal differences it contained? or did they not call it Scripture?

The Septuagint is the earliest version of the Old Testament existing in any language; its date is about 300 years before Christ. It was spread abroad in Egypt, Northern Africa, and Asia Minor, and was also held in great esteem among the Hellenistic Jews, who commonly spoke Greek. The Lord and his apostles used it frequently when making citations from the Old Testament. It was read in some Synagogues; Philo and Josephus adopted it, and the early Christians universally accepted it. But the controversies which arose between them and the unbelieving Jews aroused at length the enmity of the latter against the Septuagint; for the Christians appealed to it with great force of argument, urging that the Lord himself had made use of it. The Jews therefore began finding fault and quibbling with the version; and they even denied it to be the Word of God, because it did not everywhere strictly agree with the Hebrew original. To meet this accusation, over 200 years after Christ, Origen undertook to revise the established version; but we ask, By what authority did he undertake this work? Why did he or any other man attempt to revise a Book, which had been acknowledged to be Scripture by the Lord and his disciples? Was not this authority sufficient to satisfy lesser and uninspired men? If not, it is to their shame. Now when it was revised, it was no longer the Book the Lord and his apostles proved their doctrines by. We should prefer laying down our faith from the writings of inspired men and the words the Holy Spirit has sanctioned.

The Lord followed the Septuagint when quoting that beautiful portion of Scripture which runs thus: "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," (Luke iv. 18,) the last clause but one of this verse is found only in the Septuagint version. (Isa. lxi. 1.) Again, the apostle Paul quotes from the Septuagint as follows: "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me." (Heb. x. 5.) This is the rendering of Ps. xl. 6, which reads, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened." Here, "A body hast thou prepared me" answers to the words, "Mine ears hast thou opened." Now the Holy Spirit by this act stamped the rendering of the Septuagint with his authority, as being correct in spirit, though not verbally in unison with the original. But let us look at it more exactly. *Opened ears are ears digged* (margin) as a well is dug (Gen. xxvi. 15), or a pit for laying snares. Now the digging of a well or of a pit implies the end in view—viz., to prepare the well for water, and the pit for mischief. To have the ears opened or dug, then, implies the preparation of them for use—they are prepared to receive instruction. A prepared ear refers to the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore *agrees in spirit* with the rendering of the Septuagint, "A body hast thou prepared me." On this account it is evident to us that the Holy Spirit owned the Septuagint reading; and after he had honoured it by calling it Scripture, we think it was highly imprudent for any man to alter it. We would rather leave it where we find it.

Taking this, then, as an illustration of what we wish to convey to our readers as *our mind* on the subject of the *old version*, we fully believe that the hand of God was in the ordering and production of the Authorized Version, 1611; and it is a noble national treasure to the English nation. It has been the centre of all parties, and its authority has been owned by all. No other version will ever become the Bible of the nation; it will be merely that of a party. Further, all who own the Bible as the Word of God will acknowledge its usefulness, and great social benefit apart from its spiritual bearing. We therefore take it as God has given it to us; and as with the Septuagint, though it is not strictly a literal version, we accept it, because it is that Bible which God has given his Spirit to apply, and use in all possible cases wherein he may think fit to graciously make it effectual. In the old Bible we have unity; in the new version, a division throughout the whole nation.

(To be continued.)

BOTH unregenerate and regenerate persons are compelled to duties, but from different principles; the one by law and wrath apprehended, the other by love and mercy manifested.—*Thos. Bisco.*

My sun is past the meridian, and will soon be in the eastern horizon. It ill becomes me to trifle any part of my evening, or spend a moment idle.—*T. Charles.*

FOR COMMUNION WITH GOD.

ALAS, my God, that we should be
 Such strangers to each other !
 O that as friends we might agree,
 And walk and talk together !
 Thou know'st my soul does dearly love
 The place of thy abode ;
 No music drops so sweet a sound
 As these two words, *My God !*
 I long not for the fruit that grows
 Within these gardens here ;
 I find no sweetness in their rose
 When Jesus is not near.
 Thy gracious presence, O my Lord,
 Can make a Paradise ;
 Ah, what are all the goodly pearls
 Unto this Pearl of price !
 May I taste that communion, Lord,
 Thy people have with thee ;
 Thy Spirit daily talks with them,
 O let it talk with me !
 Like Enoch, let me walk with God,
 And thus live out my day,
 Attended with the heav'nly guards,
 Upon the King's highway.
 When wilt thou come unto me, Lord ?
 O come, my Lord, most dear !
 Come near, come nearer, nearer still ;
 I'm well when thou art near.
 When wilt thou come unto me, Lord ?
 I languish for thy sight ;
 Ten thousand suns, if thou art strange,
 Are shades instead of light.
 When wilt thou come unto me, Lord ?
 For till thou dost appear,
 I count each moment for a day,
 Each minute for a year.
 Come, Lord, and never from me go ;
 This world's a darksome place ;
 I find no pleasure here below,
 When thou dost veil thy face.
 There's no such thing as pleasure here ;
 My Jesus is my all ;
 As thou dost shine or disappear,
 My pleasures rise or fall.
 Come, spread thy savour on my frame,
 No sweetness is so sweet ;
 'Till I get up to sing thy Name,
 Where all thy singers meet

THOS. SHEPHERD.

THE OLD LAMP LIT UP AFRESH.

No. IV.

My dear Friend,—The Lord enrich you with his blessing, and keep you in his precious love! He has let a little glimpse of his glory pass before me; and what I have handled and tasted of the good word of life, that declare I unto you.

The plan of salvation was contrived and continued by God the Father, fulfilled by Jesus, and applied by the Spirit. The whole was so ordered, from first to last, that all the glory might be secured to Jehovah.

The devil fell by pride; therefore the Lord, to hide pride from man, has so contrived salvation that he that glorieth should have nothing to glory in but the Lord. All is of God. He humbleth us that we may be made willing to come to Christ. He keeps us humble that we may be willing to live upon Christ. How low does this lay the pride of good works; after all, they are vile unless perfumed by the blood of Jesus and his righteousness. O yes! they are all dead works unless done in and through the faith of the Son of God. Against this blessed truth, of which I am as certain as I live, I find my nature kicks to this day. A legal heart will be creeping in between me and my dear Saviour; but he recovereth me and makes me loathe myself for it; and thereby gets fresh glory to himself. To this moment I find so much unbelief that, if God were to leave me, I should fall a prey to it.

There is no comfortable way of leaving the world, but by faith. All who obtained a good report in every age died in faith, looking only to the Lamb of God. Yes; you and I, my dear friend, after we have lived a little longer to empty us more, to bring us more out of self that we may be humbled and our Jesus exalted, we shall fall asleep in Jesus; and in his dear arms we shall sweetly rest our weary bodies; and our souls shall be for ever with the Lord. For so he promises us. Then shall we learn this lesson, that "of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." In heaven the saints are as humble as they are happy, clothed in glory; and they, with one heart and one voice, cry, "Worthy the Lamb." I feel in a small measure what they do; for my heart is in tune and I can join in that blessed song, "Worthy the Lamb." O how indebted we are to the precious Lamb of God! Let us adore and praise him together. The Lord help us to trust him more when he shows us our vile nature, our corrupt hearts, and our poor works. And when corruptions stir and are ready to break out, may he enable us to go to him freely and tell him boldly just what we feel; for we shall never get such fellowship with him on earth as when we are enabled to go to him in this poverty of spirit. Now, my dear friend, these are some of the things the Lord has taught me. I did not learn them of man. This is the pathway to Zion; there is no other way. The world and profes-

sors mistake us sadly, and the way of salvation too; and say all manner of evil against us falsely. They say we hold that we may live as we list, and be saved because we are elected. But, blessed be God, we have not so learned Christ. Our Lord says, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake." For works we contend earnestly, but from this principle—we would work from love. We desire to follow our dear Lord in all his commands, and so fulfil the law of Christ, and to show our faith by our works. You and I cannot live in sin. We know that we carry about with us a body of sin and death, which often brings us into captivity; but we cannot roll sin as a sweet morsel under our tongue. Yet, if we sin, we know that "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," who has made full propitiation for our sins.

"How can we sink with such a prop
As our eternal God?"

Impossible. No, my beloved friend; neither heights, depths, nor any other thing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Your last letter was sweet to me. O that you may be enabled to thank God and take courage!

Yours in our Jesus,

Penshurst, April 10th, 1863.

HENRY CONSTABLE.

REPLY.

My dear Friend,—I thank you for your last welcome letter; and can truly say I enjoyed reading it. I am glad you are still enjoying the felt presence of the dear Lord. The love of God does not make us selfish; when we feel it in our own souls, we long that others should feel it too.

I was very much disappointed that dear Mr. Chandler did not come on Sunday. I trust his ministry was blessed to the hearers elsewhere; and I do hope, dear friend, that you found the green pastures of God's grace, such as your soul loves. I was not at the Wells; but I hope I did enjoy a little sweet communion with the Lord. It is so sweet to feel an appetite for divine things; and I think we value it more, after having lost it for a time. It is now nearly thirteen years since I believed those sweet words were spoken to my soul, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." I arose from my knees and told the Lord it was enough. My prayerful desire then was, "O that thou wouldest keep me from evil that it may not grieve me!" And that was the first time I could say in the language of faith, "My Lord." I had long been seeking salvation; but had yet to learn that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified."

I really do think the Lord wrought the beginning of a work of grace upon my soul when I was no more than six years of age. Then I first heard or understood there was a God, a heaven, and

a hell. At that time I was at school at Groombridge. When I read the parable of the "barren fig-tree," O how I did fear lest it should be said of me, "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" And yet I used to feel a sweet childlike confidence in God as my Father in heaven, and a love towards him as a kind and good God. I prayed to him, and believed he heard me. I remember the places so well. I left that school before I was seven, and went to Dormansland (Mrs. E.'s). My convictions remained with me; and after some years I was taught my need of a Saviour. Then I sank into deeper distress; and though my distress was not such as I have heard some speak of, yet I wished I had not a soul, fearing it would be lost.

Believe me, Yours affectionately, I trust, in a precious Jesus,
Blackham, April 14th, 1863. S. RICHARDSON.

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

SIMPLE THINGS AND GREAT RESULTS.

Dear Friend,—How dark at times does the way of the Lord seem, quite out of our reach; yet, he tells us, it is all ordered by his wisdom and love; for so exact is his way, and so certain are all things, that a sparrow falls not to the ground without his knowledge; therefore Job says, "Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground, yet God performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with him." How simple at times do things appear, yet what great results are connected therewith. Mordecai would not bow down to Haman. This provokes the man to slay all the Jews, and God by this means delivers his people and brings them into a better place than they had before; therefore we see that the wrath of man he makes to praise him, and the remainder he restrains; so that the wicked cannot do what they would, but only just what pleases God, and what shall be for the good of them that fear him. When he sends affliction it is not pleasant, neither is there any good in the thing itself; but God makes it work well at times; for it brings us to see and feel that this is not our rest, and we begin to look about us to know wherefore this trouble is come upon us; and Satan and conscience plead so powerfully against us, for our conformity to the world, and cleaving to it, and many things that have been neglected are brought to mind, that we are led to confession and prayer; it deadens us to the world, makes us look after our evidences, to see how matters stand with us; and thus these things are the life of our spirits. There is no knowing where we should run to unless the Lord checked us; therefore we may say that "he remembers us in our low estate, for his mercy endureth for ever." Though "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous, nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby;" and

this trial has exercised you, no doubt, and the good effects will be seen, I have also no doubt, for "God doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men." O, my friend, it cometh from a Father's hand, therefore it must end well, and be right; for love moves him to it, and wisdom directs the way. Witness the men that have not the rod of God upon them, how proud and lofty they are, how self-willed; they want none to teach them; they are satisfied they are right, and their eyes stand out with fatness; but we do not covet their state, and

"Though our cup seems filled with gall,
There's something secret sweetens all."

Our souls are after a better portion than is to be found in this world, and the blessed Son of God has said, "Seek and ye shall find;" therefore we do not seek at any uncertainty; the promise is sure; and though hope deferred makes the heart sick, yet in the end it shall speak and not lie. All things lay straight before you; there is a complete Saviour for just such a ruined, helpless sinner as you are; here is blood to cleanse you, and a robe to cover you, all free. Here is the good Spirit to teach you, and bless you with a praying mind and a believing heart; and a good God whose love is from everlasting to everlasting to receive you, forgiving you all iniquities for his mercy's sake. What a blessed gospel! This is good news for a poor blacksmith, and then an inheritance provided for him to enjoy to all eternity, where sin shall never molest him nor unbelief plague him. No more fears or sinkings, where afflictions, sorrows, and trials never come, but eternal joy shall fill his soul. Then surely he will look to the end of his race and say, "The day of my death is better than the day of my birth." May the Lord give you faith to believe these things, for they are true.

Remember me to all in your house that love or are seeking after their soul's salvation.

Yours truly,

Croydon, Jan. 22nd, 1851.

F. COVELL.

WAR A GOOD WARFARE.

My very dear Daughter in the faith of Jesus,—Yesterday, just as I was starting into a village to preach Jesus to my fellow-sinners, I received your welcome note. How much we have thought of and prayed for you. I have named your case to some of my poor praying friends here; and how thankful I was last evening when I arrived at the village and a very godly man said, "Can you tell me anything about that poor young lady? For I was praying for her nearly all night?" And then a very choice woman came in and asked the same question. I said, "O keep on praying for her; she is in a hot furnace." It is so blessed to know,

"Prayer can force a passage through
Iron bars and brazen gates."

What an evidence of this we have in Acts xii. 5, to the end; and blessed be God, his power is the same now as then.

I have had much upon my mind the circumstances of Jesus's baptism. Immediately after his baptism it reads, "Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." And how true it is, the closer we follow him the more Satan and his agents will roar. Your affliction is the more trying because it comes from those near and dear to you in nature's ties; but the more furious the assault and the greater the danger, the more signal the deliverance when the Lord appears. It was so in Abraham's case. O how the Lord tried him! "Take now thy son, thine only son." What a test! But what confidence and obedience in the man of God! He must not have the voice at the foot of the mount; he must ascend to the very place God had told him. Mark, my afflicted child in Jesus, the wood is laid, the lad is bound, the knife is grasped, the arm is stretched out; and now the voice of God—"Abraham, Abraham, slay not the lad." What a signal deliverance! And then the glorious testimony, the Lord will see—the Lord will provide.

It is too often the case with us, that as soon as we feel the fire we want to leap out of it; but God's promise is, "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned." This is God's way of doing it. O this walking through—this trial of faith! What a wondrous display of Jehovah's power, quenching the violence of the fire—out of weakness made strong—waxing valiant in fight—putting to flight the armies of the aliens. But these aliens, these "strangers from the covenants of promise" will rally their forces again. Yet God's feeble child

"Shall win the day,

Though death and hell obstruct the way."

O my beloved daughter, think it not strange concerning this fiery trial;

"Thou shalt conquer,

Through the Lamb's redeeming blood."

My earnest prayer for you is that you may be clothed with the whole armour of God, that you may stand fast in this evil day, and, having done all, stand. I have you daily upon my mind and in my heart as a fellow-sufferer in the bonds of the gospel, and my companion in tribulation. The Lord give you much grace and daily wisdom, and make you perfect to do and suffer his will, who is

"Too wise to err, and O, too good to be unkind."

I shall venture to send this direct, and shall continue anxious to learn how our heavenly Parent is leading you. Ah! Dear child,

"Thy Parent's arms, and not thine own,
Are those that hold thee fast."

Yours very affectionately in the Lord of Life,

Lutterworth, Feb. 17th, 1864.

R. DE FRAINE.

GOLD IN THE FURNACE.

My dear Friend,—I have a few letters of ministers and others, what would you have me do with them? And what must I do with myself? "Cast yourself on the mercy of God," do you

say? Thank you, dear friend, and a thousand thanks to the ever-dear Friend of sinners for the word of his grace; yet still I want something more. Many can go into eternity resting on the word of man. One my mother visited on her death bed thus left the world. When my dear parent began to doubt her religion, the poor creature replied, "Job (her husband) thinks I'm right," and so wrapped it up; but

"On the word his blood has sealed
Hangs my everlasting all."

Before him I stand; with him I have to do. Against him have I sinned, and before him I must soon appear; and I feel I cannot go from day to day without the sweet witness within of his acquittal, more or less. How, then, can I go from time into eternity, except I am told by God's own mouth that I am right in his all-searching sight? and of late I have felt as never before that it is indeed no trifle, but a solemn, stern reality. "He knoweth the way that I take," and the deep and trying exercise of soul I have again been passing through.

It is no fancy, my dear, tried, and tempted brother, as you painfully know, when it makes one "stagger like a drunken man." More especially for the last two months, I have gone at times to and fro, roaring aloud and trying to cry to God, till my knees have been sore and my nature almost spent. Sins of my youth, and sins since making a profession that I had almost thought buried and forgotten, have risen to a hideous mountain, and have seemed too black to be forgiven. "Be sure your sin will find you out" somewhere, as Joseph's brethren's sin 20 years after, and as David's, perhaps many months after, and so with myself. Though Satan may have a hand in it, yet he cannot accuse of what has not been committed. Some tell me they believe Satan has a special spite against me. I know he is not dead, and may have a great deal to do with my suffering; yet he must have leave first. I am often contesting the ground with the devil, and O that I could detect and expose his craft and cruelty; but I am "ignorant of his devices." "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." I have asked him questions sometimes which I have thought have made him sculk off. Who opened Lydia's heart? Aye, Satan, answer me this; and did I tell my dear friend a lie when I said my heart was open to him and all saints four years ago? and is it yet closed against them? What made my affections run out to poor Mary the other day, washing the doorstep? (a good woman who lives opposite.) *There!* Satan cannot make me believe it is all flesh.

Two or three weeks since I sat down to repair a watch, being able to do a little between times. My hands and whole frame shook like one sick of the palsy, with distress of mind, and it seemed madness to think of doing it; so I put it down. But I took it up again, and again laid it aside, for I thought, it being a delicate watch, I should surely break it; when the words of that dear, godly woman, Mrs. Hall, came to my remembrance,

when she dashed the watch on the floor in anguish. I felt very sad and perplexed, I assure you, and knew not what to do. It seemed like tempting God on the one hand, and giving place to the devil on the other. I tried to cry to the God of Bezaleel, as I have many times, for a little quietude and skill in my work of gold, of silver, and of brass, and withal that it might be a token for good. I began and finished the dreaded task without mishap; and then the words flowed with some little gratitude, I trust, into my soul: "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy."

On Feb. 1st, at dinner, I took up the "Gospel Standard," and opened on "Repentance" (p. 68). It was suggested, "You can't stand that, you have never repented aright, put it down." My flesh began to creep, and I felt I must yield. But again I thought, "I'll read it, sink or swim;" and by that piece and a sentence on another page my soul was melted, and I was obliged to leave the table, and pour out my heart to God. How such Scriptures as Heb. vi. and x., the parables of the sower and the foolish virgins, passages concerning cutting off right hands, together with such characters as Esau, Saul, Ahitophel, Simon Magus, have tried me; though I know, after all, they have nothing to do with me. "What is that to thee?"

But why do I so obtrude? Perhaps you say, "I know the pride and naughtiness of thine heart;" but you don't, my dear friend, know the half of it; and though it still "puffs me glad," or "torments me sad," yet I would fain hope it may never wholly recover the blows which God has dealt upon it. God says, "I will make thee sick in smiting thee." He that searcheth the heart only can know my deceitful heart. But I have thought I have been made sick of myself in measure, for I have sometimes hardly been able to bear the sight of a magazine where my worthless name has appeared. I have been ashamed to see my own countenance in the glass, and when walking the street have wished it was night that I might hide my guilty head from man at least. Sin has so bruised and blackened my poor soul that I have wished to live a hermit's life. Then, again, when I read, "Occupy till I come;" "Work while it is day;" "Glorify God in your body;" "There is no device in the grave;" and such like exhortations, I know not what to do, or what to leave undone. Was ever a poor thing so hampered in the net? Berridge says, "I have often mistaken rank pride for deep humility." How easy to be deceived! How narrow is the way! Dear brother, I think I know this much—"My wounds stink;" and could I but get my foot on the neck of these traitors, indeed I would show them no mercy, but deal out to them a threefold destruction, like Joshua with the rebel kings—he "*smote them and slew them and hanged them.*"

You will think this is all of self, as a man said to me once, "How long so-and-so is in prayer, and all for himself." Ah! my poor attempts so savour of self that I think I will attempt no more. O that I could write of him who his own self bore sin and

sorrow, and that I could hope he would deign to look down upon it with approval. Is any sorrow worth mentioning save his? Never man was oppressed and afflicted like this Man. "Sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing," Paul could say. But where, save once only, can you find your elder Brother rejoicing? His life was spent with grief, till grief broke his guiltless heart. But am I exercising myself "in great matters?" The apostle would not even *attempt* to speak of heaven, and if I try to speak of heavenly things, it seems I only impoverish or lower them.

And how are you, my dear friend, and those near to you? I must still hope Zion's sorrows are my sorrows. I would "weep with them that weep;" and you, my dear brother, are as one of Zion's mourners and comforters to whom I have felt much love, especially since that never-to-be-forgotten evening (Sept. 16th, 1874) at Sandy Lane; when your sweet tidings of mercy for nearly two hours seemed scarcely half an hour. What was that? Whatever it was, there it is unto this day. My dear sister was greatly blessed that night, also our friend Miss Wilkins whom God has now released from all her sufferings. After the service I drove her home through pouring rain; but the storm hurt her not. "When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" She said after alighting, "I am too happy to be scolded." The church at Calne has lost a friend in her; may the Lord raise up many such.

And now, my dear friend, ere I close, may I repeat that the pulpit, my house, and my heart are open to you? May we hope for an evening service? It would be "a favour bestowed, we hope not in vain." The Lord direct your way and incline your heart. I feel much for you in your work. He that made your frail body can strengthen it, and is able to make all grace abound towards you. Afflictions abound on every hand, and what a sad plight for those who have no God to go to in trouble! "O thou hideous monster sin!" Can we wonder at its driving so many to desperation. But O the unutterable worth of that sweet atoning sacrifice, which saves his people from their sins!

Our kind friends that lent us this barn where you preached, May 1st, 1877, have had great afflictions of late; both Mr. and Mrs. H. are now in a very precarious state. Others, too, of the little number have been very low. I have been in my room a good part of a month again, though lately my breathing has been less distressing. My poor mind is very low, and I cannot but think it will prove too much for my mental powers. Yet here I hang—if I am the Lord's I am in his hands, blessed be his Name, come what may; and if I lose my reason I cannot lose my soul.

I will burden my dear, patient friend no more, save with this which I would lay upon you, that you bear me up before the mercy-seat. Can you find it in your heart to pray for such an one? The Lord himself be with you, stand by you, and strengthen you for all your labour of tongue and pen, and bless you in it. Your most unworthy Friend in love unfeigned,

Clack, March, 1881.

E. MORSE.

Obituary.

WILLIAM TURNER.—On Nov. 3rd, 1881, aged 74, William Turner, of Croydon, for many years a member of the church at Gower Street, London.

A wish having been expressed that some memento of my late dear husband might appear in the "Gospel Standard," I will endeavour to comply with the request as far as I am able. Much, however, cannot be said about his earlier years, and his call by grace, very little record having been left by him; and I shall have to depend chiefly on memory for events related by him at various times in conversation.

He was born on Feb. 23rd, 1807. His parents were accustomed to hear the truth preached by the late William Huntington, and by him the subject of this memoir was named. When about the age of 17, as he was reading the life of John Knox, he was led to see that he was destitute of real religion, and to cry for mercy under a sense of his lost estate. How long he was under this feeling I am unable to say, but he was raised to a little hope by the application of these words, "The Son of man came to save that which was lost." The fear, however, of his not being one of the "sheep" again distressed him. Soon after this he must have written the following scrap:

"Sunday, Feb. 28th, 1830. For this last fortnight I have seemed to delight in iniquity in one or two ways. The cause of it was my being so dead to all spiritual things, and dark, when the beasts of the forest creep out, such as lust, conformity to the world, and the finding no life in spiritual things, as prayer, or hearing the Word. I seemed given up to hardness of heart, and everything that was not serious, and I thought I should like to have my full swing in the world and sin. But I trust that, through mercy, the Lord has been pleased to deliver me from the fearful looking-for of judgment this day, under Mr. Fowler, from these words: 'If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.' (Ps. lxvi. 18.) The Lord was pleased to speak through him to my soul. In his discourse he said that the man who did regard iniquity never had prayer answered, for he was a *dead* man; but the children of God *seemed* to regard it, which I thought I did. 'But,' he said, 'let it be understood there are two natures in the Lord's people, the one being of the spirit, the other that of the flesh. That which is born of God never does sin, for it is holy, as God is holy; but the flesh is full of sin and iniquity, and is always bringing the child of God into captivity. But the new nature in a man always desires to be holy, and to live near God, and not to be so much swallowed up in the world.' I seemed not to have had this desire until he spoke, and then the Lord was pleased to shine in upon my soul, and to show me that though my flesh was full of sin and iniquity, yet I had a desire to be free from it. Bless the Lord for his preserving mercy in keeping me from the world at this time! I had felt no life in prayer this morning, but seemed obliged to go to the prayer meeting, feeling dead, hard, and unconcerned. All that I could say was this broken language: 'O Lord, preserve me from the power of sin and of the world, and revive thy work, if it *be* thy work which thou hast been pleased to do this day.' O! I find that when I get into this state of deadness, and

when sin is so alive—it separates me from the company of the children of God; but let the Lord shine upon me as he has done to-day, and I cannot keep away from them. After leaving them to-day I said to a friend that I felt I could praise the Lord for preserving me from the evils of my heart, and, with an outstretched arm, bringing me to delight in his ways again.

“Monday. This day the Lord has been pleased to keep alive the savour of his gracious mercy in my heart, though at times I have felt many departures in thought from God, which, with the bearing-in of sin upon me, have caused me to sink under the evil of the same. It is my desire to walk and act in his fear; to be able to do so is a great blessing. I went to chapel this evening feeling the guilt of sin, but it did not destroy the savour of what I had received, and I trust I heard to profit. In one or two instances the preacher was led to speak of the fear of the Lord in its various operations. ‘Sometimes,’ he said, ‘it would operate against presumption.’ When I have been conversing lately with any of the Lord’s people, I have not been so much tried afterwards about what I have said as I used to be; and I thought that this was presumption, because I was not troubled about the reality of what I had spoken of. Or I have thought it presumption when I have seemed to hold what I have said as though it actually *were* reality. So the fear of presuming was a twit to me, to keep me from the dangerous path. The minister was also led to speak of Ephraim (Jer. xxxi. 18–21), which seemed a confirmation of what I heard yesterday. Singular to say, while he was speaking of Ephraim I was thinking where the passage he quoted was to be found; and when he had finished, he was led to say where we might find it. I afterwards turned to the place, and the reading of that chapter was a feast to me. Praise the Lord for his great and unspeakable mercy to such a vile worm of the earth! In my feelings I became a new creature; for before, I was in bondage through the power of sin; but now the ways of the Lord are pleasantness to my soul.

“Tuesday. This morning I arose in a dead, lifeless state, and, in approaching the Lord, did not feel any heart; but was under a sense of conviction. I know I need his preserving love, and I beg of him to keep me from the power of sin that is in me, and from the allurements of the world which I am prone to, and cleave too much to. The Psalmist knew something of this when he cried out to the Lord to quicken him, for his soul clave to the dust. I have been this day carried away into the vanity of the world, which ought to be a lamentation; but instead of that, it is often a grief to me that I cannot lament it; but this evening the Lord has been pleased to bring me to a sense of his kind and gracious mercy communicated to me on Sunday last, that has carried me above all my feeling of sin and evil. The ways of the Lord are past finding out, for they are ways of mercy to his people, although they are vile sinners; and it is because his mercies fail not that his people are not consumed. What a mercy that the Lord God is of one mind, and none can turn him—no, not all our sins, and the evil we daily bring forth. I am sometimes afraid that what I enjoy is a deception. If it is, what an awful one! But from the secret confidence working within, and the savour from it, it seems impossible that it can be deception. ‘Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy Name is as ointment poured forth; therefore do the virgins love thee;’ and when the Lord is pleased to bless a poor soul, there is sure to be love to the Lord, his people, and his ways.

“Wednesday. I have had many checks to-day from dishonouring God with my lips; but have committed myself to the Lord several

times, when I have had keen conviction, and a lustful heart withal, so powerful that I did nearly fall on account of it, but was preserved by an unseen hand from the evil. I could have put an end to my existence on account of my sin. This filled me with dismay, and I thought I would not go to chapel, but would wander about the town; for I was such a wretch, after all the mercy of God. But I thought afterwards that I might as well go, for the gospel was sent for sinners, and as I had felt sin so much in me, perhaps I might hear something that would deliver me from the guilt of it. I went, and Mr. Fowler took his text from Rom. viii. 16. 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.' As soon as he had read his text, I hoped that the blessed Spirit would bear witness with my spirit that I was a child of God, that I might in spirit cry, 'Abba, Father!' But the appointed time was not come for my soul to be favoured with that blessing. The Lord led Mr. Fowler to speak from the preceding verses, at which I felt disappointed; for I wanted *his* witness as a confirmation of what I had received on Sunday. All the time he was speaking from the other verses I was begging the Lord to lead him to speak to my soul from his text; and his not doing so tormented me. I have often thought I was going to get a blessing under the Word; but have been disappointed, as I was to-night. This tried me, and made me beg the more. Last night I read the 1st chapter of the Song of Solomon, and found great sweetness; but often, when I read the Word of God, it is rather a burden to me than a pleasure. This has taught me that I cannot read to profit unless the blessed Spirit help me; and it is so, not only in reading, but in everything spiritual.

"Thursday. This evening I was out upon business, and in returning home a sin presented itself to me, which I was afraid would cause me to fall. I was obliged (I hope by the Spirit of God operating on me as a spirit of prayer) to cry to God to preserve me from it; for I knew my heart would soon be on fire. But through the preserving care of God I did not fall, nor did my lust operate to any great extent; for my mind was begging of the Lord to keep and preserve me; and at last, from the continual crying, I was taken from thinking of the sin to thank and adore the Lord for my preservation. O! that he was always with me, and that I was more often led to think of the unchangeableness of God, though I am a guilty, vile sinner. It does not alter his love to me, when I feel that I do not know anything about it. Suppose the case of a friend, to whom, after he had treated me with the greatest kindness, I should act the part of an enemy. Of course, I should not expect any more friendship from him. But what a mercy that it is not so with God. He says, 'I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.' I was not at this time under the feeling of any overcoming joy, but was in a sweet frame of mind. I found a sweet confidence that I was a child of God, though I could not say that the Lord was my God. It was then suggested that I could sin because of this very confidence; and I know the vile heart will take this advantage sometimes, if the fear of the Lord is not in exercise. I felt no wish to sin then, and could say that such was not my desire. I called on a friend, and we entered into a sweet conversation. This was a blessed evening—one to be remembered. 'Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul'—if it be, as I hope, his work. Praise ye the Lord for his wonderful works."

He was the subject of many doubts and fears, but he also experienced some seasons of great comfort, and was delivered

from numerous heavy trials. I have often heard him speak of the blessing the following words were made to him, at a time when he was viewing himself as a base sinner: "Come, and let us reason together." I cannot pretend to describe the effect of the application of this sweet promise to his soul. It is much to be regretted that he did not himself commit it to writing, as his many friends would have felt a great interest in reading it.

He frequently referred to the goodness of the Lord, displayed towards him in a way of providence. At one time, when he had a small family of young children, he was out of employment for some time, and greatly distressed in mind. One day, he took one of his little ones for a walk, and pleaded most earnestly for the dear Lord to appear; and when he returned home a man was waiting with work for him. At another time, in 1848, a way was opened for him to take his father's business (finding that his own trade—brushmaking—was prejudicial to his health, as well as being poorly remunerative). His father had been trying to dispose of his business, unknown to his son; probably supposing, rightly, that he might wish for it, and aware that he had not the money to purchase it. However, upon its being brought to my husband's knowledge, he applied to a friend, Mr. Frost, who very kindly advanced the necessary sum, without interest, to be repaid when convenient. The Lord prospered him, and enabled him, in a short time, to discharge the debt; notwithstanding his affliction of deafness, which he often felt to be a great inconvenience behind a counter.

A few years before the death of his first wife, who was a good woman,* he was again brought into the place of straits. He could never understand how it happened; but he found himself considerably indebted to the tradesmen who supplied him with goods, particularly to his cheesemonger. This was a great trial to him. He offered the man all he possessed, but the latter declined to avail himself of it. From that date he paid ready money for all fresh goods, and, at the same time, reduced the old debt as fast as possible. I have often heard him speak of the many bitter cries that broke forth, of the tears that were shed, and of the many sleepless hours that were passed by himself and his dear wife under that burden; but she lived to see all the debt cleared off.

He was a member of the church at Gower Street, when under the pastorate of the late Mr. Fowler, but I do not know in what year he joined. I think it must have been after the death of Mr. F. that he attended to the ordinance of believer's baptism, concerning which he had been exercised for some years. Mr. Tite was supplying at Gower Street at the time; and as the ordinance was not then administered at that chapel, my husband was baptized by him at Zoar, remaining a member at Gower Street as before. Here he continued until Mr. Blackstock was

* She died in January, 1863; and a short memoir of her death appeared on the wrapper of the "G. S." for May, in that year.

elected pastor; when he, with six others, left, and forming themselves into a little community, opened a room at Gadsby's Yard, Tottenham Court Road. His pecuniary means at this period were very limited; but he gave his time, labouring willingly for the cause. They were subsequently enabled to rent a chapel in Eden Street, Hampstead Road, where a church was formed by the late Mr. Gadsby, (he having previously baptized eight at Keppel Street chapel,) my dear husband being then chosen one of the deacons. Once when much exercised about the step they had taken, these words were sweetly applied while he was on his knees, "The little one shall become a thousand." He saw this verified in after-years at Gower Street. He often spoke of the blessings he had received at Eden Street under the ministry of the late Messrs. Gadsby, M'Kenzie, Warburton, Kershaw, and many others, nearly all of whom are now in glory.

He remained a member at Gower Street until Nov., 1868. About that time much was being said upon the doctrine of the eternal Sonship. Many thought that our dear friend denied that doctrine, but his own words were that he did not. He had no hope but in the eternal Son, who, he held, could not be the author of eternal salvation, unless he was eternal himself. But he stumbled at the words, "eternally begotten." A resolution was passed at Gower Street that all the members must sign a certain paper which had been drawn up or resign. Some of the friends strongly urged him to sign for the sake of continuing his membership. At this time he had an opportunity of conversing with the late Mr. Covell, to their mutual satisfaction. Mr. Covell said, "Don't you sign—you will have to come out after all; I can understand you, your faith does not go so far as mine. I can realise it, though you cannot." This good advice he found very helpful, and he sent in his resignation. This was a great trial to him, after a membership of so many years. (He had resigned his office of deacon some years before, shortly after the removal to Gower Street from Eden Street, on account of his deafness.)

In December, 1868, he was enabled to relinquish business, and removed to Croydon, where, with great pleasure and profit, he sat under the ministry of our dear friend, Mr. Covell, whom he was generally favoured to hear very comfortably with the outward ear, with the assistance of a trumpet; as well as frequently spiritually, to his soul's profit. He often spoke of the many prayers he had put up to be under a settled ministry, and how the dear Lord had answered him, not by sending a stated minister to Gower Street, but by removing him to Croydon. After Mr. C.'s death, even when his health would permit him to attend the chapel, he could not hear with the outward ear, and was always pleased if I could tell him the substance of the discourse. Although, as he said, he had it second-hand, he often brightened up, and felt his heart drawn out to the

Lord on behalf of the ministers; and this led me many times to beg of the dear Lord to enable me to bring home what I had heard.

For the last two years he was unable to go out at all during the winter, and was often much helped in reading the sermons of the late Mr. Philpot. About a fortnight before his death, he much enjoyed one called, "Four Links in the Chain of Grace." As years passed on, his mind became more clear as regards the doctrine previously mentioned, and in February, 1877, a special power rested on Jno. i. 14, and especially on the words, "And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father." I much wish he had put pen to paper at this time; but he was very backward at that. Mr. Covell was very pleased to hear him speak of it, and there are a few now living to whom he mentioned the matter.

In January, 1878, he had so severe an attack of bronchitis that many thought he would never recover. He was very comfortable in his mind, and mentioned these words as being so sweet to him: "Would he spare me when a foe, and leave me when a child?" He said he had the feeling that he *was* a "child," but that Satan tried to persuade him he was deceived; yet, though he often feared that he was, he had been enabled to tell Satan that "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners," and that he was a sinner, and how did Satan know that Jesus had not come to save him. He recovered from this illness, but year by year a great difference was observed in him, and he became less and less able to withstand the occasional attacks of bronchitis.

On Monday evening, Oct. 31, 1881, he was seized with a fit of paralysis and partial apoplexy, losing the entire use of his left side. His speech and sight became much affected, but his reason remained quite clear. He was alone in the room at the time of the seizure; but providentially help was close at hand, or the circumstances would have been much more painful, as a large paraffin lamp, that was burning on the table, was upset by his fall. The kind friend who first entered the room was greatly alarmed to see the burning oil running from the table, the lamp-glass smashed, and our dear friend lying on the floor with an open knife that he had been using, under him; but was much relieved to hear him speak. He was fully aware of the dangerous condition in which he was, and responded feelingly, as well as he could, to a line in Berridge's evening hymn which was mentioned to him, "He scattereth every rising harm." "Yes," he answered, "and thrusts it far away." He was carried up stairs and placed in bed. While some of his friends were standing round him, he repeated the whole of the hymn, but his speech was so much affected that only those who knew the words could understand all he said. To a friend who called as late as ten o'clock he said that hymn 299, Gadsby's selection, suited him well. It was his custom to select a hymn at tea-time each day, and to read the chapter from which the text was taken that the hymn referred to, and hymn 299 was

the one he had chosen that evening. He was a great lover of hymns, and had many great favourites, too numerous to mention here. Hymn 293 was a great help to him not long since; and "Rock of Ages," and "Guide me, O thou great Jehovah," were both sweet to him on his death-bed. He was mercifully preserved in his latter hours from gloomy doubts and fears, and distressing temptations, all of which he had often been much tried with. He frequently spoke; but, though we should have much liked to have heard what he said, we could understand but very little—a word here and there giving us an idea of the state of his mind. Mr. George Covell called to see him, and after he had left the room, our departed friend, thinking he was still present, said, "Your dear brother, on his death-bed, said he had nothing to do but to die, and Mr. West said, 'To die will be gain;' they had the power." I said to him, "You have a little of it." "Yes," he answered, "I believe I have." I replied, "A crumb is bread as much as the whole loaf." To a friend who sat up with him on the Tuesday night, he spoke very comfortably, saying,

"If Jesus once upon me shine,
Then Jesus is for ever mine."

He remarked, with much gratitude and astonishment, the kindness of friends, and often spoke of the goodness of the Lord in providing for him so comfortably. He used to say that many years ago his prayer was that the dear Lord would grant him neither poverty nor riches, which prayer he felt was answered; and he often acknowledged in his declining years that he had not wanted anything.

But to come to the last day. After being made comfortable in bed by kind friends, he seemed inclined to doze. He occasionally took a little nourishment, and was still conscious, but feeling so fully satisfied with regard to his state, I did not disturb him with questions. On his grand-daughter arriving from Hastings about one o'clock, he recognized her, and asked if I had told her of his accident; and, to a friend who called in the afternoon, he spoke very sensibly. His breathing was very troublesome during the latter part of the day; but it became easier about nine o'clock, and at 9.30 he passed away without a sigh or groan.

— TURNER.

AMOS BAILEY.—On June 25th, 1881, aged 41, Amos Bailey, junior deacon of the church at Mayfield.

In writing a few lines concerning our beloved friend, Amos Bailey, I hope we may say our object is not to praise or extol the creature, but to show, though in a faint manner, the glory of God's free and sovereign grace in the effectual calling and, in short, in the salvation of the lost. This is my son who "was lost and is found."

About 21 years ago our departed friend was so much injured, while at work on the roof of a building, by some tiles being

thrown upon him, that life hung in doubt for a time. Three years after this he was kicked in the face by a horse; and though ill for a time, he was just saved from the hand of death. In 1873 he had another narrow escape while in a quarry; a stone, about a ton in weight, fell within three feet of him.

He was called, not only from a state of death, darkness, and ignorance, but of open rebellion against God, his truth, his people, and his ways. This is not said out of any disrespect, but to show the faithfulness of God to his promise that there is mercy "for the rebellious also." About the age of 21 he became the son-in-law of a God-fearing woman, and a member of her family and household. He also became her sorrow, her grief, her burden, and the plague of her life; not only by throwing obstacles in the way of her going to hear, but by making himself the ringleader in the family to spend the Sabbaths in gambling and sports. The following incident is one instance of his enmity against the church of Christ: One of the deacons of the church at Mayfield, a gracious man, though poor in the things of this life, had usually made a little extra money in the spring, on an estate where Mr. Bailey held the office of wood-reve. But Mr. Bailey deprived him of the opportunity, until the dear Lord made a place for himself in Mr. B.'s heart; then he gladly made room for the poor man on the estate.

This brings us to his calling, the time when the "dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and live."

About the year 1874, on Sunday afternoon, Mrs. B., on returning from chapel, said she intended going again in the evening. He said, "You are not. I have been at home all day alone, and now you must stay at home with me." Mrs. B. then suggested that they should both go; but he declared he would never go to that place. However, after tea, being pressed, he reluctantly started. Once or twice on the road he made a stand, saying he would go no further; but being told he could go up into the gallery where no one would see him, he consented and went. Whether out of sight or not, the sound of Mr. P.'s voice reached him; and not his only, but the voice of him whose voice is as the sound of many waters; not that I can relate anything special on this occasion, because he was a man naturally reserved, and said but little at any time. But this we know, that he never ceased to attend from this time until the last time the place was open before his death; that is, unless prevented. And I may say that in hearing Mr. P. 12 months, he learned a grand lesson which thousands never learn in a long lifetime; viz., that he was the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints, or unworthy the name and place of the smallest saint. At this time one Sunday evening, returning home with his mother-in-law, he stopped in the road and said, "Mother, I feel I am the worst creature on all the earth; what a wretch I have been to you, and to poor master Dann (the deacon before referred to). My trouble is

more than I can bear; yet I fear it is not a right trouble. I could go down upon my knees before you both, if that would do any good; but I want the Lord to forgive me."

This is one of the many times that he told out the burden of his heart to his once despised mother. She said, "Ah, Amos,

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

He exclaimed, "What? ride upon the storm for such a wretch as I am!" I will give another little incident which, though a simple one, was yet very satisfactory and comforting to a praying mother. It was this: Returning home one day, she saw him weeping behind a heap of fagots with a book in his hand. One evening about this time, while reading a chapter in John's gospel, he was much overcome and said, "I hope after all it will be well." One Sabbath evening returning from chapel he turned into the wood to return thanks to the Lord for his manifested love in that day's hearing; here the dear Lord met with him again, and so filled his heart with his love that he had now the "oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." These words were often the language of his heart:

"More frequent let thy visits be,
Or let them longer last."

Also,

"When Jesus with his mighty love
Visits my troubled breast,
My doubts subside, my fears remove,
And I'm completely blest."

The above will show that he was called and separated from his ungodly companions, life, and practices, to a life of holiness in principle and desire. I do not say he was without fault; only I believe *that* love which covers a multitude of faults covered his. At home he was a loving and forbearing husband, a most dutiful and kind son-in-law, a source of peace and comfort to all in the house. As a man of business we have the unsolicited testimony of his employer that he was remarkable for honesty and integrity; also that of a business man living near him, that he was a most upright and honest man.

Although he did his alms in secret, we know he has done many acts of kindness; especially to those he had persecuted and despised, such as the deacon before mentioned, whose office in the church he was called to fill after his death. As a deacon Mr. B. served the church in a most unaffected, humble, and satisfactory manner with much self-denial and perseverance; having to walk two and a half miles every Sabbath morning to open and conduct the Sunday schools and attend to sundry little things. At a week evening service he spoke in prayer alternate weeks. The last prayer-meeting in his life, 22nd June, 1881, he gave out the following hymn:

“ Death is no more a frightful foe ;
 Since I with Christ shall reign,
 With joy I leave this world of woe ;
 For me to die is gain ! ” &c.

As he usually displayed a tender fear in the selection of hymns, this is all the more remarkable ; it being only two days between this and his sudden and unexpected death. On the evening of the 24th, he read a chapter on prayer, and spoke in prayer at home as usual ; but with a marked solemnity and earnestness. The next day, 25th, while at his work he fell from a waggon, and part of an oak tree fell upon his chest. He looked up and smiled ; but never spoke or breathed again. “ O grave, where is thy victory ? O death, where is thy sting ? ”

Whether this is worth reading or not, I venture to say I have written it in loving remembrance of one who is gone ; and wish it may kindle in the living a flame of love and admiration of the superaboundings of the rich and free grace of God in a precious Christ.

Thus far one of the church has written concerning our dear friend ; and much more might be said ; but I know the obituaries have to be short. Yet I wish to add a few words. I shall never forget our last parting in the vestry after the evening service ; so peacefully did we bid each other good night, little thinking I should never see him again here below, but should so soon have to commit him to the silent tomb. Perhaps I made too much of him, as he had almost everything to see to ; and when matters were placed in his care I rested quite quiet, unless I heard anything about them from him. He was indeed a man of peace as far as truth would allow, which is what I so dearly love. I have indeed lost a friend ; but, bless the Lord, he has entered into that peace where my soul hopes to enter by-and-bye. The church has lost a praying friend ; but, bless the Lord, he still fills the places of those taken away.

Mayfield, Feb. 15th, 1882.

ELI PAGE.

HANNAH RUMSEY.—On Nov. 22nd, 1881, Hannah Rumsey, of Brighton, in the 80th year of her age.

My dear mother, Hannah Rumsey, was born into this world of sin and sorrow, Jan. 9th, 1804. Like the rest of Adam's race she was born in sin, and grew up in it, following the course of this world and its pleasures, without God or a desire after him, being fond of dancing, cards, &c. But when his set time came, the Lord stopped her by a very heavy affliction, and led her to see and feel, too, her state as a sinner, that where God is she could never come ; and she told those about her the solemn state they were in, and where such a course would end.

The Lord was graciously pleased to raise her up again ; but that arrow of conviction was so fastened in her poor soul that she tried many means to get rid of the load she felt within, and was set to work under a legal ministry.

About this time one of Mr. Huntington's hearers lent her some of Mr. H.'s books, from which she received a little help, and also from the company of those she hoped were the Lord's people,

frequently walking behind to hear if they had any exercises and troubles of soul. She walked three miles on a Sabbath to hear, not getting what she wanted. Hearing of a cause at Ripley where her path and feelings were described, although six miles distant, she felt obliged to go. This was about the year 1837. Feeling such an attachment to the people, and the Lord blessing the ministry to her soul, she wished to join the church; and was unanimously received by the minister, Mr. Merryett, and members in 1841.

Here she attended for many years, her conversation and actions proving the truth of what she felt within, and oftentimes speaking a word of caution, encouragement, or warning to those she came in contact with. Her heart was open and house to relieve the necessities of the poor. I think, if she were living, she would say the heaviest trial she passed through in her life was caused by "discord among brethren;" and their contentions are "like the bars of a castle."

She would walk many miles to hear such men as Mr. Mortimer, Mr. Tiptaft, Mr. Muskett, and others. Her soul was also much blessed in hearing the late W. Gadsby. No one knew what she gave to the cause; for she fulfilled that word: "Let not thy right hand know what thy left hand doeth." When father has said she would bring us all to the workhouse, she would reply, "No, master, the Lord will provide for me. He has told me he will be with me, and I believe he will be as good as his word. He told me, 'I will be with thee in all places whither thou goest.' 'Thy bread shall be given thee and thy water shall be sure.'" In after-years she was a "mother in Israel," in succouring, comforting, and encouraging many in their soul-distresses; and often her words proved "a word in season" to those in a cast-down, fainting condition. She was greatly esteemed and beloved by those who knew her.

My father dying, and after a time also the gentleman whose faithful servants my parents had been for many years, my mother spent the remainder of her life, about eight years, under my roof. How many times she has said hers was the best room in the parish, where her dear Lord visited her soul and spoke some word to her, which was generally the first thing in the morning. How many times she used to say, "Bless the Lord; his mercies are very great."

After she was taken with that sickness which proved to be unto death, she said, "I know that 'he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.' 'I know in whom I have believed.'" On one occasion she quoted these words with some concern:

"And can he have taught me to trust in his Name,
And thus far have brought me to put me to shame?"

At another time:

"Prepare me, gracious God,
To stand before thy face.'

Do make me what I must be to be acceptable in thy sight." On my going into her room one day, she said, "Ah, my boy, the God of heaven will accept only his own work. He must work all for us and all in us, and he shall have the praise."

The Lord was very gracious to my dear mother in taking down her tabernacle with so little pain; although she proved the truth of what Job said: "His flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn." The doctor said her body was completely worn out, and her mind went with it; but she would answer to my frequent questions if she felt comfortable in her mind, "Yes." Now she has entered "into the joy of her Lord."

Will her friends in America and New Zealand please note this.
61, Cobden Road, Brighton, Jan., 1882. HENRY RUMSEY.

To the Editor of the "Gospel Standard."

Dear Sir,—Enclosed I send you a short account of the death of Mr. Hilbers. As he was greatly beloved by a large circle of friends, and many have expressed a desire to hear a few particulars of his end, I believe you would be conferring a real favour on many of your readers if you could arrange to insert it in the March number of the "Gospel Standard."

I believe the few particulars will be read with interest, with joy and thankfulness, by many who have truly "wept with him," and who will rejoice as they read of his rejoicings. As a family we should feel no desire to press an early insertion, but for the sake of others, we should be thankful.

Leaving it to your kind consideration,

I am, Yours sincerely,

West Deeping, Feb. 15th, 1882.

M. J. TRYON.

On Feb. 3rd, at the residence of his brother-in-law, Mr. Tryon, Market Deeping, Henry Christopher Hilbers, aged 70 years.

The large circle of friends to whom Mr. Hilbers was so well known, and who felt so deeply interested in him, owing in part to his self-denying efforts for the good of others in ministering to their spiritual and temporal needs as enabled, and owing in part to the long continued, painful, and deep soul exercises of which he was the subject for many years, will rejoice to hear of the Lord's goodness to him during the close of his life. About six weeks before his death, he expressed himself as being in great measure free from that severe conflict in which he had been engaged for so long, and as having more hope of getting to heaven than he had had for years.

He was greatly helped about the commencement of this year with views of a suffering Saviour, and said one morning that, during the night, although in great distress of body, he had had such a meditation on the sufferings of Christ in connection with those words in Ps. xiii.: "How long, O Lord," that he could truly say he would not miss the pain of body, if thereby he

missed the comfort of his soul. He said, What are my sufferings to Christ's, and his not for his own sins, but for the sins of his people, and his bodily suffering was light compared to the suffering of his soul when his Father hid his face from him, when "he poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors." He spoke also much on Christ being made an end of sin, and on one occasion said, "If I die to-night, all I can say is, I die a believer in the infinite efficacy of the wonderful atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ;" at another time he said, "I die a believer in the Word of God." Another day, he said, "I was enabled in the night to fall into the hands of God simply as a sinner, and in doing so I felt to know what is expressed by Erskine in those lines, 'The match is made, with little din 'tis done,' and I feel I can approach God in a way I never could before."

He was much laid on the minds of God's people, that he might be spared great suffering, which was much feared, owing to the nature of his disease, and that the Lord would deal gently with him when it came to the time for his dissolution; which prayers were remarkably answered, as he suffered comparatively little the last fortnight of his life, and at the last fell into a profound sleep of many hours' duration, out of which he never awoke, and thus literally fell asleep in Jesus. He more than once expressed his desire that his death might be made a blessing to the church of God, and in part fulfilment of this desire it is hoped that this short notice of his death may be used by the Holy Spirit to the encouragement of the tempted and tried of God's people still to wait and to prove that he is a faithful and covenant-keeping God. The following texts were put on his funeral card in accordance with his own wish. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (Jno. vi. 37.) "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." (Heb. ii. 17.)

ALTHOUGH trouble and affliction rise and spring oftentimes by the wickedness of enemies, and through the instigation of the devil, or else by some other means; yet ought we never to imagine that it cometh by fortune or chance, without the permission, sufferance, determination, and will of God, but by and with the foreknowledge, providence, and appointment of God. And to speak properly concerning safeguard, it is all one (so that we tempt not God) whether we live in poverty or in riches, in the fire or in the water, among our enemies or among our friends, seeing that God seeth, knoweth, disposeth, and ruleth all things.—*Wermullerus*.

Erratum.—On page 138 the word *earth* has been put by the compositor in the wrong place. It should have followed the 24th line from the top. These repeated blunders, after the proofs have been read by us, are very annoying.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

MAY, 1882.

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

A BROKEN HEART.

BY JOHN BUNYAN.

(Concluded from p. 156.)

THUS I have showed you *one* sign of a broken-hearted man. He is a sensible man, he has all the senses of his soul awakened; he can *see, hear, feel, taste, smell*, and that as none but himself can do.—I come now to another sign of a broken and contrite man.

2. And that is, he is a very sorrowful man. Thus, as the other is natural, it is natural to one that is in pain, and that has his bones broken, to be a grieved and sorrowful man. He is none of the jolly ones of the times, nor can he be, for his bones, his heart, his heart is broken.

(1.) He is sorry that he feels and finds in himself a pravity of nature. I told you before he is sensible of it, he sees it, he feels it; and here I say he is sorry for it. It is this that makes him call himself, wretched man! It is this that makes him loathe and abhor himself; it is this that makes him blush—blush before God, and be ashamed. (Rom. vii. 24; Job xlii. 5, 6; Ezek. xxxvi. 31.)

He finds by nature no form nor comeliness in himself; but the more he looks in the glass of the Word, the more unhandsome, the more deformed he perceiveth sin has made him. Everybody sees not this, therefore everybody is not sorry for it; but the broken in heart sees that he is by sin corrupted, marred, full of lewdness and haughtiness; he sees that in him, that is, in his flesh, dwells no good thing; and this makes him sorry, yea, it makes him sorry at heart. A man that has his bones broken finds he is spoiled, marred, disabled from doing as he would and should, at which he is grieved and made sorry.

Many are sorry for actual transgressions, because they do oft bring them to shame before men; but few are sorry for the defects that sin has made in nature, because they see not those defects themselves. A man cannot be sorry for the sinful defects of nature, till he sees they have rendered him contemptible to God; nor is it anything but a sight of God that can make him truly see what he is, and so be heartily sorry for being so. Now "mine eyes see thee," said Job; "now I abhor myself." "Woe

is me, I am undone," said the prophet, "for mine eyes have seen the Lord, the King." And it was this that made Daniel say his comeliness in him was turned into corruption; for he had now the vision of the Holy One. (Job xlii. 6; Isa. vi. 1, 5; Dan. x. 8.)

Visions of God break the heart, because by the sight the soul then has of his perfections it sees its own infinite and unspeakable disproportion, because of the vileness of its nature.

Suppose a company of ugly, uncomely, deformed persons dwelt together in one house, and suppose that they never yet saw any man or woman more than themselves, that were arrayed with the splendours and perfections of nature; these would not be capable of comparing themselves with any but themselves, and consequently would not be affected, and made sorry, for their uncomely, natural defections. But now, bring them out of their cells and holes of darkness, where they have been shut up by themselves, and let them take a view of the splendour and perfections of beauty that are in others, and then, if at all, they will be sorry and dejected at the view of their own defects.

This is the case; men by sin are marred, spoiled, corrupted, depraved, but they dwell by themselves in the dark; they see neither God, nor angel, nor saints, in their excellent nature and beauty; and therefore they are apt to count their own uncomely parts their ornaments, and their glory. But now, let such, as I said, see God, see saints, or the ornaments of the Holy Ghost, and themselves as they are without them, and then they cannot but be affected with, and sorry for, their own deformity. When the Lord Christ put forth but little of his excellency before his servant Peter's face, it raised up the depravity of Peter's nature before him, to his great confusion and shame, and made him cry out to him in the midst of all his fellows, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." (Lu. v. 4, 8.)

This, therefore, is the cause of a broken heart; even a sight of divine excellencies, and a sense that I am a poor, depraved, spoiled, defiled wretch; and this sight, having broken the heart, begets sorrow in the broken-hearted.

(2) The broken-hearted is a sorrowful man, for that he finds his depravity of nature strong in him to the putting forth itself to oppose and overthrow what his changed mind doth prompt him to. "When I would do good," said Paul, "evil is present with me." (Rom. vii. 21.) Evil is present to oppose, to resist, and make head against the desires of my soul. The man that has his bones broken may have yet a mind to be industriously occupied in a lawful and honest calling; but he finds by experience that an infirmity attends his present condition, that strongly resists his good endeavours; and at this he shakes his head, makes complaints, and with sorrow of heart he sighs and says, "I cannot do the thing that I would." (Rom. vii. 15; Gal v. 17.)

I am weak, I am feeble, I am not only depraved, but by that depravity deprived of ability to put good motions, good inten-

tions and desires into execution, to completeness. "O," says he, "I am ready to halt, my sorrow is continually before me."

You must know the broken-hearted loves God, loves his soul, loves good, and hates evil. Now, for such an one to find in himself an opposition and continual contradiction to this holy passion, it must needs cause sorrow; "godly sorrow," as the apostle Paul calls it. For such are made sorry after a godly sort. To be sorry for that thy nature is with sin depraved, and that through this depravity thou art deprived of ability to do what the Word and thy holy mind doth prompt thee to, is to be sorry after a godly sort; for this sorrow worketh that in thee of which thou wilt never have cause to repent; no, not to eternity. (2 Cor. vii. 9, 11.)

(3.) The broken-hearted man is sorry for those breaches that, by reason of the depravity of his nature, are made in his life and conversation. And this was the case of the man in our text. The vileness of his nature had broken out to the defiling of his life, and to the making of him at this time base in conversation. This, this was it that did all to break his heart.

He saw in this he had dishonoured God, and that cut him: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." (Ps. li. 4.) He saw in this he had caused the enemies of God to open their mouths and blaspheme; and this cut him to the heart. This made him cry, "I have sinned against thee, Lord;" this made him say, "I will declare mine iniquity, I will be sorry for my sin." (Ps. xxxviii. 18.)

When a man is designed to do a matter, when his heart is set upon it—and the broken-hearted doth design to glorify God—an obstruction to that design, the spoiling of this work, makes him sorrowful. Hannah coveted children, but could not have them, and this made her "a woman of a sorrowful spirit." (1 Sam. i. 15.)

A broken-hearted man would be well inwardly, and do that which is well outwardly, but he feels, he finds, he sees he is prevented, prevented at least in part. This makes him sorrowful; in this he groans, groans earnestly, being burdened with his imperfection. (2 Cor. viii. 1, 3.)

You know one with broken bones has imperfections many, and is more sensible of them too (as was said afore) than any other man; and this makes him sorrowful, yea, and makes him conclude that he "shall go softly all his days, in the bitterness of his soul." (Isa. xxxviii. 15.)

3. The man with a broken heart is a very humble man; for true humility is a sign of a broken heart. Hence, brokenness of heart, contrition of spirit, and humbleness of mind, are put together. "To revive the heart of the humble, and to revive the spirit of the contrite ones." (Isa. lvii. 15.)

To follow our similitude. Suppose a man, while in bodily health, stout and strong, and that fears and cares for no man; yet let this man have but a leg or an arm broken, and his courage

is quelled; he is now so far off from hectoring it with a man, that he is afraid of every little child that doth but offer to touch him. Now he will court the most feeble that has aught to do with him, to use him and handle him gently. Now he is become a child in courage, a child in fear, and humbleth himself as a little child.

Why, thus it is with that man that is of a broken and contrite spirit. Time was, indeed, he could hector, even hector it with God himself, saying, "What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? or what profit shall I have if I keep his commandments?" (Job xxi. 15; Mal. iii. 13, 14.)

Aye, but now his heart is broken, God has wrestled with him, and given him a fall, to the breaking of his bones, his heart; and now he crouches, now he cringes, now he begs of God that he will not only do him good, but do it with tender hands. "Have mercy upon me, O God," said David; "yea, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions." (Ps. li. 1.)

He stands, as he sees, not only in need of mercy, but of the tenderest mercies; God has several sorts of mercies, some more rough, some more tender. God can save a man, yet have him a dreadful way to heaven. This the broken-hearted sees; and this the broken-hearted dreads, and therefore pleads for the tenderest sort of mercies; and here we read of his gentle dealing, and that he is very pitiful, and that he deals tenderly with his. But the reason of such expressions no man knows but he that is broken-hearted; he has his sores, his running sores, his stinking sores. Wherefore he is pained, and therefore covets to be handled tenderly. Thus God has broken the pride of his spirit, and humbled the loftiness of man. And his humility yet appears,—

(1.) In his thankfulness for natural life. He reckoneth at night when he goes to bed that like as a lion, so God will tear him to pieces before the morning light. (Isa. xxxviii. 13.)

There is no judgment that has fallen upon others but he counts of right he should be swallowed up by it. "My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments." (Ps. cxix. 120.)

But perceiving a day added to this life, and that he in the morning is still on this side hell, he cannot choose but take notice of it, and acknowledge it as a special favour; saying, "God be thanked for holding my soul in life till now, and for keeping my life back from the destroyer." Compare Job xxxiii. 22; and Ps. lvi. 13; Ps. lxxxvi. 13.

Man, before his heart is broken, counts time his own, and therefore he spends it lavishly upon every idle thing. His soul is far from fear, because the rod of God is not upon him; but when he sees himself under the wounding hand of God, or when God like a lion is breaking all his bones, then he humbleth himself before him, and falleth at his foot. Now he has learned to count every moment a mercy, and every small morsel a mercy.

(2.) Now also, the least hope of mercy for his soul, O how precious is it! He that was wont to make sport of the gospel, and that valued promises but as stubble, and the words of God but as rotten wood,—now, with what an eye doth he look on the promise? Yea, he counteth a peradventure of mercy more rich, more worth than the whole world. Now, as we say, “He is glad to leap at a crust;” now, to be a dog in God’s house is counted better by him than to dwell in the tents of the wicked. (Matt. xv. 16, 27; Lu. xv. 17, 19.)

(3.) Now, he that was wont to look scornfully upon the people of God; yea, that used to scorn to show them a gentle cast of his countenance; now he admires and bows before them, and is ready to lick the dust off their feet; and would count it his greatest, the highest honour to be as one of the least of them. “Make me as one of thy hired servants,” says he. (Lu. xv. 19.)

(4.) Now he is in his own eyes the greatest fool in nature, for that he sees he has been so mistaken in his ways, and has yet but little, if any, true knowledge of God. “Every one now,” says he, “has more knowledge of God than I, every one serves him better than I.” (Ps. lxxiii. 21, 22; Prov. xxx. 2, 3.)

(5.) Now, may he be but one, though the least in the kingdom of heaven! Now, may he be but one, though the least in the church on earth! Now, may he be but loved, though the least beloved of saints! How high an account doth he set thereon!

(6.) Now, when he talketh with God or man, how doth he debase himself before them! If with God, how does he accuse himself, and load himself with the acknowledgments of his own villainies, which he committed in the days wherein he was the enemy of God? “Lord,” said Paul, that contrite one, “I imprisoned and did beat in every synagogue them that believe on thee. And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.” (Acts xxii. 19, 20.) “Yea, I punished thy saints oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme. And being exceeding mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.” (Acts xxvi. 9, 11.)

Also when he comes to speak to saints, how doth he make himself vile before them? “I am,” saith he, “the least of the apostles; I am not to be called an apostle; I am less than the least of all saints. I was a blasphemer, I was a persecutor, and injurious,” &c. (1 Cor. xv. 9; Eph. iii. 8; 1 Tim. i. 13.)

What humility, what self-abasing thoughts doth a broken heart produce? When David danced before the ark of God, his wife taunted him for his doings; but says he, “It was before the Lord, &c. And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight.” (2 Sam. vi. 20-22.)

O, the man that is, or that has been kindly broken in his spirit, and that is of a contrite heart, is a lowly, a humble man!

4. The broken-hearted man is a man that sees himself in spirituals to be poor; therefore as *humble* and *contrite*, so *poor* and

contrite are put together in the word: "But to this man will I look, even to him that is of a contrite spirit." (Isa. lxxvi. 1, 2.)

And here we still pursue our metaphor. A wounded man, a man with broken bones, concludes his condition to be but poor, very poor. Ask him how he does, and he answers, "Truly, neighbour, in a very poor condition." Also you have the spiritual poverty of such as have, or have had their hearts broken, and that have been of contrite spirits, much made mention of in the word. And they go by two names, to distinguish them from others. They are called *thy* poor, that is, God's poor; they are also called "the poor in spirit." (Ps. lxxii. 2; lxxiv. 9; Matt. v. 8.)

Now, the man that is poor in his own eyes (for of him we now discourse, and the broken-hearted is such an one), is sensible of his wants. He knows he cannot help himself, and therefore is forced to be content to live by the charity of others. Thus it is in nature, thus it is in grace.

First. The broken-hearted now knows his wants, and he knew them not till now. As he that has a broken bone knew no want of a bone-setter till he knew his bone was broken, his broken bone makes him know it; and thus it is in spirituals. Now he sees that to be poor indeed is to want the sense of the favour of God; for his great pain is a sense of wrath, as hath been shown before; and the voice of joy would heal his broken bones. (Ps. li. 8.)

Two things, he thinks, would make him rich.

1. A right and title to Jesus Christ and all his benefits.

2. A saving faith therein. They that are spiritually rich are rich in him, and in the faith of him. (2 Cor. viii. 9; Jam. ii. 5.)

The first of these giveth us a *right* to the kingdom of heaven, and the second yields the soul the *comfort* of it; and the broken-hearted man wants the sense and knowledge of his interest in these. That he knows he wants them is plain, but that he knows he has them is what as yet he wants the attainment of. Hence he says, "The poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst." There is none in their view, none in their view for them. (Isa. xli. 17.)

Hence David, when he had his broken heart, felt he wanted washing, he wanted purging, he wanted to be made white. He knew that spiritual riches lay there, but he did not so well perceive that God had washed and purged him; yea, he rather was afraid that all was going, that he was in danger of being cast out of God's presence, and that the Spirit of grace would be utterly taken from him. (See Ps. li.)

That is the first thing: the broken-hearted is poor, because he knows his wants.

Secondly. The broken-hearted is poor because he knows he cannot help himself to what he knows he wants. As the man who has a broken arm knows it, so he knows of himself he cannot set it. This, therefore, is a second thing that declares a man to be poor, otherwise he is not feelingly so. For, suppose a man wants never so much, yet, if he can but help himself, if

he can furnish himself, if he can support his own wants out of what he has, he cannot be a poor man; yea, the more he wants, the greater his riches, if he can supply his own wants out of his own purse.

He, then, is the poor man, that knows his spiritual want, and also knows he cannot supply or help himself.

But this the broken-hearted knows; therefore he, in his own eyes, is the only poor man. True, he may have something of his own; but that will not supply his want, and therefore he is a poor man still. I have sacrifices, says David, but thou dost not desire them, therefore my poverty remains. (Ps. li. 16.)

Lead is not gold, lead is not current money with the merchant. There is none has spiritual gold to sell, but Christ. (Rev. iii. 18.)

What can a man do to procure Christ, to procure faith or love? Yea, had he never so much of his own carnal excellencies, no, not one penny of it will go for pay in that market where grace is to be had. "If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would be utterly contemned." (Song viii. 7.)

This the broken-hearted man perceives, and, therefore, he sees himself to be spiritually poor. True, he has a broken heart, and that is of great esteem with God; but that is not of nature's goodness, that is a gift, a work of God, that is "the sacrifices of God." Besides, a man cannot remain content and at rest with that; for that, in the nature of it, does but show him he is poor, and that his wants are such as himself cannot supply. Besides, there is but little ease in a broken heart.

Thirdly. The broken-hearted man is poor, and sees it; because he finds he is now disabled to live any way else but by begging.

This David betook himself to, though he was a king; for he knew, as to his soul's health, he could live no way else. "This poor man cried," saith he, "and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." (Ps. xxxiv. 6.) And this leads me to the fifth sign.

5. Another sign of a broken heart is a crying, a crying out. Pain, you know, will make one cry. Go to them that have upon them the anguish of broken bones, and see if they do not cry; anguish makes them cry. This, this is that which quickly follows, if once thy heart be broken, and thy spirit indeed made contrite.

First. I say anguish will make thee cry. "Trouble and anguish," said David, "have taken hold upon me." (Ps. cxix. 143.) Anguish, you know, doth naturally provoke to crying. Now, as a broken bone has anguish, a broken heart has anguish; hence the pains of one that has a broken heart are compared to the pangs of a woman in travail. (Jno. xvi. 20, 22.)

1. Anguish will make one cry alone, cry to oneself; and this is called a bemoaning of oneself. "I have heard Ephraim bemoaning himself," said God. (Jer. xxxi. 18.)

That is, being at present under the breaking, chastising hand

of God, "Thou hast chastised me," saith he, "and I was chastised as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke." This is his meaning also who said, "I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise;" and why? Why? "My heart is pained within me." (Ps. liii. 2, 4.)

This is a self-bemoaning, a bemoaning themselves in secret and retired places.

You know it is common with them who are distressed with anguish, though all alone, to cry out to themselves of their present pains; say, O my leg! O my arm! O my bowels! or, as the son of the Shunammite, "My head, my head!" (2 Ki. iv. 19.) O the groans, the sighs, the cries, that the broken-hearted have when by themselves, or alone. "O," say they, "My sins, my sins! My soul, my soul! How am I laden with guilt! How am I surrounded with fear! O this hard, this desperate, this unbelieving heart! O how sin defileth my will, my mind, my conscience! I am afflicted and ready to die." (Ps. lxxxviii. 15.)

Could some of you carnal people but get behind the chamber door to hear Ephraim when he is at the work of self-bemoaning, it would make you stand amazed to hear him bewail that sin in himself in which you take delight, and to hear him bemoan his mis-spending of time, while you spend all in pursuing your filthy lusts, and to hear him offended with his heart because it cannot better comply with God's holy will, while you are afraid of his Word and ways, and never think yourselves better than when farthest off from God. The unruliness of the passions, the lusts of the broken-hearted, make them often get into a corner, and thus bemoan themselves.

Secondly. As they cry out in a bemoaning manner of and to themselves, so they have their outcries of and against themselves to others; as she said in another case, "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." (Lam. i. 12.)

O the bitter cries and complaints that the broken-hearted have, and make to one another! Still every one imagining that his own wounds are deepest, and his own sores fullest of anguish, and hardest to be cured. Say they, "If our iniquities be upon us, and we pine away in them, how can we then live?" (Ezek. xxxiii. 10.)

Once, being at an honest woman's house, I, after some pause, asked her how she did. She said, "Very badly." I asked her if she was sick. She answered, "No." "What then?" said I; "are any of your children ill?" She told me, "No." "What," said I, "is your husband amiss, or do you go back in the world?" "No, no," said she, "but I am afraid I shall not be saved;" and brake out with a heavy heart, saying, "Ah, good-man Bunyan, Christ and a pitcher! If I had Christ, though I went and begged my bread with a pitcher, it would be better with me than I think it is now."

This woman had her heart broken; this woman wanted Christ; this woman was concerned for her soul. There are but few women, rich women, that count Christ and a pitcher better than

the world, their pride, and pleasures. This woman's cries are worthy to be recorded. It was a cry that carried in it not only a sense of the want, but also of the worth of Christ. This cry, "Christ and a pitcher," made a melodious noise in the ears of the very angels.

3. As they bemoan themselves, and make their complaints to one and another, so they cry to God. "O God," said Heman, "I have cried day and night to thee." But when? Why, when his soul was full of trouble, and his life drew near to the grave (Ps. lxxxviii. 1, 3); or, as it says in another place, "Out of the deep, out of the belly of hell, cried I," by such words, expressing what painful condition they were in when they cried. (Ps. cxxx. 1; Jonah ii. 2.)

See how God himself words it. "My pleasant portion," says he, "is become a desolate wilderness; and being desolate, it mourneth unto me." (Jer. xii. 11.)

And this also is natural to those whose heart is broken. Whither goes the child when it catcheth harm, but to its father, to its mother? Where doth it lay its head but in their laps? Into whose bosom doth it pour out its complaint more especially, but into the bosom of a father, of a mother? because there are bowels, there is pity, there are relief and succour. And thus it is with them whose bones, whose heart is broken. It is natural to them, they must cry, they cannot but cry to him. "Lord, heal me," said David, "for my bones are vexed; Lord, heal me, for my soul is vexed." (Ps. vi. 1, 3.)

He that cannot cry feels no pain, sees no want, fears no danger, or else is dead.

6. Another sign of a broken heart, and of a contrite spirit, is, it trembleth at God's Word. "To him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." (Isa. lxvi. 2.)

The Word of God is an awful word to a broken-hearted man. Solomon says, "The word of a king is as the roaring of a lion;" and if so, what is the Word of God? for, by the wrath and fear is meant the authoritative word of a king.

We have a proverb, "The burnt child dreads the fire, the whipped child fears the rod;" even so the broken-hearted fears the Word of God. Hence you have a mark set upon them that tremble at God's Word; to wit,—they are they that keep among the godly; they are they that keep within compass; they are they that are aptest to mourn and to stand in the gap when God is angry, and to turn away his wrath from a people.

It is a sign the Word of God has had place and wrought powerfully, when the heart trembleth at it, is afraid, and stands in awe of it. When Joseph's mistress tempted him, he was afraid of the Word of God. "How shall I do this great wickedness," said he, "and sin against God?" He stood in awe of God's Word, because he kept in remembrance what a dreadful thing it was to rebel against God's Word. When old Eli heard that the ark was taken his very heart trembled within him; for

he read, by that sad loss, that God was angry with Israel, and he knew that the anger of God was a great and terrible thing. When Samuel went to Bethlehem the elders of the town trembled; for they feared that he came to them with some sad message from God, and they had had experience of the dread of such things before. (Gen. xxxix. 7, 9; 1 Sam. iv. 18; xvi. 1, 4.)

When Ezra would have a mourning in Israel for the sins of the land, he sent, "And there came to him every one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the transgressions of those that had been carried away." (Ezra ix. 4.)

There is, I say, a sort of people that tremble at the words of God, and that are afraid of doing aught that is contrary to them; but they are only such with whose souls and spirits the Word has had to do. What care men for God? what care they for his Word? Neither threats nor promises, neither punishments nor favours, will make them obedient to the Word of God; and all because they have not felt the power of it, their hearts have not been broken with it. When king Josias did but read in God's book what punishment God had threatened against rebellious Israel, though he himself was a holy and good man, he humbled himself, he rent his clothes, and wept before the Lord, and was afraid of the judgment threatened (2 Ki. xxii.; 2 Chron. xxxiv.); for he knew what a dreadful thing the Word of God is. Some men, as I said before, dare do anything, let the Word of God be ever so much against it; but they that tremble at the Word dare not do so. No, they must make the Word their rule for all they do; they must go to the Holy Bible, and there inquire what may or may not be done; for they tremble at the Word.

This, then, is another sign, a true sign, that the heart has been broken, namely, when the heart is made afraid of and trembleth at the Word. (Acts ix. 4, 6; xvi. 29, 31.)

Trembling at the Word is caused by a belief of what is deserved and threatened, and of what will come if repentance is not granted; and, therefore, the heart melts and breaks before the Lord.

JOHN BUNYAN.

OUR corruptions and spiritual diseases are the subjects of Christ's care. And his care about them is to cure them, and to keep his people from dying under them.—*Traill*.

OUR fellowship with Christ, while in this world, is with him as he is a Saviour, and we sinners; as we have sin to be cleansed, and he hath blood to cleanse us; and your sins and defilements, which you go to him with, and complain of, and want to be cleansed, instead of casting you away for them, they draw out his compassions towards you. And know that he never united you to himself, or drew your heart to him, because you are perfect, but that in his own time and way he may make you so; nor because you are clean, but that he might cleanse you, according to his promise: "I will sprinkle clean water upon you; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you."—*Erskine*.

A VESSEL OF MERCY;

OR,

THE EARLY EXPERIENCE AND LIFE OF WILLIAM ASKER,
A MEMBER AT GOWER STREET.*(Continued from p. 165.)*

AFTER this blessed deliverance I enjoyed a peaceful state of mind for one month as near as I can recollect; and then a sharp and cutting trouble came suddenly upon me without a minute's notice. I was digging up a flower border when it passed quietly through my mind, "You have an uncle down at home, of the name of Mordecai." "Well," I said, "and what of that?" "Why, Mordecai is a Jew's name; you are of the race of the Jews. And you know you read that the Jews are rejected, and the Gentiles chosen; so you have no part in the salvation of Jesus Christ." I cannot describe the feeling of my poor mind; nor shall I ever forget it. After about one month's joy and peace, I had one month's sorrow and bitterness. Some folks would think it a very trifling thing to be so troubled about; but it was no trifling matter to me, and cost me many a groan. I searched well the Epistles of Paul to see if I could find that one Jew had been converted after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ; but I could not find one; neither had I heard of one then. O the blindness and ignorance of my mind even in the bare letter of truth! I knew both my lost and saved condition; and if any one had asked me about that, I could have answered as clearly as possible. But had they asked me anything respecting the doctrines of election and predestination, or to give an account of the Trinity in Unity and the manner and plan of salvation, I could no more have answered them than the pen I am writing with. All I could have told them was I had felt I was lost; and that Jesus Christ had pardoned and saved me. But to return. Being thus persuaded that I was of the race of the Jews, I was brought into great distress of mind, and was afraid all was over. It never entered my mind about those who were called under the preaching of Peter after the resurrection; nor about the Apostle Paul himself, who was "as one born out of due time." I felt somewhat like the dear disciples after their Lord and Master had been crucified. It appeared that all their hopes and expectations were blasted; they thought it was all over with them. This made them walk about in sadness; and so did I. I did once in the time get a little help from these words of the Apostle Paul to the church at Rome. Speaking of the natural branches of the good olive tree which were broken off, he says, "And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in; for God is able to graff them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?" (Rom. xi. 23, 24.) This gave me a little

encouragement for awhile; then I sank again. But one day, as I sat alone reading, I came upon these words: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." (Rom. ii. 28, 29.) My burden fell off, and I was like a bird let loose. For I felt that circumcision of heart was all to me, whether I was born a Jew or a Gentile; and it has been no burden to me ever since.

Passing over a few more troubles, such as are common to all, I come now to my removal from Hatfield to London. I came to London in the commencement of the year 1829, having a strong inclination thereto for two or three reasons not worth naming, and obtained employment in a nursery-garden in Camden Town. Here I worked until the month of July, when the strawberry-gathering time came. One Saturday evening my master said to me, "William, I shall want you to-morrow all day to gather strawberries." I said, "Sir, I cannot come." "Why," he said, "are you afraid the devil will have you?" "No, Sir, I have not that fear; but I have a fear about me, that I cannot gather your strawberries all the Lord's day." So he told me to go home and get my tea, and consider about it for an hour, and then come and take my week's money; and if I still refused, he said he should not want me any longer. You may guess, a very uncomfortable tea I had. It was an unexpected trouble to me. I had just before this enjoyed some solid peace in my mind; but now came a sad reverse. I went and took my money; and the master discharged me, as I could not agree to his terms.

For about the space of three weeks I wandered about London till my money was almost gone. My wages being very low, I could save but little while in work; so that I had but little stock in hand, and less in the bank. I begged very hard for the dear Lord to open a way for my escape from this new trouble. But as no way appeared, it came to my mind that I must beg all my way home to the parish I belonged to, in Norfolk, which was about 120 miles. This sorely cut up my feelings; for I knew I was a very poor beggar. The enemy of souls was permitted to harass me sore; and the following passage of Scripture, among others, caused me much pain of mind: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." (Ps. xxxvii. 25.) For it came into my mind, as there appeared nothing for me but to beg all my way home, it was an evident proof that I was not a child of God, but altogether a deceived character. For you read that David says he never saw "the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." At that time I was very ignorant of Satan's devices; nor did I think Satan was capable of twisting Scripture about to suit his own purpose. I had no thought at the time of poor Lazarus at the rich glutton's gate, or it might perhaps have

broken the snare; but the devil was too artful for me. I kept on begging hard that I might have some way opened for me. So, you see, I was begging of God all the while, if not of mortals; nor do I believe any but beggars get to heaven. And bless his dear Name, in three weeks he granted my request. It came into my mind one day to try and find a vessel sailing for Lynn, in Norfolk, and to ask the captain to let me work my passage there. Then I thought I could walk the rest of my way to the parish I belonged to, without any begging. Accordingly I went in search of a vessel, and found one with the greatest ease; which was rather remarkable, as I was quite a stranger to that part of the town. When I told my sad tale of woe to the captain, and my desire to escape begging, he looked at me very hard and said, "You will be of no use to me in a storm." And I thought so too; for I felt more fit for a hospital than a storm at sea. The captain paused for five or ten minutes, and thus gave me time for bitter reflection. My begging case occupied most of my thoughts; but I stood my ground, and waited for a more favourable answer. At last he broke silence, after I had had time to sink fathoms in my feelings, and said, "Well, I am in want of a cook, and you shall go to Lynn with me. And if you like it, you shall stop with me; but if not, you can go home to your parish. Tomorrow you must come on board, as we shall sail in a day or two." I thanked him kindly with a feeling heart, and got away as soon as possible to give vent to my feelings. For my soul was now as much overcome with the goodness of God as it was oppressed but a few minutes before,—not so much on account of begging, as of its being a proof that I was not a child of God.

We sailed for Lynn on the 7th of August, 1829, and had a very pleasant trip. This time there was no proof of my usefulness in a storm, for we had fine weather and a fair wind; and, to add to my comfort, I had a heart full of gratitude to the God of all my mercies. The captain was satisfied with me as a cook, and I was satisfied with him; so I continued with him about five months. During this time I saw many changes, and the captain had more than one opportunity of proving my usefulness in a storm. The last passage I had in that vessel was in the month of December. We were three weeks coming up to London. One gale we encountered lasted out four days, and it was next to a miracle our bark lived in such a sea. She was a sloop of only 100 tons' burthen. In this heavy gale there were many wrecks, and many driven on a lee-shore; but we were mercifully preserved, and safely arrived in the port of London with very little damage. One day, during this passage, a trifling circumstance took place as follows: I let go a wrong rope in my hurry, while it was blowing very hard. The mate, enraged at me, struck me on one side of the face with his fist. I was enabled to take it as mild as ever I took an insult in my life; but I did not feel disposed to turn to him the other. And I quietly told him I did not like it, and would leave the ship when we got to London. At this he exclaimed

with an oath, I might go, then, if I liked. As soon as I had an opportunity to get by myself I spread the case before the Lord, as Hezekiah did the letter, and begged of him to deliver me from that ungodly man. For I had suffered much from his ungodly tongue before this blow came. The dear Lord kindly gave me an answer in this way. A solemn persuasion dropped with much weight and power into my heart that when I reached London I should have a place; and I as firmly believed it as if I were in it.

The next day I told the captain of the mate's behaviour to me; and also that my mind was fixed to leave the ship when we arrived in London. The captain was very partial to me, and used every argument he could to drive me from my purpose. He told me I should see hundreds and hundreds of able young seamen walking London streets without shoe or stocking, or a bit of bread, who could not get a ship for the life of them. But when he had ended I told him with the confidence I felt, that if there were hundreds more walking about as he described, I should have a place; but as to the kind of place I could not tell, nor was I concerned to know; nor was I disposed to tell him how I came by that confidence. My mind was peaceful, and I felt a grateful heart for the Lord's goodness to me. I was enabled to carry out the word of the apostle, "Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God."

To be brief. When we arrived in London, after mooring the vessel, I was coiling up the ropes on deck to make it a little tidy before going ashore, when a man came on board who had previously sailed with us; he came direct to me, and laid his hand on my shoulder and said, "Bill, I have a berth for you." "You have?" I said. "Yes, in a schooner of Southampton; and you must go on board in a day or two." Accordingly I left the sloop, and went on board the schooner; but was so confounded at such a speedy answer to prayer, in such a conspicuous way, that I felt quite a trembling while I believed. What a wonder-working God is our God, even as a God of providence; how much more so as a God of grace! But this ground, though pleasant at the time, had to be tried and proved shortly after.

We sailed in a few days, bound for Southampton, expecting to take in a cargo for Jersey. But God had ordered it otherwise. There was no cargo ready for us; and the captain laid the vessel up for the remaining part of the winter, and paid off all hands.

This circumstance commenced a fresh trial for my faith, and in a very short time I was at my wit's end, not knowing what to do. I started on foot for London the next day with two others of the ship's crew. It was bad travelling, both without and within. The roads were full of snow and water; and no promise had I in my mind of a place when I should reach London. I kept on begging, but no answer came. At length I began to doubt the reality of my former assurance, and to think I had

only been deluded. In London all that the captain of the sloop said to me came fresh to my mind. I was tramping from place to place, and could not get another ship for the life of me. Then I thought more of the captain's words than ever, and called myself a fool for leaving him. However, in the space of three weeks I was recommended by a gentleman to a place in Brompton Square as groom and gardener. Then was I glad, and could bless God with all my heart. The few months at sea were made a real blessing to me, as regards my health. I was very much strengthened in body, especially my nervous system, which had been much shaken through trouble of mind.

After I had been in my new place a short time, I went to see my first captain in a friendly way. When I got to the wharf one of the men said to me, "The next time the 'Bee' (for that was the vessel's name) went down to Lynn, she was driven by a gale upon a lee-shore." This was another proof of the dear Lord's kindness to me, and confirmed my mind in the truth that he is a God hearing and answering prayer. And it has proved one of my "high heaps" ever since, when he hath kindly brought it to my remembrance in times of need.

(To be continued.)

THE OLD LAMP LIT UP AFRESH.

No. V.

My dear Friend,—May mercy and peace rest upon you, and the God of comfort go before you; then all will be well.

We are witnesses that no God but our God could bear with such wretches as we are, and save, and uphold, and deliver us. Bless his Name! Has there been one trouble in which he has not been our very present help? or one storm in which he has not been our refuge? or one casting down that has not been followed by a raising up? Have we had one fit of rambling, and he has not brought us back with weeping? Have we ever passed through the dreary desert expecting nothing but death, and he has not caused rivers to flow therein, and made the desert to bloom as a rose? No, my dear friend; our lovely Jesus has done all things well. Not one purpose of his can be frustrated, nor one promise from him ever fail. He has perfected and eternally secured salvation to his people; an eternal salvation that for ever excludes the possibility of one of his elect being lost. How can we help loving, admiring, adoring, and praising him who has done all things so well? With what pleasure we can say we have not had one trouble too many, when we see the needs be for them all. With what boldness and courage we then bid defiance to every enemy that comes in our way. Yea, we can do all things through Christ strengthening us. The Lord be praised for all his tender mercies towards us. Our continual shortcomings and our often coming for for-

givenness do not exhaust him. He is never weary of hearing the cries of his poor tried and tempted saints. They are always welcome; he has no frowns towards any who really feel their need of him. There is a smiling welcome which gladdens the heart, and fills the soul with a humbling sense of its own vileness. O yes! If humbled in self, we are exalted in Christ. What a God is our God! No one knows but such as ourselves. It almost breaks my heart to think of his wondrous love towards one so utterly worthless.

O! To be a real Christian is no light matter. How many trials and crosses, ups and downs, are needful to fit us for the mansions Jesus has gone to prepare for us; and as soon as our education is complete, he will take us home to the *full* enjoyment of our inheritance above. Blessed be God for the hope he has given us in the gospel of his dear Son.

If we review our lives, what unprofitable servants we have been! How prone to evil, having a deceitful heart in us, which we inherit from the fall of Adam; and how often do we start aside like a deceitful bow. Yes, my dear friend, we shall have sin in our members as long as we remain in the body; for the Canaanites still dwell in the land. They are to be to us thorns in the side and pricks in the eyes. What for? That we may not dwell at ease, and that we may be driven to a throne of grace. If we had the power and could fulfil all the law's demands, yet we should have no right to heaven. But if we could obtain a right, what honour or glory would it bring to God? None at all. He stands in no need of us.

All the world by nature believe they can save themselves; not so with God's people. When you came in that childlike way you mention, when you called on or prayed to God in different places, the Lord put it into your heart that you could not save yourself; or why did you call on him to save you? I believe God accepted you then in his beloved Son, although he had not then revealed him to you as your Saviour. You state your convictions were not so powerful as some you read of; nor were mine. My greatest trouble arose from sins committed after conversion. You knew and felt you were a guilty sinner; and I really believe, from the feelings I have towards you, that God has loved you. You may be afraid you are a hypocrite, and have deceived yourself and others. But hypocrites have no love to God's people; and you know you "love the brethren." The world does not know what love Christians have towards each other. In the apostle's days it was said of them, "See how these Christians love one another." A few days ago my daughter told me that our servant had said she thought I should not live long, because I was so happy. You see, even the world takes knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus.

A few weeks ago I was so wrapped up in the mighty love of God my Saviour that my mind was continually going out in praise to my loving Jesus; yes, and often in my sleep too. Then

my tongue (although I am a man slow of speech) could talk of his excellency; and my hands loved to write of his lovingkindness. When he shines on the soul, ah! *then* we can run through a troop, or leap over a wall. I am not one of those who like to lay the blame upon Satan when there is anything amiss. I believe the devil is within us, from the seed sown by the first Adam.

Since I last wrote to you, Satan has wished to rob me of my comfort, or, if possible, destroy the foundation on which I stood. It was in this way. I felt such a fearfulness and trembling, and sank down in my feelings. My enjoyment was gone. I seemed to be getting as dead as possible. O how my soul went out in mental prayer—"Lord, help me. Do not withdraw thy presence. Do hold me up. O Lord, do appear." Not that I was shaken off the foundation; but my great fear was lest I should get into that dry, formal, and insensible state I have known and been in formerly; for God threatens to spue such out of his mouth. All the afternoon I felt going back and back. I went at my usual time to closet prayer. I had no words to utter except such short sentences as I have mentioned. Here I was again taught painfully that I could not keep alive my own soul. I went to bed low in feeling; in the morning, blessed be my great and good Lord, he appeared for my help. "I am thy God; I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." This is the way the Lord takes pride from man. I had no power to pray in words; but was obliged to groan in spirit. This is the prayer our Lord loves to answer,—yes, when we are brought to our wit's end, and to feel our poverty. At times when I have gone to prayer, and have had a flow of words, I have been tempted to say, "Well done." The Lord will not suffer us to rest here, but will bring down haughty looks, and lay us low in the dust of self-abasement. O what is religion without feeling! A poor dry thing at best. He loves to hear either prayer or praise; but the dry, formal professor he takes no delight in. Such are like a standing pool whose waters stink, and often dry up altogether.

I am now blessed in being where David prayed to be kept, "in an even place."

Yours in Jesus,

Penshurst, April 23rd, 1863.

HENRY CONSTABLE.

REPLY.

My dear Friend,—Though I am now on the airy heights of Selsfield Common, I must write a line to thank you for your last kind, Christian letter. I trust I can say I did enjoy reading it, and I bless God he put it into your heart to write to me at all; verily, you shall in nowise lose your reward. Truly it has been the "cup of cold water" to one of his little ones; and O, how reviving it has been to my poor, dried, and parched-up spirit. May he reward you a hundred-fold; and he does bless you with much of his sweet presence. I am glad to hear of it; and yet I must tell you I was somewhat cheered to find even you had doubts and fears at times. I often feel them, and yet hope I am still treading in the footsteps of the flock.

I am staying a few days with my sister; but hope to be at home on Saturday, and to hear Mr. Gearing on Sunday. That will be just a year since poor Mrs. Crowhurst's death. I was with her at the time, as well as previously; and O, the distress she was in! I never witnessed the like before. When I went to the bed-side a few hours before her departure, "O," she said, "he is not come, he is not come!" I did so hope he would manifest himself to her poor, guilty soul, and say, "Peace, be still; I am thy God." But if he did, we were not permitted to know it; only she looked very earnestly at me, and tried to speak; but we could not catch the words. Still, I do encourage the hope that the Lord was gracious to her, or would he have shown her the state she was in by nature?

What a sweet sermon was read on Sunday morning, and also in the afternoon; only I gleaned most in the morning. Bless God for all his mercies. Though it is a troubled path, yet I sometimes feel it is all well, and all for the best. And O, when we come to rest in Jesus, will it not be *well* with us then? Dear Lord, preserve us to the end, and bless us with much of thy sweet presence is the desire of

Selsfield Hall, April 30th, 1863.

Your affectionate friend,

S. RICHARDSON.

GODLY WISHES.

O THAT mine eyes might closed be
 To what concerns me not to see;
 That deafness might possess mine ear
 To what concerns me not to hear;
 That truth my tongue might always tie
 From ever speaking foolishly;
 That no vain thought might ever rest,
 Or be conceived in my breast;
 That by each word, and deed, and thought,
 May glory to my God be brought!
 But what are wishes? Lord, mine eye
 On thee is fixed; hear my cry.
 Wash, Lord, and purify my heart,
 And make it clean in every part;
 And when 'tis clean, Lord, keep it too,
 For that is more than I can do.

1660.

THOMAS ELLWOOD.

HATH not this been known to many, that when they had been long struggling and striving with and bewailing a body of death, and of strong corruptions and distempers, that rendered them unlike to Christ, and loathsome in their own eyes; if he be pleased (as oft he doth) to draw near to them, and to *cause them to approach to him*, as Ps. lxxv. 4, how suddenly and how sweetly is likeness to Christ wrought in the soul? True nearness to Christ, and converse with him, hath always this effect. Communion with Christ, if real, is always the life of grace, and the bane of corruption.—*Truill.*

A PLEA FOR OUR GOOD OLD BIBLE.

My dear Miss V.,—When I look at the date of your last kind and good letter, I feel as if you would think me very ungrateful not to have acknowledged it sooner, for I am sure it is very kind of you to write to me when I know using your pen is now an effort to you. But I do value your letters, and your last brought a few tears from my eyes; and for a little I felt a giving way of the dreadful hardness and unfeeling state I was in.

Several things have kept me silent of late; and until yesterday I have not attempted to write a letter for long. Much bodily weakness is one thing which seemed to bring a confusion into my mind whenever I tried to write or read. Added to this, the numbers around me during the holidays prevented my ever being quiet; and last, not least, a very deathly state of soul, from which I sometimes have feared I should never be restored again; for unbelief has worked powerfully, and indeed, dear friend, if I were to try, I could not describe the sad state I am often in spiritually.

I wrote you a little of what I found under the Lord's gracious quickening mercy, soon after he brought me safely through my time of trouble. But how soon did the sweet savour I then felt pass away; and the death I have been in since has appeared worse than the former, so that I could not "remember the days of old," or former mercies with any feeling. I have indeed been sensibly a lifeless lump of sin and ill, unable to read the Word with feeling, no hungering or spirit of prayer, no giving way of the hardness within. Sometimes I have been ready to conclude I am not a true-born daughter of Zion. So devoid have I felt of the operations of divine life, this wretched state has made me shrink from writing to God's dear children; and were I to wait until the dayspring from on high shines into my soul, I should not be trying to write to you now. But I desire to acknowledge his hand in the least measure of grace, and I do trust I have again felt quickened to long, seek, and cry after him who is the life of all regenerate souls. When sin separates between God and my soul, were it not for his never-failing mercy and faithfulness, I could not turn to him again. But it is of his mercies I am not consumed; that he causes the groans and cries of my needy soul to go out after him—"Turn thou me, and I shall be turned;" "Quicken me that I may call upon thy name." I experience more and more my weakness and helplessness, also am made to turn again and behold greater abominations still within; and yet how little (I am convinced) do I know of my own sinfulness, or of the Lord's rich mercy. What a blessed sight the apostle had of God's free mercy toward sinners, when he wrote, "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!"

In your letter you tell me of the Lord's renewed tokens of favour

towards you, and of your being allowed to commune with him whom your soul loves. O dear friend, on earth there is no happiness that can compare with this, though it is a mixture of joy and grief when the sinner's heart is broken, and is met by a Saviour's rich pardoning love and mercy. Then we find what that peace is which the world can never give or take away.

When I received yours Mr. Hatton was here; he spoke often of you and of his visit to you at Bath. Nearly eighteen years have passed since then. Sometimes, when I look back thus I cannot put from me the hope that I am a spared monument of his mercy, for that I feel a deeper need of it now than then, and a greater dependence on it. I was very pleased Mr. Hatton was willing to come and be with us for a few weeks; he certainly was much stronger when he left, and I hear that he is still gaining strength. May it please the Lord to spare him; for the faithful labourers are few. Truth seems fast falling in the streets, and the visible church of God under a sad decay. No wonder the living children of Zion are full of lamentation, for the fine gold has become dim; and as regards the preached gospel in places of truth, may we not say, as the prophet of old did, "The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his month for thirst; the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it to them?" So that we have need to pray, as he did, "Remember, O Lord, what is come upon us; consider, and behold our reproach."

The means which the Lord used, I think, to rouse me from the benumbed state of soul I was in were the Revised Version, and a pamphlet commending the revision highly, and advising its use in places of worship and Sunday schools.

I have always felt a great horror of the proposed revision; and some time ago, whilst able to pray about it, I had a conviction that it was another of Satan's efforts to overturn the blessed revelation of God's truth. But when it was published, though there were copies in the house and amongst those I know, I did not wish to look into it, until I saw that all the evidence which had been brought forward in the "Gospel Standard" in favour of our own translation, and the conviction there expressed as to the Revised Version containing the Arian heresy, were being controverted, and made out to be incorrect and groundless. It troubled me very much, especially as it was thought by some that I rejected the book without a sufficient reason. So I read the three gospels, Matthew, Luke, and John, and have gone through them carefully with our own Bible; and am more and more convinced that there is solemn ground for the fears entertained by many of God's people concerning this new version, and for Mr. Hatton's faithful testimony against it. I do indeed feel it is a mercy there is some one who is not afraid *openly* to stand in the gap, when such a breach is made upon the divine revelation of God's good will and great salvation to his elect, and his eternal indignation and wrath towards those who die out of Christ.

Leaving alone the blasphemous omissions of many portions of

Sacred Writ, the alterations are continual. The eunuch's testimony is omitted, Acts viii. 37; also, 1 Jno. v. 7. There are notes in the margin to tell us that "many" or "some" ancient authorities omit the following Scriptures, besides numerous others. The agony of our Lord in the garden, Luke xxii. 43, 44; Peter's visit to the sepulchre, Luke xxiv. 12; "Father, forgive them," &c., Luke xxiii. 34; "Peace be unto you," Luke xxiv. 36; "And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet," ver. 40; "And was carried up into heaven," ver. 51; "And worshipped him," ver. 52. These, too, are amongst the omissions: "Of his flesh and of his bones," Eph. v. 30; "Of one" is put for "of one blood," Acts xvii. 26; and the names "Jesus" and "Christ" are often left out. The thief's prayer is altered from "Lord, remember me," to "*Jesus, remember me,*" (Luke xxiii. 42);—"power," speaking of our Lord's power, altered to "*authority,*" the one meaning an innate or natural power, the other a delegated power;—"miracle" changed for "*sign;*"—the darkening of the sun at the crucifixion, altered into the "*sun's light failing,*" as though an eclipse were intended, instead of the miraculous darkening of the light of nature, so sweetly written about by dear Hart:

"When the fair sun withdrew his light,
And hid his head to shun the sight."

The Lord's prayer is chopped up into pieces; the account of Christ's incarnation in Luke i. 35, altered; and his Eternal Sonship touched, in Jno. i. 18. So that it seems to me there is an insidious aim at attacking both his Sonship and his human nature. The marginal note to Rom. ix. 5 is full of confusion; also the note to Jno. i. 3, 4. In 2 Pet. ii. 9, it is rendered, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment;" which appears, to my mind, a softening down of eternal punishment.

Some of these are in marginal notes; but what difference is there to any simple mind between placing them in the margin or in the text, when a note is affixed in either case casting a doubt upon the inspiration of the passages? As one reads, the alteration in the language is a continual offence and jar upon the ear,—to find the precious words of God's Book, which have so many times been spoken home to the heart with power and savour, all needlessly and ruthlessly changed, to the marring of the beautiful and blessed harmony of our own version, which for almost 300 years has been read just as it is; and not a saint of God has ever wanted a fresh Bible.

Moreover, the revisionists have done what was even never proposed; and that is, produced a new Greek Text from which to translate their English version; for they have followed many of the peculiar readings of a few of the oldest authorities, even where unsupported by others equally as old, or by later evidence. Whereas the text our present version is taken from has been preserved in

continual use in the church, both in the Greek and other languages; and agrees in many of the places now altered with the text which was universally read in Eastern churches from A.D. 400 until the invention of printing.

If our confidence is to rest entirely on the three oldest MSs. simply because they are the most ancient of the Greek copies, when it is clear that there are corruptions in them, we shall land ourselves without any sure foundation. It appears to me so clear that God has kept his Word of truth free from the many corruptions which have crept into some of the MSs. of it; for he has had his witnesses always on the earth who are taught of him, and who know by the divine teaching when men of error have tampered with his Word; and thus it has been kept pure in the true church of God, in spite of all the numerous errors which have been here and there inserted.

In the "Quarterly Review" there is a very able article written by Dr. Burgon, Dean of Chichester, a learned man, who brings forward abundant proof to show how the three MSs. the revisionists have principally used in their work were made at a corrupt period, and have been greatly tampered with. So that Mr. Hatton's original suggestion that these *oldest* MSs. were impure is remarkably confirmed by one who is qualified as a scholar to judge. And how can any one presume to say that had Mr. Philpot been living, he would doubtless have forbidden the republication of his remarks on the subject of revision? Had that faithful champion for God's truth and honour been alive now, I believe he would, had he been enabled, have raised his voice in the churches, warning God's people against saying a confederacy in this matter, and have written likewise a solemn protest against it. Had he not an intimate knowledge of the Greek Testament? And did the omission in it of Acts viii. 37 weigh with him as to its inspiration? Not for one moment. Had he believed that portion to be a spurious addition to God's Word, he would never have brought it forward, as he frequently did, both in his writings and printed sermons.* I am sure he would have rejected the rendering of Jno. i. 18, which speaks of a begotten God. How blessedly did our Reformers know how to translate it when they put, "The

* A personal friend of the late Mr. Philpot's and member of one of his churches for the last 30 years, remarks as follows: "Mr. P. would occasionally say from the pulpit that our translators might at such a passage have given a rather more extensive meaning, or that it would have borne rather a different rendering. But he always made any such remark very tenderly, lest (as he would say) it should be food for an infidel mind. And frequently from the pulpit and in conversation he would speak of our excellent translation, and that we wanted no other. He expresses the same in his letters, and in his other writings now in print. As a rule, he read the Scriptures for an hour every morning in the original languages, therefore he was well qualified to give his opinion; and he was so tender and careful in whatever he wrote or spoke touching the Word of God that he had no need to recall his words. The united voice of his two churches, over which he was pastor for 26 years, would contradict such a thought concerning one whose memory is so dear, and whose praise is in the churches."

only-begotten. SON, which is in the bosom of the Father." A change of words soon produces the appearance of error.

How precious is the declaration of Holy Scripture, "They shall be all taught of God." How awfully solemn do those words sound in my ears as I have read and re-read this new version: "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." O, in this day of infidelity and blasphemy, what need to cry that God would preserve one from the foul and deceitful breath of error—that "pestilence that walketh in darkness," and reveal himself to us, the true Light which alone "lighteth every man that cometh into the world;" that he would anoint our eyes with heavenly eye-salve that we may behold wisdom, and have a right understanding; and that we may hold fast his testimonies, and be led more deeply into the mysteries of his kingdom, the treasures whereof are only opened out by the Holy Spirit to those who cry after the knowledge of the Most High, and seek for understanding "as silver, and search for her as for hid treasures." "The rich man's wealth is his strong city;" it is "durable riches and righteousness." This is the true knowledge the wise man is to lay up, as Solomon wrote; which shall deliver the simple "from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things."

While greatly troubled in spirit, and driven to cry to the Lord to preserve me, and let me hear his voice above the tumult and din of war, these words were brought home to my heart with power: "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee; ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established." What a burden was lifted off my heart as I felt, "To whom, Lord, shall I go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Thus, dear friend, have I tried to add my feeble testimony once more to the preciousness of God's own Word; and I think you will be glad to hear, because I know how solemnly your mind has been exercised about the new version. It is only another proof of that Scripture, "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" For when the learning of unregenerate men is used to mystify the simplicity of the gospel, and cast doubt upon the inspiration of many portions of God's Word, we may well say, "Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us? Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay."

I trust you are a little better; but I know now the days of weakness must be many, and you must be sorely burdened. How I wish I could see you once again! Now, dear friend, I must say good-bye. I fear I shall have tired you with so long a letter to

read, much longer than I thought of writing; but I have written as it has come up. May the covenant-keeping God of Israel bless you and shine upon you, is the desire of

Your very affectionate, but unworthy,

Jan. 26, 1882.

E. C.

[The above letter has been inserted by the special request of several friends who feel greatly distressed at the attempt made to undermine the Word of God as we have received it in our old Bible. When we wrote our Review we had no knowledge of the existence of the letter, neither had the writer of the letter any knowledge of the Review. It contains, therefore, an independent testimony; and had it not been for the wishes of friends we should have deferred it, on account of the subject being so exactly coincident with our own.]

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

AFFLICTION LAID UPON THE LOINS. (PS. LXVI. 11.)

Dear Friend,—It is true that I am in your debt in the way of writing; but I had not forgotten it, neither did I mean to pass it away in careless indifference. Now, as you have given me a little stirring up by your last, particularly by the state of your affliction, I must make a feeble attempt to send a part towards the payment of that which is your due.

In this you are quite in a mistake; viz., that I have discovered that you are nothing but a hypocrite, and therefore would take no further notice of you. From the first time of your writing to me, I believed that you were divinely taught; and there has been no cause for me to shift my position, or to change in my opinion; no, not the least. The enemy takes every advantage that lies in, or crosses his way, of suggesting something that is wrong. Therefore he is a lying interpreter of my long silence; but I am blameable therein. Hence, then, let this suffice upon this subject, that, as I felt constrained to receive you as a sinner taught by the Lord, *that* abideth the same unto this day.

Many are the afflictions of all human beings; but much more so with the children of God. But it is only when they are sanctified that they are of more good to the children of God, than they are to the rest of mankind. To the Lord's family there are no afflictions that for the present are "joyous, but grievous;" nevertheless, they afterwards yield "the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby." Moses, speaking to us of the children of Israel, tells us that afflictions were growing times unto them: "The more they were afflicted, the more they multiplied and grew." David says they were to him soul-restoring times: "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." Jeremiah says they are good as "remembrancers." (Lam. iii. 20.) Jerusalem remembered in the days of her afflictions all the pleasant things which she had before she fell into the hand of the enemy. Paul says they are productive of much fruit. James, in writing to afflicted

people, would have them call for the elders of the church for solemn prayer; and assures them of success. Mr. Hart truly informs us that they are enlightening times, saying,

“Afflictions make us see
What else would 'scape our sight.”

Our heavenly Father saw that it would be best to make choice of us in such an estate, saying, “I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.” Then, why should we object? We escape some dreadful times that are past. We are not all afflicted alike as to bodies or estate. But we must all share in affliction by the rod of the Almighty upon us for our sins; as Jeremiah says, “I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath.” And all must feel the disease of sin, and sorrow for it. “For they that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.”

Then why not look for the marks of election in the time and state of affliction, as well as when we are in good health? Why not take those things as tokens for our good, which the Almighty has designed to be so, in one estate as well as the other? Why not take them in sanctified afflictions as well as in unsanctified health? If the dear Lord makes afflictions to be good unto the soul, and health to be ill unto it, then afflictions are the best, and should be acknowledged to be so before him. James would have believing people, or his brethren to take the prophets as an example of suffering “affliction and patience;” and example has always been considered to go before precept. The reason that he assigns is, “Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.” Being enabled to believe this, the matter is very soon settled. Ah! the Lord help us to believe this,—that when he is afflicting “he is very pitiful;” and when our end seems to be fast approaching, we shall live to see “the end of the Lord;” and “the end of the Lord” is this: “The Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.” It is as if the Lord did say, “Poor sinner, I must correct you to do you good. I must afflict you to let you know my pity and tender mercy.” Hear Jeremiah: “For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth.” Whatever the Lord may or will do with his own in correction and affliction, he will not approve of the oppression that may be laid on them by their fellows. “To turn aside the right of a man before the face of the Most High, to subvert a man in his cause, the Lord approveth not.” And he never, no, never will. I am a living witness that God is true; and that his Word is a Word of truth. I join with Mr. Hart when he says,

“The thoughts of men are lies;
The Word of God is true,
To bow to *that* is to be wise;
Then hear, and fear, and do.”

The Lord is blessing my labours, poor as they are, and adding unto his church at times such as I believe that he will save. I should like to know, when you write again, if you continue to hold your little place; and I desire you to remember me to all that you think would like to hear of me. I am now laid by from week evening labours; and so betake myself a little to writing to my distant friends.

My wife joins me in wishing you and yours all that is good, profitable, and everlasting to and for the immortal soul; and
Believe me, yours truly,

Wadhurst, Sept. 11th, 1850.

WILLIAM CROUCH.

PATIENT IN TRIBULATION.

My dear Friend,—I have not forgotten you, and should have written sooner, had I not received your kind invitation. You will be glad to hear that my wife is quite restored, it is a great comfort for me. We had a sharp and long trial; but I have ever proved that the day of prosperity is set over against the day of adversity. Surely the promise is true: "As thy days so shall thy strength be." When I saw the trial coming on, my poor wife's mind sinking, the Lord favoured me with sweet access in private prayer, such as I have not felt since; and I said, "Lord, if things get worse, grant me patience; and if better, grant me gratitude." From that day she was much worse; and you can hardly conceive what a bitter trial followed; and though it lasted for many months, I do not think I spent five minutes in rebellion. At times my heart was ready to burst with sorrow and trouble when in the pulpit; yet my God supported and kept me to my post every time; and I hope and trust his people reaped some benefit from my afflictions. The great sympathy and manifested affection of his people, and the lovingkindness of my God, I think I never can forget. O that I could serve him better and love him more, who "hath done great things for me," whereof I am at times truly glad; and my cup runs over in gratitude and praise.

I am glad friend Warburton is to pay you a visit in March; may the Lord bless his message to the poor and needy. I wish you could prevail with Tiptaft and Tryon to speak at your chapel; you must feel it a trial when you cannot get such ministers. You desire to fill your pulpit; yet it had better be empty than be filled by those men whom the Lord hath not thrust into the work; but who are ever seeking to thrust themselves into it. "For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth" in the consciences of his people. . . .

O the vile corruptions of the human heart! What a mercy to be favoured with that grief and godly sorrow on account of them, which worketh repentance unto salvation.

In kind love to all that love the Lord in sincerity, I remain,
Yours gratefully and affectionately,

Welwyn, Jan. 13th, 1842.

D. SMART.

REVIEW.

SOME REASONS FOR ADHERING TO OUR PRESENT
AUTHORIZED VERSION OF THE BIBLE.

Eight Letters by Pastor D. Allen, which have appeared in the "Witness." [Reproduced by request.] *The New Version Viewed in the Light of the History of the New Testament for 1800 years.*—S. E. Lees, Printer, 134, Pitt Street, Sydney.

(Continued from p. 170.)

THAT God has granted us a measure of experimental understanding in the Word of truth we dare not deny; and that understanding has come in such a manner that we are enabled to give a reason of our faith in the Word. We claim, therefore, a right to judge for ourselves on so momentous a subject as now lies before us; and, to be candid, we trust the Lord will enable us to exercise that right unreservedly for his glory. Our present Bible has been given to us by the Lord. None who revere it will deny the blessing it has been to the church of God and the English-speaking people; and now we are asked to give it up! But for what? For a better? Nay, nor yet for one that is its equal—either in judgment of the text, or in spirituality and conception of the true meaning of a passage. Take, for instance, Col. ii. 11: "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." The new version has struck out "of the sins," and reads it thus: "In the putting off of the body of the flesh." Now this is not true. The "body of the flesh" is not put off through the circumcision of Christ; but it is "the sins of the flesh" which are put off by Christ's circumcision; for when he was circumcised he became a debtor to do the whole law, and having fulfilled the law for his people, thereby put off "the body of the sins of the flesh," certainly not "the body of the flesh." Christ took the sins of the flesh, and in and through him they are by faith put off; because they have been put away by the sacrifice of Christ.

Such blunders as these compel us to cleave to what we call our own Bible; and when we find alterations and omissions at every few words we begin to inquire where the evidence for our text is to be found, and the question arises, What evidence is there to conflict against the "ancient authorities" everywhere quoted by the revisionists to uphold some new reading? And we discover that in many instances the contested passages of our text are found in almost all the Greek MSs. known, except a few of the early ones, and portions that were at one time cut out of some of the copies in a corrupt age have not been suffered to be lost, or separated from the whole body of the inspired Word. If it should be asked, Can our own received text be said to have existed before and at the time of those oldest Greek MSs.? We answer, It must certainly have done so. For—

1. There are old translations from the original Greek con-

taining the now contested or omitted portions, some of the same date and some older considerably than any of the Greek MSs. extant. Several of these versions, judging from the time they were written, the 2nd and 3rd centuries, may possibly have been taken from the inspired writings of the apostles themselves.

2. An immense amount of evidence for our text is found in the numerous citations of Scripture in the writings of the early Christians, every writer from the 2nd century upwards bearing testimony to the text received as Scripture in his day.

3. The "ancient authorities" referred to comprise, as we are told in the Preface of the Revised Version, "not only Greek MSs., some of which were written in the 4th and 5th centuries, but versions of a still earlier date in different languages, and also quotations by Christian writers of the 2nd and following centuries." Yet when it is known that in no case where our text is departed from, these various authorities all concur in their testimony, many of them being witnesses for our own text, and others exhibiting further variations; and that of the four or five Greek MSs. which the revisionists have almost put in the place of the oracles themselves, often not more than two can be found to agree on particular readings where our text is questioned, while in many such cases some of *them* contain our own reading; and especially that the peculiar readings of these old MSs. lack the support of the body of the remaining evidence;—when all this is fairly considered, at once the whole significance of the expression we are confronted with at every two or three verses of the revision has vanished, and we gladly return to the old Bible with abundant proof that our own received text is the one God has preserved in the church, and constantly used and owned as Scripture ever since it was written.

It follows, therefore, that the omissions and corruptions of some of the oldest MSs. have been suffered almost to die out (until revived in the new version of 1881); while the Word of God in its entirety and purity has remained. Nothing fresh has been discovered, not a single new Scripture unknown before has been brought to light in the 300 years' researches since the Reformation, notwithstanding the numerous documents that have been found. Indeed, to whatever quarter we look we are led to the same conclusion that our Bible *as it is* is the Word of God. Surely it is not possible in the light of such evidence, both internal in the heart of a child of God, and external in the history of the past, to allow one single portion to be cast away as spurious, or even doubtful; how much less the many portions which receive this treatment undisguised in the pages of the Revised Version?

Again. The value of a MS. must depend upon the writer. The faithfulness of a copy reflects the faithfulness of the copyist. How much may the character of the age to which they belong have influenced many of the early copies of the Sacred Text? Even these boasted MSs. themselves, which date as far on as

the 4th and 6th centuries, contain nearly all the errors of that period; and these errors are now being revived by the revisionists. Errors which have been fought against over and over again are now brought forward as the Word of God. A bolder stroke Satan never made to deceive the people.

We have just received a work on the Revised Version;* one which we had not before seen, and hope to make good use of. May all our readers rally round the good old Book, and save it from the hands of spoilers. We will give one extract to show that the main evidence we have for the Scriptures does not depend upon those recently discovered MSs., so widely differing from our own translation; in order that others may bear testimony with us that the oldest Greek MSs. are not necessarily *the purest* for a variety of reasons, and that, in the case of the Greek MSs. in question, they have no right whatever to such an epithet.

"The provision which the divine Author of Scripture is found to have made for the preservation in its integrity of his written Word is of a peculiarly varied and complex description.

"1. By causing that a vast multiplication of COPIES should be required all down the ages—ever increasing—he provided the most effectual security imaginable against fraud. Upwards of a thousand MS. copies of the gospel alone survive at the present day.

"2. VERSIONS.—The necessity of translating the Scriptures into divers languages procured that many an authentic record has been preserved of the New Testament as it existed in the first few centuries of the Christian era.

"3. Lastly. PATRISTIC CITATIONS form a vast accumulation of additional evidence of which it is scarcely possible to over-estimate the importance.

"With reference to the first-named class of evidence,—most of our extant copies of the New Testament are comparatively of recent date, from the 10th to the 14th century. That they are copies of older MSs. is self-evident; and that in the main they are faithful representations of the sacred autographs themselves, no reasonable person doubts; though the fact remains that they *are* thus separated by about 1,000 years from their inspired archetypes. It ought to be remembered that the little handful of copies on which we rely for the texts of Herodotus and Thucydides, of Æschylus and Sophocles, are removed from their originals by full 500 years more; and, instead of 1,000 copies, amount only to about five. In truth, the security which the text of the New Testament enjoys is altogether unique and extraordinary. Lectionaries, too, abound, which establish the text that has been universally read in eastern churches from at least A.D. 400 until the time of printing.

"An increased acquaintance with certain of the oldest extant codices of the New Testament claims especial attention. Singular to relate, the two earliest,—viz., the Vatican and the Sinaitic of the 4th century, with one of the 5th, and one of the 6th centuries have within the last 20 years established a tyrannical ascendancy over the imagination of the critics, only to be fitly spoken of as a blind superstition. Yet *all four* are discovered to differ essentially, not only from 99 out of 100 of the whole body of MSs. besides, but even *from one another*. This last circumstance, so fatal to their corporate pretensions, has been overlooked. And yet it

* In the "Quarterly Review," Nos. 304, 305.

admits of only one satisfactory explanation; viz., that in different degrees they all exhibit a fabricated text.

“But surely the oldest extant MSs. *must* exhibit the purest text?” Answer. It ought to be so, but certainly *need not* be the case.

“We know that Origen in Palestine, Lucian at Antioch, and Hesychius in Egypt, ‘revised’ the New Testament text in an age when such fatal misapprehension prevailed on the subject, that each in turn *must* inevitably have imported fresh *monstra* into the text. Add to this the baneful influence of Theophilus, A.D. 168, Tatiau, Ammonius; add the fabricated gospels which anciently abounded, notably the ‘Gospel of the Hebrews,’ which Jerome translated into Greek and Latin. Lastly, grant that the orthodox may have sought to prop up truths which early heretics had assailed, and we have sufficiently explained how it comes to pass that not a few of the codices of ancient Christendom *must* have exhibited a text even scandalously corrupt.

“One of the most learned of the Revisionist body (Dr. Sorivener) writes: ‘It is no less true to fact than paradoxical in sound that the worst corruptions to which the New Testament has ever been subjected, originated within 100 years after it was composed; that Irenæus (A.D. 150), and the African fathers, and the whole western, with a portion of the Syrian church, used far inferior MSs. to those employed by Stunica, Erasmus, or Stephens, 13 centuries later, when moulding the *Textus Receptus*.’

“And what are codices B & C D* [the four above-mentioned] but specimens of this class? We have thoroughly convinced ourselves that the new Greek Text put forth by the Revisionists is utterly inadmissible. We refuse to throw in our lot with those who, disregarding the witness of every other known codex—all the versions—and every other available writer—insist on following the dictates of a little handful of suspicious documents. The *Textus Receptus* has been departed from by them far more than 5,000 times, almost invariably *for the worse*.”

It is our earnest desire that our readers will see how subtle an attempt has been made to impose upon them in this new revision. We give the judgment of others to strengthen our points:

“We are thoroughly convinced that a *rival translation* is a project not to be seriously entertained. For ourselves, we deprecate it entirely.

“On the other hand, who could have possibly foreseen what has actually come to pass since the Convocation of the Southern Province (in May, 1870) declared itself favourable to ‘a revision of the Authorized Version,’ and appointed a Committee of divines to undertake the work? Who was to imagine that an utterly untrustworthy Greek Text, constructed on mistaken principles, would be the fatal result? Who was to foresee that instead of removing the ‘*plain and clear errors*’ of our version, the Revisionists would themselves introduce a countless number of blemishes, unknown to it before? Above all, how was it to have been imagined that they would have sown broadcast over four continents doubts as to the truth of Scripture, which it will never be in their power either to remove or to recall?

“For, the ill-advised practice of recording, in the margin of an English Bible, certain of the blunders—(such things cannot be styled ‘various readings’)—which disfigure ‘some’ or ‘many’ ‘ancient authorities,’ can only result in hopelessly unsettling the faith of millions. It cannot be defended on the plea of candour,—the candour which is determined that men shall ‘know the worst.’ ‘*The worst*’ has not been told;

* The Hebrew letter \aleph is used to designate the Sinaitic MS.; A, the Alexandrian; B, the Vatican; C, the rescript codex preserved at Paris; D, the codex Beza.

and it were dishonesty to insinuate that *it has*. If all the cases were faithfully exhibited where, 'a few,' 'some,' or 'many' 'ancient authorities' read differently from what is exhibited in the actual text, not only would the margin prove insufficient to contain the record, but the *very page itself* would not suffice. In the meantime of what possible use can it be to encumber the margin of St. Lu. x. 41, 42 (for example), with the announcement that a few ancient authorities read *Martha, Martha, thou art troubled; Mary hath chosen, &c.* (the fact being that D. alone of MSS. omits 'careful and' . . . 'about many things. *But one thing is needful and* . . .)? With the record of this circumstance, is it reasonable to choke up the margin of our English Bible,—to create perplexity and to insinuate doubt? The learned author of the foregoing marginal annotation was of course aware that the same 'singular codex' (as Bishop Ellicott styles codex D.) omits, in St. Luke's gospel only, no less than 1,552 words, and he will of course have ascertained by counting that the words in St. Luke's gospel amount to 19,941. Why, then, did he not tell *the whole* truth; and instead of '&c.,' proceed as follows? 'But inasmuch as codex D. is so scandalously corrupt that about one word in 13 is missing throughout, the absence of nine words in this place is of no manner of importance or significance. The precious saying omitted is above suspicion, and the first half of the present annotation might have been spared!' We submit that a note like that, although rather 'singular' in style, really *would* have been to some extent helpful,—if not to the learned, at least to the unlearned reader.

"Even so, however, the whole amount of the mischief which has been effected by our Revisionists has not been stated. For the Greek text which they have invented proves to be so utterly untrustworthy, that if it were to be thrust upon the church to-morrow, we should be a thousand times worse off than we were with the text which Erasmus and Stephens and the Elzevirs bequeathed to us upwards of three centuries ago. On this part of the subject we have remarked at some length already; yet shall we be constrained to recur once and again to the underlying Greek text of the Revisionists, inasmuch as it is impossible to stir in any direction with the task before us, without being painfully reminded of its existence. Not only do the familiar parables, miracles, discourses of our Lord, trip us up at every step, but we cannot open the first page of the gospel—no, nor indeed read *the first line*—without being brought to a standstill."

One thing is evident—that, wherever it has been possible, the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ has been obscured. When will the churches wake up to the danger now lying before them!

Why did the revisers insert that wicked marginal note on Rom. ix. 5? It runs as follows: "Some modern interpreters place a full stop after *flesh*, and translate, *He who is God over all be (is) blessed for ever*; or, *He who is over all is God blessed for ever*. Others punctuate, *flesh, who is over all. God be (is) blessed for ever*." The intention is plain; it is a slash at the eternal Godhead of Christ. The Holy Spirit has recorded the passage thus: "Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

"A grander and more unequivocal testimony to our Lord's eternal Godhead is nowhere to be found in Scripture. . . . How does it come to pass that *the Socinian gloss* on this grand text has been brought into such extraordinary prominence? . . . We refer to the MSS. and find that *the oldest codices, besides the whole body of the cursives*, know nothing about the method of 'some modern interpreters.' 'There is absolutely

not a shadow, not a tittle of evidence in any of the ancient versions to warrant what they do.' How, then, about the old fathers? We find that the expression '*who is over all, God blessed for ever,*' is expressly acknowledged to refer to our Saviour by the following 55 illustrious names. . . . Against such a torrent of patristic testimony, it will not surely be pretended that the Socinian interpretation to which our Revisionists give such prominence, can stand."

In like manner they thrust the poisonous dart of Socinianism in the margin of Jno. i. 18, which we have already noticed in a previous number: Many very ancient authorities read *God only begotten.*" The "many very ancient authorities" appear to be only the Sinaitic and the Vatican of Greek MSS., with two later copies. These stand by themselves against the remaining evidence of some hundreds, including early ones. And not only has the expression abundant testimony against its authenticity, but it is unquestionably wrong and contains a damnable error—a *begotten God*. The scriptural term, "*only begotten Son,*" marks and conveys the doctrine of a plurality of Persons in the God-head; and it is by our old Bible hereby distinctly affirmed that the Person of the Father is not that of the Son, nor is the Person of the Son that of the Father—for the Son is "the only begotten," and the Father is not begotten. Therefore no twisting nor turning can change the fact that if Jesus is a "begotten God," he is not the same *being* with the Father. This, we say, is a damnable error introduced into the revisers' work. How surely we shall wander into the dark paths of error and from the right words of the Lord, if we forsake Scripture language!

Again. Let the reader observe the Socinian craft exhibited in another instance, in the following quotation:

"At St. Jno. iii. 13 we are told that the last clause of that famous verse ('No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, *which is in heaven*') is not found in 'many ancient authorities.' But why are we not also told that the precious clause in quotation (*ὁ ὢν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ*) is found in every MS. in the world, except five of bad character? is recognized by *all* the Latin and *all* the Syriac versions; as well as by the Coptic, Ethiopic, Georgian, and Armenian; is either quoted or insisted upon by Origen, Athanasius, Chrysostom, Theoderet, and 20 other ancient Greek writers, besides 13 more names; in short, is *quite above suspicion*. Why are we not told *that*? Those 10 versions, those 37 fathers, that host of copies in the proportion of 995 to 5,—why concerning all these is there not so much as a hint let fall that such a mass of counter-evidence exists?"

We draw our readers' attention to these things, because there is a deep design in fretting away the evidence of the deity of Christ. There is also the Gnostic error concerning the human nature of Christ in the margin of Jno. i. 3: "That which hath been made was life in him;" besides numerous others of like nature. A more unfortunate attempt to displace the good old Bible could not be made, and we can join with the learned reviewer from whom we are quoting:

"Changes of *any* sort are unwelcome in such a book as the Bible; but the discovery that changes have been made *for the worse* offends greatly."

“How rash and infelicitous, for example, is the following rendering of the famous words in Acts xxvi. 28, 29, which we find thrust upon us without apology or explanation; without, in fact, any marginal note at all: ‘And Agrippa said unto Paul, *with but little persuasion thou wouldst fain make me a Christian.* And Paul said, I would to God that *whether with little or with much,*’ &c. Now this is indefensible. For, in the first place, to get any such meaning out of the words, our revisionists have been obliged to substitute the fabricated *ποιῆσαι* (the peculiar property of \aleph A B and a few cursives) for *γενέσθαι* in ver. 28. Moreover, even so, the words do not yield the required sense. We venture to point out that this is precisely one of the occasions where the opinion of a first-rate Greek father is of paramount importance. The moderns confess themselves unable to discover a single instance of the phrase *ἐν ὀλίγῳ* in the sense of ‘*within a little.*’ Cyril of Jerusalem (A.D. 350) and Chrysostom (A.D. 400), on the contrary, evidently knew that here the expression can mean no other thing; and they were competent judges, seeing that Greek was their native language. ‘Such an amount of victorious grace and wisdom did Paul derive from the Holy Spirit,’ says Cyril, ‘that even King Agrippa at last exclaimed,’ &c. From which it is evident that Cyril regarded Agrippa’s words as an avowal that he was well nigh overcome by the apostle’s argument. And so Chrysostom—who says plainly that *ἐν ὀλίγῳ* means ‘*within a little,*’* and assumes that within a little St. Paul had persuaded his judge—even puts *παρ’ ὀλίγον* into Agrippa’s mouth.”

Can it be possible that any one could persuade himself that Paul attempted to use—or that Agrippa understood Paul to use—little or any persuasion to make him a Christian? So that here again the words put into Agrippa’s mouth and Paul’s answer twice over infer something impossible and erroneous.

Moreover, we find the revisers have cast a doubt on *all* the Scriptures being inspired of God. We give another quotation in confirmation of our own mind on the subject:

“Again. At a period of prevailing unbelief in the INSPIRATION of Scripture, nothing but real necessity could warrant any meddling with such a testimony on the subject as is found in 2 Tim. iii. 16. We have hitherto been taught to believe that ‘*all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable.*’ &c. The ancients clearly so understood St. Paul’s words; and so do the most learned and thoughtful of the moderns. Πᾶσα γὰρ, even if it be interpreted ‘every Scripture,’ can only mean every portion of those *ἑσθὰ γράμματα* of which the apostle had been speaking in the previous verse, and therefore must needs signify *the whole of Scripture.* So that the expression, ‘all Scripture,’ expresses St. Paul’s meaning exactly, and should not have been disturbed. But ‘it is very difficult,’ says the learned chairman of the Revisionists, ‘to decide whether *θεόπνευστος* is a part of the predicate, *καί* being the simple copula, or whether it is a part of the subject. Lexicography and grammar contribute but little towards a decision.’ Not so thought Bishop Middleton. ‘I do not recollect,’ he says, ‘any passage in the New Testament in which two adjectives, apparently connected by the copulative, were intended by the writer to be so unnaturally disjointed. He who can produce such an instance will do much towards establishing the plausibility of a translation, which otherwise must appear, to say the least of it, to be forced and improbable.’ Our Revisionists translate, ‘Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable,’ &c.,—which, of course, may be plausibly

* *Ἐν ὀλίγῳ τουτέστι παρὰ μικρόν.* ix. 391 α.

declared to imply that a distinction is drawn by the apostle himself between inspired and uninspired Scripture. And pray (we should be presently asked) is not many a Scripture (or writing) 'profitable for teaching,' &c., which is *not* commonly held to be 'inspired of God?' But, in fact, the proposed rendering is inadmissible, being without logical coherence and consistency. The utmost that could be pretended would be that St. Paul's assertion is that 'every portion of Scripture *being inspired* (i.e., inasmuch as it is—because it is—inspired) is *also* profitable,' &c. Else there would be no meaning in the *καὶ*. But, in the name of common sense, if this be so, *why* have the blessed words been meddled with?"

(*To be continued.*)

DELIVERANCE.

"He delivered me."—Ps. XVIII. 19.

THE arrow of conviction

Had deeply pierced my heart ;

With tears and sore affliction

I mourn'd its inward smart.

For long I labour'd under

Sin's bitter misery.

My bonds were broke asunder.

When—"He delivered me."

Night's darkest hour distinguished,

Precedes the dawn of day ;

When hope's almost relinquished,

God does his love display.

Thus, spent with supplicating,

I, fainting, urged my plea.

It seem'd 'twas useless waiting ;

Still!—"He delivered me."

Sin was my lamentation ;

Mine seem'd a hopeless case.

I fear'd—through condemnation—

I'd sinn'd away his grace.

Sudden his love revealing

The Lord my soul set free.

Who can describe the feeling

When—"He delivered me!"

Dear child of mercy, mourning

Thy wretchedness and sin,

Thine eye to Christ be turning,

For he will take thee in.

Thou couldst not more sinful,

More vile, and wretched be

Than he who now is writing,

Yet—"He delivered me."

Whate'er thy bitter anguish,

Poor sheep of Jesu's flock ;

Though at his feet you languish,

Still "*ask*" and "*seek*" and "*knock*."

In deepest tribulation
 To Jesus seek to flee ;
 He'll hear thy supplication,
 For—" *He delivered me.*"

Weak, weary fellow-pilgrim,
 Perplex'd, cast down, dismayed,
 What though oppress'd and doubting,
 And very sore afraid,
 Ere long the night of sorrow
 Far, far away will flee.
 It was a glorious morrow
 When—" *He delivered me.*"

Dear saints in sore temptation,
 Who feel a Father's rod,
 The richest consolation
 Is treasured up in God.
 Soon will his blest appearing
 Your burden'd minds set free.
 O think, ye souls so fearing,
 How—" *He delivered me.*"

Sleaford.

E. C.

Obituary.

Dear Mr. Editor,—As I have written a little account of the Lord's gracious dealings with, and the peaceful death of my dear friend, George Weston, of Brighton, for the "Gospel Standard," I send you also a few particulars of the last days and happy death of his wife, Susanna Weston. Though they were united and shared in each other's mercies, sorrows, and trials so many years, yet the Lord did not manifest his love to her so as to remove all fears and doubts, until near her end, she being, "through the fear of death" all her "lifetime subject to bondage." "But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first." Her husband was brought by the Holy Ghost into liberty, joy, and peace, through the precious atonement and manifestation of Christ crucified to his soul, about 30 years previous to her last illness and death; but her ransomed soul, though so long held in bondage, must first enter into that eternal rest and presence of their Lord,

"Where sin no more defiles."'

And he had to sojourn here below about 11 years longer, before being taken by his last illness.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
 Of never-failing skill,
 He treasures up his bright designs,
 And works his sovereign will."

Yours in love,

E. A.

“Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.”—JNO. VI. 12.

SUSANNA WESTON.—On Aug. 30th, 1869, aged 74, Susanna Weston, the beloved wife of George Weston, of 17, Foundry Street, Brighton, fell asleep in Jesus.

She was a firm believer in the doctrines of grace, and could see the safety of the Lord's people; but was subject to many fears and doubts concerning her own interest in that great salvation through the atonement of Christ Jesus. She frequently said to her husband, “O, father, you are safe for eternity, I wish I was; but I am such a lifeless lump of sin,

“Without the power to act or will.”

She was often reading the Bible and good books, and was a reader of the “Gospel Standard” for many years; and at times she was raised to a hope in the Lord's mercy; but feeling herself sinful and helpless, she said but little about eternal things. Sometimes, after reading and prayer in the family, at night her husband has heard her, when in bed, sighing and praying for mercy, she thinking he was asleep; but he says, “I never disturbed her.”

Some time before she was laid aside, she said, “Father, how rebellious I am.” He said, “It does not show itself.” “Ah!” she said, “it is inward rebellion.” At another time she said, “What horrors of mind I do feel! What shall I do?” But this was all removed during her illness, and submission to the Lord's will was given to her. When it was feared she would not recover, her husband said to her, “My dear, you are very ill, and we cannot tell the mind of the Lord whether you will be raised up again, or whether you will be taken from us. Have you any hope of eternal life and salvation besides that in and through the merits of the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ?” She said, “No, none whatever. O that he would save me!” Again he said, “Have you nothing you can trust to, and hope in, in yourself?” She said, “No, *nothing*. I am all sin and wretchedness; but I do hope and trust in the Lord for mercy.” After they had had reading and prayer downstairs, and had come up to bed, he said to her, “Used you not to pray for mercy?” She said, “Yes, frequently.” Her daughter E. said to her, “If it is the Lord's will to take you, do you feel resigned?” She said, “Yes, if I were quite sure I should be saved.” E. said, “Well, dear mother, you have a hope in the Lord Jesus, have you not?” She said, “This is what I rest on. We have no merit of our own—*none, none!* I am a lump of sin; sinners Jesus came to save—not the righteous. Pray for me, that I may be *quite* satisfied. O that I were quite sure. I do not want to be deceived; I want to be quite sure. If I were quite sure, O how happy I should be!” Her daughter said, “You are longing for the salvation of your soul.” She said, “Yes, and it is what I have earnestly prayed for.” In these anxious times she frequently asked her husband

to come and pray for her. "The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail." (Isa. li. 14.) This was her case as her affliction increased. At one time she asked her husband if he had prayed to the Lord that he would save her. He said, "Yes." With much earnestness she said, "What did the Lord say?" Her husband answered, "*He will save you*; for the Spirit witnesseth with our spirit that we are the children of God." At another time she said, "Lord, have mercy on me, a vile wretch, and an unworthy, sinful creature!" Her daughter repeated some verses of Hart's hymn :

"Ho! ye needy, come, and welcome;
God's free bounty glorify;
True belief, and true repentance,
Ev'ry grace that brings us nigh,
Without money,
Come to Jesus Christ and buy."

Then said, "You do feel weary and heavy laden, do you not, mother?" She said, "*That I do!*" "Then, Jesus says, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'" "Yes," she said, "there is a rest for the people of God." "Yes," answered her daughter, "and we believe you are one of them." Her eyes filled with tears, and she said, "The Lord's Name be praised." After her daughter had left her a short time and returned, she said, "The Lord bless you, my dear. The Lord will bless you." Her daughter asked her if she felt more satisfied of her eternal state, she said, "Yes; but I do not feel that gloriousness and joy that some speak of; but

"A hope of salvation in his Name,
How comfortable 'tis."

Bless his dear Name, what a mercy!" Her daughter said, "Yes, he has been merciful to you, in sparing you so long in your large family." "Yes," she said, "I wonder he has not long ago cut me off as a cumberer of the ground. I am full of bruises, and putrefying sores. I am a lump of sin." She frequently cried out, when in great pain of body, "Come, Lord Jesus, and take me from this body of sin and death!" At another time, "O! I am afraid I shall be rebellious, pray that I may have patience.

"None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good."

Fearing she was near her end, and being about to send for other branches of the family, she said, "Don't be in a hurry, I shall not be released yet." As she came near her end, the Holy Comforter comforted her fearful heart; and though very weak in body, and at times in much pain and weariness, yet she repeatedly said, "Blessed Lord—wonderful—

"God's mercy is for ever sure."

Her daughter said, "Yes, and it will last through time and eternity;

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take."

She answered,

“ ‘The clouds we so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on our head.’

We want the eye of faith to see through it all.” Her daughter said, “Yes, that *little* faith.” She answered, “It means a great deal of faith; though it seems only as ‘a grain of mustard seed,’ the mountains would be removed.”

After this, she sank into a dark cloud of fears again, and said, “I cannot see my way quite clear;” and was much troubled in her mind. After a time her countenance brightened again, and she said, “It is all gone now—*gone now*.” Her daughter said, “Is it clear?” She answered, “Yes, bless his holy Name! It was Satan worrying me with his fiery darts.” She was now fast sinking, and became very weak. But after a day or two of pain, weariness, and faintness, she exclaimed, “Precious Jesus! Precious Jesus! Precious Jesus!” Her daughter said, “Is he precious to you, mother?” She answered, “Yes, yes—it seems as though I could see him now, nailed upon the cross;” and again repeated, “Precious Jesus!” Afterwards she added, “It was with the eyes of my understanding that I saw him. I could see him so plainly; it was as if he were here; bless his dear Name.” Her daughter said, “Then you are satisfied he is yours to all eternity.” She answered, “Yes, bless his holy Name.” Then she said, “The Rock! the Rock!” Her daughter repeated,

“ Christ is the eternal Rock,
On which his church is built;
The Shepherd of his little flock;
The Lamb that took our guilt,”

which seemed very sweet to her. Again she said (with a loud voice that astonished those who were with her) “*Beautiful—beautiful—beautiful!*” Her daughter said, “What is it, mother?” She answered, “Such a beautiful house.” Her daughter said, “It is a foresight of the heavenly mansion.” She answered, “*Yes; and there is a place for me, a place for father, and a place for you—for you;*” repeating it several times, moving her head.

On Lord’s day, Aug. 28th, she said, “I am so happy—I am so happy!” Her daughter said, “Are you, mother? what a blessing!” She said again, “I am so happy—I am so happy! ‘There shall be peace in the dwellings of the righteous.’” This was a Sabbath of peace both to her, her husband, and daughter; for the Lord had answered their prayer, and granted peace, bless his great and faithful Name. Her daughter left her to take a little rest, the peace and happiness still abiding with her.

On Tuesday morning, Aug. 30th, she raised her hand, and with peace on her countenance, gently fell asleep in Jesus. Her husband said, “I never was in such a dying chamber before. Blessed be God, I have cause to say my loss is her eternal gain. ‘Bless the Lord, O my soul.’”

Burgess Hill, Oct. 15th, 1881.

E. ASHDOWN.

SARAH CLARKE.—On Jan. 25th, 1882, aged 85, Sarah Clarke, of Oakham.

The subject of this obituary was born at Oakham, June 11th, 1796, and married in the year 1823. She then went to reside at Stamford, and was a constant hearer and member of the Wesleyans until Mr. Tiptaft (of undying memory) first preached at Stamford. No one at this time would allow him a pulpit, so he preached in a club-room from these words: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Our dear friend heard him for the first time, and with great power, God sealing it home to the uprooting of all her fleshly religion, and she could no longer rest with the Wesleyan answer to her troubled mind. Not long after this she withdrew herself entirely from them, which caused her trial of mind. She then heard Mr. Philpot preach from these words: "If thou take forth the precious from the vile thou shalt be as my mouth." This sermon, although it searched her, was a source of hope to her troubled soul. She dearly loved both these servants of the living God.

Some time after this, in the good providence of God, she removed to Oakham. Here the exercises of her mind became deeper, and temporal trouble followed her. Her husband, after a few years, became afflicted for years. She struggled along with her mind much weighted, and saw many ups and downs. She was a very industrious, noble-hearted woman, and kept her trials to herself, except when she could pour them out before God, sometimes in words, but oftener in sighs and tears. Her husband died in 1847. She now always sat under the truth, and was often very mercifully helped; and says, in a few scraps left behind her:

"O may I not have heard in vain! I pray that his precious truths may be brought home to my soul with the power of his Holy Spirit that Satan may not be permitted to rob me of them as he has often done, and my own wicked heart. O that the Lord would have mercy upon me and forgive me my sins. Of late my mind has been severely exercised on account of my soul. The Lord the Spirit does at times shine into my heart with some precious promises; especially he did on the last night but one in the old year (1851). As I was on my bed, not thinking of them, these words came: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;' and it was further added: 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' O how my soul was melted down in a moment; and my feelings I cannot express. I blessed and praised the Lord. I felt as if he had forgiven me. O how I wished to make it known to some one of his children; but I could not, only by writing to my niece; and since then have been led to question the words again and again. O this unbelieving heart of mine! Years before this, when my husband was alive, this precious promise came with such sweetness: 'Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God.' I did not know where to find the words; but they have many times been a comfort to my cast-down soul. Since then, Satan has told me I had no right to them as they were only for the church. O how my soul is exercised by night as well as by day.

“Through the goodness and long forbearance of God I have been spared again to hear his precious truth from the mouth of his dear minister. May his blessed Spirit seal it upon my heart. I bless his Name he granted me a few crumbs from his children’s table, though unworthy the least of his mercies. I pray that I may not be deceived in things of such great importance; but that he would search me and prove me, and try my heart. I pray the Lord will not leave me to my own wicked heart, and the temptations of the devil; although I deserve it for my sins. But blessed for ever be his Name, he has no delight in the death of a sinner.

“O how condemned I felt under that precious truth of God: ‘But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul.’ I have been much exercised in my mind, and have had no one to speak to; but there is One above that knoweth all things; and I hope it is his own blessed Spirit’s teaching in my heart, or else I am altogether deceived. I feel my own sinfulness and helplessness; but I pray the Lord to enable me to make it known to his own blessed minister.

“How good the Lord is to me, such a worthless worm. My mind has been led to these words in the Bible: ‘God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us.’ O, was it not for that little word *us*, what would become of me? O search me, O blessed Lord, and try my heart; for thou knowest my thoughts, and the exercises of my mind from day to day, and in sleepless hours of the night. ‘O how unsearchable are thy ways!’

“In thy dear Name, O Lord, with much fear and trembling lest I should be deceiving myself, I feel compelled to make a few of my thoughts and exercises of my heart known to some one; for my soul is bowed down within me on account of these things. I feel condemned for keeping them in my own bosom; and was it not for the Lord the Spirit bringing some word of divine truth to my mind in a time of great need, I know not what would become of me. But I have felt much distressed since I heard Mr. Tiptaft speak from this text: ‘They that honour me I will honour;’ and through the Lord’s own words: ‘If ye love me, keep my commandments;’ and, he that denieth not himself, and ‘doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.’ This morning I felt as if I was left and given up; I knew it was in the Lord’s own power either to damn or save my soul, for I could not alter his divine purpose, when, in a little while, these words came to my mind: ‘Wait on the Lord;’ and I felt a little resigned to his divine will.”

She was here deeply exercised about joining the church, and came before it at a meeting which Mr. Godwin conducted; and her original and gracious account of the Lord’s dealings with her was affectionately received by him and the members of the church. She was baptized by Mr. Tiptaft, and received into fellowship with the church by Mr. Philpot, Oct. 26th, 1857. She was a God-fearing, consistent, and prayerful member; her gain is our loss; we mourn, and rejoice. In her day she has been a succourer of many; and her industry is memorable, that she might earn a shilling to give away where she felt led.

I must pass over much on account of brevity, until the time she was taken worse, which was the beginning of January, 1882. She remarked, “I hope it will not be long now.” One said to her, “You feel the grasshopper a burden.” She said, “Yes, I do indeed; I prove it true, it is ‘labour and sorrow.’ O, never

pray to live to be old. I am a poor helpless thing; O that the Lord would prepare me and take me to himself." Hymn 471 was sweet to her many times. Once having sunk very low, and been restless through the night, I left her for some time; when I returned she looked so smiling. Her niece said, "Aunt, you look very smiling this morning." She answered, "Yes, I do when Jesus smiles on me." After some time she sank very low, and said, "I hope the Lord will not leave me at last." A little time she lay still, and repeated hymn 158; then lifted up her hand, saying, "Praise him," and sweetly added,

"My hope is built on nothing less,
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

The three Persons in the glorious Trinity are all engaged in my salvation. Only think, such a poor vile sinner as I am to be loved of God. Bless his precious Name, 'tis all of grace from first to last. Nothing less than God's power can make a Christian, I am a witness." She was again brought low in her mind with many fears, when the Lord mercifully gave her these words: "I *will* see you again, and your heart *shall* rejoice." Some time before she had been especially favoured, when going upstairs, by these words being applied with great power: "Ye are graven on the palms of my hands." It was as though a voice spoke them audibly to her. She now thought of them again with great sweetness, and her soul was much humbled within her from their effects. She was a person who greatly valued the privilege of attending the means, and often mourned over being unable to go to them for so many years. Although she could not reach the streams she was often favoured with the Fountain fulness, and sweet meditation was granted her; her mind was led into the Word, and it was sweetly opened to her understanding. She lay and repeated the Scriptures without any book; the Bible was within her. Hymns 957, 909, 1010, and 1032 were great favourites. She had a very prayerful spirit, and did not forget the ministers and church, and all the Lord's tried people. Many times did she ask God's help and power on their behalf.

She greatly admired the wonderful providence of God, and would, with tears, beseech the Lord to bless the hands by whom he sent her so many earthly comforts, saying, "My dear, it is all God's mercy, and he knows how to repay. I never can; but he remembereth a 'cup of cold water,' and therefore much more what I receive, and *from whom* I receive it. I wish you, when I am gone home, to testify my gratitude to that excellent institution, the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society. The Lord only knows the help and comfort it has been to me these many years; for parish pittance is but small. Bless the Lord for his merciful help to me in my times of need, an unworthy sinner."*

* Her nomination to the A. P. F. S. was obtained by Mr. Philpot, and she became a pensioner, July, 1855. Through his kind efforts she was advanced to the ten guinea pension in June, 1864, having received the five guinea pension from Aug., 1858.

A friend or two who used often to read parts of the Word of God, hymns, &c., to her during the seven years she was unable to read or to assemble with others and hear the Word, were struck by the earnest attention she would give, and her eagerness to receive and enter into what she heard. It was very remarkable at her advanced age how the Lord preserved her mental faculties. During the last three weeks of her life, she often repeated firmly Ps. xxvii.; the last verse she would dwell comfortably upon. Verses 1 and 2 of Isa. xliii. were a promise given her long before, which she would plead and hope in at various times.

As she drew nearer her end she wanted another token of God's love, and was much in prayer concerning it. After watching and waiting she said to her niece, "I have just had these words: 'Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.'" She lay quiet for several hours, until her niece asked, "Do you feel afraid, aunt?" She replied, "How can I be afraid with such blessed words?" and presently broke out, "I am longing and waiting to go. O to be with him!" and looking upwards added intently, "Precious Jesus, the sinner's Friend!—Praise him!" Another time I said to her, "You are like good old Jacob; you have nothing to do but to die." She answered, "No; but the devil is very busy." I said, "Is he?" "Yes; yes; but my 'life is hid;' he cannot destroy it, nor I lose it, what a merey—what a provision for *real sinners!*" I said to her, "You have had a sweet help?" "Yes," she said, "'Crown him, crown him, crown him Lord of all;' for he alone is worthy."

She spoke very little after this, excepting now and again, saying, "Precious—precious Jesus!" and when talking was quite over, her dear hands moved in the attitude of praise. Her departure was very gradual, but mercifully peaceful. God took her to himself at half-past ten o'clock on Wednesday night.

Jan. 25th, 1882.

A MEMBER.

HARRIET KEY.—A few fragments respecting the death of Harriet Key, of Billingham, who fell asleep in Jesus on April 1st, 1878, aged 34; written by Mr. Abraham Potterton, deacon of the Strict Baptist chapel at Billingham.

The first time I called to see Harriet Key I found her in a very distressed state of mind concerning her soul's eternal welfare, feeling death before her; and nothing but an eternity in hell could she expect, "having no hope, and without God in the world." She appeared much tormented and tempted by the enemy to believe her distress was not the distress of mind which his children experienced, but only a *natural* dread and fear of death. She expressed a great desire that the Lord would give her true, godly repentance for sin, and show her truly what real grace was. She could see many very precious promises in the Word of God; but could not think they were or ever would be *for her*.

The Lord did indeed grant her request in giving her distress of mind for sin; she was brought very low, and into a most

pitiable and *feelingly lost* condition, so much so that she feared she was losing her rational powers.

In the midst of her deep anguish of mind she was blessed with little helps, little meltings before the Lord; but they were soon lost and forgotten, and swept away by a multitude of evils, and the buffetings of Satan, "who goeth about seeking whom he may devour." Her cries to the Lord were most touching to hear; and O how sure she was that no man could give her that which she longed for; neither could she herself produce faith to trust and cast her whole condition on a crucified Saviour. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." But this did not satisfy her; for she knew and felt that nothing but the power of the Holy Spirit could enable her to grasp by faith some sweet, suitable portion of his Word. At times she was heard to repeat over and over again, "No hope! No hope!" and at other times she would exclaim, "Lord, I cannot give it up; Lord have mercy on *me*." The distress of mind she felt and manifested during the whole six weeks of her illness was most heartrending and painful to witness by all who visited her, and also all who attended to her. She was sometimes quite desperate in the conclusions she came to as regarded her own state; but she prayed that, if there never was to be any hope for herself, God might sanctify her state and affliction to those who were around her, and thus make it a means of blessing to others.

On the Wednesday before her death I visited her, read, and engaged in prayer, feeling some degree of liberty and encouragement in my own mind that the Lord would hear prayer on her behalf, and give her true peace of mind. On rising to leave her she feelingly expressed her deep gratitude to the friends for their kindness to her. I said, "Good-bye, and I hope the Lord will yet bless you," when she shook her head and firmly said, "No hope, nothing for me. Who can tell the feeling to be sinking, and *no hope*, and eternity just at hand!"

On the following Friday she was to all appearance just grappling with death, and was never expected to speak again; but she did revive, and spoke of having heard some beautiful singing and chanting. She said it was beautiful to hear them, and she thought she was going with them; but, to her great sorrow, she was left behind.

Her conflict with Satan after this dream was most distressing to hear. It was a perfect dialogue between Satan and herself; the whole was carried on in open conversation. It was in the evening when I called and found her in this distressed state. She spoke the very words which Satan appeared to be suggesting to her poor, distressed mind, first repeating Satan's words and then her own answer. "Come with me," &c., and she answered, "I cannot, I *will* not,—Lord, help me, Lord have mercy on me, I cannot give it up." She then referred to her past dream and said, "I want to look where the singers went," pointing up her right hand, "I

thought I was going, but am left behind." The enemy replied, "Why, you are dead;" and she exclaimed, "Not dead—*not dead yet*," and would most feelingly beg of the Lord to have mercy on her and help her. This conversation, which was a very long one, and continued for some hours, was carried on in the presence of her friends, and was most pitiable to hear. O how certain she was that no free-will of her own could give her what she desired and she was indeed brought down into a prepared state to receive mercy and pardon from a precious Saviour, to feel all her own righteousness and prayers as filthy rags, and painfully to know that her whole dependence for salvation must be Jesus Christ from first to last.

After this conversation with Satan, having been brought into a most wretched state of mind, the Lord appeared for her Light. He did fulfil her desire; and she was indeed a wonder to many. She broke out in words like these: "The Lord has come and blessed me,—I am washed in the blood of the Lamb. Tell all my friends the Lord *has* appeared for me—O, tell *all* I have found a precious Saviour!" She was indeed most sweetly blessed, and her voice was strengthened to shout aloud to the praise of Jesus' Name. Her tongue was loosed, and the fetters broken, and she rejoiced in her salvation through the blood of the Lamb. Her desires were now that the Lord would take her home.

She never again appeared harassed and tormented; but seemed perfectly calm and quiet up to her end. Surely we may exclaim, "The Lord hath done great things for her, whereof we would be glad. The Lord has delivered her from the hand of him that was stronger than she." O how true it is that heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people; and none but the feelingly lost and helpless sinner can enter there.

She fell asleep in Jesus in a quiet, peaceful state, early on the 1st of April, 1878.

A. POTTERTON.

JAMES PEARSON.—On Feb. 2nd, 1882, aged 62, James Pearson, of Hadmar Place, Smarden.

As I was not acquainted with our dear departed friend until the last two years, and as he has been a man of very few words, I cannot say much about the Lord's dealings with him until he came near his end. He was a regular attendant at our chapel from the the time it was opened in 1880; he was one of the trustees, and was greatly interested in the cause.

I had many times had a little conversation with him previous to his illness, but always found him afraid of saying too much about himself; and he was very considerate in taking any steps in connection with the house of God. Our friend was taken ill last Christmas-day morning, and it was soon discovered that he had a cancer on the liver, which gave him much pain; but he bore it very patiently. For although he had nearly all his lifetime been subject to bondage through fear of death, not being able to claim the Lord as his Portion, yet when affliction was laid upon him the

Lord appeared for him and blessed him indeed, favouring him with a precious view of Christ hanging upon the cross, bearing all his sins, and smiling upon him so that he could say, "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid."

I saw him several times during his illness, and heard more from his mouth concerning his exercises, trials, and deliverances than I had before.

At one time he told me how sweet and precious the 43rd chapter of Isaiah had been to him, and how it had supported him under the pains of the body, he feeling the Lord's presence with him, saying, "Fear not." He also acknowledged how his mind had been too much taken up with his business, and that he looked upon it now as vanity and vexation of spirit, and said he could comfortably leave it all, and also his partner in life, and his offspring, "having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better." Another time he said, "I am afraid my patience will not hold out" (his sufferings being great). He had no desire to recover; but was afraid his motive in desiring to depart was not all pure, as he wanted to get beyond afflictions, being persuaded it would be well with him, and yet he could not long to be with Christ as he would.

At another time, being low in mind, all he had felt was called in question; for now he had lost the sensible enjoyment of the Lord's presence. But he could not give up his hope, saying, "I have been wonderfully favoured, wonderfully favoured." Once when I saw him he desired me to read the 14th chapter of John, saying it had been made a blessing to him some years ago in affliction. Also the whole of hymn 472 (Gadsby's) appeared to be very sweet to him. Sometimes he seemed to be quite melted down when I have read to him portions of Scripture, and have tried to lift up a heart of prayer for him.

He told me he had thought of making our chapel his home; and had, in his way, offered up many prayers for the Lord's blessing to rest upon us, that the managers might have wisdom and grace to do what is right, and that this weak worm now writing might be helped to faithfully declare the whole truth amidst evil and good report. He warned such as are satisfied with the form of godliness, who meet with us from time to time, saying they would find it hard work when they came to their death-bed if they had no more than a form of godliness and knew nothing of the power. He also said it was hard work for a Christian to lift his heart on high, or look up, without enlivening grace. At this time our friend appeared to feel a strong cleaving to our chapel and people, and was melted into tears when he spoke of meeting with us no more in the flesh.

At times he was troubled with hard, rebellious thoughts against the Lord, and was afraid they would come out in words; but he who has said, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him," kept him by his power; so that he was for the most part "patient

in tribulation." As his sufferings were great, he could converse but little. From the beginning of his illness he appeared like a man who had done with the world and all its toys, and cared not for the company of any but such as are "led by the Spirit of God;" and these could not often see him because of his pain and great weakness.

How brightly has the grace of God shone in bearing him up, and strengthening him with "might in the inner man" when his outer man was fast decaying; so that he who had for years been a fearing one, wondering how he should stand the trying day, has proved the language of the hymn true in his experience:

"When ghastly death appears in view,
Christ's presence shall thy fears subdue;
He comes to set thy spirit free,
And as thy day thy strength shall be."

Although he has been afraid to say much, yet there have been times when he has had a crumb of the Bread of life at the house of God, which has showed itself in his countenance, and now and then escaped his lips. "A city which is set upon a hill cannot be hid." If the Lord "worketh in," it will show itself outwardly in the conduct and at times in the countenance." The Lord is the "health of the countenance."

For two or three days before he died, he said but few words, being at times in an unconscious state. Once, after severe pain and being assailed by Satan, he said, "I hoped that would have been the last gasp." Another time he said to his attendant, "Did you hear that music and singing?" He fell asleep in Jesus on Feb. 2nd, about three o'clock in the afternoon. Our loss is great, as also the loss of the parish where he resided. He was a business man, and greatly respected on account of his upright dealing and conduct. Salvation by grace has been his standing and rejoicing.

We buried our friend on the 7th at the Old Baptist Chapel, Smarden, when many friends were present.

Chapel House, Biddenden.

J. KEMP.

JOB CHAPPELL.—On Oct. 12th, 1881, aged 73, Job Chappell, a member and deacon of the church at Crudwell, Wilts.

In the early part of 1881 he was laid very low on a bed of affliction. On April 22nd his daughter went to see him, and found him calmly trusting in the blood and righteousness of his Redeemer. A few words were taken down which dropped from his lips between the excruciating pains he was suffering. When she entered his chamber he exclaimed, "O the grace and mercy of my God in saving such a hell-deserving wretch as I am.

"None but Jesus, none but Jesus,
Can do helpless sinners good."

"No, I have no other foundation; they are all sinking sands; but

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

O how my poor soul longs to embrace him, and fold him in my arms. O for him to say once more, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' A sinner I was born, a sinner I have lived, and nothing but a sinner now; but I do hope and trust I can say (unless awfully deceived), a sinner saved by sovereign grace. Yes, what a sinner, having gone into a far country and spent his all, and fain would have fed on husks. But then God took me in hand; and now this poor soul cannot feed on husks; no, no, husks won't satisfy my soul—nothing short of Christ. O do give me one more smile. But I must do whatever thou seest fit. O, I feel like poor David when he said, 'My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws.' O my child, if I never get another smile, or another manifestation of the love of my dear Saviour, I die calmly resting, calmly trusting in the precious blood and righteousness of my precious Christ." Then he prayed the Lord to give him strength and patience to wait the appointed time; and soon after cried out, "Lord, am I one whom thou wilt own and bless? Yes," he added, "for the dear Lord has told me that he has engraven my name on the palms of his hands. Stay, Lord, for this poor soul can hold no more." He continued, "O I long to go! To have a glimpse, a foretaste of eternal glory here on earth—what must heaven be? It passes all comprehension of man. O come, my heaven's bright Glory, come." The next morning he said when his daughter went into his room, "O what a night I have had! what an enemy sin is! Sin and Satan are the biggest enemies my soul has got here; but the dear Lord has told me, 'E'en down to old age and hoary hairs I will keep thee.' O what a loving Saviour, to think he should save such a wretch." And he broke forth again, saying, "O it won't be long—and

"Then O how pleasant the conqueror's song.'

I had a word from the Lord just now; it was this: 'Set thy house in order; for thou shalt die and not live.'" These same words had been spoken to him about four years before, and had followed him ever since.

After all these sufferings, and risings, and sinkings, our dear father was graciously raised from his bed for a little while, quite unexpectedly to any of his friends or himself. The last three weeks of his life he was once more laid low on the bed of suffering. I was summoned to his bedside on Oct. 9th. I said, "Father, you won't be imprisoned here much longer to suffer this intense pain;" and he answered, "No, I shall soon be with Jesus—my dear Jesus has done all things well." His daughter came to see him the next day, and he said to her, "I am very ill—but it will soon be all over; for I am dying." She asked him, "Father, has death lost its sting?" "Yes, yes," he answered, "I feel nothing but a solid resting till Jesus is willing to take me into the realms of endless day.

“ My hope is fixed on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness ;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' Name.”

Afterwards he repeated the whole of that beautiful hymn :

“ How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds,” &c.

Oct. 11th, the day preceding his death, he took but little notice of any one, unless spoken to ; but was quite sensible to the last.

On the evening of his death, his breathing became very heavy and short up to the last half-hour ; when he was more easy, and repeated with every breath he drew for half-an-hour, “ *Bless the Lord—bless the Lord.*” Thus he breathed out his soul into the hands of his dear Lord and Saviour, at 20 minutes to 12 o'clock in the evening of Oct. 12th. It can be truthfully said of him : “ Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright ; for the end of that man is peace.”

Bath.

A. CHAPPELL.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO THE VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE.

I TRUST also, Madam, that you will be careful to present to the Lord the present estate of this decaying kirk ; for, what shall be concluded in parliament concerning her, the Lord knoweth. Sure I am, the decree of a most fearful parliament in heaven is at the very point of coming forth, because of the sins of the land ; for we have cast away the law of the Lord, and despised the words of the Holy One of Israel. (Isa. v. 24.) “ Judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off ; truth is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter.” (Isa. lix. 14.) Lo, the prophet, as if he had seen us and our kirk, declares justice to be handled as an enemy, holden out at the gates of our city, and banished ; and he compareth truth to a person sickly and diseased, fallen down in a deadly swooning fit in the streets, before he can come to a house. The priests “ have caused many to stumble at the law, and have corrupted the covenant of Levi.” (Mal. ii. 8.) “ But what will they do in the end ?” (Jer. v. 31.) Therefore give the Lord no rest for Zion. Stir up your husband, your brother, and all with whom you are in favour and credit, to stand upon the Lord's side against Baal. I have good hope your husband loveth the peace and prosperity of Zion ; the peace of God be upon him, for his intended courses, as to the establishment of a powerful ministry in this land.

Anwoth, July 27th, 1628.

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

WHILE I feel a desire to be active for the Lord, it becomes me to be sensible that he does not want me, that I can do nothing without him, and that it will be all in vain unless in the Lord. To be active, to be dependent, and to be nothing, is very becoming and very comely in those who are nothing without him.—*T. Charles.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JUNE, 1882.

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

HOLY IMPORTUNITY IN PRAYER.

A SERMON BY ROBERT HARRIS, B.D., MAY 25TH, 1642.

"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint: saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: and there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenger me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And 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."—LU. XVIII. 1-8.

IN this portion of Scripture we have a parable which delivers an excellent truth under a comparison. That truth is here prefixed: *In prayer, "not to faint."* This is the point; and this is pressed from the widow's success, and is argued thus,—If true, earnest prayer carry it with the worst of men, most assuredly it will with a gracious God.

Observe the persons. A poor, friendless, but a praying widow, who had no advocate but *misery* and *importunity*,—she prayed to a sullen, froward character, a man without humanity; one whose portrait Jesus hath drawn in two features; but they convey the whole countenance both of head and heart; he "feared not God, neither regarded man." What hope could there be that one so impudent as openly to declare he "feared not God nor regarded man" would listen to her petition? Yet, see, this woman prevailed with this man. Observe the truth clothed in this parable; you have for one woman, many men; for one stranger, many children; for occasional petitions, incessant suits; and for a bad judge, a good Father, who can no more deny his own than he can deny himself. If then she, a woman so weak, overcame a man so vile, what may not a child, or children so many, do with a Father so good?

This parable our dear Saviour closes with the following blessed application: "Hear," saith our Lord, "hear what the unjust judge saith." Hear it to your comfort, poor fearful soul. Christ speaks to *you*, and bids you take comfort and encouragement in all your approaches to the throne; and in Christ, God speaks to you!

Our Lord avers, and that most strongly, as the question shows, "Shall not God avenge his own elect?" As if he said, "It is out of question that he will." And remember, though they are God's "own elect," yet they are like this poor widow, much oppressed; yea, they have many adversaries; sin, the world, Satan, a dreadful evil nature, with an unbelieving heart; yet these are all God's adversaries as well as theirs; therefore God cannot but regard them.

Our Lord concludes God will certainly hear; nay, will seasonably hear, with a "notwithstanding"—notwithstanding he is seemingly slow in his answers, and we certainly weak in our faith and dependence; yet God will hear. "Yea," saith Jesus, thus putting a blessed positive emphasis upon it, "I tell you that he will avenge them speedily."

Something I have to say to you from these words. In the first place, your attention will be called to the glorious Person himself, out of whose mouth such gracious words proceeded! Then, secondly, the doctrine contained in the text, viz., in point of prayer we shall have all arguments of encouragement, and through grace never cease till we have won the day. And may the Holy Spirit so sweetly accompany the word to our spiritual understanding that we may find cause to say, at the close of this opportunity, "Never man spake like this man!"

In the first place, I am to speak of the glorious Person of Immanuel; but who indeed can undertake to say what immense blessings are treasured up in him? There is a blessedness to the heart of every believer in the very name of "Immanuel, God with us!" For, as *God*, it is evident that all he did when upon earth, and all that he is doing now in heaven, is effectual to all the purposes of salvation. The infinite dignity of his Person gives an infinite merit to his work; and cannot fail, both in his blood and righteousness, to cleanse and justify his people, and render them truly acceptable in the sight of God. As he is *Immanuel*, or God in our nature, it gives an interest to his people in all that belongs to him; yea, all the blessings come home with a tenfold sweetness to our hearts, because he is Immanuel, God in our nature, and we "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." To know him, as he is in himself, is blessed! To know him, as being interested in him, in all that he said, all that he did, and all that he is doing, is yet more blessed. But to know him, and to live in constant personal fellowship and communion with him, is heaven on earth, and a real foretaste of glory.

When we consider how infinitely glorious the self-existing and incomprehensible Jehovah is in his Trinity of Persons, dwelling eternally in his own glory, and that he could receive no addition from the praises of his creatures, for all his divine perfections must have been the same, though man or angel never had been; yet that he was pleased for their happiness in the contemplation of his glory to go forth in those acts, whereby he might be known in the several departments of creation,

providence, grace, and glory,—when we contemplate Jehovah as he is in himself, and in his own eternal greatness, before whom “the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance,” nay, “are counted unto him less than nothing and vanity,” (Isa. xl. 15–17.)—what shall we say of his coming forth and unbosoming himself in the Person of his dear Son, not to add to his own glory (for that can receive no addition), but to make us happy in the blessed revelation of himself? As it is written, “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” (Jno. i. 18.) And what shall we say of his infinite condescension in revealing himself to his people, under the endearing names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in a covenant of grace and mercy well “ordered in all things, and sure?” The love of God, manifested in the work of redemption, is not only in itself astonishingly great, but the time when it was shown enhances the mercy; for it was at a time when we were not simply without anything to recommend us, but when we had everything to render us odious in God’s sight—not merely undeserving, but hell-deserving creatures. And yet it is in this manner God commendeth his love towards us. No wonder, therefore, “These things the angels desire to look into.” (1 Pet. i. 12.)

Let us also reflect upon the awful state and ruin in which we are involved by original sin and actual transgression. By parentage, we have nothing to boast of more than others. Our father was “an Amorite,” and our mother “a Hittite.” We were “by nature the children of wrath even as others.” (Eph. ii. 3.) Such, in truth, is our total ruin by the fall, that the Holy Ghost by the prophet sets forth not only the weakness and helplessness of every man’s condition, under the figure of an uncleaned infant; but that every son and daughter of Adam may be said to be cast out to the loathing of their person, and left everlastingly to perish, for any help or pity all the creatures of God could give. (Ezek. xvi. 5, 6.) What an awful representation is this! Not only exposed to endless ruin, and unable to put forth a helping hand to our recovery; but, like an infant, insensible to our danger and lost condition! But from this our state of misery and helplessness, the Lord takes occasion to magnify the riches of his grace. It is not said that when we had crept out of our blood the Lord said unto us, Live; but when we were *in* our blood the Lord said, Live! “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” (1 Jno. iii. 8.) Here is set forth the blessed purpose of God; which, like himself, must be eternal,—for “he is in one mind” (Job xxiii. 13), and that eternal purpose (in the manifestation of the Son of God) was to destroy the works of the devil. For, in our redemption “was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.” (1 Jno. iv. 9.)

I now propose to call your attention for a few minutes to the *eternal power and Godhead* of the Person of the Son of God, who is one with the Father "over all, God blessed for ever." (Rom. ix. 5.) Then, direct your consideration to those names which are given to Christ in the Scriptures, in testimony of his *manhood*. And, lastly, take a view of some of the names and characters by which Christ, in his twofold nature of *God and man in one Person*, is clearly known and distinguished as the glorious "HEAD over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. i. 22, 28.) And whilst we are thus engaged, I pray we may have grace, like the chosen disciples, to "behold his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth!"

Brethren, we shall do well to keep in remembrance, as we proceed in a subject so big with importance, that it is in the work of *our redemption* he is so gloriously revealed; for he came to *redeem us from sin, the greatest of evils*; and to *save us from damnation, the greatest of miseries*. And in the coming of the Son of God we have the greatest manifestation which God could give of his own infinite and unchangeable love. Now, the sacred Record of the Old Testament expressly testifies the Son of God to be Jehovah the "Creator of Israel;" the Jehovah Alehim, the "Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." (Isa. xliii. 3, 14, 15.) The New Testament also bears witness that "by him were all things created." (Col. i. 16.) "And without him was not anything made that was made." (Jno. i. 3.) John the Evangelist not only saw the elders fall down before him, but heard them saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. iv. 10, 11.) And not only do the sacred Scriptures bear witness of him as "Jehovah the Creator," but in Ps. lxxxix., as well as in the prophecy of Isaiah, he is described as "Jehovah the Holy One." Yea, the very devils acknowledged him as such, even in the days of his humility. (Mark i. 24; Lu. iv. 34.)

Secondly, the Scriptures alone bear testimony to his *manhood*; for, in the very first promise, he is spoken of as "the seed of the woman." (Gen. iii. 15.) Elsewhere, as having taken upon him the "seed of Abraham," (Gal. iii. 19) and, "the seed of David." (2 Tim. ii. 8.) He is described as "the Son of man" by every one of the evangelists in many places; besides those Scriptures where his manhood is clearly set forth under those endearing names, which reveal him as united to us in the perfection of every human relationship, such as, our "Head," "Husband," "Brother," and the "Friend of sinners."

Thirdly, let us now take a view of him as Christ, in his twofold nature of *God and man in one Person*. This subject, like his Godhead, is inexhaustible; and, as upon that fundamental article of our faith I have confined myself merely to two or three leading Scriptures, I shall do the same upon this. Brethren, "Who

shall declare his generation," even *his* who was born in Bethlehem Ephratah, "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting?" (Mic. v. 2.) His name is "Wonderful," as descriptive of his Person. For, in that precious scripture where he is said to be the "child born," and the "son given," he is declared to be "the mighty God." (Isa. ix. 6.) In the New Testament, he is clearly revealed as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. xiii. 8.) I would here remark how clearly John the Baptist preached the Godhead of Christ, when he declared that he should baptize with the baptism of the Holy Ghost; for no one could do this but God. With what faithfulness did John also bear witness to the momentous doctrine of redemption by the blood of the Lamb, when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John i. 29.) Moreover, you will observe that in conformity with his wonderful Name and Person, his throne is called "the throne of God and of the Lamb," whence proceedeth "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal." (Rev. xxii. 1.) For all blessings flow in and from Jehovah in his Trinity of Persons, through Jesus Christ, in whom we are blessed "with all spiritual blessings." (Eph. i. 3.) The Holy Ghost by the evangelist John, when speaking of his twofold nature in one Person, saith, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." (John i. 14.) Here this glorious Person, so much and so highly spoken of under the name of the Word, is declared to be "made flesh;" and elsewhere, Christ is said to be "in the likeness of sinful flesh," to denote the vast humiliation of the Son of God in the assuming of our nature. The word "flesh" means our full nature, both soul and body, complete man; and the assumption implies the most perfect union of both natures, divine and human; not by any change or alteration of the one by the taking the other, but, as Augustine hath happily expressed it, "not by changing what he was, but by taking what he was not." And what endears the whole and renders it truly blessed to us is, that the union of God and man in one Person is indissoluble, and for ever. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

By this union, all the mystical members of his body became united in his Person, and obtained fellowship and communion in all that he said or did as the Christ of God. Who then can know the wonders of his Person, whose love, in all its "breadth and length and depth and height," "passeth knowledge" (Eph. iii. 18),—who is so infinite that eternity itself will be rolling on, whilst we are knowing more of him, and entering more and more into his joy? Now, what think you of Christ? If to know him is to be filled with the fulness of God (Eph. iii. 19)—what must his love be, and what the infinite value of our redemption, which cost a price so vast? For by virtue of our union to him, we know him not only as our Head, but in the endearing relationship of our Redeemer and Saviour. It was this know-

ledge the apostle Paul thought the most essential of all things, and for which he counted all other things but dung and dross. You whose eyes have been opened by the Holy Ghost, and who are convinced of your total inability ever to come to God but by the only "Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," must rejoice in him who, as the Son of God, is one with and can call God Father, and as the Son of man, is one with and not ashamed to call us brethren. By his partaking of both natures he became the Way of God to us and our Way to God—such a Mediator that God could reconcile sinners to himself, and such that "he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him;" such a Mediator that God "could be just, and yet the justifier of sinners that believe in him;" and such that "when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, now to appear in the presence of God for us." There, he exercises the office of our Advocate (see Zech. iii. 1-5 and Jno. ii. 1,) and puts to silence and confusion all our accusers by pleading the full atonement he has made for all our sins; the merits of his own righteousness for our justification; the holiness of his own Person for our personal sanctification; our union to him and being in him, for our acceptance; and the glory of God, for our glorification.

Beloved, consider these things; and whenever we draw near to the mercy-seat, may the eye of faith be fixed on him, who not only advocates our cause, but exercises on our behalf the office of High Priest, having by his own blood entered into the holy place, that is heaven itself; and "ever liveth to make intercession for us;" to present our persons; to announce our names; and to put into his Father's hand our prayers and praises, freed by himself from all imperfection, perfumed with the incense of his own merits—for every prayer, and every sigh, however broken, ascendeth before God out of the hand of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Brethren, this glorious Person, who spake as never man spake, saith, that "men ought always to pray and not to faint;" and from this parable I learn that *in point of prayer we are enabled to use all arguments of encouragement, and by the Spirit never yield till we have won the day.* For prayer is a mastery, a wrestling; and wrestle we must while we live. By this parable the Lord Jesus, who best knows how matters go on in the court of heaven, instructs all his people how to hold on and hold out, until the needed mercy is obtained. "In due time we shall reap if we faint not." (Gal. vi. 9.) The Lord's people are a praying people. Grace no sooner entered Paul's heart than he prayed. But perseverance and holy importunity in prayer are the great points which the Lord Jesus so graciously taught in this parable, and to which I now earnestly call your attention.

First, God stands in the dear relationship of a *Father* to us in Christ; for it is written, "I am a Father to Israel" (Jer. xxxi. 9), "And ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. vi. 18.) Secondly, God hath bound himself

by promise to be a Father *hearing prayer*; for he hath said, he "will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry." (Isa. xxx. 19.) "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." (Isa. xli. 17.) "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth." (Ps. cxlv. 18.) Thirdly, God is a Father *calling for prayer*. Therefore he saith, "Call unto me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not." (Jer. xxxiii. 3.) And, "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." (Ps. l. 15.) And such is Jehovah's condescension that he even calls upon his people in language the most moving, saying unto them, "O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? Testify against me!" Nay, such are the exceeding riches of his grace that he hath undertaken to remove every impediment out of the way, and will himself cause us to draw near, and we shall approach unto him. (Jer. xxx. 21.) Fourthly, God is also a Father *loving prayer*. Hence he addresseth his people individually, saying, "The companions hearken to thy voice; cause me to hear it." (Song viii. 13.) Yea, although their condition may be dark, and their circumstances so poor that they may live even in cellars, or under the steps or stairs, yet he calls upon them even there, saying, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." (Song ii. 14.) Indeed, to meet the most trying case of darkness and distress, for it may be possible a poor soul may be so overwhelmed as to be incapable to do more than to think upon the Lord, and that with fear; yet to such he saith, that "a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." (Mal. iii. 16.) Fifthly, God as a Father, is able to *exceed* all our prayers, needs, and thoughts, for he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. (Eph. iii. 20.) God, having thus bound himself by so many precious promises, now calls upon us by his grace to put him to the test, that in very faithfulness he may answer us; for all his promises are full and free, he being "rich unto all that call upon him," and the Word runs, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." And by way of exciting our serious attention to the advantages and privileges which are contained in this grace of prayer, he adds, "For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened."

Now, all these precious promises are made to Christ, founded on Christ, sealed in Christ's blood, and confirmed by an oath, that "we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Moreover, God calls us to beg, and that without wavering; nay, with all bold-

ness, with confidence of boldness, and fulness of assurance. Thus God arms us with parables, promises, precepts, and all arguments of comfort. In the Word of God we have a cloud of petitioners, who have been enabled by the Holy Ghost to take hold of God, and who proved him indeed to be faithful and true, the prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God.

I shall begin with Moses. If any man had reason to be discouraged, Moses certainly had been the man. The children of Israel had most awfully sinned against the Lord in the matter of the golden calf; and God seems to take Moses off from his intercession: "Let me alone," saith he; and then he seems to remove every objection, by informing Moses that he would make of him, instead of them, a great people. The Lord suspends his answer to Moses's entreaty day after day. Yet Moses, although commanded, does not go down from the mountain but pleads on, puts the Lord in remembrance of the glory of his great Name; and success crowned his importunity. (Ex. xxxii. 14.) Brethren, the Lord help us to follow his example, that we may put the Lord in remembrance of his great Name, and that "his glory is great in our salvation." (Ps. xxi. 5.) What a plea will this be; and what encouragement there is in it! For, as the Lord's glory and the salvation of his people are inseparable, so their salvation cannot by any possibility fail.

To him, I add Jacob our father; in whom, the Holy Ghost saith, God "spake with us." (Hos. xii. 2-4.) Jacob had many things to discourage him. God seemed to frown upon him in Esau's expedition against him. Jacob had separated his family into bands, and sent them forward; so that he was left alone. And then "there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." God seems as if he will be gone; but Jacob will not let him go. He seems to take his leave; but Jacob will not part so. He seems angry, and willing to shake him off; but Jacob keeps his hold. Nay, he seems to crush him, to maim him, to begin Esau's quarrel against him; but whilst breath held, Jacob held. Jacob is at a point; a blessing he came for, and a blessing he will have. "I will not let thee go," saith he, "unless thou bless me." His limbs, his life may go; but there is no going from Christ without a blessing. This is the man! Now what is his speed? The Lord blesses him, and honours him to all generations. "What is thy name?" saith he. As much as to say, "I never met with thy like; titles of honour are not worthy of thee. Thou shalt not be called Jacob, a shepherd with men; but Israel, a prince with God! Nay, not Jacob, a wrestler with man; but Israel, a prevailer with God."

To these men, I add one woman. (Matt. xv.) Nothing can discourage her; no, not her sex, not her nation, not her misery, not her delays; but she gathers strength by her wounds, and comfort out of discouragements. Doth Christ give no answer? "Good," thinks she, "there is no denial yet." Doth he give her a discouraging answer, and call her a dog? "All the better;

dogs in some way belong to the family, some right they have to a few crumbs and scraps;" and something she makes of it. You hear the conclusion, "O woman! great is thy faith. Be it unto thee even as thou wilt! I never met with her equal,—have it she will, and have it she shall this very hour, and that fully, even as she will;" for I have put it into her heart.

Again. Courage in prayer draws on importunity; both when we carry it with man, and much more with God. Mark the widow in the text. She stood in no relation to the judge; had no promise from him, and as little hope; yet she screws him up, and makes him weary of denials. What a woman! Consider, I beseech you, how much is won by the Spirit's holding up our spirits in prayer. Are we confident? Then consider, that prayer is the spiritual strength of the new creature, for it engages God's strength; and confidence in God is the strength of our prayer. That made Jacob, Israel; other ways and things might make him Jacob; but prayer denominates him Israel. Brethren, having shown you God's warrant and patent for prayer, and examples in proof of his faithfulness—tell me, have not his people better warrant to beg of God than beggars have of us? They are strangers; they have no promise from us, and no invitation. Nay, there is a law against their asking alms, yet they cease not to crave a little assistance.

But this I must press further, for we receive discouragements from a thousand doubts within, and from the many difficulties without us. Even friends sometimes give us up, and Satan will suggest that we are hypocrites, our applications unwelcome, our prayers abominable, and our persons so sinful that the pure eyes of the most holy God cannot but loathe us. Sometimes the Lord himself, to try our faith, will seem altogether against us—Laban behind, and Esau advancing against us; but "although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither fruit in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and no herd in the stalls; yet we are to rejoice in the Lord, and to joy in the God of our salvation." (Hab. iii. 17, 18.) Indeed, if we were only to look for help from the creature, the end would be uncertain; but when by prayer we are enabled to engage the God of heaven, whose greatness is unsearchable, then the victory cannot be doubtful; our triumph is sure. For do but think what it is to deal with God in the way of prayer. We need not travel far; every place is a sanctuary. If under the influence of the Spirit, we cannot come too often,—in the day or in the night,—in prosperity or adversity,—when friends fail us, or foes annoy us,—when faith is strong, or when it is weak,—just as we are, in joy, or in sorrow. So long as we speak *his language*, he will hear us, yea, will help us out; will understand our broken words and sentences, and read our wants and distress from our sighs and our tears; nay, even from our afflictions themselves. Should not this encourage us? If they were blessed that stood before

Solomon continually, what is *our* condition, think you, that have God's ear ever open to our cry, God's eye upon us continually for good, God's presence to go with us where we go, and his heart and his strength perpetually engaged in our behalf?

Remember, the *marks* of God's *own* are asking, seeking, knocking, mourning, meekness, love to the brethren, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, being merciful, peace-makers; and persecuted, reviled, and evil spoken of for righteousness' sake. Now examine yourselves. Have you of these marks? Then your prayers are not the fruit of gift, but of grace. They are in agreement with God's promises; his glory is the object and end of your petition; and you present them for acceptance solely in the hand of the Mediator, the Lord Christ—for the Lord will be served only with his own. Look how it was in the law. All must be God's *own*; the priest *his*, the sacrifice *his*, the altar *his*, the place *his*, all *his* to the very knife and meanest tools. So it is now. The person praying must be his *own*, the prayer *his*, the Mediator *his*, all *his*. Hence, when you press him with his own words, he cannot deny himself. For God, in all his perfections, is a God *in covenant*. Consider this. For all in God makes for us, because that covenant is made with *Christ*; and, by virtue of that covenant, *Christ* and *we* are *one*. God is a Father; and what will not the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ do for so many children?

Again, how full and free, and how suited to our exigencies and needs are God's promises! They are made to the lowest degree of grace, even to grace mingled with many wants and corruptions, to bruised reeds, to smoking flax, whose faith can extend no further than, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."

Again. God gives *more* than is asked, never *less*. He hath given us his Son to present our petitions, and his Spirit to teach us how and what to ask for. He gives us daily mercies, and, so long as we are in the receipt of one, it is a proof of his faithfulness. In addition to the encouragement we derive from the parable in the text, the Lord, to strengthen our faith, tells us what prayer can do with a neighbour, and what with a father: the one is raised out of bed by entreaties; and the other will give good gifts to his children. By which we are to understand that when we look up to God in prayer, we may press him with his promise, with his seal, and with his oath, until he saith, "Be it unto thee, even as thou wilt." Remember that "the Lord is very pitiful;" that he is a Father; and may not a king's son go as freely to his father as a poor child may to his, at any time of the day, or night? A father, we know, will attend to the broken speeches of his child, however imperfect; for the father feels what the child suffers. And whither should children go in the hour of their distress, but to their father? Moreover, if you consider God to be a judge; remember, you have a Mediator, and he is *his Son*,—a Son who never sinned, and in whom he is ever well pleased. But, to silence unbelief, I

add, there is no temptation so strong, but faith, through the Spirit, may conquer it; no affliction so great, but faith may lessen it; no bondage so strait, but faith can untie it; no objection so hard, but faith may dissolve it; and no cloud so dark, but faith can disperse it.

Remember the story of another widow, who had but a little, and needed much. What said the prophet to her? "Borrow," saith he, "of all thyneighbours; but shut the doors upon thee." It was surely time to shut the doors of her senses, when many great vessels were to be filled from one little cruse of oil. Remember, the cruse never ceased running until there was not an empty vessel left, and that God never left off communing with Abraham, respecting the destruction of Sodom, so long as Abraham was kept praying.

Now, brethren, before I conclude, ask yourselves the question, "Shall not the Lord avenge his own?" God's title is "the avenger." (Ps. xciv. 1.) Vengeance is his prerogative as supreme, for vengeance belongeth unto him who is ready to pardon. He is a God that forgives us; but taketh vengeance of our inventions. And vengeance is his glory; for he is known by it. (Ps. ix. 16.) Moreover, God is concerned in all his people's sufferings; for their cause is his, and their enemies are his enemies. Hereupon the church calls him to her quarrels, saying, "Arise, O God, plead thine own cause." (Ps. lxxiv. 22.) In answer thereto God saith, "He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye." (Zech. ii. 8.) Agreeably thereto, the Lord calls Babylon's oppression of his people sinning against *him*. (Jer. l. 11, 13, 14.) And again, the Lord said to Saul, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou *me*?" Such, indeed, is the union between God and Christ, and Christ and his people, that their interest and happiness are but one; and to this purpose Christ prays to the Father, that they (meaning the church) "may be one, even as we are one; I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." (Jno. xvii. 22, 23.)

Our Lord not only asked the question in the text, but answered, that God "will avenge them speedily." Now, then, it is faith's turn and time. Now, let the just live by his faith. Remember how it stands betwixt mother and child. While the child only whimpers in the cradle, perhaps the mother stirs not; but should the child cry lustily, then the mother hastens, she flies and outruns herself. My drift is to beat you off from trusting in anything but the Lord; for in him alone we have encouragement enough. He is a Father,—he can help, he will help; his Word, his promise, his precept, his parable, his work, and his servants are *for us*. But what is more than all, his Son is *for us*. Nay, he is one of us; one who sits upon the throne and lives with the Father, and one who ever liveth to intercede for us. Then put your petitions into his hand. If you cannot speak, the Lord help you to weep. If you cannot weep, sigh. God will put your tears into his bottle; he will hear your sighs,—nay, your

afflictions. (Gen. xvi. 11.) Do not we give to many a beggar that saith nothing, but only holds out a hand to receive? O, think as ill as you will of yourselves; but never harbour one hard thought of God. Pray as you can pray, for he hears and understands your broken petitions.

To conclude. Christ who knows the heart of, and lives in the bosom of his Father, presents his people in their militant state, with their wants, temptations, sorrows, and afflictions, in his own Person complete before the throne, and will most assuredly put to silence and confusion all their enemies. For the promise runs—"No weapon that is formed against thee [either on earth or in hell] shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." (Isa. liv. 17.)

Gracious Lord, accompany thine own Word with thy almighty blessing. Come forth and bless us with thy pardoning love, thy renewing, saving, and sanctifying grace. Pour out upon each of us the spirit of grace and supplication, that we may hold sweet communion with thee continually by faith and prayer; and whilst we lie low in the dust before thee, under a spiritual sense of our unworthiness, do thou put to silence all our enemies, and bless our souls with such precious apprehensions of thyself, and of the atonement thou hast made for sin, as shall fill us with all joy and peace. Lord, do as thou hast said. Turn not away from us to do us good; and put thy fear in our heart, that we shall not depart from thee. Keep us living humbly and confidently upon thee by faith, for all we want for our bodies or our souls; and so inflame our affections with thy unchangeable love that we may be daily waiting the fulfilment of thy own most gracious promise—the coming of thee, our dear Lord, to take us to thyself, that where thou art we may be also; for thou, Lord, art our light, our God, our glory; and to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the One ever-blessed Jehovah, be all glory, honour, blessing, and praise ascribed, through Christ Jesus. Amen and amen.

SINCE then I not only have believed what I have spoken; but, as both my own heart, and God who is greater than my heart, are witnesses that I have engaged in this labour for the truth under the influence of the most sacred regard and reverence for the majesty, purity, holiness, justice, grace, and mercy of God; from a detestation of that abominable thing which his soul hateth; and with a heart inflamed with zeal for the honour and glory of our dearest Saviour, Jesus Christ, who is fairer than the sons of men, and altogether lovely; whom with my whole soul and all that is within me I worship, love, and adore; whose glorious coming I wish and long for ("Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly"); for whose sake I count all things but as "loss" and "dung;"—since, I say, I have engaged in this labour from these motives alone, I am under no anxiety or doubt but that it will meet with a favourable reception from impartial judges,—from those acquainted with the terrors of the Lord, the curse of the law, the virtue of the cross, the power of the gospel, and the riches of the glory of divine grace.—Owen.

A VESSEL OF MERCY ;

OR,

THE EARLY EXPERIENCE AND LIFE OF WILLIAM ASKER,
A MEMBER AT GOWER STREET.*(Concluded from p. 207.)*

AT this place I remained as groom and gardener till the following September. Circumstances not worth naming caused me to leave, and return to Hatfield once more. During all this time I had heard many different preachers, but with an uncircumcised ear, being extremely ignorant as to the letter of truth. If I did but hear anything about Jesus Christ, a name I loved dearly, I felt satisfied; how he was preached I could not say much about. "The simple believeth every word;" so it was with me. I was taken captive by the poor blind Wesleyans for about the space of a year and a half; but they could not make much of me, nor I of them. The reason I was taken with them was because I had at that time more zeal than knowledge. I dare say they thought me a very poor disciple, by the exhortations I received from them every week at their class meetings that I was to pray and read more; for when my class-leader used to ask me, "Well, brother Asker, what good thing have you done for the Lord during the past week?" I was always behind with my task, and my answer was, "Nothing." I could not see anything I had done worth mentioning; but I assure you I heard, on the right and left, those who had plenty of good deeds to prate about. One thing I recollect they frequently warned me of, and that was to beware of Antinomians. They might as well have spoken Arabic or French to me; I should have understood it quite as well. I was very much puzzled to know what these people called Antinomians were. I rather think they were afraid I was a little tainted with it myself, according to their idea of it.

I had been at Hatfield about twelve months when I heard of some people at Welwyn, a place over five miles from Hatfield; and that the minister held very strange doctrines, different from everybody else; one of which was called election; and I was told that the people had been in the same state of mind as I had. This made me anxious to go, for I did not know any one else had been like me. So I went, and Mr. Oxenham, formerly a friend of Mr. Huntington's, preached; and the dear old man took for his text these words: "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" (Jno. xx. 15.) This was a time not to be forgotten by me. All the path I had trodden from the Saturday night when I thought the end of the world was come, and my standing before the Lord in that guilty state, my happy deliverance therefrom, and all I had felt and feared in that short space of my experience, were so clearly brought forth that the dear man appeared to me to know it as though he had lived with me, and had been an eye and ear witness to all that had happened. He brought it all out much better than I could

have told him ; and from that day to this, my teachers have not been "hid in a corner." From that time I consider my ear was circumcised to hear the truth. After this special hearing I proved that the ear trieth words as the mouth tastes its meat. (Job xii. 11.)

This change gained me enemies where I little expected them, and among some whom I had looked upon as my bosom friends. One of them soon after called me a blasphemer to my face ; but I was enabled to leave them, and cast in my lot with those poor despised few at Welwyn, where I continued to hear till March, 1835. I had to prove many changes in my feelings, both good and evil. The latter I had not so much expected, and had looked for better days ; but to my grief, such enemies without and evils within made me "stagger like a drunken man," and brought me to my "wit's end." But one thing was in my favour. I was much helped on Lord's days in hearing ; so that notwithstanding my trials and conflicts all the week, I was often made joyful in the "house of prayer." O how I did in those days hail the Sabbath with a hearty welcome, and thanked God and took courage.

During the time I was at Brompton Square, a correspondence had been formed between me and a God-fearing woman, a member of a Strict Baptist church in London. After four years' acquaintance, which was mostly by letters, only seeing each other twice a year, our minds were made up to a marriage union when it should please the Lord to bless us with the means. Both of us being in poor circumstances, we could make but slow progress.

I very much wanted a better situation, but could not get one. There was a gardener's place vacant belonging to two maiden ladies at Hatfield ; but it was at the disposal of the rector of Hatfield church. I quite expected it would not be for me, as he was the same gentleman I have already named, who was so much put out by my saying that my sins were pardoned. I had an interview with him respecting the place ; and told him I should like it ; but he said, "The place will not suit you ; you would not like to go to church." I answered in the negative : "Not for ten better places than that." Here the matter was soon settled. He was made honest enough to say he believed I was an honest, upright, young man and competent for the place ; but that he did not like my religion, for my sentiments and his very much differed. So I returned home as I went, with this exception—the rector could find no fault in me except in my religion, which was a little consolation to me. When my intended wife knew of the circumstance she was very glad ; for she could not see her way clear to come to Hatfield for two or three reasons, chiefly because she would be deprived of church-fellowship ; and she was fully assured in her mind that if I came to London I should get employment. And by what she stated to me in a letter I found she had good cause for so saying. She had laid the matter before the Lord, and this promise had been sweetly

applied to her mind: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." "And," she added, "to my mind, 'all other things' are temporal things." In this she was so confirmed that she felt she was doing right in refusing to come to Hatfield. I was then led to consider her weak body, and that she would have nearly six miles on a Lord's day to go to hear; besides the church not being Baptist, she would be deprived of church-fellowship. I was not a member myself, although I loved the people dearly; so that I did not feel that tie she had expressed to me respecting the Baptist cause in London.

In a short time I felt an inclination to comply with her request, and returned once more to London; but I must acknowledge it was more upon the strength of her faith than my own. To my astonishment I had work very soon with a gardener in Berkeley Square and Leicester Square, and several little gardens; and work was promised me till October. When that month drew near, and nothing else appeared for me, fears began to arise in my mind lest the approaching winter should be a bad one, and the little money I had saved would all go. I wanted the Lord to open another door before that door was shut. What forbearance with my bad manners did he show towards me. I did not know what was in reserve. The poor man who had employed me through the summer was laid by with a bad leg, and instead of discharging me at the time appointed, was obliged to keep me on to do his work. An application was now made to him by a noble earl in Berkeley Square, to manage a small conservatory in which the earl had a few hothouse plants; but he refused to undertake it, and asked me if I would do it, as he thought with this and his little work I should be bettered. I agreed to his proposition, and my winter's work was much better than the summer's. I felt the Lord's kind hand in it, and so did my intended wife. Then she would remind me of the promise she had had.

But there was another trial for faith before many weeks were over. This noble peer of the realm would sometimes have his workmen very busy on Lord's days, pulling down what they had built up in the week, if it did not suit his taste. The hothouse was out of sight of the public eye, at the back of the house. One Lord's day it happened that I was wanted for something; but no one knew where to find me. On the Monday the porter told me that his lordship had wanted me yesterday, and no one knew where I lodged. So I told the porter I would give him my address, and if his lordship wanted me next Lord's day I would come, but that I got my living in six days. It so occurred that I was wanted the next Lord's day; and it was to fill in a large hole I had dug on the Saturday. On Lord's day morning, while at chapel, his lordship sent for me. On hearing this when I went home, I hastened to get my dinner and go, though not very comfortable, fully expecting the result would prove the loss of my work. I went into the conservatory, and the porter acquainted his lordship

that I was come. I begged hard of the dear Lord to stand by me, and bring me honourably through this trial. I trembled in my feelings till his lordship made his appearance; but as soon as he came to me my fears all fled in a moment, and I felt as bold as a lion, and said to him, "I understand your lordship wanted to see me." He said, "Yes, William," and pointing his stick to a hole I had dug on the Saturday, said, "I want you to fill in that hole." I answered with firmness of mind and without trembling, "What your lordship hath for me to do on the Sabbath that is requisite to be done, I will do with all my heart; but to fill in that hole I'll not do for you or any man." Poor man! he turned himself round as if he were thunderstruck, and did not utter a word, but walked back into the house. I picked up my hat, and returned to my intended wife, who was anxiously waiting to know the result. I went back with peace in my conscience, and blessed God that he had enabled me to deal faithfully with so great a man as the noble earl, not regarding the loss I had anticipated. In making known the result to my intended, she immediately said, "You have done right, let what will be the consequence." I went on the Monday morning, and brought away my tools, quite expecting his lordship had done with me; but I was sent for on the Wednesday to see him, and went, wondering what he wanted. He said, "William, I did not mean you to leave me, though we did differ about the wages," which we had previously done; and not a word was said about filling in the hole. "But," he added, "I have kept you in suspense some time; here is a small present for you;" and he put two sovereigns into my hand. I thanked him kindly, and came away with love and wonder in my heart to the God of all my mercies. I made my way to my future wife, and gave her my two sovereigns, saying, "There, my dear, there is the produce of my first sermon." I knew she had made up her mind to be a sharer both of my sorrows and joys. This door was kept open for me till the spring, by which time I had full employment with the gardener at Berkeley Square; and in the following July I married.

For brevity's sake I now pass over about five years of our married life, during which time we were the subjects of changes within and without. A cutting trial came at my dear wife's confinement with the second child, after having lost our first. She had hard labour, which threatened the life of both mother and child. Two doctors were with her. When all hope was given up by them, I was admitted at the request of my wife, to take my final farewell of her in this world. After this painful occasion I withdrew from the room in anguish of mind; yet, as I knew there was life, I kept on crying. The dear Lord was graciously pleased to order it so that skill was given, and the child which had been dead six hours was brought into the world, and the life of my dear wife spared. Still great fears were entertained of her sinking through weakness, as her labour had lasted three days. All the night she was in a raging fever. I went to work the next

morning with a heavy heart, fearing I should lose her after all. But after I had been at work about an hour, I felt a cry go out of my heart with these words, "O Lord, do spare her life, do spare her life." Immediately what the disciples said to Jesus concerning Lazarus came to my mind: "Lord, if he sleep he shall do well" (Jno. xi. 12); and my heart responded to it, and I said, "O Lord, if she sleep she will do well." All my anxious fears and burden of mind fled, and for the time being I felt, "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." I went direct to one of the workmen, who I believed knew the truth, and told him the circumstance; and I said, "Friend Hall, I do believe the Lord hath done something for my wife." I was very anxious for the time to come for me to go home to breakfast, to know what had passed. As soon as I got home I went to the bedside, and asked, "Well, my dear, how are you now?" She looked at me with a smile, saying, "I am better. I have had such a comfortable sleep." I burst into tears, and my heart was too full of love and gratitude to relate the circumstance for a while; but when I did, the time corresponded to the minute when the raging fever suddenly left her and she fell into a sleep for twenty minutes; and from that time she recovered. This is one of our "high heaps" which at certain seasons we are enabled to look at. In this sharp conflict I bought this truth: "And this is the confidence we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will he heareth us; and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." (1 Jno. v. 14, 15.)

Whatever part of the truth of God that I have learned or bought through the fire, I hold dear to me; but what is learned in theory is of little value. Amen.

W. ASKER.

"CHRIST IS ALL AND IN ALL."

COL. III. 11.

Those who are in any measure acquainted with the plague of their own hearts know that much "wood, hay, and stubble" get built upon the "one Foundation;" much "dross and tin" mingle with the pure gold. Hence, he who desires to walk humbly with God will be often examining himself to see what part of his profession is real and spiritual, and what carnal and fleshly. The child of God does not want to be deceived in this matter. He desires to come to the light, and to bring his religion to the test of the Word. The prayer of his heart at times is, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Wanting above all things to be right, he is on that account willing to be tried, tested, and proved.

The portion of Scripture at the commencement of this paper offers one of the most searching tests in the whole of the sacred Records. The meaning is that to the "new creature" in a saint's heart *Christ is everything*. Whatever religion a man may have

that is not *from* him, *in* him, and *of* him will not stand in the light of this Scripture. Let it be applied to the graces of the Spirit—to faith, for instance. Faith signifies confidence and trust. Now, just so far as we have any confidence and trust in ourselves, in our own wisdom, strength, and ability, just so far is Christ not *everything* in respect of faith. Indeed, all the fancied faith, hope, and love that we may think we possess, of which Christ is not the author, substance, and end, are not of the right sort.

Much alloy being often mixed with the precious ore, it is very necessary to remember that that part of our religion (and that only) is genuine gold in which Christ is everything. We inquire, 1. To whom is Christ “all and in all?” 2. How Christ is “all.” 3. In what respects is he “in all.”

1. To whom is Christ “all and in all?” The answer to this question is to be found in the first verse of the chapter, where the apostle addresses himself to those who have fellowship with Christ in his resurrection: “If ye then be risen with Christ,” &c. Resurrection implies a previous death and a newness of life. When Jesus rose from the dead he entered into his glorious resurrection-life. His life on earth had previously been a life of humiliation and suffering; the rising of his body from the dead was the commencement of his exaltation and glorification. He was never more to die, because he had broken the power of death, and burst the bonds asunder; never more to suffer, because he had finally and for ever put away sin (not his own) which had been the cause of his bitter anguish and inconceivable sufferings. The believer has fellowship with Christ in his resurrection; and it is manifested in the following particulars.

A child of God in his natural state is “dead in trespasses and sins;” but, having been quickened into newness of life by the effectual and gracious operation of the Holy Spirit, he is delivered from that death. Paul refers to this in ver. 13 of the preceding chapter: “And you, being dead in your sins . . . hath he quickened together with him.” This, let us note in passing, is a benefit flowing immediately from the death of Christ; for he died that we might live.

Now, as Jesus died *for* sin, so the children of God experimentally die to sin. 1. To all hope of salvation by the deeds of the law; while mere unregenerate religionists hope for salvation because of their prayers, alms-givings, or doings in some form. All these the Spirit-taught soul learns are, apart from Christ, nothing more than sins in the sight of a Holy God. 2. Such a one, further, dies to the enjoyment of sin. He may have shared in the amusements, frivolities, and even in the iniquities of worldlings with as much zest and delight as any; but grace accompanying the revelation of the folly, guilt, and consequences of these things, effectually separates the soul from them. Jesus suffered under the out-pourings of the wrath of God against sin; so the child is made to realize something of God’s immutable hatred thereto,

and with the revelation of it to die to the sin ; and this dying is a certain evidence of life. "As dying, and behold, we live." But sin still lives in him.

Not only does the quickened soul thus die to sin, but rises therefrom into a newness of life, which becomes manifested in a seeking of "those things which are above." After his resurrection Jesus ascended into heaven ; so after a soul has been raised from spiritual death, his new heart, with its thoughts, affections, desires, and hopes, is made to ascend upward to "where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." He longs after spiritual blessings, such as holiness, pardon, faith, peace, love, divine guidance, &c. It is an inestimable blessing to be made alive unto God ; and those who possess life eternal desire an increase thereof, that they may not only have life, but "may have it more abundantly." How earnestly the apostle desired this for the Colossians. Hence, in the 2nd verse, he exhorts them : "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." The affections are not to be set "on things above" *as well as* on "things on the earth." Such a rendering would suit most professors admirably. But it is not so. We cannot serve God and mammon. Our affections can only be set on heavenly things as they are weaned (in measure) from earthly things. Indeed, the apostle plainly says, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth (ver. 5) ;" and, "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. viii. 13.) Here we learn the only efficient means of mortification, even the Spirit of God. The quickening operations of the Spirit in the heart lay the foundation of a sound experience and ever lead it to a sound practice. The soul truly taught its utter helplessness, poverty, and ruin will rejoice in the free, sovereign, matchless power of God applied to his heart ; and when the same Spirit, who thus brings a man to value the grace of God, reveals, in due time, a hope of interest and participation therein, an earnest desire will be felt to honour and glorify God by separation from the world, a humble walk, and a shunning those things which are evil and contrary to the will of God. This inward desire will be manifested in the outward walk. Where a sinner is made willing to follow Jesus, and is seeking for his mercy and feeling after him ; where there is a sigh of desire, "O that I knew where I might find him !" a look of longing for pardon and grace ; a cry of distress on account of sin, and an anxious inquiry as to the state of the soul ; where these things exist, the Lord has begun a work which he will surely perfect ; and to the seeking, feeling, sighing, crying, and inquiring heart after a precious Christ it is that "Christ is all and in all."

We now proceed to inquire, 2. How Christ is "all." It is Christ, the Anointed One, who is thus everything to those desires of the quickened soul. He was anointed for a certain end and purpose, explained in Isa. lxi. 1-3, and the Spirit as the anointing oil is described, Isa. xi. 2. These two portions prove that the

Christ of God was anointed for the special and peculiar reason that he might be "all" to his dear people. If with these Scriptures we compare 1 Cor. i. 30, we shall find the suitability of Jesus wonderfully set forth, and what he is made to the "weak things," "foolish things," "base things," and "things which are not" anything in themselves. Unto these Christ is made "wisdom, and righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." He is made so to them unchangeably in God's account, as well as by the powerful operations of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. There was a time when he was not their Wisdom in their own account. Man by nature thinks he is wise. As it is written, "Vain man would be (will have that he is) wise, though he be born like a wild ass's colt." As the incorrigible folly bound up in the heart is revealed, there will be a seeking for that wisdom which is "first pure, then peaceable," &c.; but there must be an emptying of our own fancied attainments; and when we have lost *all*, and become fools in our own eyes, then we commence to become "wise unto salvation." Painful and humiliating is the process of being emptied; but utterly emptied all God's children must be that Christ may be made all their wisdom.

Further, Christ is also made all their "righteousness." They have absolutely none except that which is in HIM, from HIM, and by HIM. If Paul counted all his righteousness but as "filthy rags," when, touching the law, he was "blameless," how very filthy must our good deeds appear! It is generally long, however, before proud man, full of self-sufficiency and self-righteousness, is brought to see his real state before God. It is so natural to think that some merit attaches to the practice of virtue, attendance at public worship, the exercise of private prayer, reading the Word, &c. Yet the Pharisee in the temple had all these things, and was not justified by them; whilst the publican, having nothing of the sort to bring before God, "went down to his house justified rather than the other." He had approached the mercy-seat in the right way, viz., on the ground of his sinnership. He cried for mercy because he was *so bad*. The Pharisee claimed God's favour because he was *so good*." Paul was just such a one as the latter, till God met with him, and then he was brought down to the level of the publican, as the "chief of sinners." It is thus we must be "stripped of all our fancied meetness" to approach a great and holy God, and be despoiled of our creature holiness, that Christ may be made all righteousness to us. No longer then shall we boast of the duties we have done; our boast will be in the cross of Christ; that cross where the spotless robe was perfected, arrayed in which Manasseh, David, Paul, and the Magdalene stand complete and accepted before the throne of God. The righteousness of Christ (and it alone) is sufficient to cover sins of deepest dye, and to cleanse the blackest soul. Those who know most of the plague of their hearts, of their inherent vileness, and of their inward depravity, will most prize the glorious, perfect, and infinitely precious righteousness

of Christ. How they long for their interest therein to be revealed by the Holy Spirit!

Moreover, Christ is all their sanctification, and all their redemption. He is revealed as his people's strength, life, light, peace, the price of their ransom, &c., by their being experimentally led to see their destitution of these things by nature, to seek for them in Christ (after perhaps they have long vainly sought elsewhere), and at length to find him to be *all* they need for time and eternity. Thus, by the living, daily revelations and leadings of the Spirit, a sinner is taught that "*Christ is all.*"

3. In what respects Christ is "in all." He is in all the saints, formed in them "the hope of glory." He is enthroned as king in the humble hearts which are the dwelling-place of his grace. The time past of their lives has sufficed to discover the vanity of the worship of self, sin, and the world; they have been brought to humble themselves under the sway of the sceptre of his sovereignty and to bow low before the throne. Christ is also in the heart of his own as their ever-present Friend, supporting and upholding their souls in life. By his Spirit he is in them inditing all real prayer. Again, Christ is in all the dispensations of his providence. All the various changes that the saints experience are for the lifting of Jesus on high. Troubles and difficulties attend them which baffle all their skill, strength, and wisdom. Ere long Jesus appears and probably in an unlooked-for manner and at an unexpected time removes the trouble, makes crooked things straight, and rough places plain in a moment. Then how conspicuous and glorious do his power and wisdom appear in all his dealings with them. In a very special way Jesus is also in all the afflictions of his people. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them." The Lord proves his sympathy by being present with them when they pass through the fire, the rivers, and the waters. How blessed is the lot of those who possess the compassion and the companionship of Jesus! He was in the fiery furnace with the three worthies, delivering them from the fury of the fire. He was with Daniel in the lion's den, saving him from destruction. The Lord never suffers his children to fall into any affliction but what he is present with them in it to sanctify, and in due time to deliver out of it.

Christ is the only treasury where all blessings are stored, and the only channel through which they flow to his poor, helpless-looking, longing ones below, to whom "*Christ is all and in all.*"

Sleaford.

E. C.

SCARLET is such a deep dye that all the art under heaven cannot alter it; yet the Lord can make of a scarlet sinner a milk-white saint.—*Watson.*

No greater mischief can happen to a Christian people than to have God's Word taken from them, or falsified, so that they no longer have it pure and clear. God grant we and our descendants be not witnesses of such a calamity.—*Luther.*

THE OLD LAMP LIT UP AFRESH.

No. VI.

My dear Friend,—Vain are all our works in the matter of religion ; this I hope I have been taught, and am thankful for it. When I have tried any in my own strength, I have found it perfect weakness. Man may tell us to believe, and that it is our duty. Why, that is just what we want to do ; and if the Lord is pleased to give us faith, we want no man then to tell us to believe ; for we can then believe in Jesus as our Friend and Saviour from all our sins and the justice of God, through his death. This we find to be a sure foundation ; it never deceived a poor sinner yet, and it never will. The faith of God's elect stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God ; and I am glad it is so that Jesus might have all the glory. "For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." O how sweet it is when we can say from our heart, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength." Yes, when Jesus, our Righteousness, appears, then we can bless the Lord ; yea, all within us can bless his holy Name.

A dead religion will not do for a poor sinner that knows the plague of his own heart. Men may tell us there is the Word of God to follow, and that we ought to lay hold of it ; but it fits us much better when the Word lays hold of us. It is sweet work when the Lord breaks in and sets our souls at liberty, so that we can feelingly love him, his people, and his precious doctrines ; and although we are sitting in darkness and sorrow for the greater part of our lives, yet, when the truth drops as the rain in our souls, how it revives us, enabling us to "run and not be weary," to "walk and not faint ;" while the power of the Holy Ghost leads us into a little of the everlasting love and mercy of the Father, Son, and Spirit.

O, what a blessed and unspeakable favour that you and I have an interest in electing grace and redeeming love ; and are regenerated, and have a good hope of the same sealed on our hearts by the Spirit. Yea, what a mercy it is to be taught by the same Spirit to feel the pain and guilt of sin ; to be made to confess it freely and honestly in secret before the Lord ; to mourn over it, and to cry for pardon and peace in the conscience ; to long after God ; to hunger and thirst after righteousness ; to be poor in spirit ; to be meek and lowly in heart ; to feel one's helplessness, and to be the true subject of God's help. These are the "blessed" indeed in God's sight ; for such an experience is the fruit of the Spirit, and is his work in the soul. Such a soul is passed from death unto life, and has an interest in the blessed Jesus and an inheritance in the kingdom of God ; for the Lord's own lips have pronounced all such "blessed." May God, of his mercy, grant that we may enjoy his heart-cheering presence, and his soul-supporting Word, to the overcoming of sin, the exalting of Christ, and the glorifying of God and his truth.

am so glad, yes, it does gladden my heart to see from your last letter that you gather strength and faith; you believe you are in the footsteps of the flock. Now, dear friend, it is not the quantity of our faith; by no means; but the quality which is all important. If we have the faith of God's elect, though it be only as a grain of mustard seed, it will be accepted of God. I think you feel because your faith is not so strong as you would wish that you have no faith at all, or that your faith is not the right faith. This is the way God takes to try our faith; for it is said faith must be tried. If you had none, you would not be in any trouble about it. Depend upon it, when God has tried your faith, it shall come forth as gold; and our Jesus has promised that it shall never finally fail. Yes, the weak is as dear to him as the strong. O yes, faith shall be triumphant; and I do verily believe we shall meet where faith shall be swallowed up by sight, and where God shall wipe the tears from our faces, and we shall join the heavenly chorus singing, as Dr. Watts has it,

“ ‘Worthy the Lamb that died,’ they cry,
 ‘To be exalted thus!’
 ‘Worthy the Lamb,’ *our* lips reply,
 ‘For he was slain for *us*.’”

Yes,

“Then shall we sing more sweet, more loud,
 And grace shall be the song.”

Heaven is only to be entered “through much tribulation,” some in mind, some in body, and some in circumstances; for it is declared that all that come must and shall come in this way. O how many ups and downs we have to teach us where our great strength lieth, and to wean us from the world and from ourselves, and to cause us to flee for help to Jesus, where help is only to be found. O, what a plague is in-dwelling sin! I remember some years ago I felt as if I had all the abominations possible within me. I could not believe I could be a child of God and feel as I did; and yet I would not have had it so, if I could have helped it. I did struggle hard to overcome them; but there they were. I remember the spot, and often think of it, when these words dropped sweetly into my soul, “The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” O, I felt in a moment it was the old man of sin that was striving with the new man of grace, but that grace was the conqueror; and I could then for a time say, “Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” These are some of the experiences of the Lord's people. True religion is essentially experimental in its nature, find it where you may, whether in the Scriptures, or in the records of God's children. Trace the histories of Abraham, Moses, Job. Read the prophets, the psalms, the epistles, the discourses of Jesus; true Christianity is nothing less than the life of Jesus in the soul of a believer. Experience may and does vary in the children of God; but there is no life in the soul without it. Dry doctrine only is nothing but a dead letter; for what is the

Bible in the letter of it without the power, more than another book, unless we have the experience of it in our souls?

I had a good day on Sunday in hearing Mr. G., as I had been brought into the very place he was led to describe. His text was Heb. iv. 14, 15, 16. He spoke from it twice, which is unusual with him. As I was going up to the chapel these words of Berridge were on my mind :

“ Exceeding precious is my Lord;
His love divinely free;
And sure his Name doth help afford
For sickly souls like me.”

How I did enjoy the first line. I stood on the bridge, and had some loving communications with my Lord. Yea, “exceeding precious is my Lord.” I was alone, and I was glad it was so; for I like to be alone at these times. How Mr. G. preached Jesus in his fulness; yes, into my very soul! It was just 12 months ago that I heard him so well. How I love the man for his work’s sake. I was afraid you were ill as you were not there; but I learned from Miss C. you had not come home. I will finish my letter by giving your own words; for they are sweet: “O when we come to rest in Jesus, will it not be *well?*”

Now, dear friend, adieu; and may the God of all comfort be with us; and when we come to pass the flowing of Jordan, may our Jesus divide the waters, and take us safely over to the habitation he has provided for us.

Penshurst, May 7th, 1863.

HENRY CONSTABLE.

REPLY.

My kind Christian Friend,—I feel impelled to write to you again. I must thank you for your last, though it may be in a feeble way that I express myself. I was feeling somewhat depressed that morning, and on reading it, gratitude sprang up in my heart to the writer for his kindness, and thankfulness to his dear and loving Master for having put it into his heart to write and giving him such sweet matter to write about. Surely, I thought, my friend might date his letters from the land of Beulah, where Bunyan’s pilgrims heard the birds singing all day; where, as they walked, they had more rejoicing than in parts more remote from the kingdom to which they were bound. I was glad you sent me word of that sweet visit on the bridge. How blessed! Do I know a little of it? Yes, I know what it is sometimes to enjoy a lonely walk when the Lord meets with me, and melts me down in contrition before him. I think no place so sweet as that. O, to lie very low at the feet of Jesus! I know, too, that “the rebellious dwell in a dry land;” for I was there a long time. I found no sweet savour there; all was dry and barren; no sweet springing after rain. I bless the Lord that he did not leave me there.

“O to grace how great a debtor!”

You tell me you think my faith is stronger. There are times

when I cannot doubt that the Lord has had mercy on me; and I should like always to live in the sweet enjoyment of that assurance. But I believe, as Mr. C. said on Sunday, it is sin that separates between the soul and the Lord's sensible, manifested favour. "If his children forsake my law . . . then will I visit their transgression with a rod," &c. Dear friend, I believe you take my letters very kindly, or I should not venture to write to you. I assure you I am thankful for yours, and hope you will continue to write when convenient and you feel the springing of the well. Surely there is some sweetness in the communion of saints, even on earth. Wishing you much and sweet access to the Lord,

I remain, Yours in Christian Bonds,
Blackham, May 14th, 1863.

S. RICHARDSON.

GETHSEMANE AND CALVARY.

O THAT it were but mine to sing!
The subject of my song should be
The conflict of my Lord and King,
On visiting Gethsemane.

Ah! Here it was he wept and pray'd,
And in his prayer remember'd me,
When all my sins on him were laid.
Can I forget Gethsemane?

I would with rev'rence softly tread
This holy ground—such 'tis to me—
Where Jesus pray'd, and wept, and bled,
O wonderful Gethsemane!

Yes, here it was the Father frown'd
Upon the Darling of his love.
Lo, darkness veils the earth around
And all the shining orbs above.

Stern justice doth her course pursue,
The vials of wrath are all unseal'd,
Each attribute demands its due,
The Scriptures too must be fulfill'd.

No marvel that this cup of gall
Should force the blood through every pore;
Nor wonder we to see him fall
Upon the ground he stains with gore.

The Saviour walk'd, and wept, and sigh'd,
Ere he the glorious victory won;
He bore the cross on which he died,
And conquer'd all his foes alone.

Down from the blissful realms above,
Behold the wond'ring angels fly
To see the streams of grace and love
Which issue now from Calvary.

Be thou, my soul, with rapture fill'd;
 My heart, be thou with love inspired.
 The voice of justice Jesus still'd
 When he upon the cross expired.

O love divine, how deep the well!
 E'er may its themes my mind engross!
 And may it be my joy to tell
 The wondrous story of the cross!

Boston, Feb. 14th, 1882.

J. BOLTON.

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

MUTUAL ANXIETIES FOR THE FUTURE.

My dear Friend,—Before I left London you asked me to write to you, if I felt disposed to do so. Well, my dear friend, I have many times felt my mind drawn out towards you since I left; because I heard you tell out some of the things you had passed through, some of your daily exercises and temptations, troubles and sorrows, darkness, doubts, and fears; some of your sinkings and risings; and heard you express a great deal of fear respecting the office you hold at Eden Street, lest you should never stand, nor yet endure; which was a means of drawing out my heart and affections towards you. My soul has been a living witness to the same things for many years past. I have feared I should not stand another day, and morning after morning have I feared that I should not stand until night, and many times have I trembled on my bed lest the next day should make manifest what I was; for I could see so many black marks against me, working in my devilish, black heart. I could see myself a Judas; for he sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver; and it seemed to me, according to my feeling, that my wretched heart would sell him for one morsel of sin, which is less than thirty pieces of silver; and in this way I feared that I should betray him, and sell my religion. But that text, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall," hath been a great support to my mind many times under the workings of these things.

Saul has been a stumbling-block unto me time after time when I have been left in the dark. I have seen the great zeal and strength that he professed to have, and the spirit of prophecy which rested upon him for a time, and how it has staggered me when faith has been at a low ebb; nay, when faith seemed to believe no more than the devils; for they "believe and tremble"; and I believed and trembled at his fiery wrath and indignation, but could not believe in his mercy towards sinful me, vile me, base me, wretched me, and hell-deserving me. And Balaam hath tried me much,—that is, the devil and my devilish unbelief have devil-dragged my poor soul because of the knowledge Balaam had of the truth of God's blessed Word, and how the Lord met him and put his Word into his mouth, and told him to go again

unto Balak; and how Balaam told Balak he could not go beyond the Word of the Lord, and the sight he had of Christ and his church. But there was one thing in Balaam's case the devil could never get over my soul with, and that was that he "loved the wages of unrighteousness." Ah, my dear friend, the Lord will ever make a way out of all the troubles, trials, temptations, and afflictions that ever you and myself and all the elect vessels of mercy are brought into. And this you and I have proved, time after time; yet the very next trouble, trial, or temptation that befalls me, down my soul sinks again in unbelief, and the old enemy sets in upon me like a lion, and tells me that God will cast me off and cast me away. And all the black crew of my wretched heart joins in with him—lust, pride, self-pity, rebellion, enmity, blasphemy, and the basest thoughts against Father, Son, and Holy Ghost that ever passed in a vile sinner's heart, such as I cannot so much as hint at; but they make my poor soul groan, sigh, and cry daily.

Dear friend, my religion seems to have become so threadbare that it seems almost dwindled away and worn out; and the paths that my soul is obliged to walk in from week to week I cannot understand; for they are so dark, rough, and dreary. And I cannot see what benefit those things can be unto my soul, or to any of the tried family of the Lord; for there seems to be no life in my prayers, reading, preaching, or writing. Therefore I feel fit for nothing but to be cut down as a "cumberer of the ground." Yet there is one text that still stands by me and sticks to me, and that is that the Lord saith, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps;" and again he says, "How can a man then understand his own way?" Truly I cannot understand my way; for my soul would never walk in those dead and dark paths that I am obliged to walk in from day to day, if it were left to my judgment. If the dear Lord did not help me in the pulpit and let his truth run through me into the hearts of some of his tried children, it seems to me that I must faint. Some time ago the Lord spoke those words home into my heart: "If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small." And my soul answered, "Lord, it is small;" for I could not see nor feel one grain of spiritual strength shut up, or left.

When a poor soul is brought into these spots, what would he do if he had no more religion than his faith can carry out? Why, he must sink according to his feelings; but he is held fast in Jesus, and by Jesus, and through Jesus. For "those that thou gavest me," saith Jesus, "I have kept."

Now may the blessed Spirit lead your soul unto Christ, the Fountain of living water, and give your poor leprous soul a good plunge into the love and blood of Immanuel, and open up his blessed righteousness in your heart. This is the desire of

Your unworthy Friend and Brother in the Covenant Bond of true Affection,

Pewsey, Wilts, 1844.—To Mr. Turner.

THOS. GODWIN.

LONGING FOR FRUITFULNESS UNDER A SENSE OF INABILITY IN SELF.

My dear Sister,—In pondering over the epistles of Peter, it has been given me to see our Lord's charge fulfilled; viz., "Feed my lambs;" "Feed my sheep." What weighty matter it contains for the church of God, yet how little regarded! I feel my own short-comings in this respect, while I feel the Lord's goodness in not permitting me to settle down in a state of lukewarmness; but now and then stirring me up to consider, and try my ways by his Word, and to rejoice in the wonderful provision he has made for sinful worms. The 2 Pet. i. from the beginning to the 12th verse has been food to my soul for many days, and I desire to have it ever with me; and that the dear children of God generally may be led to consider it more for their comfort and establishment. May the Holy Ghost direct our hearts into that great love that sent his servant with such rich messages to "them that have obtained like precious faith" with them; and grant to us heavenly skill to work out this grand sum, and then to feel what dull scholars we are, "not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but that our sufficiency is of God." When it comes to be weighed up in the balances of the sanctuary, what poor, light nothings we are. Those words of Hart's are often with me:

"Sometimes we seem to gain
Great lengths of ground by day;
But find, alas, when night comes on,
We quite mistook the way."

I often find the heaviest clouds after the brightest shinings. I find some sweet helps in the periodicals. Bless the Lord that he has still his faithful witnesses in this day of small things. Dear old Smart seems like one ripe for glory. May the Lord grant a rich outpouring of his spirit on his people generally. It is indeed a dark and cloudy day; but what a mercy to have "a good hope through grace" that all shall end well with the righteous, and to have a God to go to in every trial.

With heartfelt wishes for your spiritual and temporal prosperity,
I am, Your loving Sister,

Aug. 14th, 1880.

MARIA E. GREGORY.

To see one's nothingness, and not to despond; to feel the Lord working in us and by us, and not to boast, are hard lessons for such a dull scholar as I am. It is well the Lord can bear with me, and forgive me much.—*T. Charles.*

THE words of the Hebrew tongue have a peculiar energy. It is impossible to convey so much so briefly in any other language. To render them intelligibly, we must not attempt to give word for word, but only aim at the sense and idea. In translating Moses, I made it my effort to avoid Hebraisms; it was an arduous business. The wise ones, who affect greater knowledge than myself on the subject, take me to task for a word here and there. Did they attempt the labour I have accomplished, I would find a hundred blunders in them for my one.—*Luther.*

REVIEW.

SOME REASONS FOR ADHERING TO OUR PRESENT AUTHORIZED VERSION OF THE BIBLE.

Eight Letters by Pastor D. Allen, which have appeared in the "Witness." [Reproduced by request.] The New Version Viewed in the Light of the History of the New Testament for 1800 years.—S. E. Lees, Printer, 134, Pitt Street, Sydney.

(Concluded from p. 226.)

WE stand amazed at the apathy of some good people in saying that the new version can do no harm; for when we meet with its infidel tendencies so frequently, we feel sure it will do harm. We would ask, Can such a tendency do no harm in a book professing to set forth the pure streams of life? Can it do no harm by casting such errors into its waters as the heresy of Socinianism? Is it possible it can do no harm? We believe if these things had been openly broached when such men as Gadsby, Warburton, M'Kenzie, and men of like character were living, they would have raised their voice against the attempt to degrade the person of the Son of God, which is evident in the marginal note to Rom. ix. 5, and elsewhere. Scarcely a doctrine is left untouched in some part of the revision. There is a fretting away of the doctrine of eternal punishment; this is acknowledged by various persons among the supporters of the book.

We have not, nor have we had, the least idea of calling in question the scholarly ability of the revisionists; but we are far from allowing Greek scholars to undermine the foundation of our faith. All our articles of faith are taken from our old Bible; and we cannot submit to have them questioned by mere scholastic learning. Our objection to their version of the Bible is not on the ground of scholarship; here we award them all they can require. But it is to their judgment in divinity we object. Had they been good divines they never would have inserted such a note on Rom. ix. 5, nor the words in the margin of Jno. i. 18, "A begotten God." Neither would they have struck out "*of the sins of the flesh*" (Col. ii. 11); nor have revised other passages in a similar way. These blunders by the side of our own reading show that the divinity of the old translators was of a more reliable character. For the old Book contains no errors. Its authority is so well established that persons of every denomination profess to found their faith upon it, believing it to be free from errors; and surely it would do harm to cast aside the standard to which all can appeal. In the new version, on the contrary, errors are discovered and complained of by various parties. To exchange the one version for the other must then be an exchange of truth for error.

Our readers will no doubt have been looking for Pastor Allen's little book to be introduced. We cannot fully endorse all he says in it; but, considering its main drift as a testimony for the old Bible, we would place it before their notice.

"I think it is a *very* New Testament,—too new to be good. Having drunk of the old one, no wise man will choose the new, I presume. I am provoked with it. It offends the religion of my heart, it dishonours the deity of Christ, and it insults the Holy Trinity. To these three things I will calmly attend, by your kind permission: 1. It offends the religion of my heart by omitting this solemn demand: 'If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest,' &c. 2. It dishonours Christ by omitting the believer's solemn confession of his deity and Sonship: 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' The whole of Acts viii. 37 is entirely omitted. 3. It insults the Holy Trinity by omitting, 'For there are three that bear record in heaven,—the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.' The whole of 1 Jno. v. 7 is entirely omitted. There are other omissions also.

"Simply to state this fact will be enough with the God-fearing man without harsh words; therefore I refrain from them. Nevertheless my spirit is provoked within me by this taking away of God's Word. If the Master looked round upon the people with anger, so may I, and not sin, I hope. I do not see how the masters of this very New Testament are to escape the sentence in Rev. xxii. 19, 'And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.' I do not believe they can escape this sentence only by repentance and doing works meet for repentance, by giving us back these portions of God's Holy Word, which have never been absent in any one of the 30 versions and editions of versions in our English nation from 1385 to 1881. What a daring presumption in these modern half-taught men to tell us they know better than Wycliffe, Tindal, Coverdale, Matthews, Cranmer, Taverner, Tontal, Heath, Gaultier, Hill, Grafton, Harrison, and all the learned hosts of men who assisted them in giving to our fathers, and from them to us, the whole Word of God! Not only did all the above true scholars give us these parts I have named, but all the blessed bishops of Queen Elizabeth's reign did the same in the 'Bishop's Bible,' a copy of which I have before me now, as also of Wycliffe's. And not only did all these truly learned men give us all these portions omitted in this 'new thing' under our British sun, but all the blessed scholars of James I., in 1611, gave us the same in our present authorized version. Now, sir, I say it is a piece of daring presumption to pretend to know better than all these wise men of our nation for 500 years past,—and all this without a reason why."

We therefore hail Pastor Allen's little book as a witness against the new version, and wonder how any godly man can fail to discover the grave faults the latter contains; and we wonder the more, seeing the numberless instances wherein God has so signally blessed the Word to the salvation and comfort of, we may say, millions of souls. We can ourselves bear testimony to the light, comfort, joy, and peace conveyed to the soul through the Bible. How then can any man who has received its witness stand still and see it removed, or any attempt to remove it, without lifting up his voice against such an uncalled-for act? The very attempt harrows up one's feelings to the uttermost degree, and compels one to cleave to the Scriptures as they have been received, on account of the unction and savour that have been conveyed by the Holy Spirit to the soul through them.

Regenerate souls are truly the only persons who can form a right opinion of what is truth, because (as we have said) that truth is written in their hearts; and truth revealed in the conscience can only respond to truth revealed in the Word. The latter is only the reflection of what has been already revealed in the heart. The law was first engraven in the heart before it was revealed or engraven on stone; and the gospel must first be put into the heart; as it is written, "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them" (Heb. x. 16), before any gospel truth can be understood. At regeneration the law of faith is first put within the heart before it is by the Spirit openly proclaimed to the ear. Therefore it is necessary that the revealed Word should be in exact accordance with the previously revealed testimony of God in the conscience; because any difference whatsoever, existing, would cause a jar in the feelings of the quickened family of God. To them alone we appeal. Does not the Word of God harmonize with the desires, longings, affections, and love towards the Lord Jesus Christ that ascend Godward? Is not that Word a complete revelation of all that the soul can desire? Again, we would ask, in reference to our Bible, What is there absent when on the knees in prayer to God? What is there wanting in deep distress and affliction? Where does it fail to ascend to the highest enjoyments and delights of the most rapturous feelings of the soul? It can ascend with the child of God to the heights in communion with God; and he can descend with it in a measure to the depths of the sufferings of Christ. In this way we recognize it to be a transcript of the mind and will of God. And for these things alone we cleave to it, and reject any attempt to break that harmony that exists between the Word of God as we have received it, and the testimony engraven upon the fleshy tables of the heart.

On this ground we make our stand, without looking for the original inspired writings. They are lost. God has not entrusted to them the evidence for his Word; if he had, he would have preserved them. He has not put it there, but in the hearts of his people who are called his witnesses. And for the want of those inspired MSs. any attempt to alter the received text would only lead to an endless quibble; we should still keep getting further away from the truth by every fresh attempt. With the revised version of 1881 before us, it is clear that our old text can never be satisfactorily mended; therefore we say let it remain as it is. May God continue to preserve it to us, and overthrow any attempt to disturb the harmony there is between the written Word and the testimony of the Spirit.

I WANT to be more sensible of my guilt, both in my desponding and presumptuous frames of mind. I highly dishonour God in both. When I consider myself, in viewing all my frames, I see great reason to cry out, "Vile! Unclean!" It is well that there is perfection in Jesus, and that we are made acceptable in the Beloved.—*T. Charles.*

INQUIRIES AND ANSWERS.

I.

Dear Sir,—A friend has kindly lent me a book to read, entitled "An Antidote Against Arminianism," by Christopher Ness. I have read it very carefully, but confess that the two following extracts are so entirely beyond my comprehension that you would be doing me a real service, and perhaps others, if you would kindly explain in what sense you understand them to be scriptural:

"1. It was possible, in respect of the thing, that God might have pardoned sinners without a Christ, but impossible inasmuch as God had decreed Christ to be the ransom." (P. 49.)

"2. If there be no life but through union with Christ, then till we be engrafted into that blessed and bleeding Vine we cannot bring forth fruit unto God. And it is not any natural power or principle in us that can engraft us into Christ; for faith is the engrafting grace, and that is the gift of God (Eph. ii. 8), the grace whereby the just live (Hab. ii. 4), and whereby Christ dwells in our hearts (Eph. iii. 17); till then we are dead and have no free-will to good." (P. 12).

In the first extract the author, for anything I can see, lays down the doctrine that it was in the nature of the thing possible for God to have pardoned sinners without a Christ, and only impossible to do so because he had decreed Christ to be the ransom; just as it was impossible for the Jews to break a bone of Christ, because God had decreed that not a bone of Christ should be broken. In the second extract, faith appears to be made to precede union, and union to precede life.

Sincerely yours,

A. E. F.

To the Editor of the "Gospel Standard."

ANSWER.

Christopher Ness was a man of might in handling the doctrines of grace, and his "Antidote Against Arminianism" is unanswerable. But it is just possible that a few places might be picked out where the good man has overstepped his mark.

1. The first of these queries is one of those places that appear to be not quite correct. We think that the Lord's cry in the Garden would sufficiently bear testimony to the impossibility of salvation without a pardon, when the Lord has said, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." We think these words bear testimony that this is the only possible way that sinners could be pardoned. It is, to our mind, very unsafe to assert such a point of argument upon the mere possibility of what could be done; because the salvation of a sinner does not appear from the Word of God to be wrought by his almightiness, apart from the other divine attributes. There is a sweet harmony running through the whole of them; and divine power and the death of Jesus Christ seem most closely connected; as Hart says:

"When the blessed Jesus died
God was clearly justified.
Sin to pardon without blood
Never in his nature stood.

“Worship God, then, in his Son;
There lie's love, and there alone.
Think not that he will, or may,
Pardon any other way.”

2. Christopher Ness is not here speaking of that eternal union between Christ and the church before the world began, but of what is sometimes termed “vital union,”—that is, the union manifested at regeneration. Now, this regeneration-life could not take place were there no union with Christ. This is what Ness means by saying, “If there be no life but through union with Christ, then, till we be engrafted into that blessed and bleeding Vine, we cannot bring forth fruit unto God.” All this is quite correct; for until a person is regenerated and manifestively engrafted into the true Vine, it is impossible for the least spiritual desire or action to be put forth by the creature. Union must precede life, and life must precede spiritual actions; hence we consider that the statement thus far is correct.

But we cannot see how the statement that “faith is the engrafting grace” can be sustained; because the Scripture saith, “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” Faith, then, can never precede the testimony that is to be believed. No one can believe in a scriptural sense that they are sinners, until it has been witnessed to the heart by the Holy Ghost. “When he is come he will convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” (Jno. xvi. 8.) There is the cause, and the effect is faith. To speak of faith as “the engrafting grace” is faulty, because engrafting implies *forming a union*; and faith can only be said to make manifest that union to the soul; just as it is in the case of a debtor. If some one should discharge his debts without his knowledge, in law he would be a free man, in conscience a guilty man; but when the testimony of his benefactor's act is conveyed to his knowledge, the testimony begets faith, and faith makes it manifest to the man that he is free; and joy follows. But should he not believe the testimony, his unbelief would not render the act of the benefactor void, or without effect. Here it is evident that faith does not place the man in his new position, neither can unbelief remove him from it. And it is the same spiritually, according to the Word: “Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?” (Rom. iii. 8.) So that we think good Master Ness has pressed his figure a little too far on the point of engrafting.

To our mind, in reading any of these old authors, they should not be merely read, but their arguments closely examined; otherwise the great force of them must certainly be lost. For we are sure that the ideas of the men of those days were often clothed in words that modern professors stretch beyond what the writers intended. For instance, the term, “accepting Christ,” was by them meant to express nothing more than a *being enabled to look to Christ alone*. Yet how it is perverted to imply the existence of

some creature-power. Notwithstanding one or two little mistakes in Ness, we would honour him as a staunch advocate for the doctrines of sovereign grace.

II.

Dear Mr. Editor,—Will you oblige me by giving your thoughts on Song vii. 10, and following verses, whether the person speaking is the church, or her Beloved?

Believe me, &c., S. MITCHENALL.

ANSWER.

When we approach Solomon's Song we desire to do so with the utmost reverence to the name and character of the Son of God in his human nature, which constitutes that glorious Person who is the Head of the body, the church,—feeling that the sacred union between Christ and his bride is of so holy a nature and character that the least approach of anything of a carnal tendency in the thoughts destroys the whole harmony of the apprehension of that union and fellowship that is between them. For such is the blessed union between them that the mutual love existing knows nothing of what might be termed a forwardness; so that the church can say, "Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages." This we know from our own experience. When the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, there is that familiarity with the Lord that no one can possibly conceive without having experienced it. The soul feels a holy boldness with the Lord, and such words are poured into the mind that the soul is afterwards astonished at the familiarity of the expressions it has used. It can then, without the slightest embarrassment, say, "Lord, make me thine; keep me near thee; let us live together for ever." And in this sweet frame of heavenly fellowship, feeling the confidence of faith, it can say, "I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me." (ver. 10.) Then that holy boldness in the words following,—“Come, my beloved,” &c.—is in perfect harmony with the feeling of divine confidence. Hence we believe that it is the church, speaking in both the verses, 10th and 11th.

GOD requireth not anything of us whereby we should purchase or merit for ourselves life and salvation. For we are saved by grace "through faith;" "not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. ii. 8, 9.) God doth save us neither by nor for the "works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his own mercy" (Tit. iii. 5); so that, although on the one side, "the wages of sin is death," there being a proportion in the justice between sin and punishment; yet there is none between our obedience and our salvation; and therefore "eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. vi. 23.) God, therefore, requires nothing at our hands under this notion or consideration; nor is it possible that in our condition any such thing should be required of us. For whatever we can do is due beforehand on other accounts, and so can have no prospect to merit what is to come. Who can merit by doing his duty?—Owen.

Obituary.

NOAH PAXMAN.—On March 8th, 1881, aged 84, Noah Paxman, of Clifton Hampden, near Abingdon, Berks.

My dear father was born at Swefling, near Saxmundham, Suffolk, on March 6th, 1797. He was called by divine grace when about 18 years of age in a very marked manner. He was in the habit of meeting with several young men on a Sabbath afternoon for what he then considered enjoyment; and at this particular time they were crossing some fields to go to a skittle-ground, when he was suddenly stopped by an arrow of conviction entering into his soul; his past sins were brought before him, and he believed the Lord was about to cut him off, and send him to that place which he felt he justly deserved. His companions left him; but he was obliged to turn aside and fall to the ground begging the Lord for mercy; and there he lay for some hours, weeping over his sins and for pardon; but he could not see how God could be just and pardon such a vile sinner as he felt himself to be. From this time he could no longer join his companions, nor follow his sinful habits; but was made to seek after food for his never-dying soul. He went to different places of worship, but could get nothing. At last he was led to go and hear an Independent minister, where he received much encouragement from time to time, with a hope of salvation through a precious Mediator. After attending there for some time, he was led to cast in his lot with them in church membership; and I have heard him say he believed the minister and many of the members to be good and gracious souls, taught by the Spirit of God.

At about the age of 25 years he removed from Suffolk to Clifton Hampden; and on the journey was much favoured in his soul in reading one of Dr. Watts's hymns. The spot on the road was dear to his memory for nearly 60 years after. He remained at Clifton about three years, and sought food for his soul among the Independents in the neighbourhood; but could find nothing to satisfy his spiritual appetite. In the providence of God he was led to go to hear a Particular Baptist at the old chapel, Wood Street, Wallingford; here again he found spiritual food. The late Messrs. Gadsby and Warburton with other faithful ministers used to supply at that place, to whom he felt very much attached, and in after years they stayed occasionally at his house.

About this time he became acquainted with my mother, who was then a godly woman, attending the means of grace at Wood Street. They married and settled at Dorchester, Oxon, about four miles from Wallingford. This marriage proved to be a blessing to them both, as they lived in each other's affections, and in the fear of the Lord; and the Lord favoured them very much, both in grace and providence, and made them of much use to the poor and needy of his children.

Soon after his marriage the ordinance of believers' baptism

was laid upon his mind; and he joined the little cause at Wallingford, and was baptized at Goring Heath. The late Mr. W. Doe, minister of the gospel, attended to the ordinance at the same time, and a union was then formed between them that death did not sever.

Some time after he had joined the church he was chosen one of the deacons; and he found this to be not an enviable office; but the Lord sustained him. About the year 1844 he removed to Clifton Hampden, four miles from Abingdon, where that dear and faithful servant of Christ, Mr. Tiptaft, preached. There for the most part my parents attended, only going to Wallingford occasionally. After a time they transferred their membership to the church at Abingdon, finding their souls fed under Mr. Tiptaft's ministry. I can remember seeing them often in tears, talking over the love and goodness of God in Christ Jesus, in the evening of the day, after hearing dear Mr. Tiptaft.

I pass on to the year 1868 when my mother was laid aside through affliction. My father put up many petitions to the Lord that he would grant that their wills might be swallowed up in his will, let come what would, knowing he was

“Too wise to err, and too good to be unkind.”

In February, 1869, the Lord was pleased to take my dear mother to himself, and gave my dear father a quiet, submissive spirit, knowing that his loss was her eternal gain.

After this loss he never was the same for business; but spent much of his time in reading the Word of God, and Gadsby's hymns. I believe he often had a sweet morsel that others knew nothing of at the time. Many ministers and godly people can bear testimony that they found it good to spend an hour with him. He has tried to encourage my soul many times by telling me how good the Lord had been to him so many years in this wilderness world; how he had led him along and instructed him by his various dealings with him, and his promises had never failed him; and he was sure he would be faithful to every one of his children.

On one occasion, when I paid him a visit in 1878, he told me how very much he had been favoured by the Lord when reading Isa. xliii. The spirit applied the Word with power, and the savour had an abiding place in his heart for a long time; he said he felt safe in the hands of a good and gracious God, both for time and eternity. He spoke much of the Lord's faithfulness; and he said he was persuaded without a doubt that he was among the “ye” spoken of in the 10th and two following verses. The book of psalms was often a great comfort to him, which I think I may say he read daily, and many times in the day the last few years of his life.

On Feb. 25th, 1881, I spent several hours with him in, I hope, profitable conversation. I was led to open my mind to him, I think, more freely than ever I had done before, which brought from him much that he had passed through. He began to speak of

the various temptations which often beset a child of God, and how in the hour of temptation he had been preserved by sovereign grace. He also spoke much about the providential goodness of God, how the Lord had appeared for him in so many instances; and how he had been blessed under various trials that he had passed through. The way he spoke of God as the God of mercy I shall never forget; he went back to the time when God in his mercy stopped him as a sinner, and showed how mercifully the Lord had led him on so many years, and had borne with his sins and shortcomings; how many times the Lord had blessed him with a sense of pardon through a precious Mediator; and how the Lord had sealed home many portions of the Word of God, and made them very precious to his soul, also many hymns in Gadsby's selection. He had often proved trials to be the means used for him to obtain a blessing, and was enabled to bless the Lord in return. He said he believed his time here was very short; but that he was anxious "to depart and be with Christ; which is far better." I said I thought he would be spared to us for some time yet; I hoped for years; and he said it was a cruel wish; he hoped to be taken home in less than ten days, referring to his eighty-fourth birthday. He said he was sure he should not be a trouble to any one long, when he was laid aside for death; and he should have a sweet entering into that rest that remains for the people of God. When I left him in the evening he said, "You will not wish me good-bye many more times. I should be glad if it is the Lord's will that this may prove the last time."

On the following Tuesday morning he was taken ill with severe shivering all over the body. He told my sister and also his medical man that he believed he was taken for death; and so it proved. He said to my sister the same morning that he had been like the poor fishermen, toiling and rowing all night, but had taken nothing; he had been much in prayer during the night, but felt such darkness of soul he could not find the Lord's presence as he desired. The enemy of souls was permitted to worry him much through the day; but Satan could not stop the cry going out from his soul to the Lord. In the evening he was favoured by the Lord, and was enabled to rejoice in his mercy. He exclaimed, "'Underneath are the everlasting arms,' What a mercy!" Then again,

"Shouts of victory
I will ever give to thee."

During the remaining few days of his illness he was favoured with a calm and peaceful mind for the most part; and many portions of the Word that were made good to his soul fell from his lips; also many verses from hymns.

On Monday, March 7th, my wife and I went to see him. We saw a great change in him, and thought his end very near. He only appeared to know us for a few moments at a time. I left him with others of the family for some little time, when I tried to beg the Lord to give him a calm and peaceful mind, and a

sweet entering into eternal life, as he had already promised to do for him. I returned to him and found him much the same. I took up the hymn book, and asked him if he remembered the conversation we had together a few days ago about the mercy and goodness of God. He at once replied, "O yes, my boy. I can well remember." I commenced reading the 11th hymn:

"Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song," &c.,

After I had repeated the first verse, he went through the rest, making some observation at the end of each verse. From that moment his mind did not wander again, and his soul was filled with the goodness of God. He asked me to read a portion of the Word to him. I read Ps. ciii., which he much enjoyed, and spoke on nearly every verse of the preciousness of knowing it for himself. After some of the family had gone to rest, my father appeared to be much in secret prayer, but very restless in body. About two o'clock in the morning he wanted us to extol the goodness of God with him. He said, "I want you to sing." I said, "What would you like us to sing?" He replied,

"Sov'reign grace, o'er sin abounding."

I said, "My dear father, you know neither of us can sing." He answered, "I know you can." My wife said, "You mean we can praise him?" He said, "Yes, yes, that is it,—I wish I had breath enough, I would sing,—that I would." After a few moments' rest he looked up at me, and said, "You close it up, my boy, close it up." My sister said, "You want him to close with prayer?" To which he replied, "Yes, yes." On my concluding, he said, "Amen, amen, amen."

Shortly afterwards he broke out in a strong and earnest manner, praising and blessing the Lord for his goodness and mercy through a precious Christ, and thanking him for all favours bestowed upon such an unworthy sinner, and begging him to cut the work short. It was then a little past three o'clock, and we could see a change in him. We called the rest of the family, and watched him peacefully sinking into the arms of death. After a little time he said,

"O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrain'd to be!
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wand'ring heart to thee."

Shortly after, "Not unto us, but unto thy Name be all the glory, all the glory. Amen." Again, "O Lord, thou art wonderful to a poor sinner. I cannot praise thee enough." After a little time he repeated,

"Here I raise my Ebenezer;
Hither by thy help I'm come,
And I hope, by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home."
"Jesus sought me when a stranger
Wand'ring from the fold of God;
He to save my soul from danger
Interposed his precious blood."

In a little time he said,

“To fear his Name, to trust his grace,
To learn his will, be my employ,
Till I shall see him face to face,
Himself my heaven, himself my joy.”

“Unto thy Name be all the praise, all the glory, and dominion, both now and ever. Amen.” He also repeated that beautiful hymn, “Rock of ages,” &c., nearly through. I think his last words we could hear were,

“Songs of praises
I will ever give to thee.”

He gently breathed his last about six o'clock in the morning of March 8th. J. P.

WILLIAM MUSKETT.—On Sept. 24th, 1881, William Muskett, of Perth, Western Australia.

I have received intimation from Mrs. Muskett of the death of her husband. He was a son of the late George Muskett, well known to, and well loved by, many a reader of the “Gospel Standard.”

It is about five years ago that a letter of his in the form of an inquiry appeared in the “G.S.,” seeking advice as to whether he was justified in attending a place of worship for example's sake, where truth was not preached. I wrote to him then for the first time, and have carried on a correspondence ever since, I believe to our mutual benefit. He much wanted encouragement, poor man, deeply tried as he was, both in providence and grace,—a stranger, too, in a strange land. He has left a widow and, I think, three young children.

The following letter I received from him, written a few days before his death:

“Dear Brother Evans,—Your letter of the 25th of July I have received, and was cheered to hear from you once more. It found me in bed, having had an attack of dysentery in addition to my lung complaint. I trust I am getting better slowly; but it brought me down. I have not been able to work for nearly three weeks, and dare not try at present. The Lord has been good to us beyond all my expectation, in inclining the hearts of some to give a shilling or two, others to send such articles of food as seemed most needful at this time. But notwithstanding all this, for which I have been favoured at times to thank and praise our covenant God and Father in Jesus, we cannot help getting a bit behind through needful family expenses; and but for your exceeding kindness, this would leave a dark cloud which I could not remove. Glad I shall be to hear from you as soon as you can write. I know not what the Lord's will may be. Certainly without a great change the tabernacle must gradually, if not more speedily, come down. I trust for the most part I enjoy a precious peace, resting upon Christ and his precious atoning blood and perfect righteousness; although I cannot say much of great manifestations at present, which I leave with the Lord. ‘I know in whom I have believed,’ and that his love in times past is a sure pledge of his faithfulness; and yet, dear brother, when the billows rise we find this will not do,—this anchorage is generally swept away (to sense only); and it is with us as with the

disciples in the boat,—‘It is now dark and Jesus is not come.’ Past tokens will not satisfy now, much less on a dying bed; the presence of God we want.

‘I feel much for you in your dark path. I know it is well, and believe that sufferings, soul-sufferings I mean, are really the only grand test of a real Christian. Dear brother, these are the sufferings of Christ. ‘If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.’ What! My brother mourning over his vile nature and also because of an absent God, and then doubting and calling into question the good work? Satan knows whom to worry when permitted; he knows better than to trouble dead professors who are not in trouble as other men. I assure you these have been the subject of much of my sick-bed thoughts, brought home by the blessed Spirit I do believe, because my mind was drawn upward in ardent love and adoration to the Triune God of Israel. It is by these trying things you speak of, and I know the same, that we are fitted here below to know and enjoy a precious Christ, and also made meet for the glorious inheritance. Hezekiah said, ‘In all these things is the life of my spirit.’ The Lord will not have his children deceived; they shall each know in measure the worst of themselves in this world, in order that Christ may be exceedingly precious above everything in heaven or on earth; and to conform us—the new man I mean—to the glorious image of the dear Firstborn and Elder Brother. Cheer up, dear heart; there is no place in hell for thee; as dear Warburton once said, ‘Hell could not hold thee.’ God’s presence in Christ is heaven begun. The Lord knows when to give us a cordial. We need all we can get. He never breaks rocky hearts and heals them with love and blood, and then lets that poor sinner die. ‘Faithfulness is the girdle of his reins.’

‘My wife unites in kind regards to you. Do write soon, and I hope to hear you are got beyond this dark cloud. How did you like my father’s book? (‘The Eternal Sonship of Christ.’) I have an only brother, James, in Norwich, in the ministry, a tried one too.

Yours in Love,

To D. O. Evans, Sydney, N.S.W.

WILLIAM MUSKETT.

SARAH TIMS.—On Oct. 30th, 1861, aged 59, Sarah Tims, of Watford, Herts, after a short illness.

Sarah Tims was born of poor parents in a little village in Hertfordshire. She was brought up to attend the parish church, and was thought to be a very amiable young person. The following account was written by herself many years ago, and given to her sister, being intended for her only.

‘I was born in sin, 1822, and continued in that state till I was 15 years of age, when the Lord was pleased to bring me to a knowledge of my state as a guilty sinner before him who is ‘of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.’ I believe I had convictions from my earliest recollections; but they were natural, as I did not feel I had broken the law of God and justly deserved eternal banishment from his presence until the time I have mentioned. This was brought about in the following way. I went with a party of young friends to see a monument on the Ashridge estate on a Sabbath day. The weather was very hot, and there was one of the most tremendous thunderstorms I ever witnessed. I was always very much afraid of thunder; but now it was thunder within and without. I shall never forget the terror of my mind and the fatigue of my body together. I thought I should have sunk under

it. I did not then know the Lord had a purpose of mercy towards me, which I now believe he had. Though the Lord had previous to this time kept me from gross immoralities, into which many are permitted to fall, yet I was prone to every evil; and, but for the restraining power of God, I should, as his Word says, have 'committed all uncleanness with greediness.' But,

“'Twas grace that kept me to this day,
And will not let me go.’

I now began to work for life, and diligently attended the means of grace.” (At this time she had never heard of a free grace gospel.)

“So I went on for a long time, perfectly satisfied with doing my duty, till the terrors of Mount Sinai again arrested me, and made me tremble lest I should be cut off in my sins. What with these gloomy forebodings of death and judgment, and having domestic trials, I have often thought I should lose my senses; but,

“‘He who has helped me hitherto
Will help me all my journey through,
And give me daily cause to raise
Fresh Ebenezers to his praise.’

“I continued in this way for years with now and then a little reviving in my bondage, but utterly unable to open my mouth to any one, not knowing what was the matter with me. The dear Lord would at times apply a word with power by his blessed Spirit, such as this: ‘We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren;’ and ‘Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord;’ and, ‘To this man will I look who is of an humble and contrite spirit and trembleth at my Word.’ Every return of thunder and lightning seemed to renew my convictions. Once in particular, I cannot say how long ago, I felt as though I must perish; but I said, ‘If I perish, I must perish at his feet.’ And these words encouraged me, ‘Cheer up, my soul, there is a mercy-seat sprinkled with blood,

“‘Where Jesus answers prayer,
There humbly fall before his feet,
For none can perish there.’”

I felt I must acknowledge his justice though he should cut me off; still I seemed to entertain a little hope that he would not. Then he was graciously pleased to apply these Scriptures with such power as if I actually heard them with my outward ears: ‘They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be removed.’ ‘That we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.’

“I still went on ignorant of the great truths of the gospel, until the Lord was pleased to open my eyes to discern a little of the errors of the Church of England, and bitterly to make me feel the sin of remaining in her. He did this by hedging up my way with thorns, and leading me in the order of his providence to hear the truth from the mouth of his own sent servants, and giving me a desire to follow my Lord through his much-despised ordinance of believers’ baptism.”

Here she ends her account. She was baptized by Mr. Richard Searle. She was very much tried in temporal things, and it would have been to her temporal advantage to have remained in the Church of England. I have heard her say that in reading of the secession from the Church of that dear man of God, Mr. Philpot, she was greatly encouraged to take up her cross, and come out of it. For some time she lived in London, and she

has spoken of the happy seasons she enjoyed while hearing Mr. Smart and others at Gower Street chapel.

In the course of an unerring providence she was brought to Watford some few years ago in trying circumstances; and here I became acquainted with her. She was led to join the church under Mr. G. Burrell's care, Beulah Chapel, and was enabled to drink in, at times, the consolations of the gospel.

For some time before her last illness she was confined at home to attend upon an afflicted member of the same church; and being of a weak constitution, her health gradually gave way. The friends at Beulah collected a small sum to send her to Hastings, hoping a change of air would recruit her strength. While there she much enjoyed Mr. Hull's ministry. She returned home very cheerful, and seemed better, but was taken ill the same night with bronchitis, &c., and gradually kept sinking. A friend asked her if she thought she should get over this affliction. She replied, "I don't know what the Lord is about to do with me." When asked about her assurance, she said, "I want another manifestation." The friend said, "You have had it?" "Yes," she answered, "but I want it now." We did not think her end so near. Mr. Burrell visited her about an hour before she died, and she seemed pleased to see him. Afterwards she rose with her sister's help to go to bed, and reached the chair by the bedside, and expired without a struggle or a sigh. The following letter was found unfinished in her own handwriting after she was gone. It was written on the Thursday before her death on Sunday.

"Dear Friends,—I must tell you how greatly I feel strengthened under all this. As I lay in my bed on Thursday evening, these words came with much sweetness and power: 'The weakest among you shall be as David;' and 'where the word of a king is there is power.' Truly I have felt it so. I felt my mountain stood strong, and I could not help saying, 'If I am to enjoy such blessed manifestations, welcome the cross.' I said to myself, 'Shall I act the part of Pliable, and turn back in the time of trial?' I was singing in the morning, 'Their feet shall never slide to fall, whom he . . .'"

Our dear sister thus passed away, having her changes of joy and sorrow, faith and fears, conflict and triumph to the last. She was interred in Watford Cemetery by her pastor.

J. RICKETT.

HIGGONS.—On Feb. 12th, 1882, aged 80 years, Mr. Higgons, of Jericho, Oxford.

The following account is written by Miss Belcher, who was housekeeper to Mr. Higgons for 20 years:

"I have heard him say that he lived very comfortably with his wife until the Lord called him by grace; then she was permitted to persecute him in various ways. She told him he would bring her and the children to poverty. He was compelled to leave the Church of England, being seized with great terror the last time he was about to enter the doors, feeling he was mocking the Almighty. He returned home and never went to church afterwards.

After a little time he attended a prayer-meeting in a house at Somerton, near Oxford, where a few of the Lord's people were formed into a church by the late Mr. John Foreman. After a year or two he opened his kitchen for preaching, and many of the late ministers, Philpot, Tiptaft, Godwin, Warburton, and others, preached there. The room at length became too small, and Mr. Higgons fitted up a warehouse for a chapel. This was a great sacrifice in his business; but it was impressed on his mind that it was to be the Lord's house, and I have heard him say he never had to regret it. A room adjoining was afterwards added, and the friends continued to meet there till 1861, when a small chapel was erected.

He had many trials to endure. His wife died in 1839, and he lost five children. One of them was drowned at the age of 14. He had been looking forward to his son's leaving school in about three months, and helping him in the business; but one night the sad tidings came of his death while out fishing with a cousin. The sudden shock almost overwhelmed his poor father. I believe he fell from his chair; but after a little time he revived, and the Lord broke in upon his soul, and gave him such a blessed manifestation of his love and mercy that, though in this painful trial, he could not be a mourner, but felt and said he could have given all his other children while so favoured with the Lord's presence. This he was afterwards called upon to do. His eldest daughter died almost suddenly when about 20 years of age; and his youngest son was only ill a fortnight, with water on the brain. His remaining two daughters both made happy ends; and he was much supported and comforted in their deaths. He told me after the death of his daughter Agnes that for a long time before her end she had been laid upon his mind as a heavy burden; and one night, having forgotten her case while in prayer, it came before him when in bed and obliged him to get up, and seek, and entreat the Lord on her behalf.

"The other daughter, Caroline, was much on my own mind for several years. Sometimes I felt encouraged to hope the Lord would call her by his grace; but "hope deferred maketh the heart sick," and I seemed to watch, and pray in vain for a long time. At length, I resolved to seek the Lord no more on her behalf, as I thought it might not be his will to save her; but just then these words were forcibly impressed on my mind: "Lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left." I felt in a moment such freedom in prayer, it was no longer a task. I had confidence my request would be answered, and it was blessedly realized in her end. Both daughters left a blessed testimony of the Lord's manifested mercy to their souls.

"Though in a path of much tribulation, Mr. Higgons was favoured to enjoy many mercies and sweet seasons mingled with the bitters. On one occasion of deep exercise about his state, these words were applied with power: 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' His hope and confidence in God were greatly strengthened. Other portions of the Word were sweetly realized by him in times of trial. He had many days of darkness and temptation; but I rejoice to know his end was peace. For many years I have felt a great union of soul to him, and we have wept and rejoiced together.

"M. BELCHER."

One who was with him at the last writes:

"On Monday, Jan. 16th, I was telling him about the sermon of the previous day, when he said, 'The Lord comes sometimes and blesses me here.' And continued, 'God has been a good and gracious God to me for many years. He was pleased to speak to my soul a year or two back with these words: 'Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; . . . thou art

mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee.' At one time he looked up and said, 'I shall be glad when this poor tabernacle is dissolved.' One morning, when he seemed very dark, I said, 'We want the Lord to speak again and again.' He said, 'Yes; but the Lord has spoken very precious to my soul, and told me my sins were all pardoned.' I read to him 'Little Faith' in the Standard for February, and he remarked, 'We know that in our own soul's experience.'

Mr. Silas Keevil visited him several times. On one occasion he said to him, 'Well, friend, on what do you build your hope?' He replied, 'On his blood and righteousness; and if that fails, I am a lost man; but, bless his Name, he has given me a good hope through grace.' Mr. Keevil said, 'You are now waiting for one more touch.' 'Yes,' he said, 'one more token, Lord; and then take me home.'

"At one time he said, 'My only hope is Jesus Christ; he is all in all.' He lay quiet for a few moments, and then looked up with a sweet smile and wept. I said, 'Can you see anything?' He answered, 'Yes,—blessed object.' In the evening he seemed low, and wept, and said, 'I am in a deep ditch.' I repeated to him the verse, 'I sink in deep mire where there is no standing,' and added, 'The Lord brought him up out of the horrible pit and the miry clay.' 'Yes,' he said; 'but the question is will he bring me up? I know nothing is too hard for the Lord.' He repeated over and over the passage that had been so much blessed to him: 'Fear not, for I have redeemed thee,' &c.

"He was taken worse on Feb. 11th, and his speech became so feeble we could only understand a word or two now and then. He tried to send a message to his nephew to tell him he was happy. I said to him, 'You can sing victory through the blood of the Lamb?' He replied, 'Victory, victory.' After this he was for the greater part of the time unconscious.

He quietly passed away on the Sabbath evening, Feb. 12th."

R. SHILLINGFORD.

ROBERT NORFOLK.—On April 3rd, 1882, aged 69, Robert Norfolk, deacon of the church at Mark's Tey, after seven months' suffering illness.

When the Lord was pleased to convince him of sin, for some little time he followed the Methodists; but, feeling dissatisfied, he went to hear Mr. Collis, of Coggeshall. As Mr. C. was describing the deeds and doings of the creature to merit salvation, and comparing them to a spider's web spun out of its own bowels, and that ultimately the besom of destruction would drive it away, he felt he was the character, trying to patch up a righteousness. By this means the blessed Spirit was pleased to open up to him the righteousness of Jesus Christ as his only hope.

During his last affliction the Lord was very gracious to him. He did not sink very low, nor was he raised to great joys, but would at times say,

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

Some of Kent's hymns were made very precious to him on the Friday before his death. On the Monday following I took him some arrowroot, which he ate freely; and just as I was leaving, he breathed three times, and expired without a struggle. He had been in fellowship with the church 20 years, and was a quiet, honest, useful man. He has left a widow and four children to mourn his loss.

T. C. FRENCH.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JULY, 1882.

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

MAN'S CONDITION AND POSITION BEFORE GOD.

A SERMON PREACHED AT SMALLFIELDS, BY MR. HATTON, SEPT. 18TH, 1881.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”—2 COR. v. 17.

WE should, to be right, properly understand both our condition and our position before God. For if we do not know either our condition or our position we cannot know in any true sense the gospel of the grace of God. Our position is that of creatures to a Creator, who have neither right nor title to heaven on the ground of creatureship. Man never lost heaven by sin, and he will never gain it by merit.

Perhaps that may startle some of you; but it is true that as he did not lose it by sin, so he cannot gain it by merit. He could not lose what he did not possess. Heaven never was given to man. Paradise was what he lost. Therefore there is no man on the face of the earth who has any claim to heaven,—neither right nor title. It is God's sacred presence where he is pleased to exhibit himself. If he gives a right or title to it, that is from himself; but he never sells it, never offers it for competition. That would be impossible. He will never offer his sacred place, where he reveals his face, for competition. “It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” This comes as one of God's good gifts; therefore understand we have no right nor title as creatures to heaven. It was never lost by transgression, and can never be gained by merit. We repeat, paradise was lost; and man has no power to regain that position; but, as far as he is concerned, must ever remain as he is, sinful, and at enmity with God. If the Lord gives us heaven, what a merciful consideration,—to give us a title to that place, and all that is connected with that place, that we may live and enjoy it. How unspeakably great and gracious!

God created man sufficient only to live in and enjoy paradise. Consequently, if he is to live in heaven, he must be re-created. A radical change must take place. He has no capacity for heaven, or for the glory of God. Neither can the regenerate children of God see him in his full glory in this life. When John beheld the glory of Jesus Christ, he fell down as one dead;

he was not equal to it. So did Daniel in vision; he fell down unequal to it. These were both good men, yet they shrank from the presence of God; though we may say it was, as it were, clouded. They could not commune; they were not companions; could neither walk nor talk with that Person, neither could hold a proper kind of fellowship with him, until they were strengthened thereto. Hence how necessary it is that there should be a re-creation equal to the heavenly inheritance, equal to God's presence, equal to the glory that shall be revealed; so as to enjoy it; to have fellowship, and sweetly to commune with God in that fellowship, as a child with a parent.

This new creation is actually in existence. And if we have felt the Spirit of adoption in our hearts, we know that such a thing is in existence—a talking with God without dread, a feeling God precious to our souls; and the more precious, the more bold we become. The nearer we get to him, the less we feel earthly things. The nearer we approach his feet, the more we are absorbed in him. He has so far separated us from the world, really and actually *separated* us from it. So that, if he gives us an overwhelming sense of his presence, we are incapacitated for this world; therefore he wisely withholds a full sense of his presence, and hides that from us while here that we may do the duties of this life. How unfit for them would you be with the love of God shed abroad in your heart in a great degree! What would you do in the market with the love of God overwhelming your heart? What could you do? How could you bring your mind down? What could you do in your family connection with your thoughts in heaven? You would be as incapacitated to follow these as by nature you are incapacitated to follow the things of grace without God's power.

Here we have a living proof that there is a great distinction between the two states. There is a new creation, and there is an old creation. We have a distinct witness in our souls that the old creation is for this world. All its hopes and happiness are here, and are derived from this world. If any desires spring up in a man's mind for another world, they are simply for a paradise, a state of being comfortable and happy. He carries with him all the associations and relationships of this life; and you have a motley heaven, drawn out by motley men, of what is merely imaginary; and all is earthly. Again, take the child of God. The nearer he gets to heaven, the less of earth there is about him. The relationships of this earth dwindle away; nature's ties snap asunder; he hardly can realize the existence of earthly things; he is lost to its thoughts; and the end of his anticipation is the Lord Jesus Christ; to be lost in him and to be with him for ever and ever.

Now in looking at these two things we must keep them separate, one from the other. They are never intended by the Lord to be joined together. Each one of us has thoughts either of an earthly paradise or of heaven itself, which is the presence of

God, Father, Son, and Spirit, revealed through the gracious humanity that the Lord himself assumed.

“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” Man lost paradise; and in that he lost his life. Hence he is dead. So the Lord says, “Ye must be born again.” It is impossible to enter into the heaven of God without that, life in heaven being a new state, a new existence. When the Lord first began his work upon your soul, what a new condition appeared, what a strange thing it seemed, as if you had just waked up from a long sleep! You did not know what to do. You were like a person dropped into a new existence; and in a dreamy sort of way you thought, “Where am I? What am I to do? What position is before me?” All these things presented themselves before your mind; and, as though waking up a little, you found yourself a sinner, and that God was your Creator. You had not seen yourself in such a condition before. There was a breach which you had not discovered before; all your hopes, if you had any, were vain. This was all strange together. The poor child of God can remember the strangeness of the position, the fright he wakes up in, how empty and foolish he sees he is! He says, “What must I do to be saved?”

Everything, then, which is called gospel that tends to lead you to gain heaven by merit is to put you on a false foundation. Everything that shows you that heaven was lost by your sin is false. Heaven is the pure gift of God, never given to any but in his dear Son. No right nor title had man unto it; therefore he never could have lost it. So the Lord's people are said to be heirs of salvation, heirs of heaven, heirs of righteousness; and an *heirship* cannot be obtained by merit. They were heirs of salvation prior to this world being formed; and because they were heirs of salvation, Jesus Christ came into this world for their sakes. Nothing else brought him down; nothing else caused him to stoop so low, and come into this world, and tabernacle as he did, but the ancient settlements of eternal love. They were heirs of a righteousness promised in him.

Let us look, then, at these two existences. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” First of all, there are the old things: “Old things are passed away.” The world has passed away from us with all its connections, with all its glory, so far as becoming the pursuits and delights of the regenerate soul. Now there is one principal thing I must draw your attention to, and that is the enmity there is in a natural man's heart. This enmity as a predominating principle passes away at regeneration. The enmity of the carnal mind can never rule in the heart of a child of God. It cannot subject him so as to make him become a hater of the Lord; although it remains in the flesh as the root of all evil. No natural man can love God, and no spiritual man can hate him. We are speaking now of fixed principles. There is a fixed principle in the carnal man to hate Christ, even when

seen in his people. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (Jno. xv. 18, 19.) And no regenerate child of God in his worst state, if pressed closely, could say that he hated God, or his Word, or his people.

Some of you may be ready to say, with many others, "But I do not hate the gospel." It is because you do not know it. "I do not hate the doctrines of truth." Then you do not know them. "I do not hate God's people." Then it is because you do not know them,—here is the solution. We can come very quickly to the point. To know them would be to hate them. Why? Because there is a rooted enmity in the heart against what God is. Now do you ever feel anything rising up in your heart against God's election? "Well, I think sometimes that is hardly the right thing." You think, then, God has no right whatever to choose his own inhabitants of his heaven; the right belongs to you, and he is bound to submit to your decision, and not you to his. This has a very awkward look about it,—that God should submit to you, and he himself have no right at all. I can assure you, God will never ask any man whether he may or not. As Hart says, "It is not whether I will be a Christian; but whether God will make me one." But surely, poor sinner, when you find that, you will find your right position before God. It is not whether you will go to heaven; but whether he will take you there; not whether you will be a servant of his; but will he take you for one? You get into a right position. You seek him now from a true spirit of fervency, a knowledge of your own unworthiness of that heaven. You seek and you beg from the Lord free mercy for your soul; now you are brought into a right position before God, and he will listen to your cry. Not for the merit of your cries. You sometimes think the Lord will not hear your prayers, because of the nature of them. It is not *that* the Lord will look at; it is the condition you are in, the earnest necessity felt in the heart, those breathings, "Lord, give me thy heaven."

Again, the rooted enmity in the carnal mind rises up against God in all his divine attributes and works, and you feel indeed you are unrighteous. I do not know any man that would say he was righteous. The very pope himself must have a few extra good deeds. Good deeds are the only hope some have for heaven? They may think they are ready to die when in good health; but when they come to face death there is something to do; like Cardinal Wiseman, who said when dying, "Do all for me that *the Church* can do." He was conscious that he wanted something he had not got. What a poor state to face death in! Men find, when they come to die, that they cannot face the presence of God. They find their condition is repulsive to their own thoughts; that he is too great, and they are too great sinners. As the Lord says, they call on the rocks and hills to fall on them,

and hide them from the presence of him that sitteth upon the throne. Here is a true opening up of their state. What a position that is for a man to wake up in! What a mercy to wake up in this time-state, through the Spirit of the living God instructing us; for by nature we are verily ready to cry out as the others, and should do so, were it not that the Lord has put a new principle in our hearts. It is that new principle that is granted to the soul, that breathes after God, that earnestly desires and hopes for God. What a favour to be put in possession of such a blessing as this!

So all men by nature find out that they are unrighteous, and not acceptable to God. There is something wanted. "Rocks and hills, hide me." The truth is, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Then they cannot be acceptable to God. They are not pleasing to him. But it only maddens the heart of man when he sees himself in that position. It raises the evil passions of men,—some to curse God, to curse his very existence. And you will find in your heart, if the Lord has done anything for you, that "the law worketh wrath." When the law shows you your true position as a creature, how you wish you had never been born! How you wish there was no eternity, and envy the very beasts in the fields! There is the law working wrath against God, because you are unrighteous; because you are unfit to meet him; and because you durst not look up. Let a little imputation of Christ's righteousness be found in your soul, and that enmity is removed directly; the soul is made "like the chariots of Amminadib." Such a one would fly to the Lord, and embrace him, and love him with all his heart and soul.

It is not surprising that the justice of God should rouse a sinner's enmity and madden men to speak violently against God. Man by nature is not in a position to serve God. He cannot do it; and his finding this out, or being told of it, raises his indignation. It touches that deadly evil, enmity, that is within him, and it blazes up. "What?" says one, "Can I do nothing good?" If you could do something that was not selfish, you could do something good; but you never did an act in your life that was not selfish. "O but," say you, "I think I could find some. I see people who give away all they have got." What for? Dive into the cause, and dive again, and you will find that self-interest is in it all. Tell a man or woman that all they have done to their fellow-creatures comes to nothing, and you will find you touch the spring that lets out the locust of the bottomless pit that is in their hearts. "I would not do it then," says one; "we may as well live as we list." There is a selfishness at the bottom of all these expressions. I believe many would not do it if they thought they would not be rewarded for it. And the Lord's people find there is a servile spirit within them. How it mars their worship; it is from another power. The child of God serves God not for reward. His service is not purely selfish, because it is natural to the new creation. It is its own breathings, its own

desires, coming from the heart. It would love and serve God with the same feeling heart, if the Lord never gave it anything, if the bottomless pit were to be its receptacle at last,—still it would praise God. It would be as habitual in that as the old man is in breathing after this world. The things of this world occupy the carnal mind, and the things of God occupy the spiritual mind. These “old things” stand connected with the rooted enmity in our hearts against God. The Lord Jesus Christ came into the world that he might slay this enmity,—it must be slain in all his people; and that he might work out a righteousness to remove the cause of that dread between the soul and God, that they should have no necessity to call upon the rocks and hills to hide them.

Now let us notice the “new things.” “Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” Let us take the opposite to enmity,—love. Here is the root of all that is good. Where love is, there is goodness; and, “Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.” A little love to God in your heart is better than all the great show it is possible for men to make. A little love that draws you on your knees in secret is better than all the profession that men can make. All this shrinks into nothing in comparison to the soul with a little love in its heart that seeks God’s face, is breathing after God’s presence, seeking for the Lord’s favour, begging mercy from him, begging that he might be able to love him more, and serve him better. In the simplicity of his love, asking after God’s mercy and goodness, such a poor sinner as this is far better than all the famous names in the annals of history put together. Here there is a principle that God has implanted.

When the love of God is put into your heart, love to God goes up immediately to him; and that causes a strong contest in your soul. Love to God and hatred to God both exist,—the one called in Scripture “the carnal mind,” which cannot be subject to the will of God. The carnal mind that dwells in your heart and mine no process can bring under, no burden subdue. Perhaps you may marvel that you should be so great a fool after many chastisements. “My follies are so great, I am no better than I was at the beginning. My stupidity is so great, I think of all God’s creatures I am the worst.” Poor sinner, remember this, that you possess a carnal mind that cannot possibly be subjected. You may go through a thousand furnaces, and you would be just the same. It is like braying a fool in a mortar. But there is the other principle, that is, love, in the heart. This improves by chastening, increases by correction. This grows wise by the instruction it passes through, and sees enmity it did not see before, and dares not tamper with it. Its great anxiety is to love God; so it becomes grieved with what it believes grieves God, and attached to whatever it thinks God loves. God’s love and the soul’s run in the same course; as David said, “Do not I hate them that hate thee?”—or that which is contrary to God himself.

This gracious love that God has put in his people's hearts is the fulfilling of all laws. And when the Lord pours his love abroad in the heart, then they both sensibly unite. All God's people are anxious to know whether God loves them. They cannot take it for granted. Suppose you love a person merely in your heart, and they have never spoken to you, never said or done anything for you; can you take it for granted that they love you? I hardly think you would venture on such bare ground as that. There must be a personal knowledge, even in nature. So if we love God in our hearts, we cannot take it for granted that he loves us, until he expresses that love in some way or other; and when he does so, how our love bounds up to meet God. There was love in the heart of the prodigal son towards his father; and O what a fellowship of love! The father longed towards the son, and the son towards the father; there was a certainty of a friendly meeting. God's heart is towards his people; and theirs towards him; and there is a certainty of a heavenly meeting. Well, they must meet; and you will find it so, poor sinner, however late the Lord may keep you waiting. He may keep you till the hour of your death; but when it does come, you will be glad to meet him, come late or come early. Whenever he comes the soul is on the spring after him: "Come and tell me that thou lovest me, and say that I am thine." The Holy Spirit in the heart springs up in the substance of these few words: "Say that I am thine. Tell me thou lovest me, and that I shall be with thee for ever and ever."

It is the Holy Spirit's right and office to show you your condition. Let me just trace a little. Has he shown you your condition? He will bring you to see that you have no right to heaven at all, and that as sinners you have a right to hell, if you have your just deserts. Your right is turned; your right is hell; and it is feared. But the longing desires you feel go after heaven,—not simply to escape hell; but because no love would enter into your heart in hell; God will never see you, and you will never see him there; you will never be able to put forth those longing desires there. Therefore you are anxious to escape hell, that that little spark of life that is in your heart may not be quenched. Many of the Lord's people have requested this favour,—if heaven is not theirs, that he would let them love him even in hell. Your right and title as a sinful creature is hell.

The Holy Spirit tells you you are a sinner; then new things take place. What a vast change takes place in your mind! You hear a man describe what a sinner he is. Once it raised up indignation in you; but all that came from a disturbed enmity in your mind; from a jar in your feelings when the idea of sinnership was brought forward. "Now," says the soul, "I believe it is all true. I am a greater sinner. I am the greatest of all." It is discovered to you that as a creature you have no right to heaven. Now when you are told so, instead of its raising up enmity in your heart, you say, "I believe it; and I wonder how

God can take anybody to heaven." With this degree of reconciliation in your heart, you find yourself in a new position. Now you feel it. Man's unrighteousness is described to you, and his helplessness and insufficiency to do anything good. You bear witness to it as a fact. "My best deeds are polluted." Therefore, having a right sense of your position, you write bitter things against yourself. All the promises of God are cut off; every hope that is presented before you is cast away; and all confidence in the free mercy of God is put aside. "It cannot be for me;" because you stand in some measure as fully realizing your position as a sinner before God; with no right or title to heaven, but a right to hell; without righteousness, but full of unrighteousness; without any grace in your feelings, but full of all that is evil. In all this, at times you will turn aside in some secret place, or perhaps it will heave up in your heart, "Lord, do make me right. I am so anxious to be right. Give me a right spirit; and put a righteousness in my heart; and make me love and serve thee better." The poor sinner is anxious before God: "Do save me; do bless. I know I have no right to it; do it for thy goodness and mercy's sake." Here comes a true suppliant; because the Lord has made him so. He is asking upon a new foundation.

I am laying down the ground of my subject on these two points, the "old things," and the "new." This is the new position; the "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." And this love in our hearts carries us through all storms, all perplexities, all trials. How many times a child of God is brought to his wit's end, and to the end of his patience. "I can never love God any more. I am so discouraged and disheartened, I never can hope again." I can tell you, if you are trying to please God by your good deeds, you get discouraged, time after time. You will see that all natural religion will come to an end. You cannot carry it on yourself. But a little earnestness comes into your heart: "I should like to love and serve him." Then the poor sinner begins to feel something that burns and kindles in his heart,—"I will try once more;" and he begins again. O, poor soul, it is refreshing; just a little love bubbling up in thy heart to strengthen thy soul. "These disappointments,—I will pass them all by, and begin again and try." And this is the secret and root of the matter. That root is planted in a living soil; and thou canst not keep these shoots back any more than thou canst keep the thoughts of sin back. And, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed way; behold, all things are become new."

It would be impossible for me to describe at once what these "all things" are. But there are the two roots, the two things that God's Word deals with,—enmity, and love. If the love of God is in your heart, God must have put it there. It never grows of itself; such a thing never happens to a man. It must have

been as distinctly put there by God himself as that God himself first gave you a being. I hope you will meditate on this,—how necessary is the Word of God: “Ye must be born again.” There is a heaven for the second birth; but none for the first. There is no man in nature's darkness who knows what heaven is. He cannot give you a true description. And there are some poor souls, who have read scarcely anything but their Bibles and hymn-books, who could tell you what heaven is, because they have felt it in their own souls. The rest and peace that come into their souls they know; and that is a little forerunner of the rest that remains for the people of God.

What a mercy that the Lord has made all these things new to us, and has brought us into that new position. We feel and see that all behind is death. All the old position is confusion; and it is the new position that we so long to be found in, and to die in. May the Lord add his blessing.

[The above is the morning sermon only, the subject being continued in the afternoon.]

THE TESTIMONIES OF THE LORD TO A POOR SELF-CONDEMNED SINNER.

BEING THE EXPERIENCE OF THOMAS HOBSON, A DEACON OF THE LATE
MR. BURNS'S CHURCH, WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

I WAS born in the parish of Sedgley, and in the village called Lower Gurnal, in the year 1813, Jan. 9th. My mother bore nine children, and lived to see them all grown up and settled in life. There were four sons and five daughters; I was the third child and the eldest son. My parents, being very poor, did not trouble to send their children to school, not even to a Sunday school; my brothers and sisters never learned to read. When I was very young I was induced to go to a Sunday school. The first Sabbath that I went the teacher asked us if we prayed before entering our beds at night. Some answered, “Yes;” but I remained silent, because I had never prayed. He said prayer would make the devil flee. This fastened upon my conscience, because the teacher said God saw us by night as well as by day; and I felt afraid to go to sleep without saying a prayer. But my parents had never taught me any prayers; so I was induced to use these words from that time till I was turned 21 years of age: “O Lord, thou seest me by night as well as by day. For Christ's sake pardon my sins, and convert my soul. Amen.” By going to the Sunday school I learnt to read a little.

It was customary for my father to go to the harvest every summer. He took me with him for ten years in succession; the first time I was a little more than seven years old. What little I had learned from the Sunday school, against I returned I had nearly forgotten. But mark, when I was in a strange place I could not lie down, till I had been in some secret place to say my prayers.

Dear reader, I lived more than 16 years to myself in that wretched condition, "having no hope, and without God in the world."

I was married when I was a little more than 21 years of age. I had been keeping company with a band of young men, seven besides myself. One Sunday morning, as we were taking our usual walk, a voice stopped me with these words: "Who hath required this at your hands?" I could not go any further. I returned home and went to chapel ever after, and gave up their company. I became what some term a moral liver, went to church and chapel, and very often went from church to the ale bench. I continued in this wretched state about nine months after my marriage.

One particular night I purposed to go to the meeting; but that day I was half-an-hour later at my work than usual, and had three-and-a-half miles to walk home. My wife did not want me to go out again; but nothing could prevent me, and I went and was just in time to hear the preacher read his text. It was these words: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's and of the holy angels." (Lu. ix. 26.) I was the man that had been ashamed to confess Jesus Christ before men. This was the heaviest blow that ever I received from God. Great trouble seized me from that very hour; it sent me home roaring and groaning. As soon as I reached home I asked my wife if she would go to prayer with me. Her answer was, "Yes;" and she has continued from that time to the present to go on her knees with me. I believed at that time that confessing Jesus Christ before my wife would suffice.

I now became very earnest to know how souls would be saved. I attended all the meetings that were possible. My cries were very vehement, and also my groans and sighs. The Lord the Spirit showed me my sins even from my childhood. As my sins became numberless, so my trouble increased. These words sounded in my ears: "Men ought always to pray." They induced me to pray more; even going to my work I would get into a secret place on my knees, and the same coming back, believing that much praying would suffice for my sins. Then these words came with great surprise: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them;" and, "Whosoever sinneth in one point is guilty of all." They came as a sharp knife, or a sword with two edges. I believed something very strange had happened to me. My distress increased; my cries were very vehement; my groans and sighs even startled the beasts that were in the field. These words also seized me: "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores." That word still stuck to me fast, that "men ought always to pray and not to faint." I was induced to ask God's blessing on my food before partaking of it. And before going to work, where my companions despised me and blasphemed on my account, I was obliged to fall on my knees to

pray; but I thought they roared the more at me. Hearing the chapter read about the 500*l.* debtor, something suggested that I was a 5,000*l.* debtor; and I believed I was more than that twice told.

Dear reader, I will leave you to guess how my trouble increased. My sins appeared like two huge mountains on either side, with the Red Sea before, and the pursuer behind. Then the enemy set in upon me, saying my sins were too great to be pardoned,—“These are your old sins, and you are sinning every day.” Notwithstanding my prayers, he had a charge against me every night that I had sinned in thought, word, and deed. With all my toiling I seemed to sin and stumble but the more. The curse followed me, and the parables of the stony-ground hearers, and the wayside hearers, so that I believed I was the man. My neighbours and fellow-workmen talked of taking me to an asylum; my wife said she wished she had never seen me; and if my employers asked me a question, I could not give them a proper reply.

The enemy suggested I was the greatest of all sinners. At this time I was induced to go to my old place to pray, and when I got off my knees I was tempted to put an end to my life. There was a fish-pond near; but the Lord prevented me from yielding and being drowned. Our parson's preaching did not suit me; his cry was, “To believe is only to take God at his word; and to get into the kingdom is like stepping over a chalk mark.” I thought I could as easily reach the moon and stars as do what he proposed. It was a great grief to me that I could not shed a single tear, believing that the children of God come with “weeping and supplication;” and therefore Satan suggested I should go and take company with my old companions. I believed him this time and went to an ale-bench; but the women that were there condemned me, and said that I was a married man. Such a fear came upon me that I durst not drink a drop of beer; and I came home with all the horrors that mortal flesh could feel.

About this time I purchased a book called, “Bunyan's Choice Works.” It contained “Law and Grace,” and “Grace Abounding.” I was very ignorant how a poor sinner could be saved, especially such a one as I who was under the sentence of death, sinning daily against light and knowledge. Dear reader, I had light enough only to know what sin was, and when I sinned; and these blessed writings of Bunyan's were of great use to me. My understanding was enlightened to see that I was the man that was under the law, my burden being felt so weighty that I believed it would crush me down to the bottomless pit. O the times that it cut off all my hopes! Once in particular I was sinking fathoms every hour, and I felt truly no standing for my feet. My fear was that I was sinking to that place where mercy and hope never could reach me; I felt this, and believed it to be a horrible pit. I thought I was all but gone, and threw up my arms, and cried vehemently to the Lord. This voice echoed in

my heart: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It gave me a standing for my feet. I was he that was weary of my sins, and of my life, and of my crying to the Lord; and he gave me rest only for a moment, as it were. The Lord the Spirit had given me an understanding, and eyes to see what sin had done for me; he had made a deep wound in my soul, and it seemed incurable.

The enemy beset me with this: "It is your religion that has brought all this upon you, you had better give it up; your cries are like the crackling of thorns under a pot." I was at last compelled to leave my work for a time. I both felt and said I was totally lost and undone. Truly I found this another horrible pit; and the enemy grated these words on my ears every day: "Cursed is every one," &c. I almost agreed with him to give up crying for mercy. Then a voice came with these words: "He that endureth to the end shall be saved," and made me cry very vehemently to the Lord again. One morning on my way to work this voice came: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." I said, "O Lord, *thou knowest* my desire is to fear thee all the day long." I believe this was another lifting up out of the horrible pit.

The cry of the parson used continually to be, "'It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners,' even the chief." He would say that believing was taking God at his word; and I have felt grieved because I could not do as others had done (as I thought). He read the case of the leper at one time, and the disease seemed to seize me in a moment, and the conviction that I was the man. Looking at my hand I thought it became leprous, and spread over the whole frame. O how I abhorred myself, and wished many times to be anything sooner than a man with a soul to save. I was under the apprehension of judgment and fiery indignation, and felt God would be just in sending me to the bottomless hell. I believed I was one of the vilest wretches that ever crawled on the earth; and what made me so black was that all my sins and crimes were against the Lord Jesus Christ.

I had now a great desire to listen to three old pilgrims, who I felt sure were pilgrims on their way to heaven. I continued to watch for them, and listen to their talk, walking behind them, until I felt such a love to those men I cannot describe. They very often talked about John Bunyan. I had read Bunyan's "Law and Grace," and believed I was under the law, and was condemned at the end of every day by it. Now I was led to look at Bunyan's "Jerusalem Sinner Saved;" and was encouraged in reading of the sinners who crucified the Lord Jesus Christ. Then the suggestion came that I was a greater sinner even than they; but this I could not receive, believing they were murderers of the Lord. Next I read Bunyan's "Grace Abounding." I received such help and comfort from that book, I carried it about with me daily. It was like a sword to fight the enemy

with; many times have I held it up as a weapon against his suggestions and temptations.

I still frequented different places of worship in search of the Lord Jesus Christ. They all appeared to me as clouds without rain, and I believe there was not any difference in all the preachers I heard; not one of them touched my case. I thought I was wrong and they were right; and how to make amends for my wrong I did not know, but tried to continue at my old work,—to keep the commandments. One Sunday I was straying off to Dudley when a sound caught my ears, and I went into the place. It was a Primitive Methodist chapel. To my surprise it was what they called a love-feast. I was going out; but one of the men locked the door, and persuaded me to go back to my seat. He soon brought the bread round. I refused to take any; but he prevailed on me to take some, and I put it into my pocket. Then he brought the water, and prevailed on me to drink. After this one and another got up and stated what they had been doing for the Lord. Here I was condemned again, feeling I could not do a mite for myself. When the door was unlocked I went out; and before I was far on my way the enemy beset my poor distracted mind with assuring me I had sinned the unpardonable sin, I had eaten and drunk damnation to my own soul. I said, "Satan, I have not eaten; the bread is in my pocket,"—but I had drunk, and that was worse than eating. I had to pass through a colliery where were several pit-shafts. Here Satan kept me for some hours, under the temptation to throw myself down one of them, dragging me from one pit to another, until the snare was broken, and I escaped. My fear was that my poor soul would be cast into that place where there would be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

While I was mourning over my sad state, there came an echo of these words in my conscience: "Your life is hid with Christ in God." I believed they were in the Bible, and found them in Col. iii. 3. Now the enemy set upon me more violently than ever, and said I was deceived, that I was under condemnation, and that I had a wicked and deceitful heart, but that God gives to his children a new heart. I thought I was too vile ever to enter heaven; for I had a leprous heart, and the leprosy seemed to be all over my soul. Then the enemy said, "You had better give up praying; it is of no use, and you are an abomination in the sight of God." This I felt to be true, and that I added sin to sin every day. Satan showed me the place where the ground would open and swallow me up; and, fearing it would prove true, I turned from the path and went across a field. For a long time I could not go over that spot; and soon after he suggested another place, and I had to choose another way again. Yet I continued to cry to the Lord for mercy.

I felt at this time almost in black despair. A neighbour of mine and a member of the Independent chapel, knowing I had stayed away from the meetings for a little time, sent to say there

was a stranger expected to preach on the following Sunday. This man I had travelled with to the meetings for nearly three years, and he had never mentioned a word to me about my soul. I had concluded that no man cared for my soul, as not one person ever spoke to me. I felt a desire to hear this strange preacher, although all my old temptations set upon me afresh, with that one that God's people come "with weeping and supplication," and that I had not shed a tear during all my three years' battling for Christ. Then it struck me that my execution would be next Thursday, and this was Friday or Saturday. How I felt and believed I had no right or claim or title to mercy!

Notwithstanding the darkness of my mind, and the gloomy forebodings which had almost brought me to despair, I had a deep sorrow for sin. O how I bewailed my past follies in life with self-loathing and self-abhorrence. The breach appeared to grow wider and wider, and the case of my soul seemed to become more hopeless; for as the hidden evils of my heart were brought to light, the hot displeasure of God was revealed against the unrighteousness discovered within; and the commandment which was ordained to be unto life, I found to be unto death. A sense of my sins filled my soul with shame, grief, and bitterness. I was ashamed to look up to God; yet the burden of guilt being so heavy made me bend very often on my knees. That saying of the psalmist David suited me well: "Thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore." A feeling of self-pity came over me; enmity rose up against God, because I believed he certainly would pour out upon me his just anger. Rebellion moved and raised its deformed head, and uttered its loathsome voice, "I wish there was no God."

I was spared to see another Sunday, and tried to go to chapel to hear the stranger; but it was a struggle to get there. There is a portrait of my feelings and the condition I was in at that time in the 102nd Ps. The enemy suggested I was going to have my sentence signed; he tried with all his might to persuade me not to go. At length I arrived at the chapel. The clerk gave out this hymn:

"God moves in a mysterious way."

It came with great power into my soul. Again Satan reminded me, "Your time is up next Thursday." The preacher read Luke xiv. On my way to chapel it had been troubling me to think there was not any room for so vile a sinner as I in the kingdom of heaven. At the 22nd verse all the lies and schemes of the enemy were overcome, as the Word said, "Yet there is room." It was to me as a voice from heaven; and when the old man engaged in prayer I felt a moving within towards the Lord of light and glory. The preacher gave for his text 2 Cor. ii. 16; and as he read the latter part of the verse, "A savour of life unto life," never can I forget the time. I could not sit on my seat. The set time was come for poor sinful me to receive life instead of death. I was as one risen from the dead. The Lord

the Spirit made a well in my heart, and one in my eyes too. Up to the present time I had not shed a tear during my three years' conviction; now the tears flowed freely. I had so disturbed the congregation that all eyes seemed fixed on me; and as soon as I came out, I could not say how many came and inquired what was the matter with me. I told them there had been something the matter for three years all but three days. In the evening I went again with the expectation to have another income of divine love. The text was read: "To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death." (Ps. cii. 20.) Truly this was a time of weeping and rejoicing; I was made to believe it was the set time by the blessed Jesus to favour my poor soul.

(To be continued.)

THE PROPERTIES AND NATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF TRUE BELIEVING.

1. BELIEVING ON Christ must be personal. A man himself and in his own proper person must be brought to receive Christ Jesus. "The just shall live by faith." (Hab. ii. 4.) Unless a man with his own heart is brought to be pleased and to acquiesce in that device of saving sinners, he cannot be saved. I grant this faith is given unto him by Christ; but certain it is that it must be personal.

2. This faith must be cordial and hearty. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." (Rom. x. 10.) A man must be sincere and without guile in receiving Christ, judging him the only Covering of the eyes, not hankering after another way. The matter must not swim only in the head or understanding, but it must be in the heart. The man not only must be persuaded that Christ is the way, but affectionately persuaded of it, loving and liking the thing, having complacency in it; so that it is all the man's desire, as David speaketh of the covenant. (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.)

If a man be cordial and affectionate in anything, surely he must be so here in this one thing that is necessary. It must not be simply a fancy in the head. It must be a heart-business, a soul-business; yea, not a business in the outer court of the affections, but in the flower of the affections, and in the innermost cabinet of the soul, where Christ is formed. Shall a man be cordial in anything, and not in this which doth comprise all his chief interests, and his everlasting state within it? Shall the Lord be said to rejoice over a man "as a bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride" (Isa. lxii. 5.), and to "rest in his love" with joy (Zeph. iii. 17), and shall not the heart of man go out and meet him here? The heart, or nothing; love, or nothing; marriage-love which goeth from heart to heart, love of espousals, or nothing. "My son, give me thine heart." (Prov. xxiii. 26.) "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body

to be burned and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." (1 Cor. xiii. 2, 3.)

I will not say that there is in all, as soon as they believe, a prevailing, sensible love which maketh sick. But there must be in believing a rational and kindly love, so well grounded and deeply engaging that "many waters cannot quench" it. It is "strong as death," and jealousy in it burneth as fire. (Song viii. 6, 7.)

3. The third property or qualification of believing, as it goeth out after Christ, is, it must be rational. Hereby I mean that the man is enabled to move towards God in Christ in knowledge and understanding, taking up God's device of saving sinners by Christ as the Scripture doth hold it out; not fancying a Christ to himself otherwise than the gospel speaketh of him, nor another way of relief by him than the Word of God holdeth out. Therefore we find knowledge joined to the covenant between God and man as a requisite. "And I will give them an heart to know me." (Jer. xxiv. 7.) "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." (Jer. xxxi. 34.) I mean here also that a man be in calmness of spirit, and as it were, in cold blood, in receiving Christ Jesus; not in a single fit of affection which soon vanisheth; as in the stony-ground hearers, Matt. xiii. 20, and in the children of Israel, Ps. lxxviii. 34; nor under a temporary interest, as Simon Magus was when he believed. (Acts viii.) A man must be brought to act here rationally, as being master of himself; in some measure able to judge of the good or evil of the thing, as it stands before him.

4. As it goeth out rationally, so it goeth out resolutely. The poor distressed people in the gospel did by the Spirit most resolutely cast themselves upon Christ. This resoluteness of spirit is in order to all difficulties that lie in the way. Violence is offered to these. The man whose heart is a shaping out for Christ Jesus cannot say, "There is a lion in the way." (Prov. xxvi. 13.) If he cannot have access by the door, he will break through the roof of the house with that man, Lu. v. 19. He often doth not regard that which the world calleth discretion or prudence; like Zaccheus climbing up on a tree to see Christ, when faith was breeding in his bosom. (Lu. xix.) This resoluteness of spirit by God's power looketh towards what inconveniences may follow, and waveth all these. At least, it resolveth over all these, like a wise master-builder, who reckoneth the expense beforehand. (Lu. xiv. 28.)

This resoluteness is also in order to all a man's idols, and such weights as would easily beset him, if he were not bent after Christ over them all; like that blind man who did cast his garment from him when Christ called him. (Mark x. 20.)

This resoluteness in the soul proceedeth from desperate self-necessity within the man; as it was with the jailer, Acts xvi. 30;

and from the sovereign command of God, obliging the man to move towards Christ Jesus. "This is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ." (1 Jno. iii. 23.) And it proceedeth from the good report gone abroad of God that he putteth none away that come unto him through Christ (Jno. vi. 87); but doth commend such as do adventure over the greatest difficulties, as the woman of Canaan did. (Matt. xv. 28.) But above all, this resoluteness doth proceed from the arm of Jehovah, secretly and strongly drawing the sinner towards Christ. "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (Jno. vi. 44.)

I will not say that every one receiving Christ hath all the fore-said thoughts formally in his mind. Yet upon search it will be found, if he be put to it, or put in mind of these things, they are then aloft in the soul.

By what is said it doth manifestly appear that many in the visible church have need for something further to be done in them than is found to have been done already.

By what is said also there is a competent guard upon the free grace of God in the gospel; so as ignorant, profane men cannot, with any shadow of reason, pretend to an interest in it. It is true, believing in Christ, or receiving him as a perfect Saviour, seemeth easy, and every godless man saith that he believeth on him. But they deceive themselves, since their soul hath never cordially, rationally, and resolutely gone out after Christ Jesus, as we have said. It may be some wicked men have been enlightened (Heb. vi. 4); and have found some reel* in their fear,—Felix trembled; or in their joy, like the stony-ground hearers; but not having had their heart engaged in approaching to God (Jer. xxx. 21), have either sitten down in that common work of enlightenment as their sanctuary, till the trial comes (Matt. xiii. 20, 21); or they return back with the dog to their vomit, from which they had in some measure escaped "through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. ii. 20-22); or they utterly fall away to the hatred and malicious despising and persecuting of Christ and his interests.

We come now to speak to the next thing proposed; and that is, what be the native consequences of true believing? I shall reduce what I will speak of them to these two, viz., sensible union with God, and communion.

First, then, I say, when a sinner receiveth Jesus Christ, as said is, there is presently an admirable union, a strange oneness, between God and the man, sensibly felt in his soul. As the husband and wife, head and body, root and branches, are not to be reckoned two, but one; so Christ, or God in Christ, and the sinner receiving him by faith, are manifestly one. "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Eph. v. 30-32.) "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." (1 Cor. vi. 17.)

* Tremor.

As the Father is in the Son, and Christ is in the Father, so believers are one in the Father and the Son. They are one as the Father and the Son are one,—“I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.” (Jno. xvii. 21–26.) O what a strange interweaving and indissoluble knot there!

Because of this union betwixt God and the believer, (1.) They can never hate one another. The Lord, it is true, by virtue of the eternal union with his people in covenant love, has never hated them, and henceforth never will. “As no man hateth his own flesh at any time, but nourisheth and cherisheth it,” so doth Christ his people. (Eph. v. 29.) He may be angry, so as to correct and chastise the man that is a believer; but all he doth to him is for his good and advantage. All the Lord’s paths must be mercy and truth to him. (Ps. xxv.) “All things must work together for good” to him. (Rom. viii.)

On the other side the believer can never hate God maliciously; for “he that is born of God sinneth not.” (1 Jno. iii. 9.) For the Lord hath resolved and ordained things so that his hand shall undoubtedly be upon all believers for good; and that they shall never get leave to hate him, and be so plucked out of his hand.

(2.) Because of this union there is a strange sympathy and fellow-feeling between God and the believer. The Lord is afflicted with the man’s affliction. (Isa. lxiii. 9.) He doth tenderly, carefully, and seasonably resent it, as if he were afflicted with it. “He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.” (Zech. ii. 8.) He is “touched with the feeling of their infirmities” (Heb. iv. 5); and “precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.” (Ps. cxvi. 15.) In a word, what is done to them is done to him; and what is not done unto them is not done unto him. (Matt. xxv.) And “he that receiveth you receiveth me.” (Matt. x. 40.)

On the other part, the zeal of the Lord’s house sitteth in the heart of the believer. (Ps. lxix. 9.) The Lord’s reproach lighteth on the believer. If it go well with *his* affairs, that is the business of his people. So there is a strange sympathy between God and believers, all by virtue of the union between them; because of which these men should hate everything which would compete with him in their love or affections, and should disdain to be slaves to the creatures, since these are the servants of their Lord and Husband, and their servants through him. What a hateful thing for a queen to whore with the servants of her prince and husband.

It is also a shame for a believer to be “afraid of evil tidings;” since the Lord, with whom he is one, alone ruleth all things, and “doth whatsoever pleaseth him in heaven and earth.” “Surely he shall not be moved for ever. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings. His heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.” (Ps. cxii. 7.)

The other great consequence of believing is an admirable, unparalleled communion; by virtue whereof,—1. The parties them-

selves manifestly belong to each other. The Lord is the God of his people. He himself, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is their God, in all his glorious attributes; his justice, as well as his mercy; his wisdom, power, holiness, &c.; for he becometh the God of his people as he often speaketh in the covenant.

On the other part, believers are his people. In their very persons they are his, as the covenant doth speak: "They shall be my people," their head, their heart, their hand, &c., whatsoever they are, they are his.

2. By virtue of this union they have a mutual interest in one another's whole goods and gear, in as far as can be useful. All the Lord's Word doth belong to the believer, threatenings as well as promises for their good; all his ways, all his works of all sorts, special communications, death, devils, even all things, in so far as can be useful. "For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." (1 Cor. iii. 21-23.)

On the other side, all which belongeth to the believer is the Lord's; heritage, children, life, wife, credit, &c., all is at his disposing. If any of these can be useful to him, the believer is to forego them, else he falsifieth that communion, and declareth himself, in so far, unworthy of Christ. "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." (Lu. xiv. 26.)

3. By virtue of this communion there should be much homeliness and familiarity between God and the believer. The Lord has a right to meddle with anything which doth belong to the believer, and do unto him what seemeth good unto him; and the man is not to mistake, or say unto God, "What doest thou?" except in so far as concerneth his conduct. Yea, he is still to say in every case, "Good is the word and will of the Lord." (Isa. xxxix. 8.)

On the other hand, the Lord enables the believer in an humble way to be homely and familiar with God in Christ; so that he may come with boldness to the throne of grace, and not use a number of compliments in his addresses unto God (Heb. iv. 16); for he is no more a stranger unto God. (Eph. ii. 19.) Hence he needs not to speak unto him as one who has acquaintance to make every hour, as many professors do; and it maketh a huge inconsistency in their religion.

The believer also may lay open all his heart unto God: "I have poured out my soul," &c. (1 Sam. i. 15); and impart all his secrets unto him, and all his temptations, without fear of a mistake. The believer also is permitted to inquire into what God doth, in so far as may concern his own conduct, or in so far as may ward off mistakes of the Lord's way, and reconcile it with his Word. So Job xiii. 15: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; but I will maintain mine own ways before him." The

believer is a friend in this respect, as knowing what the master doth. (See Gen. xviii. 23; Jer. xii. 1; Isa. lxiii. 17.)

The believer also is privileged to be homely with God to go in daily with his failings, and seek repentance, pardon, and peace, through Christ's advocateship. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." (Acts v. 31.) "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 Jno. xi. 1.) O how often in one day by virtue of this communion may the believer plead pardon, if he intend not to mock God, or to turn grace into wantonness! The Lord hath commanded men to forgive seventy times seven in one day; and hath hinted there in the parable of a king who took account of his servants how much more the master will forgive. (Matt. xviii. 22-28.)

The believer also is privileged to be homely to intrust God with all his outward concerns; for he doth care for these things. (1 Pet. v. 7.) "If God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Matt. vi. 30.) Yea, the believer is strengthened humbly to put God to it, to make him forthcoming for him in all cases as besemeth, and to help him to suitable fruit in every season, even "grace in time of need." (Heb. iv. 16.) Yea, how great things do believers then seek from him in Christ Jesus, both for themselves and others. "If we ask anything according to his will, we know that he heareth us." (1 Jno. v. 14, 15.) "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do." (Jno. xiv. 13.) "Ask of me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me." (Isa. xlv. 11.)

By what is said it doth appear of how great consequence this grace of believing is, by which a man receiveth Christ Jesus, whom the Father hath sealed, and given for a covenant to the people. It is so honourable for God, answering his very design, and serving his interest in the whole contrivement and manifestation of the gospel, and it is so advantageous to men, that Satan and an evil heart of unbelief do mightily oppose it by moving objections against it.

WILLIAM GUTHRIE.

[William Guthrie was the eldest son of the laird of Pitfrothy, in the shire of Angus. He was a student at the university of St. Andrew's under his cousin, the eminent James Guthrie. While there, studying divinity, the Lord called him by his grace through the ministry of Samuel Rutherford. He suffered much with great terror of God in his soul, until he was brought to find rest, joy, and peace in believing. He disentangled himself immediately from worldly affairs by giving his estate to a brother that he might be wholly devoted to the sacred office of the ministry.

He preached with great success in the parish of Fenwick, Ayrshire. His hearers would assemble on Saturday from distances of 15 or 20 miles, to be in readiness for the Sabbath. At length his extraordinary reputation provoked the prelates, and they procured his expulsion from his

church. But this proved to be only a few months before his death. A painful illness ended his days in the 45th year of his age, 1665. These old Scotch worthies were pre-eminent in grace. Herein it was they shone so brilliantly, as stars in the right hand of Christ. Though not altogether clear in judgment on some points, and the words they often used certainly appear to have a legal sound, we believe it was not intended as such by the writer. All we can say is, we would pray that the Lord would grant to us and others their grace.]

LINES SUGGESTED BY A SERMON

Preached on Sunday Afternoon, May 4th, 1879, from 2 Pet. iii. 18.

THOU art th' eternal God;
 Thou art the King of Heaven;
 Thou art the One by whose rich blood
 Poor sinners are forgiv'n.

'Thou art the Brother kind,
 The Counsellor, the Friend,
 Who having loved the chosen race
 Will love them to the end.

Thou art the faithful Guide,
 The firm, abiding Rock,
 The Shepherd who with tender love
 E'er leads the blood-bought flock.

Lord Jesus, make me grow
 In knowledge of thy will;
 And, O, I want thy blessed Self
 My yearning soul to fill.

I want to walk with thee
 Through life's fast-fleeting day;
 I want thine everlasting arm
 In death to be my stay.

And then, O bid me rise,
 From every burden free,
 Beyond this shadow'd vale, to dwell
 For ever, Lord, with thee.

A FRIEND.

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST speaks majestically, yet with very plain and simple words; as where he says,—“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not.” See how he describes God the Creator, and also his creatures, in plain, clear language, as with a sunbeam. If one of our philosophers or high learned men had described them, what wonderful swelling and high-trotting words would he have paraded, *de ente et essentia*, so that no man could have understood what he meant. 'Tis a great lesson, how mighty divine truth is, which presses through, though she be hemmed in ever so closely; the more she is read, the more she moves and takes possession of the heart.—*Luther*.

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

FRIENDLY ADVICE TO A TRIED ONE.

My dear Friend and Brother in the Lord,—I am sorry you should for a moment apologize for writing so fully the exercises of your mind at the present critical juncture. I feel much for you, and pray the Lord may guide you. As to the portion, "Can two walk together," &c., the answer is plain. When differences exist in fundamental points, then there must be a separation. But when this is not the case, and the two agree in heart, in love to the Lord Jesus, and in desire for the spread of his gospel, and the welfare of his cause and people, minor differences may be put up with for Christ's own sake. We are not all constituted alike, nor do we see things always in the same light. There were evident differences in the apostles; in their gifts, in their style of writing, and, I dare say, in their views on some points. But this word of the psalmist was sweet to me years ago: "He fashioneth their heart alike." All in the body are not eye, nor are all gifted with a spirit of discernment. Those who are, are called upon especially to bear with the weak, who often have strong passions and prejudices; and yet to stand firm for the truth, sometimes amidst a storm of reproaches as painful to the heart as a shower of stones would be to the poor body.

You did not place yourself in your present post. What you have met with, though very painful to bear, is not to be construed into a token or mark of the Lord's displeasure. We are not in these days called to the stake at Smithfield. The devil's great aim is to set the children one against the other. The burning plan was a total failure; and far more devilish wisdom is manifested in the present scheme. Even this is no new thing. No man stood by Paul. And as to the dear Lord Jesus, they all forsook him and fled.

"Gird thy loins up, Christian soldier."

If you leave at this time, every one will think it is in consequence of Mr. W. Now, my feeling is (I may be wrong) that Mr. W. will not take a prudent step if he settles in London. This, however, is a matter I must leave.

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform."

May the best of blessings rest upon you both. Your letter was very sweet and acceptable to us. We join in love and sympathy.

Your affectionate Friend in the Lord,

W. BROWN.

DAILY MERCIES ACKNOWLEDGED.

Dear Brother,—I hope M. has let you know before this that I received your kind letter and the order all right. I was much pleased to see a letter from you, and thought I would write and acknowledge it myself; but I felt too ill to do so then, and too trembling to hold a pen. Through mercy I have been more free from pain the last few days. I sincerely thank you for your great kindness. I do hope, dear brother, if you feel straitened

by sending for so long a time, that you will not mind telling me so; but I hope it is not so. I know the Lord is able to bless any means to fulfil his own purpose, and is faithful to his promises; and a cup of cold water shall not be forgotten. I cannot help feeling what a long time I have received your kindness, and how wonderfully the Lord has supplied our needs, and neither of us able to help towards a living. It often does raise my hope that I shall not sink at last; but sometimes I feel very low. I did last week. No case seemed so like mine as the poor thief's on the cross. He had not much to look back upon, neither a profession, nor a first beginning of the Lord's work in his soul until that time; and yet how blessedly was his prayer answered.

I often look back to see the beginning. If that is right, I know the Lord will never forsake his own work. But when all is dark, I cannot see my signs. Yet I must say the Lord does again and again give me to feel that inward witness that all is right between God and my soul. The 88th hymn of Kent's will tell you more plainly than I can what I mean. Dear brother, I feel more than ever what a great thing salvation is, and greater still to feel an interest in it; and what an awful thing sin is, and how dreadful to be left under the curse due to it. I have many changes and many thoughts here by myself. I never hear a sermon, and seldom see any one to speak with. Sometimes I have that which the world knows nothing of, and I would not change with any other. I have felt something of that promise, "I will be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come." I daily and hourly feel my need of faith and patience, but can get neither till they are given me. With kindest love to you both,

From your affectionate Sister,

Jan. 3rd, 1876.

R. FIELD.

REVIEW.

Life and Love: Records of the Lord's Gracious Dealings with Henrietta Emily Benson (Daughter of the late Bernard Gilpin, M.A.). Compiled chiefly from her own Writings, with some of her Letters and Thoughts on the Book of Job.—May be had of R. B. Benson, Pulverbach, near Shrewsbury; also of W. Benson, West Street, Hertford. Price 1s. 6d., or post free 1s. 8d.

GREAT are the manifest differences exhibited in the experiences of the living family of God; yet there is a perfect harmony amongst them. They all bear the same stamp of divine teaching, and mostly all commend themselves to the church at large. The difference is only in degree. There are some of God's people who are furnished with an experience of divine truth that leads them ahead of their fellow-travellers; but not by their own choice do they go in front. No; it is because their experience has to do with others as well as themselves,—because they are furnished with gifts and grace expressly for others, beyond those which are common to all.

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob possessed an experience of God's gracious leadings in providence and grace in more than an ordinary degree; and it has become the common property of every child of God. The same, too, with the other Bible saints. All these were in some way public persons, and their experience was not of a private nature. Again, if we read Huntington, Warburton, and others, we feel their experience is not of an ordinary type. It not only suits us, but we feel to enter into their trials and conflicts, as though we were walking side by side with them. We see the path cast up. We see the struggle going on within them. Their experience becomes a picture to the eye of the mind, by which we are brought into close communion with Huntington, and gather a sympathetic laugh and cry with Warburton. As such we walk with them in their joys and sorrows. We appear really to talk with them, and they entertain us with their company.

Just so also is it with the preached Word. Who does not know that there is a difference between the preaching of such men as Mr. Gadsby in his day, and that of others who perhaps were equally genuine gracious characters? The preaching of the former, accompanied with divine power, seemed to absorb the mind of gracious hearers and to carry them away into the subject; and they walked up and down with them, and could set their seal to the truth of the testimony. Such as these present, as it were, the living path thrown up before the eye of faith by which it is seen to be the path to heaven.

The experience of such persons, whether written or preached, is not, as we have before said, of an ordinary type, but of that class which Paul describes: "And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation." (2 Cor. i. 6.) From this Scripture it is evident that the experience of some of the Lord's people, whether of men or women, is for the comfort and consolation of others as well as themselves. The experience of these goes beyond themselves. It is for others. But it is true that in the greater number there is but an ordinary measure of experimental knowledge of the truth, which never thus goes beyond themselves.

In this we believe consists the great difference between an acceptable preacher or an acceptable book, and one that is not acceptable. The latter, if it be a book, or a diary, or experience, simply narrates the ordinary occurrences of spiritual life, apart from that clear, vivid description of divine truth which is generally learnt in some extraordinary trial, and which does not fall to the lot of every child of God. The diary or the experience may be correct; but it has not been given for the edification of others, as the apostle says, "whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation," &c. We read the book or hear the sermon, and are compelled to say, so far as truth goes, it appears to be right. But the differ-

ence between the two is this—we read the one, and the other reads us. Accordingly the interest we take in each differs to a considerable degree. We read the book or hear the sermon, and we have done with it. But the book and sermon that read us we have not done with when we close the book, or cease to listen. They have something to say to us. Hence arises that frequent meditation on the subject, which causes a longing to read or hear them again.

Many have been disappointed because their books have not been acceptable to spiritual readers, although the experience contained in them is correct. Likewise many sermons are not acceptable to spiritual hearers, although the hearer is straining every nerve to discover what the preacher is aiming at, until the ear becomes weary, and the patience fails. And why? Because the sermon has not read the hearer, nor produced any real searchings of heart. The failure here we believe to be in a lack of that gracious experience which is intended for the edification of others. It is because the writer or preacher has not been supplied with matter to qualify him for the attempt, not having been “put in trust with the gospel.”

The work under review may be truly said to rank under the class of books that you may read and put down, and read again, and it will to some extent read your own thoughts and experience. We do not mean to say that it takes rank with Huntington's or Warburton's writings; but it coincides with the same character of experience. The reader may judge of this from a few extracts. It appears that the Lord began a work of grace upon Mrs. Benson's heart before she was 13 years of age. We love the native simplicity of a babe in grace, lisping out some attempts to speak of the Lord. It is much like a child learning to speak, when the parents often smile at the blunders it makes. But it would be decidedly out of place to correct the child's talk to that of one of riper years. We much dislike to find that an editor or biographer has changed the language of a new-born child to that of one of riper experience. It is better to let it come out in its native simplicity, as we have it in the following letter, written by Mrs. Benson's sister:

“My dear Father,—Last Friday night I heard Annette crying, and when I asked her what was the matter, she said, ‘O, I am so wicked!’ I said, ‘Is it any particular sin?’ she said, ‘No, it is worse than any particular sin: it is all sin; my heart is so hard I cannot pray. Say something out of the Bible to me. I told her all the texts I could think of at the time, and then said, ‘You must look to Jesus, Annette. Uncle Frank found comfort in only the name of Jesus.’ She replied, ‘But I cannot, I cannot look to Jesus. Repeat to me that hymn—‘Gird thy loins up, Christian soldier,’—which I did until I had said a little of the fourth verse, ‘When assaulted sore by Satan,’ she said, ‘It is the devil that assaults me now, and tells me to lie down and go to sleep, but I can't, I can't, I can do nothing but cry. O, I had forgotten him, I had forgotten the Lord. It is all my own sin that has brought me here. What a dreadful place I am in, I have done nothing but sin for 13 years.

I cannot pray, I cannot look to Jesus. I must get up and kneel down.' I said, 'Do,' upon which she got up and knelt down, and continued for some time sobbing most violently. At last she cried out, 'O, I have got a little light, a very little, O, such a little;' I said, 'Shall I read to you?' She answered, 'Yes, do.' I managed to strike a light, and taking my Testament, asked her, 'Where? Shall I read Mr. Burrell's text last Sunday, was it not in Jno. xiv.?' She said, 'Yes,' and I began to read; but at the third verse she cried out, 'O, I have got it! *I go to prepare a place for you.* I am quite happy! Jesus said he was gone to prepare a place for me. I know it was for me. I shall go to heaven now I am quite sure. I will go to sleep now. Mr. Bourne says he has such sweet sleep after the Lord has made him happy."

We much admire the faithfulness, as well as the affection, of her father, the late Mr. Bernard Gilpin, and the consciousness he had that he could not give grace to his children. He seems to have understood the difference between a child's duty to God and man and the divine operations of God the Spirit upon a newborn soul.* This distinction is manifest in the following extract from Mr. Gilpin's diary:

"I had no particular conversation with my children during the day. They retired to rest about eleven o'clock, and soon afterwards called me. On entering their room Annette burst into involuntary tears and said, 'I am so unhappy! I have been rather comfortable all day, especially when we went into the little chapel, and I prayed there in my heart Solomon's prayer, 'Let thine ears be attentive.' Just now all my hope left me, and dreadful unbelief came in that the Lord would never hear me here, nor give me his presence, as I have found in Hertford and London. I cannot, O I cannot believe, it is dreadful! It is almost a week since he came to me clearly. Will he ever come again? O, I do want him so!' her hands wrung, and her whole frame trembled; but it was perfectly simple. I felt sorely convicted of my own carelessness and sin, thus tacitly reproved by my own dear child. I continued praying by her, confessing my sin, and entreating the Lord's forgiveness. She joined fervently. I said, 'My child, I can't give you faith. The right faith is thus shown to be in the Lord's hand to give.' 'I know it, I know it,' she exclaimed, 'but O, that he would give it me! But, indeed, a week ago, all was clear. Indeed, indeed, the Lord then said these words, and I know it: "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee." But O, did that mean now? O, then, won't he come? Let my sister read me that chapter.' So I left them. Soon after I heard a change in Annette's voice, and they called me back. She said, 'O, indeed, indeed, he is come! Indeed, indeed, he

* We do not know any one who has kept these subjects more distinct than the late Mr. Gadsby. Writing on Sunday schools he says, "I consider that it is possible to teach children their duty both to God and man, yea, and to themselves too, as the creatures of God, without telling them that they have it in their power to obtain eternal salvation by anything they can do. Eternal salvation, in all its bearings, is of the rich, sovereign, free grace of God, and can only be vitally experienced by the divine power and operations of God the Spirit; but that is no reason why we should not endeavour to bring up the rising generation in sobriety, industry, and good order, and teach them to read and hear the Word of the Lord; for we know not what God, in the dispensations of his grace and providence, has to do with them, and he has said, 'Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.'"

is come! How I remember he once said that if I go on sinning, he will remove my candlestick. And now he has restored my candlestick so bright.”

It appears to us that the hearing of the Word was one chief design she wished to live for. The probability of losing her father's ministry, through her intended marriage with Mr. Charles Benson, entered deeply into her thoughts, and caused much exercise and, we may say, real trouble of soul. She was then expecting to live at Sherborne, in Dorsetshire, 14 miles distant from the preached Word. But by a coincidence of circumstances, a letter was put into her hands, written by a godly man from the same part 27 years before.

“The fact that any one who had written such a letter should have once resided in a neighbourhood, which in prospect looked so barren to me, stirred a spring of faith and hope I had not before felt; and I was deeply affected, when on making inquiries through my future husband, I heard the writer still lived three miles from Sherborne, and even preached every Sunday in a small chapel in that town. . . . And at a future time it was from the lips of that deeply tried and despised man, that the Lord was pleased to seal on my heart his Word, made through the Spirit quick and powerful, separating the precious from the vile, and proving as the bread of heaven to my soul.”

The name of this godly man was Mr. Thomas Small.* He preached in a chapel at the back of a stable-yard of an old inn. At the first sight of the place and people, she appears to have had many questioning and carnal reasonings; but she says, “I was much struck by the deep earnestness and sobriety of the preacher.” Mr. Small's preaching was somewhat fresh to her; yet it found an echo in her heart. But at the second time of hearing, the Word came with power, and produced the effect upon her soul, which we have before described—it read the person. She was judged by it, as the following extract shows:

“A fortnight passed before I went again, and this time even more distressed and harassed than before. I went like a criminal, and was taunted within that I was sure to get ensnared. Indeed, in the state I then was, I believe it was true I could sit in judgment on nothing. I was no sooner seated, however, than I found myself judged, and that not by the Word which man's wisdom teacheth. My attention was fixed ere I had begun to call it up. I knew from that moment Mr. Small was commissioned to speak God's Word to me, and in the clearness of that light I felt myself to be made naked and open before God. No other thought turned my attention up to the conclusion of the service. What of consequences or appearances, if we find ourselves standing in this light?

“I thought I never heard the Scriptures read with such authority and awe. The text was, ‘I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away.’ (Ezek. xxxiv. 16.) As I listened it seemed to me that the preacher was describing the lost, the really lost, and to each sentence I inwardly answered, that is my case; for I trembled at the Word and judgment of God. The things spoken brought the question to a point, In what relation do you stand to God this day?

* A letter of Mr. Small's was inserted in the “G. S.,” Feb. 1881; which, by the date, may have been the letter referred to above.

It had nothing to do with any past day, or any former experience. The Word came nigh to me, Are *you* among these lost, driven away, broken, sick? At last Mr. Small paused and fixed his eye on me. (He has told me since he was struck by my evident attention to his past discourse.) And he said, 'Is any one before me now thus lost and driven away? To you I say, You shall assuredly be brought again. He then went through the returning promises in the text in language well known to me. I had not come to a people of strange speech that I could not understand, nor did he speak parables, or things too high. To everything he said I set my seal, even to the last beautiful words, called the blessing, at the end of his short but very expressive concluding prayer. I looked up at him for one moment to say in my heart, 'Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God,' and then left the chapel unashamed before God or man."

This is the kind of hearing or reading for which we are contending, and which only can make the preacher or book profitable or acceptable. It is thus receiving the Word into the heart that gives a deep experimental knowledge of the truth, founding the soul deeply and firmly therein. So that into whatever state or condition the person may get, the truths of the gospel remain unshaken, and are firmly believed to be of divine authority. The words of John Berry, an old friend of ours, show the soul-supporting power of such well-grounded confidence. When asked on his death-bed how he felt, he replied, "Well, I am not as comfortable as I should like to be; but this I know—if the God I have believed in is not the God of the Bible, there is *no other*. If the Christ I have believed in is not the Christ of God, there is no Christ; for there is no other. If the atonement I have believed in is not the right one, there is no other. And if the gospel I have believed in is not of God, there is no gospel." There is no doubt that hundreds of the children of God could not have felt that firmness of faith John Berry experienced while in the dark. They have never been in those dreadful afflictions, trials, and temptations, where every evidence appears to be swept away, and the faithfulness of God left alone to prop up the soul. Without a well-founded knowledge in the preacher or writer of the faithfulness of God thus obtained, we are sure that there will be no authority in the Word preached or in the book. We are not here speaking of the general nature of the work of grace on the heart, but we doubt the authority of such persons to preach or write. In the following extract the reader can see the subject of these "Records" passing through these deep waters:

"One morning my aunt Matilda Gilpin came to sit with me. At first she was too silent, but after a while she began to press me to speak. I determined not to utter a word; indeed I had nothing to communicate but my dreadful fear. However, after she had tried many times, I thought I will tell her the worst, and then she can say no more. With this I began in great fear, and told her that as to my religion it had utterly failed me in the time of affliction, and all I could say was, having been no support then I feared it never would be. Saying this I turned on the pillow, and thought what would my aunt feel at hearing that. For a time she did not reply, and then very gently repeated the

words, 'Ye are they that have continued with me in my temptations.' After this, though alone for some time, we neither spoke. But those words fell on my heart as a dew from the Lord. It was but little at first, but very wonderful to me. The sound of them I shall never forget,—'Ye are they that have continued with me in my temptations.' Continued with Jesus! I said to myself, 'I have continued with him! Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!' That one word seemed to fill heaven and earth."

Passing on to her last days, Mrs. Benson had a long and trying illness, by which she was brought to extreme weakness, and at one time to lose her consciousness. Yet it is clear from the account that she was still assured of her interest in the Redeemer. When she became aware of her mind having wandered she was led to make it a matter of prayer, and with what success the following extract will show:

"From the time she became fully aware that her mind had wandered, she watched and prayed earnestly against it; often asking her husband to pray she might sleep undisturbed by dreams and delirium. And she was never afterwards carried away by it."

She finished her course Sept. 24th, 1880, and entered into eternal rest without a cloud or a fear resting on her mind for some days previously.

"Monday, Sept. 20th.—She could touch nothing but a little water, and complained of intense thirst. She said, 'I think thirst is one of our worst sufferings. What a great deal I see contained in the promise, "neither thirst any more."' But now the time she longed for was at hand. After a restless night, in the morning of Wednesday, a slight alteration was perceived by those who watched her, perfect peace evidently filling her spirit; and she beckoned, and smiled, and tried to speak. This she did several times during the day. Her husband said to her, 'Are you happy?' She spoke gently, 'Happy! O yes;' and smiled sweetly. Towards the end of the day following her breathing became softer and softer, and before sunrise on Sept. 24th her spirit fled, where 'Glory, shadeless, shineth,
In Immanuel's land.'

"She was in the 49th year of her age."

It is comfortable to witness the triumphant death of the saints. By it is given to others a confirmation of God's faithfulness to the end, and of the victory of divine grace. It is in such scenes we see life triumphing in the jaws of mortality,—that death has been abolished, and life and immortality brought to light through the gospel. (2 Tim. i. 10.) And a lively testimony is borne to the same truths which the Holy Spirit seals upon the heart, such as the reality of the work of grace and of the application of mercy to the soul.

Yet it may be that too much stress is laid on a triumphant exit from this world, to the discouragement of the friends of those who are said to "die in the dark." We do not believe any of God's children in reality die in the dark. In attempting to comfort the friends and relatives of those who have been thought to die in such a manner, it has been said that Jesus died in the dark. How this mistaken notion can be entertained we cannot tell; for Jesus, just before he gave up the ghost, cried out, "It is finished." This

surely is not dying in the dark. No; it was the last great triumphant shout of the Redeemer after he had obtained the victory. It was then he cried out, "It is finished." A child of God may be in great darkness of mind up to a few minutes prior to his departure out of this world, and the darkness may remain until all power of expression in words is gone; but even then it has been evident from expressions of countenance and otherwise that some have entered triumphantly into eternal glory.

Besides, it must certainly be true that the communion of saints in dying circumstances is not interrupted by natural weaknesses. For the new man is not subject to decay, go backward, or in any way become diminished; but must necessarily increase in vigour, because the Lord gives "grace for grace." Hence, should the full exercise of the brain be interrupted up to the last moment, it does not interfere with the soul's communion with God.

Indeed, however distressing the condition may appear outwardly, the spiritual life of the soul remains protected from all harm, whatever violent contest may be raging against it. A remarkable occurrence was once related to us in confirmation of this truth. A minister while preaching was suddenly bereft of his rationality, and at the same time a flood of blasphemous words were uttered by him,—blasphemies which appeared to be of no ordinary character. He was taken home, and lay in this condition for about nine months, continuing to pour out the most dreadful oaths and cursings. About three days before his death his rationality was restored; and he said, "O how fearfully Satan has been tempting me to blaspheme God, and with such language as I could not relate. But I am so thankful he has never compelled me to utter it. God has given me the victory over him."

Here we see there was no consciousness of having uttered the words, and consequently no guilt. The poor man, though deprived of the proper use of his brain, had been struggling all the while against the power of the enemy, and God had brought him safely through without once yielding to the temptation, or leaving a trace of guilt upon his mind; and given him the victory. And the same power, we fully believe, will support all God's children, and bear them triumphantly through their dying moments, whether conscious at the last or unconscious, when they are past making known their state to those who may be present with them.

We have further to notice Mrs. Benson as a letter-writer. It is evident she was a woman of some natural vigour of mind, which, coupled with a clear experience of divine truth, enabled her to express herself in much simplicity of thought and originality of conception, as the following letters will show. The second letter was written only three months before her death.

"My dear Mr. Small,—I have been wishing to write for some time, but many things come in to hinder me, and lately especially I have found so many changes in my mind as to call in question one day all I felt the day before. To this path I well know you are no stranger, and were it not that I can believe all have walked in the same, who

ever arrived with Bunyan's Pilgrim at the Celestial City, I should indeed be cast down; but I am secretly and sweetly assured that there is no other way, although I do find this chastening is grievous to the flesh. On Friday evening it pleased the Lord Jesus to draw near to my spiritual sense, and it did seem to me as if he renewed his covenant with me as at the first; it was as a Bethel to my soul, for I could truly say, 'Now I know that God is my God, and will be with me as he has been with me, till he brings me to my end in peace.' I cannot tell you, and I could but faintly tell him, the fears that instantly arose in my mind, Satan strongly urging me to believe that in thus giving myself up entirely into the Lord's hands, I should now have nothing but trial and affliction to the end of my days, and representing before me in the strongest light my weakness, and reminding me that I always did sink and despond at the very sight of trouble. I still was helped to struggle against him, and finally said with great awe and tenderness, 'You know *nothing* of the way in which it will please the Lord to lead me.' It seemed as if he then fled, and I felt satisfied, be my future path what it might, I should lose nothing by falling entirely into the hands of the Lord, while something secretly whispered, 'for very great are his mercies.' Indeed, great they have been to me. Never in my life before have I felt so sweet a blessing in watching for and receiving his providential mercies, as lately.

There are two texts which describe my case most truly, 'This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles,' and this, 'Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.' I believe I shall never be anything stronger or greater in this life than that 'poor man,' for I have often felt as if I must pray for everything, and could only meet the smallest trial by prayer. My fears have been equally high, almost overwhelming all; at last I think I begin really to discover that patience must have her perfect work. I often read Mr. Bourne's letters with tears, for I find in them all my own exercises most clearly set forth, and much advice that it will be my mercy to follow.

"I remain, yours most truly,

"Yeovil, July 22nd, 1862."

"H. E. B.

"My dear Richard,—I have had some seasons of intense pain, followed by intervals of complete rest. My weakness increases. I have no spiritual impression as to the work outwardly; but I shall not be ashamed world without end. I scarcely wish to say more. The apostle says, 'I have fought,' and none will know the peace I know unless they too have fought. Some time ago I asked for the perfect love that should cast out fear. I have not in this suffering had to go and ask again, but to receive, love without one fear. Not one wish but his. Many I love come before me. O that they might be made spiritually wise! I have laboured for some. The Lord has made me do so, but I can't give it to them. I don't mean grace, of course not. But that they may be wise, and not wrap up the Lord's talent without increase. Last night I felt I had received tenfold increase. I never believed this before. I wish now to have this to myself, lest I come short. so read it only yourself at present, especially as I am not out of bow-shot. Do not think I rejoice as if not aware the armour must not be put off. I cannot so much ask, as tell the Lord I believe all he has promised. Nothing I have felt proves to me I shall not recover, only it proves I am made ready, and I feel indeed like the virgins gone forth to meet the bridegroom.

"Your affectionate Sister,

"June 2nd, 1880."

"H. E. B.

One thing we admire in the book is the consistency which runs through the whole. There is a harmony between the beginning and the ending. The same truths Mrs. Benson received at the commencement of her religion were precisely the same as those she held to her dying day. This is what we do not always find in persons who appear to start well. Their beginning seems to savour of a work of grace. There is something like a law-work, soul-trouble, seeking after God, and great earnestness, which appear to end in gospel-liberty. But the fruits which grow from this so-called gospel-liberty bear no resemblance to the fruits of the Spirit. They are quite of another nature. The persons who attain to this liberty never advance beyond a natural knowledge of the fall and the recovery therefrom; and having obtained some quietness from the guilt of natural conscience, they mistake this for gospel peace. They have a legal knowledge; and of such the apostle affirms: "Which hast the form of knowledge and of truth in the law." (Rom. ii. 20.) But here they remain, stuck fast in the law of rewards and punishment. The Holy Spirit has never been given them, who leads all the saints to feel the bondage of the law. Hence, if these professors are teachers, they begin to speculate on the Scriptures, and propound rules not found in the Word of God, which tend to strife and confusion. Their word presents itself as the word of man only, bearing no sweet anointing of the Spirit to the souls of God's children.

Having once attained to this legal peace, there is nothing more for them to learn. They have gained their highest point, whence they survey their path, and discover how foolish they have been to fear and doubt. Such things they cast away as fit only for people who grovel in the earth. The fact is the whole of their knowledge of the fall and of creature inability, not having been tried, has never been proved to their conscience; which causes it quickly to change its appearance and character; and in effect they practically deny both. They then make an attack upon the exercised children of God, and charge them with living below their privileges. This is generally the first sign of the downward course, even from the letter of the truth; and, exchanging the words of the Holy Spirit, they bring forth a well-braided whip to lash the poor children of God, who are unable to render the full tale of bricks. And while these task-masters ply the lash, they cry out, "We preach Christ. We desire to know nothing but Christ." Whereas the Spirit of Christ is not discoverable in any part of their conduct. These professors or teachers can have no sympathy with those who groan under the weight of sin, and are struggling by divine grace to live before God according to his Word.

Real experience is the great struggle which is being waged continually between grace and sin. The result of that struggle proves in the end that grace shall reign, but that sin is a mighty foe not to be played with, nor yet to be overcome by human power. We feel certain that no one who has been engaged in this warfare can, for any length of time, drop into "Brethrenism."

It is not possible, for they would soon find true the words of the apostle: "When I would do good, evil is present with me." This struggle also gives the soul a sickening and abhorrence of sin. He hates it and detests it as the procurer of all his griefs and sorrows. All of this shows plainly that persons who despise experimental religion are ignorant of the two principles found in every quickened soul.

A SONG OF PRAISE FOR THE PARDON OF SIN.

My God a God of pardon is.
 His bosom gives me ease.
 I have not, do not please my God,
 Yet mercy doth him please.
 My sins aloud for vengeance call ;
 But lo ! a fountain springs
 From Christ's pierced side, which louder cries,
 And speaketh better things.
 My sins have reach'd up to the heav'ns ;
 But mercy's height exceeds.
 God's mercy is above the heav'ns
 Above my sinful deeds.
 My sins are many, like the stars,
 Or sands upon the shore ;
 But yet the mercies of my God
 Are infinitely more.
 My sins in bigness do arise,
 Like mountains great and tall ;
 But mercy, like a mighty sea,
 Covers these mountains all.
 This is a sea that's bottomless,
 A sea without a shore.
 For where sin hath abounded much
 Mercy abounds much more.
 Manasseh, Paul, and Magdalen
 Were pardon'd all by thee.
 I read it and believe it, Lord,
 For thou hast pardon'd me.
 When God shall search the world for sin,
 What trembling will be there !
 " O rocks and mountains, cover us !"
 Will be the sinner's prayer.
 But the Lamb's wrath they need not fear
 Who once have felt his love.
 And they that walk with God below
 Shall dwell with God above.
 Rage earth and hell ; come life ; come death ;
 Yet still my song shall be,
 " God was, and is, and will be good
 And merciful to me."

JOHN MASON.

INQUIRY AND ANSWER.

Dear Mr. Editor,—Having occasion to be in Hampshire some time since, a friend called my attention to a list of subscribers for a prize for a steeplechase race in the neighbourhood (a yearly game). Amongst the subscribers (will you believe it), I was shown the names of some who give their portion, yet profess to be members of a Strict Baptist church in Surrey. We could, we hope, by God's help, answer what we ask according to God's Word; but your testimony would reach where ours would not. Will you kindly answer,

1. Is it consistent for such men to be allowed to hold membership in a gospel church, and thus reproach Christ's name? They profess him, yet by wicked acts deny him.

2. Can such possess a grain of tender regard for God's Name before the world, according to the Bible?

3. Can such love a discriminating gospel ministry? I have heard that some of them want Christ preached, but surely not God's Christ, who separates between sin and holiness.

4. Ought not the church where they are members to deal with them?

AN INQUIRER,

ONE WHO SORROWS FOR ZION'S STATE.

ANSWER.

All these questions are involved within one another; for if persons are not worthy to hold membership, it becomes a matter of course that they ought to be dealt with according to church discipline, and separated from that membership they so unworthily hold. And indeed we do not believe that persons who so entirely mix with the spirit of the world can show any signs of possessing any tender regard for God's Name before the world, or love a discriminating gospel ministry. The spirit of this age is so completely opposite to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the fear of the Lord so greatly opposed to such a spirit as the present age manifests, that one of these two things must be true,—that if they possess the fear of the Lord in their hearts, it cannot be in exercise, or before their eyes; as Peter, who had the fear of God in his heart, but not in exercise, before his eyes, when he denied his Master with oaths and curses. Or they must be entirely destitute of the fear of God in their souls.

We deeply deplore the awful spirit abroad in the earth, and which is corrupting many of the professed followers of Jesus Christ. While we hold unflinchingly the doctrines of free and sovereign grace, we fully believe, according to the testimony of God's Word, that we are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. ii. 10.) Good works, then, are God's enablings, and the fruits of divine grace in the soul. Where these are lacking, we have no right to believe that the kingdom of grace is implanted in such person's hearts; for, "by their fruits ye shall know them."

Obituary.

THE EXPERIENCE OF MRS. E. NORTON, OF STAMFORD, TAKEN FROM HER DIARY. WITH A FEW PARTICULARS OF HER LAST DAYS.

Stamford, Sept. 3rd, 1856. I have for some time had a desire to write a little, as the Lord may enable me so to do. After 34 years of ups and downs, and all the painful events I have had to pass through, I now prize them as a blessing, and hope the Lord will sanctify every providence, and bring me to bear the trials appointed for me, to the end of my days. Should this fall into the hands of any one who might think it worth their perusal, and it should in any measure prove a comfort to their souls, may they ever remember the God that has brought me thus far, and be thankful.

In the year 1822 I was wished to attend a private prayer-meeting, when I trust the Lord met with me and convinced me of sin; and ever since that time I have had, more or less, a great concern for my soul. At times indeed it has been the subject of much fluctuation; yet, trusting all these things have been working for my good and God's glory, may I still live to praise him more, and be more pursuing after a closer walk with him, and have my affections fixed more on things above. I trust my soul is labouring and panting for this blest attainment; but I fall short. Still I do believe his dealings with me have been to reclaim, not to destroy.

At the private meeting I named they were of the Methodist persuasion. I attended it a short time; but could get nothing to satisfy my soul, although I worked very hard in soul-matters. A close neighbour of mine was at the first meeting with me; and we were both invited to attend one evening in particular, as they said, "to pray us into the blessing." But O! I trust the work was too deep upon my soul by the mighty power of God, that convinced me that it was not in man to deliver me; so I could not go.

After a time I was accepted as a member of the Independents, and remained with them seven years. Still I could not settle there. Then I was led to the chapel where Mr. Hardy preached, and was at once convinced that that doctrine alone would do for me,—not to say anything about comfort; for at that time I was in the greatest distress of soul and body. I had a small family, and was in expectation of being obliged to go into the public business. This I had to do, and spend 14½ long years in it. I was kept seeking the Lord; although I found it a very painful life to a tender conscience. Such was my life then, and so I find it now; no sooner one trouble is over than another comes in some way or other. I was enabled to labour on in the strength of the Lord. At length a way was made for me to sit under a dear man of God, Mr. Philpot; and I was sometimes comforted, and sometimes could not see my signs.

But to say a little more about the first beginning of the Lord's work upon my soul. As near as I can remember, it was about four years before I was led to see in what way I was to be saved. It was not until one day a great light shone into my troubled soul, and showed me it was through a Saviour's sufferings, that I had any hope. It came with such light and power, I was quite convinced it was from the Lord. Then these words followed: "And lest I should be exalted above measure . . . there was given to me a thorn in the flesh." I felt such joy and comfort, I thought I was going singing all the way to heaven. But O what I have had to pass through since then!

O my God, search me and try me; only "remember me with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people," and may I be looking forward to that day of eternal sunshine, when I trust joyfully to bid adieu to sin and the painful feelings of corruption.

O Lord, thou knowest the sorrows that oppress my spirit, so that I cannot come to the point that Jesus is mine, and I am his. This has been my grief for many years; but let me daily confess it as my experience. It is what my soul thirsteth after. O my God, go on to bless, and guide, and support, and deliver me from all the evils which daily destroy my soul; and let my life which thou hast spared still hope in thy mercy, believing all things will work for good to the Lord's own people. A little hope that I am one.

Sept. 4th, 1856. I have had a very gloomy night, with forebodings of something painful. I rose in the morning to various trials in my family; but may they all prove effectual to soften my heart, and sanctify my spirit. The Lord has whispered, "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it." O let me not be deceived. Enable me to bear with patience all that is appointed for me; and give me grace for every day of need. I have experienced that these things alone have been the means to lead me to thyself; but a cross without a God is heavy indeed. Lord, be with me, and that's enough. Thou, O God, canst alone stay the billows that arise to cause these painful feelings. Sanctify them for my good.

Sept. 5th. Much harassed. Hardly know how to look up for a blessing, because of corruption. But O my God, that I may be truly sanctified, and prepared for thy pleasure.

In the course of the day, compelled to go to the Lord. I cannot but say, "O Lord, deliver me." "How hard and rugged" is my way; but I am fully sensible from whom my help must come. Yet O how backward!

Sept. 6th. Although my hands are very busily employed, I am in some measure led to believe there is a little light in my soul. But I do not enjoy the full assurances my soul breathes after. Deliver me, O Lord; for I am very weak in soul. Forsake me not, O Lord.

Sept. 7th. Sunday. Reading the parable of the sower this morning, when I came to ver. 13 I knew I had heard the Word

with joy; and great fear arose that I had no root in me. O my God, decide these doubts and fears. I have indeed heard the Word with joy, and been enabled to hope, and wait, believing there is a set time to favour Zion. O my God, whatever I suffer by the way,—

“When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside.”

O that I could by the eye of faith look upwards, and view the Saviour as my Advocate and Friend.

Sept. 8th. A very gloomy day. Much tried because I can retain very little of the Word preached, and enjoyed by me. O God, bid these gloomy fears depart.

Sept. 9th. Much humbled in soul for the many mercies bestowed on one so unworthy. For a short time I believe I had a faint view of Jesus on the cross; but was not enabled to believe it was for me. O God, deliver me from these doubts and fears; and enable me to come forth and say, “Jesus is mine.” Then I think my soul would be more and more humbled.

Sept. 10th. Very lifeless in soul this morning; dead to asking a blessing either for temporal mercies, or spiritual. I fear that I am not taught to see and feel sin in its nature and defilement, which distresses me; besides other thoughts and perplexities; which are known to thee, O Lord.

Sept. 15th. For some days I have been in a most deadly stupor, and can give no account of anything spiritual. O Lord, stir me up that I may come forth and praise thee.

Sept. 16th. Still in a very miserable state of soul; sick of self, and all things around me. I thought I would see if any one had been led in the same way. Reading Hart's “Experience” I felt a little encouraged. I was not permitted to go into such lengths of sin; yet, O my God, I do feel I need to be washed in the blood of Christ; and desire to enjoy, by a living experience, that vital union which all the living family of God enjoy, more or less, as the Lord enables them to do.

Sept. 17th. I think I never felt such strong emotions of displeasure at trifling things. I arose untouched with the blessings of refreshing sleep. This melancholy frame remained throughout the day. Ah! Whither shall I flee! The Almighty has taken vengeance for that I am so hardened and blinded. O Lord, I would commit my ways unto thee. Thou alone knowest I am weary and heavy-laden. Deliver me, O my God.

Sept. 21st. Still miserable and dark; cannot read, or get any comfort from hearing. O God, let a little dew fall on my thirsty and barren soul; and let me still live to praise thee. How distressed to think that I can only sigh to be delivered from this wretched frame of mind. O God, smite the rock and the waters will flow.

Sept. 25th. Much cast down by reason of the difficulties of the way.

“ How long, dear Lord, how long
 Deliverance must I seek?
 And fight with foes so very strong,
 Myself so very weak?”

“ How have I spent in sighs and tears
 A tedious series of years!
 Oft have I sought a kind release;
 But O! My sorrows still increase.”

Sept. 30th. Some days of severe trial and distress. O Lord, when thou visitest me with clouds and darkness I tremble and sink. Fear, sorrow, and temptations of Satan have greatly overwhelmed me. None but the Lord can relieve me.

Oct. 3rd. The distress of soul has been greatly mitigated. O may I esteem it a great mercy, and be more submissive, and not murmur under thy chastening hand. O my God, make me more acquainted with my sin and misery, and thankful for every mercy. O Lord, I would commit myself to thee, and leave every want to thy disposal. Sanctify every affliction; and suffer it not to produce stupor, or peevishness.

O how sin and unbelief distress my soul. But thou alone knowest the way and what is best for me. Enable me to trust thee in the dark and stormy day, though it be in the way of the cross. Make me still to look up to thee, and believe thou alone wilt bring me to my desired end.

Oct. 4th. I have been enabled to look to the Lord and rejoice that he has brought me through so many years of trials and difficulty, and not left me to fill up my time in sin and the folly of the world. I cannot but still hope I shall triumph in thy delivering power. O Lord Jesus, who art the same to-day and for ever, enable me to commit myself and family concerns to thy care, believing thou canst manage, and overrule them all, for my spiritual good, and thy own glory.

“ I want to know myself aright;
 To hear what Jesus saith;
 I want repentance in thy sight;
 I want a stronger faith.

“ Lord Jesus, let these blessings flow.
 He bought them with his blood.
 And let a worthless sinner know
 Thy promises made good.”

Oct. 17th. Felt encouraged under the Word preached, Ps. lxxiii. 5, and from the hymn mentioned,

“ Ye lambs of Christ's fold,” &c.

Surely my heart and soul did bear witness, and hope sprang up that it would be all well in the Lord's own time. This pleasing change led me to reflect that it is best to wait on God from day to day, sighing and hoping that the Lord will in his own time deliver me, and bring me to see my interest more clearly in the finished work of Christ. For, O my God, thou alone knowest my grief upon that point. Make me to improve present enjoyments

if they spring from thy bountiful hand. Make me to call thee "My Father;" and it will sweeten the bitterest cup thy providence may appoint. O to be left to my own barrenness and will! Teach, humble, sanctify, and bless; then I must say, "Father, thy will be done."

"My mind what clouds of darkness veil;
Terrors on every side assail!
By guilt oppressed, enslaved by fear,
My thoughts run out to meet despair."

Oct. 22nd. O Lord, I desire to be thankful for an opportunity to attend the means thou hast appointed; but, O my God, I do indeed see much of the deceit, and desperate wickedness of my own heart; so that I dare not ask for the removal of any cross thou afflictest me with. But with a little hope in the soul, the yoke is more easy, and the ponderous burden light. Do, O God, keep me humble under them, and in the midst of them. Thou alone knowest I have been very anxious to have many a bitter trial removed, and thou hast removed them; but it has been thy will that there should be others more painful. So by these things, O my God, bring me to say thou art wise and good in all thy dealings with me; and help me to say in my last moments, "It is well."
(*To be concluded.*)

ELIZABETH ERREY.—On Oct. 22nd, 1880, aged 43, Elizabeth Errey, of Camperdown, Victoria, Australia.

My dear departed daughter was brought up under the sound of pure truth, and in her case, as well as in many similar cases, it is difficult to know when the work of regeneration first took place. Her Bible of all books was her chief treasure. Little was said by her; but her concern was plainly seen in her manner and conduct.

When it pleased the Lord to manifest himself to her as *her* God and Saviour, she could not keep that to herself. It was in this way. In the midst of her trouble the Saviour presented himself to the eyes of her mind as hanging upon the cross, suffering for her. "Not a word was spoken," she said; "but I could not shun the sight. Do what I would, or go where I would, it was still before me, until for a time I was lost in wonder, love, and praise, hardly knowing whether in the body or out."

She married a cousin of the same name, and had 13 children. Nine are still living to feel their loss. She was taken away rather unexpectedly. Her illness was not thought to be dangerous until the doctor told us there was no hope of her recovery two days previous to her death. She had been seeking and longing for another gracious visit from the Lord; and I believe he was pleased to come and visit her heart; for she was heard to say, when alone, "I can leave them all *now*," meaning her family. She has passed away from a world of sin and sorrow to that blessed land where sorrow is unknown. T. P. ERREY.

ELIZABETH HILLS.—On March 24th, 1882, aged 42, Elizabeth Hills, of Aldershot.

In attempting to put down a few things concerning our late departed friend, I do so under a hope that it may be the means of strengthening weaklings in faith. She was a timid, fearing soul about how matters stood between her and God.

Some few years ago I addressed her in something like the following words: "Mrs. Hills, I have been trying many times, by beating, as it were, about the bush, to know what God has done for your immortal soul; but you have never told me. Now, as before the Lord, do tell out a little, and how long you have been concerned about your state as a poor undone sinner." "O," she tremblingly replied, "no one has ever asked me such a solemn question before, nor have I said a word to any one to let them think I know anything about soul-matters that I know of, for 21 years, or nearly so. I once spoke to a friend, when very young, who replied, 'Ah, many young people have such impressions as those, and they wear off again.' And I have been afraid mine would, and afraid to speak to any one ever since." "Well," I replied, "my friend, I will not speak sharply to you; therefore give me some few hints about what made the weighty impression upon your mind at first." She then began by saying, "When somewhere about 17 years of age a young person whom I knew and loved was taken ill and died. My mind was impressed with the dreadful state I was in before a holy God. And I felt my guilt hang heavy upon me, so that I could not go into company, and enjoy it as others seemed to do,—not even among some who professed God's Name. And day after day I used to sigh, and secretly try to ask the Lord to make me feel his mercy, and prepare me for death; for my sins had been many, although I had been kept very moral from my infancy."

I have on several occasions felt it profitable to enter into a little converse with her; but always found she was the subject of much fear whether she was right, whether she had been led into the truth by the Holy Spirit, or whether she had become serious through having been brought up under the truth. She was brought down to the gates of death according to all appearance several times a few years ago. But the gracious all-wise Lord raised her from time to time.

A few months since, her mind was much distressed, fearing she should give up the truth as one had who had professed it for several years, and who had gone into the ranks of the Free-willers. She expressed great sorrow, and said, "O! Shall I hold out to the end?"

On March 15th, having been very unwell for some little time, she thought she should like to take out her two youngest children for a little air; and went to witness the funeral of the surgeon-general of the camp, who had dropped down dead a few days previously. But instead of deriving any benefit, both she and the children became worse. One of the children soon manifested symp-

toms of bronchitis; the other, inflammation of the lungs. Our friend also was taken so ill, she was obliged to be in bed in one room, and the children in another. On Sunday morning, 19th, the youngest child, aged 14 or 15 months, was not expected to live, and the fond parent felt she must dress, and be with her child. Her medical attendant coming in ordered her to bed at once. Inflammation and pleurisy had set in. She continued to get worse. I called to see her on the Thursday, and asked her how she was in her mind. She said, "Do pray for me. I am very ill, and I fear how matters will go with me. I am afraid I am not right."

She clung to the hope of being raised again, till at last it seems to have struck her, "Perhaps the Lord was about to spare the dear children, and take her." When fully aware that she was indeed brought near her end, and her pain had nearly ceased (probably from mortification), she said, "O, may I be numbered with them! They would have had me join with them here long ago, but I always feared too much, lest it should only be presumption; but I hope not." Her doctor was sent for, and told his dying patient that "indeed nothing more could now be done for her bodily help." She then turned lovingly to those around her, and bade each a solemn good-bye. Then she said to her sorrowing husband, "I did hope to have been restored again to you; but if the Lord please to take me away, you must give me up."

After this she appeared to be wholly taken up with things above, and was heard exclaiming, "O, I shall see him as he is! Be forever with the Lord! Praise him, praise him! Praise the dear Jesus!

"And pass the river telling
The triumphs of my King."

When past speaking, she waved her hand almost to the last moment, and thus passed away.

J. BENNETT.

RUTH BENDER.—On March 12, 1882, aged 81, Ruth Benger, late of All Cannings, for many years a member of the church at Allington.

Her call by grace was very conspicuous. She was left early in life with two children, her husband having died from consumption. In her efforts to support her children she used to go out as charwoman, and once attended a family with small-pox. She felt a desire to help them, none in the village being willing; but was afterwards seized with the same complaint herself. She had been considered a very moral character, and had attended church regularly and the sacrament, and was rich in what is styled "good works." In this affliction the Lord began to work very powerfully on her conscience, showing her how holy was his law, and how guilty she was before him. For weeks her distress was intolerable. She was brought to the borders of despair. Her cry was that the Lord would reveal himself to her, and speak peace and pardon to her soul. The Lord very mercifully appeared, and she was blessedly delivered; so that her joy was greater than her sorrow had been. The

promises of God's Word were so powerfully applied to her heart, and, to use her own words, the robe of Christ's righteousness so blessedly wrapped around her by God the Holy Spirit, it seemed as though her full soul could hold no more of everlasting love, and that she must die, and be with Jesus for ever. Hymn 181 was most sweet to her, especially the last four verses. It begins,

“Head of the church triumphant,” &c.

To use her own words, all heaven appeared, to her feelings, to exult in her salvation. She was some time in this enjoyment, and was eventually restored to health; and then began trials and troubles. But the Lord did not leave her. She attended the ministry at Allington, and was much blessed in hearing the good men who at that time supplied there.

A sermon of Mr. Philpot's from Ps. cxxxviii. 8 was much blessed to her soul. She had been in great trouble; but her joy was then so great she could scarcely walk home. She then found the promise sweetly fulfilled in her extremity. Mr. Godwin's ministry, too, was a great blessing to her, also that of the writer; and she much prized Mr. Hazlerigg's writings on the Song of Solomon.

In the closing years of her life she was unable to get to chapel. She was made a help to those who visited her in her long affliction. Being fond of hymns, she would repeat many, fitting to weary souls. She died very happily, and was buried on Lord's day, March 16th, 1882, by the writer; and the Lord was praised for

“Shortening tribulation's days,
To hide them in the peaceful tomb.” E. PORTER.

ELIZABETH BROWN.—On April 4th, 1882, aged 71, Elizabeth Brown, at Fulham, a member of the Baptist church, Barking, Essex, after a long and painful affliction.

She had known the Lord for more than 40 years. In her early days, while living at Maldon, Essex, the Lord met with her at a watch-night service, when the word was read: “What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.” She was then led to see she was a sinner in the sight of God, and feared the chapel would come down upon her, and crush her to the lowest pit. She went on in this way for some time, until one morning these words came with power to her soul: “I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.” Her soul was set at liberty, and it was the time for her to dance for the joy she felt. After this she used to feel there was no one like herself, and was ashamed to speak about her soul-trouble to anyone. She would read in her Bible such passages as these: “I will thoroughly purge my floor,” &c.

The last six years of her life she was very heavily afflicted with internal complaints, and very much tried in providence. But the Lord wonderfully supported her soul. The church at

Barking and other friends contributed to her needs, and she had relief from the "G. S." Poor Relief Society. She was confined to her bed for 15 months before her death. Once on asking her the state of her mind, she said, "Not much comfort, neither is the enemy permitted to distress me much. I feel that I am on the Rock." The Lord having brought her through seas of trial, affliction, and sorrow, and ever having proved himself to be a Friend in need, now she could look back and say with David, "Thou hast been my help;" and her prayers were like his; "Leave me not, nor forsake me."

The pains of her body were at times very great. The Lord gave her a part of Ps. xxiii. 4: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me;" and we believe she realized the fulfilment of that promise in her last moments. She was heard to say, "Blessed Bridegroom! Happy, happy!" And with a smile breathed out her soul into the hands of her beloved Lord, for whom she had long been waiting.

T. HILL.

ANN ILES.—On Oct. 5th, 1881, aged 82, Ann Iles, of Dauntsey.

Having known her for many years, we have often heard her relate the dealings of God with her soul. She lived the greater part of her life a stranger to God and godliness, and attended the parish church, and thought herself as good as her neighbours. Her home was close to the little chapel; but she so hated the truths preached there, she could never be persuaded to enter it.

One Sunday morning, when about to cook her dinner, she went into the garden to cut some greens, hurrying to get them before the chapel people should come by and see her. Then these words arrested her, and made her greatly fear and tremble: "Thou God seest me." The arrows of God stuck fast in her soul, and the words followed her wherever she went. She now felt she was a sinner in the sight of a holy and just God, and had an aching void that neither the world nor church ceremonies could satisfy.

One Sunday the minister in the chapel preaching more loudly than usual, she felt a desire to hear him. So she asked a neighbour who had come in to sit with her if she would take a chair and sit under the chapel walls with her; which they did. However, she related herself,

"I could not hear to my satisfaction; and I felt constrained on the next occasion to go inside. My former friend soon forsook my company. I was obliged to keep on going with a Who can tell what the Lord may do for my poor soul? One evening, Mr. Moore, the minister, read those words: 'And his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground.' Under this sermon my soul was liberated. I felt it was *for me*. My load of sin and guilt was all gone; and I could have shouted aloud for joy, without fear or shame.

"I now began to tell one and another what the Lord had done for my soul; but they thought me a strange woman, and could not understand me. One man, however, who knew a little about godliness, said he believed the root of the matter was in me, and betrayed me to the minister, who spoke to me. Then I wished I had never said a word about it. In

course of time I was visited by some of the friends, who wished me to cast in my lot amongst them. A night was fixed for a church-meeting after service. I went to chapel, and came out with the rest, not intending to come forward. But just as I was passing the chapel-doors, these words were spoken into my inmost soul, 'Will ye also go away?' So I was obliged to return, and give an account, in my poor ignorant way, of what the Lord had done for my soul. I believe I was cordially received; and was baptized with others in the year 1864."

Nanny (as she was called) was a most consistent walker till her death. She was beloved by all who knew her; and was ever ready to show a kindness to her fellow-creatures, whether friends or enemies. She had many trials in providence. But the Lord, who has said, "Thy bread shall be given thee, and thy water shall be sure," was faithful to his Word, and supplied her needs.

In her last illness she was sorely afflicted with dropsy and heart-disease. She bore her affliction very patiently, and was full of thankfulness for every little kindness shown her. The last time we saw her was two days before her death. After reading and engaging in prayer with her we had a little conversation. She was in a measure comfortable in her mind; and was still longing for another visit from the Lord. She had faith to believe the Lord would soon visit her again. We felt her time here would be short, and said to her, "You will soon be where ransomed sinners sound God's praise, and Jesus leads the song." She replied she believed she should sing, "Glory, honour, praise, and power be unto the Lamb for ever."

We thus took our leave of her, never to see her again in the flesh, her end being more sudden than was expected. She was living with her grandson and his wife. On the night she died, finding they were sitting up, she entreated them to go to bed, saying, "If I die, I shall be in glory." And in a short time she fell asleep in Jesus.

W. KILMISTER.

SATAN had, so to speak, spun a ravelled knot when he cast the cords of sin round man's heart. This tangled and tight-drawn knot must not be cut through as by a sword of omnipotent power; but had by infinite wisdom and patience to be unravelled through its whole length. The work which Satan had done was to be undone. Disobedience had to be repaired by obedience—the voluntary obedience of the Son of God, and therefore of infinite value. Sin had to be atoned for by sacrifice—the sacrifice of the nature which had sinned, in union with the Person of the Son of God, and therefore deriving from it unspeakable efficacy. Death had to be destroyed by the ever-living Son of God submitting to die. The law must be magnified by being obeyed by him who by his divine Person is above law. The Lawgiver must be the Law-fulfiller. He who is the ever-blessed One must be made a curse; and the Holy One of Israel, who knew no sin, must be "made sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." "Who will set the briars and thorns against me in battle?" asked the Lord; "I would go through them" is his answer. (Isa. xxvii. 4.) So our blessed Lord went through these thorns and briars set against him in battle. He thoroughly went through all that he undertook; and by going through unravelled the work of Satan.—*J. C. Philpot.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

AUGUST, 1882.

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

A PASTORAL ADDRESS TO THE CHURCHES OF
CHRIST THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

BY STEPHEN CRISP.

[Written July 15th, 1690, during a time of great persecution.]

DEARLY beloved Friends and Brethren, gathered out of the world by the eternal arm and power of the mighty God to bear his holy Name in your generation,—My love and life, in the fellowship of the Spirit, salute you all, and my prayer to God is, you may be kept steadfast and immoveable in the grace of God and in the communion of his Holy Spirit that ye may bring forth fruit in abundance, according to the abundant mercy and grace bestowed upon you, to the glory of God, and to your mutual joy, comfort, and edification.

And that it may be so, let your eye be up unto the Lord, and behold, and take notice of the wondrous works he hath wrought in you and for you since the day ye were first quickened by his Spirit, and stirred up to seek after him and to wait upon him. How good and gracious he hath been to you in bringing you from the barren mountains where your souls languished for the heavenly nourishment; where you knew not the Lord, nor one another; but were without a comforter, or any to sympathize with you in your mournings. O, how hath he pitied your groanings, and had compassion on your fightings, and brought you into acquaintance with those that were in the like exercises; and then he taught you to believe on him that was willing and able to help you. And those who were thus taught of the Father and felt his drawing love prevailing upon them,—these came to Christ their Saviour; and in him began to feel a unity one to another, in the faith you had received in him, whereby ye believed he would give you of his Spirit to teach and guide you in the way of truth, righteousness, and peace.

And thus was the foundation of your holy communion laid, and a lively hope raised in each particular soul that he that had begun this blessed work would carry it on. And this hope made you that you were not ashamed to make a public profession before the world, but cheerfully to take up the cross, and deny yourselves of your former pleasures, friendships, and delights of this

world. This hope hath been your support in many sharp trials and bitter combats you have had with the enemy of your souls' peace within; and in all your conflicts you have found him nigh at hand to put forth his power on your behalf, as you have depended upon him for assistance. And by these experiences of his goodness your faith hath been strengthened; and by the same Word of life that quickened you, many more have been reached unto, to your great comfort and encouragement; and many are inquiring their way to Zion with their faces thitherward.

And, friends, consider of the great works that this mighty arm of the Lord hath brought to pass in the general, as well as in the particular; how many contrivances have been framed, and laws and decrees made to lay you waste, and to make you cease to be a people! And how have the wicked rejoiced thereat (for a season), crying, "Ah, ah! thus would we have it. They are all now given up to banishments, to imprisonments, to spoils, and to ruins. Now let us see if that invisible arm they trust in can deliver them!" O friends, how hath your God been your support in all these exercises! And when he hath pleased, how hath he quieted the storms and turned back the greatest floods and torrents of persecution that ever you met! And how hath he confounded his and your enemies, and brought confusion upon the heads of them that sought your hurt! Were not these things wrought by the power of God? Did your number, your policy, your interest, or anything that might be called your own, contribute anything to these your preservations and deliverances? If not, then let God have the glory, and acknowledge to his praise, "These are the Lord's doings, and marvellous in our eyes."

Again, dear friends, consider how the wicked one hath wrought in a mystery amongst yourselves to scatter you and to lay you waste from being a people as it is this day; how many several ways hath he tried, raising up men of perverse minds to subvert and turn you from the faith and from the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus our Lord; and to separate you from that invisible power that hath been your strength; and to separate you one from another; and by subtle wiles to lead you into a false liberty, above the cross of Christ; and sometimes by sowing seeds of heresy and sedition, endeavouring to corrupt the minds of whom they could with pernicious principles. But, O, how have their designs been frustrated, and the authors thereof been confounded and brought to nought! And how have you been preserved as a flock under the hand of a careful shepherd unto this day; which ministers great cause for thanksgiving unto all the faithful, who have witnessed the working of this preserving power in their own experience.

And, dear friends, I entreat you that the consideration of these great and weighty things which God hath wrought for you and in you, may have that deep and weighty influence upon your souls that ye may find yourselves engaged to answer the love and mercy of God in your lives and conversations, and in all you have

to do in this world; that ye may show forth the honour of God in all things; that the light may shine in you and through you unto others who sit in darkness; that all men may know by your conversation, and by your close keeping to the Lord, that ye are a people helped by a supernatural power, which governs your wills, and subjects them to his blessed will; and guides and orders your affections and sets them on heavenly and divine objects; and gives you power to deny your own private interests when they happen to stand in competition with the interest of truth. For these, and these only, will be found the true disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, who can deny themselves, take up the cross daily, and follow him in the guidance of his regenerating power, which brings death upon self, and crucifies the old nature with its affections and lusts, and raises up a birth in you, that hath a will and desire to serve the Lord and do his blessed will on earth. And such as these are instruments in the hand of God for him to work by, and to do works of righteousness, of justice, and of charity, and other virtues belonging to a Christian life, to the honour of God, and for the comfort and benefit of his church and people.

And all you, dear friends, upon whom the Lord hath laid a care for his honour and for the prosperity of the truth, and gathered you into the good order of the gospel to meet together to manage the affairs thereof, take heed that ye have a single eye to the Lord, to do the Lord's business in the leadings of his Spirit, which is but one, and brings all (that are governed by it) to be of one mind and heart, at least in the general purpose and service of those meetings. And although through the diversity of exercises and the several degrees of growth among the brethren, every one may not see and understand alike in every matter at the first propounding of it, yet this makes no breach of the unity, nor hinders the brotherly kindness, but puts you often upon an exercise and an inward travailling to feel the pure, peaceful wisdom that is from above to open amongst you; and every one's ear is open to it in whomsoever it speaks; and thereby a sense of life is given to the meeting, to which all that are of a simple and tender mind join and agree. But if any among you should be contrary-minded in the management of some outward affair relating to the truth, this doth not presently break the unity that ye have in Christ, nor should it weaken the brotherly love, so long as he keeps waiting for an understanding from God, to be gathered into the same sense with you, according to the law of charity. Such an one ought to be borne with and cherished, and the supplication of your souls should go up to God for him that God may reveal it to him, if it be his will, that no difference may be in understanding so far as is necessary for the good of the church, no more than there is in matters of faith and obedience to God. For, my friends, it is not of absolute necessity that every member of the church should have the same measure of understanding on all things; for then where were the

duty of the "strong bearing the weak?" Then where were the "brother of low degree?" Where would be any submitting to them that are set over others in the Lord? which all tend to the preserving of unity in the church, notwithstanding the different measures and different growths of the members thereof; for, as "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets," so are the spirits of all that are kept in the same subjection to the sense of life given by the same Spirit in the church. And by these means we come to know the one Master, even Christ, and have no room for any other masters in the matters of our obedience to God. And while every one is kept in this true subjection, the sweet concord is known, and the oil is not only upon Aaron's head, but it reacheth to the skirts of his garments also, and things are kept sweet and savoury, and ye love one another from the greatest to the least in sincerity, and (as the apostle saith) without dissimulation; and this love excludes all whisperings of evil things, all backbiting, talebearing, grudgings, and murmurings, and keep friends' minds clean one towards another, waiting for every opportunity to do each other good and to preserve each other's reputation; and their hearts are comforted at the sight of one another; and in all their affairs, both relating to the church and to the world, they will be watchful over their own spirits, and over that nature and ground in themselves that would be apt to take offence, or construe any word or action to a worse sense than the simplicity thereof, or the intention of the other concerned will allow of.

And whereas it may often fall out that among a great many, some may have a different apprehension of a matter from the rest of their brethren, especially in outward or temporal things, there ought to be a Christian liberty maintained for such to express their sense with freedom of mind, or else they will go away burdened; whereas, if they speak their minds freely and a friendly and Christian conference be admitted thereupon, they may be eased, and oftentimes the different apprehension of such an one comes to be wholly removed, and his understanding opened to see as the rest see. For the danger in society doth not lie so much in that some few may have a different apprehension in some things from the general sense, as it doth in this,—namely, when such that so differ do suffer themselves to be led out of the bond of charity, and shall labour to impose their private sense upon the rest of their brethren, and to be offended and angry if it be not received. This is the seed of sedition and strife that hath grown up in too many to their hurt. And therefore, dear friends, beware of it, and seek not to drive a matter on in fierceness or in anger, nor to take offence at any time into your own minds because what seems to be clear to you is not presently received. But let all things in the church be propounded with an awful reverence for him that is the Head and Life of it, who hath said, "Where two or three are met in my Name, I will be in the midst of them." And so he is, and may

be felt by all who have his Spirit; but he that follows his own spirit sees nothing as he ought to see. Therefore let all beware of their own spirits and natural tempers (as they are sometimes called), and pray to be kept in a gracious temper; then are ye fit for the service of God, whose house ye are, if ye be kept upon the foundation that God hath laid; and he will build you all up, and teach you how to build one another up. And as every member must feel life in himself, and all from one Head, this life will not hurt itself in any, but be tender of the life in all. For by this one life of the Word ye were begotten, and by it ye are nourished and made to grow into your several service in the church of God.

It is no man's learning nor artificial acquirements; it is no man's riches nor greatness in this world; it is no man's eloquence nor natural wisdom that makes him fit for government in the church of Christ; unless he, with all his endowments, be seasoned with the heavenly salt, and his spirit subjected, and his gifts pass through the fire of God's altar, a sacrifice to his praise and honour, that so self be crucified and baptized in death, and the gifts made use of in the power of the resurrection of the life of Jesus in him. And when this great work is wrought in a man, then all his gifts and qualifications are sanctified, and they are made use of for the good of the body, which is the church, and are as ornaments and jewels which serve for the joy and comfort of all who are partakers of the same divine fellowship of life in Christ Jesus our Lord. And thus come many to be fitted and furnished to good works, which are brought forth in their due seasons for edification and building up the weak, and for repairing the decayed places, and also for the defence of them that are feeble that hurtful things may not come near them.

O friends! Great is the work the Lord hath called you to, and is fitting you for, who wait upon him. And the Lord hath opened my heart unto you, and laid it upon me to exhort and beseech you to have a care that ye quit yourselves as ye ought in what God requires of you; and for the more particular expressing what lies before me in the matter, I shall set down a few particular observations for your benefit and advantage. And my soul's desire is that my labour of love may have a good effect in all your bosoms, that God may be honoured thereby.

And, friends, ye know the chief business to which ye are called in your church meetings is justice and charity; first to see that every one hath right done him, and next to take care there be nothing lacking to the comfort of the poor, tried and afflicted brethren, who are made partakers of the same faith with you.

And when ye meet about these things, keep the Lord in your eye, and wait to feel his power to guide and direct you, to speak and behave yourselves in the church of God as becomes the peaceable gospel, and beware of all bitterness of spirit and sharp reflection upon each other's words; for that will kindle up hearts and create a false fire. And when one takes a liberty of a sharp word, spoken out of the true fear and tenderness, it oftentimes

becomes a temptation to another; and then the first is guilty of two evils; first, being led into temptation; and secondly, becoming a tempter to others. Therefore all had need to be upon their watch, neither to tempt nor be tempted. And let none think it sufficient excuse for them that they were provoked; for we are answerable to God for every word spoken upon provocation. For that end hath the Lord revealed his power in us, to keep and preserve us in his fear and counsel in the time of our provocations. And therefore, if any man through want of watchfulness should be overtaken with heat or passion, a soft answer appeaseth wrath; and therefore such a time is fittest for a soft answer, lest the enemy prevail on any of them to their hurt, and to the grief and trouble of their brethren. For it is the proper duty of watchmen to spare the flock, that is, to let nothing come nigh them that will hurt them, and wound, and grieve them. Nay, the good apostle was so careful over the flock that if there were any doubtful matters to be disputed of, he would not have them that were weak in the faith present at such disputations; much less ought they that are weak to see those that are strong descend from their strength and go into the weakness where they are not able to bear; for it is certainly the weak that cannot bear. Those that really live in the strength and power, they can bear even burdens for them that cannot bear their own. The apostle, when he sent for the elders of Ephesus to Miletus and left a charge with them, before he said, "Take heed to the flock of God," he said, "Take heed to yourselves." And indeed we are none of us likely to discharge ourselves well towards others, if we are not made to take heed to ourselves to be kept in that sober frame of mind which the truth calls for.

In the next place, my dear friends, when ye are called upon to give a sentence of right between friend and friend, take heed that neither party gets possession of your spirit beforehand by any way or means whatever, or obtain any word or sentence from you in the absence of the other, he not being yet heard. There is nothing requires the Spirit of Christ more than impartial judgment. Judgment is a seat where neither interest, nor affection, nor former kindness may come; we must make no difference of the worthiness or unworthiness of persons in judgment. If a good man be mistaken and hath a bad cause, or a bad man a good cause, according to his cause must he have sentence. He that judgeth among men judgeth for the Lord, and he will repay. Therefore let all be done as unto the Lord, and as ye are willing to answer in his presence; and although some may for a time be discontented thereat, yet in time God will clear up your innocence, as the sun at noonday. And those who kick at sound judgment will find but hard work of it. They do but kick against that which will prick them; and however such, through their wilfulness and abounding in their own sense, may hurt themselves, yet you will be preserved and enjoy the peace and satisfaction of a clean conscience in the sight of God.

And as concerning practical charity, ye know it is supported by liberality; and when liberality ceaseth, charity is waxed cold. Where there is no contribution, there is no distribution; where one is sparing, the other is sparing; therefore let every one nourish charity in the root, from whence springs a liberal mind.

(*To be concluded.*)

THE TESTIMONIES OF THE LORD TO A POOR SELF-CONDEMNED SINNER.

BEING THE EXPERIENCE OF THOMAS HOBSON, A DEACON OF THE LATE MR. BURNS'S CHURCH, WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

(*Continued from p. 299.*)

DURING the next three days I felt all quietness within and without; and, I might say, not a dog moved his tongue. I was called on at the prayer-meeting to pray. This was very trying, as I had but a few words to say, and the substance was to ask God to be merciful to me a vile sinner.

When I awoke on Thursday morning, the day I had been before so much tempted to think would be my last, the enemy suggested it was indeed my last day, and I had better do as I had done, and go with my companions to places not fit to be mentioned. Truly it seemed as if all hell were let loose upon me. No sooner had I come to work than all that saw me began to reproach me and say all manner of evil against me. I could not work, and left to go home. My way was through the town of Dudley. Here I was tempted violently to go to my old places, as too vile a sinner to be pardoned. When I came to cross the main street, I thought I saw the devil before me. Before I reached home he suggested that I had better put an end to my life, and know the worst of it. I was to get my wife to bed first, and go down the yard till she was asleep. When I came into the house the razor was presented to my mind. That minute my wife called to know whom I had been talking to. Also there came a voice with these words: "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" I had proved the enemy a liar many times, and now he was one indeed. This was a night never to be forgotten by poor sinful me. I got to my bedside on my knees, and in that posture I wanted to remain all night. I continued all night in prayer with the Lord Jesus. I was like a bird delivered from the snare of the fowler. My parents living next door came in the next morning to know what had been the matter. I said Jesus had been with me all night.

The next day I went to my work as usual. The Lord's favour was so great I could not eat my food. I wished and longed for the Sabbath that I might hear of that blessed Jesus who saves his people from their sins.

Dear reader, up to this time I was made to believe I had not been seeking Jesus as my salvation; my desire had been to fulfil the law. This was hard labour, and I was reduced to a merc

skeleton. I had scarcely strength to walk about. But this great change gave health to my bones, and, best of all, life to my poor soul.

The Sabbath arrived. The difference I felt between my state on this and the previous one I hardly know how to express. I compared it to the difference between a lump of lead and a blessed dove. I felt persuaded I was in a new world. I asked my wife if I was reading my own Bible, or if it was quite a new book. At chapel the first hymn commenced with these words: "Blow ye the trumpet, blow." I knew it was going to be a day of jubilee with me. The text was read, 2 Cor. v. 17: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." As the Lord liveth this was a day of feasting to my soul. I felt the fatted calf was killed, and that I was commanded to take my fill. Poor prodigal Tom had returned home. There was music and dancing and rejoicing over him who was lost and is now found; was dead and is alive. Amen.

Now I was like a man restored from a dreadful disease; for I believed he had restored my soul and drawn it up out of the horrible pit of sin, and out of the miry clay of sin, and set my feet upon a rock. And he had put a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God. My mind was engaged all day long in praising and adoring that God who had wrought such wonders for me. In gazing upon the wonderful acts of the Lord I forgot to eat my daily food, and I was compelled to leave my work sooner than usual. Everything was made new to me. I saw a new world in contemplating the wonderful compassion of Jesus Christ, and his forbearance with such a wretch. The change being so great and marvellous, a question rose up in my mind whether it could be true. Satan said it was only like the crackling of thorns under a pot, and no more than a tinkling cymbal. This brought trouble upon my mind; and I longed and wished for the Sabbath, to hear something from God the Holy Ghost.

When the Sabbath came I went to the house of God with a tender conscience, and full of love to the Lord Jesus Christ. The man gave out the hymn:

"There is a fountain filled with blood."

Those words were applied with power to my heart and conscience. The preacher spoke from Isa. lxi. 2: "To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord," &c. Truly this was a proclamation indeed to my poor heart and conscience. It was a jubilee day indeed, the returning of the poor prodigal. Whether in the body or not I could scarcely tell. My soul seemed to be raised above the earth. I felt to be one with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. I imagined myself to be sitting at the right hand of God. It was a Sabbath indeed. God the Holy Ghost did make manifest his power in humbling and crumbling a poor hell-deserving sinner into nothing. He followed with these words: "For I will cleanse their blood that

I have not cleansed." (Joel iii. 21.) Also these: "Then he is gracious unto him and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom. His flesh shall be fresher than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth." (Job. xxxiii. 24, 25.)

From this time my zeal became very hot for God's house, and for the means of grace; and I was often blessed with the heart-burn for the Lord Jesus Christ, and a peculiar love for his people. I had a wish to declare to all my fellow-creatures what God had done for my soul. Many times have I even wished the birds of the air would listen to what I had to say of the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, his compassion and love manifested to one so unworthy. The Bible I had been afraid to open, because whenever I did open it I was condemned to death, seemed now unsealed; and I felt life eternal every time I opened it. If my ear caught the name of Jesus, it made wells of water in my eyes. O how true is that saying: "His flesh shall be fresher than a child's; he shall return to the days of his youth." I felt to be quite a new creature, because I felt to be cleansed from my leprosy.

The preacher began to call on me to engage in prayer at the week-night meetings. Howbeit the Lord made me feel my poverty. My memory being so treacherous, I was compelled to utter what I felt. The words of my mouth were generally of the sovereign acts of the Lord, and his doings and sayings; and of my sad state by nature to my grief and confusion. The preacher and the deacons and others began to despise and speak against me. The word "sovereign" seemed to terrify them.

Notwithstanding their reproaches I felt persuaded by them to go to the minister to declare what the Lord had done for my soul. The first time I attempted to go I was forced to turn back again, because the enemy suggested my religion was not of the right sort and they would not receive me. I went a second time, and turned back with the same fears. The third time I went in. The preacher said he was pleased to see me, and asked if I were willing to become a member with them. I said, "Yes.—Sir, I should like to tell you a little of the dealings of the Lord with me." I went on a little way when he stopped me and said he was quite satisfied, and that it was my own fault I had endured so much.

How wonderfully kind and gracious was the Lord to me in opening my heart (I mean my new heart) to receive, and giving me ears to hear his blessed gospel. Truly it was a blessed sound to a malefactor like me, doomed to die.

I was then visited by two of the members respecting church-fellowship. They asked a few questions. I answered them, and told them a little of the Lord's dealings with me. They asked if I were willing to give my heart to the Lord. I said I would give a thousand if I had them, and he would accept them, and if I had a thousand tongues, they should all be employed in prais-

ing Jesus Christ. They were satisfied, and would not hear any more of what I had to say. They only smiled at it.

Never shall I forget the time I first sat down with them at the ordinance. I was so frightened by the enemy of souls and confused I had not strength to stand on my feet. I asked one of the members to let me lean on his arm to help me to one of the seats. Satan said I was going to commit a very great crime. Then the Lord Jesus was so kind as to remove all my trembling and fear. Before I broke the bread I asked the Lord the Spirit what I was to say. He reminded me of his broken body; and, moreover, he said it was for me. O my friend, this broke my heart, and made it like a fountain; and I ate the bread and drank the wine with tears.

At this time there was none on earth or in heaven I could compare with Jesus Christ. I could not bear him from my view for long together. I was moved to carry a small Testament in my pocket; and oftentimes did I reach my small book and open it to see my blessed Jesus. Two songs especially were sung by me on my way to work and when I returned at night. The first was, "Jesus sought me when a stranger," &c. The other: "Salvation! O the joyful sound," &c.; but especially this verse:

"Buried in sorrow and in sin,
At hell's dark door I lay,
Till I arose by grace divine,
To see a nobler day."

I was moved to examine my walk, conduct, and conversation every day; and I found myself at the end of each day very faulty. I had done wrong in this, that, or the other thing. Some of the verses in the Psalms then became my prayers and desires. David knew and spoke, to my feeling and understanding, all my experience. I believed not one of God's children wanted healing more than I.

He had brought me through many deaths even when I was a boy. I was once thrown off a horse into a pond; and twice leaped into a canal to save a child from drowning; and was preserved each time although I could not swim. These are what I call deaths or graves, and providential mercies of the Lord.

I was kept to this examining work of my walk and conduct. These words puzzled me: "He that is born of God sinneth not." I searched for them and was very much distressed about them. But when I found them the Holy Ghost discovered to me that it was the new man of grace that did not sin. He directed me to the 8th of Rom., showing me that what is born of the flesh is flesh indeed, and what is born of the Spirit is of the Spirit and could not sin. I used this as a sword against the enemy and defied him with this weapon. I felt like a city that was well defended with God's wills and shalls; and was persuaded that there were no conditions in God's word; for he says, "I will" and "they shall." Yet the enemy came again with these words: "Your sins have multiplied greatly; for you know how faulty

you are at the end of every day." And again, "The Word of God declares that he calls two of a family and one of a city." This gave me fresh trouble and distress of mind, for there was no sign of any other of my family being made a new creature in Christ Jesus. The Lord seeing and knowing my weakness came to my relief with these words: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." (Isa. i. 18.)

I became a speckled bird amongst those with whom I stood a member. They despised my prayers, and began to accuse me of going among the Particular Baptists, saying they were dangerous people. I had never been to hear amongst them more than once. My prayers I believe were indited by the Holy Ghost. I was continually moved to declare a little of what God had done for my soul, and to speak of my wretched state by nature, and of my vileness owing to the greatness of my sins. And if I received a testimony from the Lord similar to the one above, I felt induced to mention it when on my knees. After I had concluded my prayer, the pastor would pause for a moment; then break out with these words: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." He would often continue speaking for half an hour against the free, sovereign, unmerited favours of the Lord Jesus Christ, and against predestinating and electing love. I was a speckled bird among them, as I said before, as well as among other denominations. I will just mention one instance.

A member of the Wesleysans came with a text, and asked me to give my opinion on it. It was this: "Be ye holy, for I am holy." I replied, "'Ye must be born again,' or ye 'cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.'" I further said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." The one I told him was from above, and the other was of the earth beneath. The one was as holy as God is holy, and the other as vile as sin could make it. I said I believed there were two that dwell in this house (meaning my body),—I might say old Tom and young Tom; the latter being holy, and the former the vilest sinner out of hell. I also said, "This is regeneration's work to bring this about. Unless you and I are regenerated, we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. My dear friend, these are the elect of God,—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; and none but the elect will ever go to heaven." These sayings of mine spread far and wide like wildfire. The people surrounded me to converse about election. They met me on my way home, and said I was a dangerous man to talk with; that my religion came from the devil, and would go back to the devil; that they would not be one of the elect; and that if that was true, Jesus Christ was cruel.

The report of my sayings reached my pastor and the deacons, and I felt ashamed to go to the meetings. Still I was kept pursuing towards the mark of the prize of my high calling of God

in Christ Jesus. As he had made known himself to me as my Light and Life, I felt a desire to infuse that light into others as much as possible; for I often felt my heart burn for that blessed Christ Jesus. I shall now try to show you a little of the craft of Satan, and what he put into the preacher's mind in order to ensnare a poor, silly sheep.

Mr. Hill (the minister) called six of the church together to devise what means to use to keep me with them. The first was to get me to the Sunday school. The next was to distribute tracts. The next, to go out with Mr. Hill whenever he went to preach. He was a popular man, and was asked to many places. The next, to go with him to the open-air services through the summer season. Poor prodigal Tom agreed to all this. But whenever I went with him to the open-air services, he would always call on me to speak in prayer; and O how it used to confuse me! When I felt my littleness and unfitness I was compelled to go the way the Spirit led me. My cry was for the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and for his leading, guiding, and directing.

O how I love that Word where it says, "Lead me into thy truth." I must drop a word here. As I was led to speak of what the Lord had done for my soul, and what he had promised and made manifest of his wonderful acts and marvellous favours, at three of these places, both men and women have come and grasped my hand at the close of the service with tears rolling down their cheeks, and have said, "God bless you. The Lord has been with you." I say this to show the Lord blesses his own Word. I continued sometime going to the Sunday school, distributing tracts, &c.; and feeling myself to be a poor needy sinner.

One Sunday morning the superintendent came to me, and said they had purposed for me to go to Sedgley to address the children and old people who could not come to chapel. It was at a school belonging to our place at Gurnal. I readily consented, and believed I had tidings to bear. To my great disappointment all that I had in view had fled away. I stood as a deaf and dumb man; and when recovered a little I gave out two or three lines of a hymn, and closed with a few words in prayer. On my way home the enemy suggested that I was weighed in the balance and found wanting, and now they would find me out. Then these words were applied, and they have stuck to me ever since; "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it?" I went home in all the horror and distress imaginable; the enemy saying, "Where is your religion now? And where is your God?" Truly I felt I had none. For the Lord the Spirit had stripped me of everything I had enjoyed; and I was like a man bereaved of a home, without food or raiment. I had made many marks in my Bible, but I could not find one evidence of my being a new creature in Christ Jesus. I ran to Bunyan's "Grace Abounding," and "Come and Welcome;" but my Bible and Bunyan's works were sealed books. I was as one alone. I had lost my heavenly Friend. I left off attending the

weekly meetings, and Sunday school, and tract distributing; and was compelled to leave my work, and bemoan my sad state night and day. I could not tell you the sleepless nights I endured. My greatest fear was lest I should be like the sow that returns to her wallowing in the mire, and like the dog that turns to his vomit again.

Two of the deacons came to see me, and to know the reason of my being absent from the school, &c. I told them they had done wrong in putting my name in their church-book, and they had better take it out again. I related a little of the Lord's dealings with me. Then they asked my wife secretly if I had committed some crime.

After this I swooned off into a kind of sleep. I may call it a dream; for the Word of God says, "He that hath a dream, let him tell a dream. I was brought into a corn-field, wherein was only stubble. I was standing alone for some time. Then a man came and began to rake the rubbish together until he had made a good heap. He then set fire to it, and said that was my religion. I was busily engaged in getting off my own clothes to throw on this fire; for I felt I abhorred even my clothes. The enemy compared me to the barren fig-tree, or a dry stick. Again the deacons called to see if I would go back and put my hand to the plough. But I said the Lord had burnt it all up; so I could not put my hand to it any more.

That text stuck hard and fast to me: "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it?" I cried very vehemently to the Lord to make me to know my heart; and he did in a manifest manner. He discovered to me all the imagery chambers of my heart, and all the places and times it had deceived me. O how I wished my heart out of the body! At this time I felt very rebellious, and had hard thoughts of the Lord. He had before so many times indulged me with such favours that I thought he was going to make a great man of me. And in bringing me into such strange and peculiar paths I could not believe I was a heaven-born child, but cut myself off. Then the Lord applied these words: "I will thoroughly purge my floor." "He will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." At another time: "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver." "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened." Notwithstanding the merciful kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ in thus talking to one so unworthy, I felt in a wilderness state, and bewildered in my mind. I fell out with myself owing to my deceitful heart, and have never been friends up to this day.

The Lord the Spirit then whispered these words into my heart in such a soft and peaceful way: "I have chosen you in the furnace of affliction." Dear reader, you may see how rebellious I had been. I had said there was no need for the furnace to be

heated so hot. Under this purging operation I felt pressed out of measure, nor could I believe, before the Lord spoke, that I was born again of the Spirit.

Then the words in Jer. iii. 14. perplexed me anew. "I will take you two of a family," &c. My cry in my distress was great. I begged the Lord to decide the case. It came to my mind to let my Bible fall open, and I thought the Lord said the words I fixed my eyes upon should decide the case. It fell open at Jer. L., and my eyes were fixed on v. 20: "In those days and at that time, saith the Lord, shall the iniquity of Israel be sought for, and there shall be none." The Lord the Spirit then discovered to the eyes of my mind the badness of my heart, as a fountain continually throwing up mire and dirt. I saw from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet nothing but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. This made me cry, mourn, and sigh for the abominations felt and seen within. But the blessed Jesus appeared, and spoke as a kind Father would speak to a beloved child. He said, "I will bring the blind by a way they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known." (Isa. xliii. 16.) And as though this was not enough, he appeared again and said, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. i. 18.)

About this time our pastor left. He sent a man from Scotland to preach for him; but he was only allowed to preach one Sabbath. Never can I forget that man and his preaching. In the morning he took his text from Eph. ii. 8: "For by grace are ye saved." It is about 43 years ago, and still it often returns to me as a sweet cordial. He made great use of that word "ye." He paused for a moment, and then said all who were included in that little word were as safe for heaven as if they were there already. I believed the fatted calf was killed for the unworthy prodigal that day. Whether in the body or out of the body I could not tell. There was a cry raised that it was election preaching; but I said it was just what my poor soul wanted. At night he preached from Isa. lxii. 3: "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." He continued in the same channel as in the morning. The blessed truths that man declared have stuck fast to me up to the present time. I feel I cannot do with anything less than the doctrines of the grace of God, and an experimental knowledge of Jesus Christ.

(To be concluded)

JESUS need but show himself to a sinner, and the sinner falls before him. *Veni, vidi, vici*, may be inscribed by the Saviour on every monument of grace, on every converted soul. I came to the sinner; I looked upon him; and, with a look of omnipotent love, I overcame him.—*Hawker.*

A LETTER TO JOHN CARELESS.

Written out of the Coal-house of Darkness; whereby God giveth Light and heavenly Comfort to his heavy and troubled Mind.

BY MASTER PHILPOT.

THE God of all comfort and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ send unto thee, my dear brother Careless, the inward consolation of his Holy Spirit, in all the malicious assaults, and troublous temptations of our common adversary the devil! Amen.

That God giveth you so contrite a heart for your sins, I cannot but rejoice to behold the lively mark of the children of God; whose property is to think more lowly and vilely of themselves than of any other, and oftentimes to set their sins before them that they might the more be stirred to bring forth the fruits of repentance, and learn to mourn in this world that in another they might be glad and rejoice. Such a broken heart is a pleasant sacrifice unto God. O that I had the like contrite heart! God mollify my stony heart, which lamenteth not in such wise my former detestable iniquities. Praised be God that he hath given you this sorrowful heart in respect of righteousness; and I pray you let me be partaker of these godly sorrows for sin, which be the testimony of the presence of the Holy Ghost.

Did not the sword of sorrow pierce the heart of the elect and blessed mother of our Lord? Did not Peter weep bitterly for his sins, which was so beloved of Christ? Did not Mary Magdalene wash the feet of our Saviour with her tears, and receive therewithal remission of her sevenfold sins? Be of good comfort, therefore, mine own dear heart, in this thy sorrow; for it is the earnest-penny of eternal consolation. In thy sorrow laugh; for the Spirit of God is with thee. "Blessed be they," saith Christ, "that mourn; for they shall be comforted." "They went forth and wept," said the prophet; "such shall come again having their gripes full of gladness." And although a sorrowful heart in consideration of his sin be an acceptable sacrifice before God, whereby we are stirred up to more thankfulness unto God, knowing that much is forgiven us that we might love the more; yet the man of God must be kept in measure in the same, lest he be swallowed up by too much sorrow. Paul willed not have the Thessalonians to be sorry as other men which have no hope. Such a sorrow is not commendable, but worketh death; and is far from the children of God, who are continually sorrowful in God, when they look upon their own unworthiness and hope of forgiveness.

For God to this end, by his Spirit, setteth the sins of his elect still before them that where they perceive sin to abound, there they might be assured that grace shall superabound; and bringeth them down unto hell that he might lift them up with greater joy into heaven. Wherefore, mine own bowels in Christ, as long as you are not void altogether of hope, be not dismayed through your pensive heart for your sins, how huge soever they have been;

for God is able to forgive more than you are able to sin; yea, and he will forgive him which with hope is sorry for his sins.

But know, brother, that as oft as we do go about by the help of God's Spirit to do that which is good, the evil spirit Satan layeth hard wait to turn the good unto evil, and goeth about to mix the detestable darnel of desperation with the godly sorrow of a pure, penitent heart. You be not ignorant of his malicious subtlety; and how that continually he assaulteth that good which the grace of God planteth. I see the battle betwixt you and him; but the victory is yours; yea, and that daily. For you have a hold upon the anchor of salvation, which is hope in Christ; the which will not suffer you to be made ashamed. Be not discomfited that you have this conflict; but be glad that God hath given you the same to try your faith, and that you might appear daily worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you strive. God beholdeth your striving faith against Satan, and is pleased with your mighty resistance. The Spirit which is in you is mightier than all the adversary's power. Tempt he may, and, lying wait at your heels, give you a fall unawares; but overcome he shall not; yea, he cannot, for you are sealed up already with a lively faith to be the child of God for ever. And whom God hath once sealed for his own, him he never utterly forsaketh: "The just falleth seven times, but he riseth again." It is man's frailty to fall; but it is the property of the devil's child to lie still. This strife against sin is a sufficient testimony that you are the child of God; for if you were not, you should feel no such malice as he now troubleth you withal. When this strong Goliath hath the hold, all things be in peace which he possesseth; and because he hath you not, he will not suffer you unassaulted. But God help you to stand fast, and hold out the buckler of faith; and with the sword of God's promises smite him on the scalp, that he may receive a deadly wound, and never be able to stand against you any more. James telleth you that he is but a coward, saying, "Resist the devil, and he will flee away." It is the will of God that he should thus long tempt you, and not go away as yet; or else he had done with you long ere this. He knoweth already that he shall receive the foil at your hands, and increase the crown of your glory; for he that overcometh shall be crowned. Therefore glory in your temptations, since they shall turn to your felicity. Be not afraid of your continual assaults, which be occasions of your daily victory. "The Word of God abideth for ever." In what hour soever a sinner, with godly sorrow, repenteth of his sins, they be forgiven. "Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"

Do you not perceive the manifest tokens of your election? First, your vocation to the gospel; and after your vocation, the manifest gifts of the Spirit of God, given unto you above many other of your condition, with godliness which believeth and yieldeth to the authority of the Scriptures, and is zealous for the same. Seeing you are God's own darling, who can hurt you? Be not

of a deject mind for these temptations, neither make your unfeigned friends to be more sorrowful for you than need doth require. Since God hath willed you to be named *Careless*, why do you make yourself careful? The Lord help you to "cast all your care on him;" and to set the Lord before your eyes always, for he is on your right side that you shall not be moved. Behold the goodness of God toward me. I am careless, being fast closed in a pair of stocks, which pinch me for very straitness; and will you be careful? I will not have that unseemly addition to your name. Be as your name pretendeth; for doubtless you have none other cause but so to be. Pray, I beseech you, that I may be still careless in my careful estate, as you have cause to be careless in your easier condition. Be thankful and put away all care; and then shall I be joyful in my strait present care.

Commend me to all our brethren, and desire them to pray for me that I may overcome my temptations; for the devil rageth against me. I am put in the stocks in a place alone, because I would not answer to such articles as they would charge me withal, in a corner, at the bishop's appointment; and because I did not come to mass when the bishop sent for me. I will lie all the days of my life in the stocks (by God's grace) rather than I will consent to the wicked generation. Praise God, and be joyful that it hath pleased him to make us worthy to suffer somewhat for his Name's sake.

The devil must rage for ten days. Commend me to Master Fokes, and thank him for his law-books; but neither law nor equity will take any place among these bloodthirsty ones. I would, for your sake, their unjust dealings were noted unto the Parliament-house, if it might avail. God shorten these evil days! I have answered the bishop meetly plain already; and I say to him, if he will call me in open judgment, I will answer him as plainly as he will require. Otherwise I have refused, because I fear they will condemn me in "hugger-mugger."*

The peace of God be with you, my dear brother. I can write no more for lack of light; and that I have written I cannot read myself; and God knoweth it is written far uneasily. I pray God you may pick out some understanding of my mind towards you. Written in a coalhouse of darkness, out of a pair of painful stocks, by thine own in Christ,

JOHN PHILPOT.

A MAN knows more the love with which he loves than his brother whom he loves.—*Augustine*.

The true gospel comes home endeared and recommended to the affections of the Lord's people, both in the beautiful simplicity of it, and in the fulness of it; agreeably to what the prophet was commanded by the Holy Ghost to proclaim in the mountain of the Lord's house,—that it was a way so plain and self-evident, when taught by the Lord, that "the wayfaring man, though a fool, should not err therein." (Isa. xxxv. 8.)—*Hawker*.

* In the dark,

THE LITTLE PRAYER, "LORD, HELP ME."

[A correspondent has forwarded to us the following interesting relation of an incident in the late Mr. Gadsby's life. The facts are contained in his Memoir, but not so fully detailed as he is here reported to have given them himself at Rochdale.]

THE late Mr. Gadsby, of Manchester, once preached at Rochdale from the text, "Lord, help me." Having read his text, he took off his spectacles, and in his usual, deliberate way, looked round on the congregation, saying, "Friends, by way of introduction, I will tell you how I came by my text; and if you will allow me to speak in the first person, I can tell you more easily by saying *I* than *he*."

"Well then, before I was fully devoted to the ministry, I was in business; and, as most business men do, I worked a little on credit. When I gave up business and settled as a preacher and pastor of a congregation, I owed several sums of money; but much more was owing to me, so that I had no fear of being able to pay my creditors. One of these creditors, to whom I owed twenty pounds, called upon me for the payment. I said to him, 'I will see what I can do for you next Monday.' He called on the Monday, but I had not got the money. He was rather cross with me, saying I had no business to promise, except I intended to perform. This observation roused my pride, and I told him I would pay him on the coming Monday. He went away in a rage, saying he hoped I would.

"I set out the following day to see some of my debtors, not fearing but that I could raise the twenty pounds; but I did not get one farthing. I tried others, but with the same success. I then put down on a sheet of paper the names of several of my friends, certain that I could borrow twenty pounds from any one of them; but to my utter amazement I was mistaken. All of them could sympathize with me a deal better than lend me anything; and I began to find out that if a man wants to know how many friends he has, he had better try to borrow some money.

"The next day I made out another list of names, of those not so well able to help me as the former; for I thought if I can get five pounds here and five pounds there, I shall be able to raise it all. I travelled many miles on my errand, spending a whole day, but returned in the evening without one penny. I began to ask myself, 'How is this, that I, a respectable man, and, as people say, a popular preacher, cannot, in the whole of my acquaintance, borrow twenty pounds? I thought I had as many friends as most men, but now I cannot find one that will trust me twenty pounds.' My pride got a terrible shake, and I felt very little indeed.

"Friday came, and my spirits were sinking. I could not tell which way to turn. I had promised to pay, and was very anxious to fulfil my promise for good reasons,—my honour and veracity

as a minister of the gospel were at stake. I feared that if I did not pay the man, he would send me the bailiffs; and for a parson to have the bailiffs would be a terrible disgrace. I read the seventy-third psalm that morning at family worship, for I thought it was nearest my case. The mournful portions of God's Word best agree with the feelings of God's mourning people. I began to look out texts for the Sunday; but I could find none, for I could think of nothing but twenty pounds. I tried to read, but it was of no use; the twenty pounds covered all the letters. *Twenty pounds seemed written on everything*,—on the ceiling, on the walls, in the fire, on my dinner-plates, on the faces of my wife and children,—and the whole of that day was one of morbid depression of spirits. I was really miserable.

“ Saturday morning came, and I rose from a sleepless bed. I ate very little breakfast; and when at prayer I was so overcome with my feelings that my wife asked me if I was poorly or in trouble. ‘Yes,’ I replied, ‘I am in trouble enough;’ and I then told her all about the cause of my sorrow. She was silent for a few minutes, and then said, ‘You have often talked and preached about the power of faith; I think you will now need some yourself.’ Having said this, she rose from her chair, and went rattling amongst her pots and kettles. She was evidently mortified because I had been refused the money by those she had considered our friends. ‘My wife,’ I said to myself, ‘is a good Christian woman; but she thinks works are the best evidence of faith, both in preacher and people.’ Saturday was spent much as Friday had been. I was in a state of torpor until evening. I then went upstairs into a little room I called my study, with a heavy heart; for I had *three times to preach* on the Sunday and *no text*,—*twenty pounds* to pay on the Monday and *no money*. What was I to do? For a long time I sat with my face buried in my hands; and then I fell on my knees, and I believe I said, ‘Lord, help me!’ a hundred times; for I could say nothing else. While praying, I felt an impression that these words might serve me for one text; and as Sunday came before Monday, I began to prepare as well as I could for Sunday's work; but no other text could I think of but, ‘Lord, help me!’

“ While preaching on the Sunday morning, I had so many thoughts and illustrations arising out of the subject that I felt very great liberty in preaching. One of my illustrations was about a man I well knew, who was a deacon of a church, and had been an executor for two orphan children. He was tempted to make use of the money, and much of it was lost. This so preyed upon his mind that he began to drink. He lost his character, lost his peace of mind, and died with the reputation of a rogue. ‘Now,’ I said, ‘had this man, the executor, when he first thought of taking the children's money, resisted the temptation, calling on God to help him to be honest, help him to do nothing but what a professing Christian ought to do, instead of losing the money, his good name, his peace of mind, and perhaps

his life, God might have heard his prayer and saved him.' Noon came, but my sermon was not half done. I preached from it again in the afternoon, and again in the evening; and I felt that I could have preached from it a week. So, you see, the Lord helped me through my work on the Sunday; and I believed he would, some way, on the Monday.

"After finishing the night's service, when I got to the bottom of the pulpit stairs, a young man stood there, with his hat in hand, wishing to see me in private. I took him into the vestry, and requested his errand, expecting it would be something about his soul. For several minutes we were both silent; but at length he said, 'You knew my mother, Mr. Gadsby?' I looked him in the face, saying, 'Surely I did; but I did not know you at first sight.' 'Well, Sir, when she died, she left me some money; in fact, all she had, except two small sums she wished me to give—one sum of five pounds, to a poor old woman of her acquaintance; and, speaking of you, said, 'Our minister needs help, and I wish you to give him *twenty pounds*.' I paid the five pounds to the poor woman; but, thinking no one knew, I resolved *never to give you the twenty pounds*. But while you were talking about the roguish executor this morning, I felt *thunderstruck*, and I have now brought you the *twenty pounds*. Here it is. Do take it, and forgive me.'

"It was now my turn to be thunderstruck. I was amazed; and while the young man was putting the *twenty sovereigns* into my hand, I trembled all over. God had heard my prayer; he had helped me through the Sunday, and sent me the twenty pounds for the Monday. It was mine, and I took it. I shook the young man by the hand, and, without putting the money into my pocket, I went home quickly, spread it out on the table before my wife, saying, 'Here it is. I see now how it was that I could not borrow the money. God knew where it was, and he has sent me the twenty pounds, and delivered me out of my trouble. He has heard my prayer, and helped me, and I will trust him and praise him as long as I live.' Ah! my dear friends, when that *little prayer*, 'Lord, help me,' comes from the heart of one of God's children in distress, neither men, devils, nor angels can tell its power. It has brought me thousands of blessings, besides the twenty pounds."

It is a glorious and blessed condition to be married to the King of glory. (1.) He is a mighty, all-powerful Husband. He thoroughly changeth and cleanseth those whom he marrieth. He puts a new spirit in them, a new beauty and glory upon them; he stamps his own glorious image upon their natures. (2.) Christ is a merciful Husband. He pardoneth and passeth by many failings in those that are his; he breathes out nothing but love and sweetness; acteth nothing but mercy and kindness toward them. All his ways are mercy to his people. (3.) He is a meek Husband, forbearing much. "He will not break the bruised reed." (4.) He is a soul-saving Husband. The Lord Christ is eternal life and salvation to all to whom he is a Husband. — *T. Bisco.*

ON THE STATE OF A HAPPY SEPARATE SPIRIT.

Dear Friend,—I am glad the Lord enables you to believe that all your afflictions are in mercy and faithfulness; for the faith of God's love therein is the strength of a believer's spirit for patient suffering. It is my joy likewise that you have the blessed experience that when nature is ready to cry out and faint under affliction's pressing weight, you are enabled by grace to sing and triumph. And believe this, that by all the various dispensations of providence, the Lord, your own God, as the God of love to you in Christ, is bringing you up to glory in that very way which infinite wisdom and grace devised and fore-ordained, that is and shall be most for God's highest praise and your highest bliss. As you long to know and love Jesus more, your longing soul shall be satisfied with an increasing knowledge of him and love unto him here; until that which is perfect with respect to both, shall come hereafter. And as Christ now is altogether lovely in your view, though you get but now and then a glimpse of his glory by faith in this distant state, O what rapturous joy will fill your heart, when blessed with sight! when, in his immediate presence, you shall see him as he is!

You say, "I long to know more what the state of a separate spirit is, which is gone to behold the face of the Lamb." For the full knowledge of this you must wait till you likewise are entered into heaven's bliss. Embodied spirits here on earth know little of the state of a separate spirit in heaven. But as grace is glory begun, we may, from a sweet foretaste and sure earnest, in the light of the Word and Spirit of God, form some true notions, though but weak and imperfect ones, of that glorious feast, that eternal inheritance, which awaits us.

The state of grace as to justification—considered as a transient act of God, in and by his written Word, which passeth upon believers at the time of their first act of faith in Christ, consists in God's non-imputation of their sins unto them, and in the free imputation of the perfect righteousness of Christ unto their persons, for their full and eternal justification before him. This act of God is perfect in itself, entirely and eternally; and so is their state of justification thereby; and this righteousness of Christ imputed to believers is their title to glory. But though the state of believers, as to justification, has in it perfection and permanency; yet even this, while their souls are imperfect and remain in their mortal bodies, is incomplete as to apperency, both to themselves and others. Believers who are perfectly justified before God have but an imperfect knowledge and conscience-persuasion of that their complete justification; and their personal standing in this grace is not fully known to others. Much less are the resplendent glories of Christ's righteousness, that God-like dress with which believers are richly arrayed, comprehended by themselves, or by others with whom they converse in our present state of shortness and darkness.

But when the souls of believers, upon the dissolution of their bodies, are become separate spirits, they are blessed at once with a clear, permanent sight of their complete justification in Christ's righteousness alone; and that this gives them a full and inde-feasible title to eternal bliss. They see, likewise, to the utmost of their finite capacities, the infinite glories of this royal robe in which they shall for ever stand with the highest acceptance, before a God of infinite holiness. And in this glorious dress they are and shall be viewed with complacency by saints and angels. But having given this hint of the state of grace in justification, I come to that of inherent sanctification.—And

The state of grace as to sanctification consists in a begun-meetness—by inherent holiness produced in our hearts and lives by the regenerating and sanctifying work of the spirit of grace—for the enjoyment of Christ and of God in him, in some glances of his glory cast upon us through the gospel-glass; in a growing conformity to his image; and in an answerable employment in his praise. Now, as glory is grace made perfect, we may hence form some true notions of what glory is; in that it differs not from grace in kind, but only in degree. But as our present conceptions about it are very imperfect, we must needs be very far from thinking or speaking of it perfectly.

The souls of the saints at the death of their bodies, by the almighty energy of the Holy Ghost, are at once made perfect in holiness. All sin, in its being and working, which remained in them before, is then destroyed utterly, removed out of them totally and for ever; and their begun-holiness completed, never more to be defaced. The sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts at first which was perfect as to kind, and as to parts—as it extended as a principle of grace unto all the powers of their souls, every one of which was in part sanctified—shall then be completed in degree, and all the powers of their souls be sanctified perfectly, as entire faculties. The infant principle of grace begun shall then arrive to its full perfection, to the measure of the stature of the perfect new man. And this perfect holiness is and will be their perfect, inherent meetness for the state of glory in the immediate vision of Christ, and of God in him, to a blissful eternity. The souls of the saints, when disjoined from their bodies, are in this respect “spirits made perfect.”

And upon the accomplishment of this happy work, these happy, separate spirits, having the righteousness of Christ upon them which gives them a title to glory, and perfect holiness wrought in them, as their meetness for that ineffable bliss, are instantly admitted into glory, and blessed with the full, facial, and endless vision of the glorious Lamb and of the God of glory in him. They see no more, as before, darkly, as through a glass, but perfectly and face to face. And thus they behold Christ, not in this or that part only of his transcendent excellences and infinite glories, but in all his Personal and Mediatorial glories at once. They see to the utmost stretch of their finite capacities the

infinite glories of his divine Person as God the Son; they see him as co-equal, co-eternal, co-essential with God the Father, in all the infinite perfections and glories of the undivided Godhead. They see him in his infinite condescension, as a divine Person, in taking the human nature, the nature of the children, for them, into personal union with himself; and so, in the wonderful constitution of his Person as God-man, the great Mediator, and in all his Mediatorial fulness. They see him in all his indissoluble relations to them, those full springs of all his communications, in all his offices and Mediatorial perfections. And particularly they see him in all the immense glories of his love and grace, his wisdom and power, his truth and faithfulness, his holiness and righteousness, as displayed before them in his engagements for them before time; in his performances for them by his life and death service in time; in the glorious achievements wrought thereby; and in his life for them in heaven as their life, eternally. And they have a perfect love-communion with him in all his displayed glories, to their ineffable felicity.—This is somewhat of the state of separate spirits who behold the face of the Lamb.

Again, they see God in him,—God in all his Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit; and in all his perfections, decrees, acts, and works; as their own God in Christ. They see God, all that is in God, as engaged for them as their Portion, settled upon them anciently and eternally; and as acting and working for their good continually. They see the whole of their salvation in all its parts is from God in all his Persons; displaying all his perfections in their eternal election unto life, and full redemption from sin and death by price and power; and in their exaltation unto heaven's bliss to possess and enjoy the God of glory there, as their inheritance for ever. They have communion with God in all his Persons in love, in all the displays of it, from their first existence in grace to their admission into glory. They see the infinite Deity through Christ's glorified humanity in all his infinite perfections and glories, and in all their various displays in nature, grace, and providence; and in all subservience to God's highest praise and their highest bliss. They live in God, and dive continually into that boundless, bottomless, endless sea of immense felicity, to the ages of eternity!—But the glory of separate spirits at home with Christ is in this regard much too great to be conceived or expressed by a mortal's thought or word. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard!" Dr. Goodwin well says, "When we are taken up to heaven we shall see God at once, with respect to the simplicity of his Being, as all that is in God is God; but with respect to the immensity of his Being, it will be like sailing over an eternal sea, where every moment's sail we have a new horizon." The fresh displays of Jehovah's infinite glories will fill our finite capacities with rising joys, and present new wonders to our raptured eyes, through the circling ages of a blessed eternity! For when we see Christ and God in him, it will

not be a bare speculation, an unaffecting sight; but a soul-attracting display, that sweetly, strongly, perpetually, will draw us into him, that broad, deep, and endless ocean of glory, for a soul-filling enjoyment!

And this beatific, facial vision of God and the Lamb will be transforming. When we see Christ as he is, "we shall be like him." And this transformation into his image by the vision of his face, as I humbly think, respects all those internal, innumerable, various, and endless acts of our perfected graces which shall be excited thereby, to a vast eternity!

And consequent hereupon we shall be externally employed in Jehovah's praise; in ascriptions of glory and blessing, salvation and honour, wisdom and power, unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the worthy Lamb, for ever and ever! And a specimen of this worship of heaven we have, thus given: "And every creature which is in heaven heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever!"

Again, another part of the bliss of perfect spirits in a separate state consists in a full, free, and eternal communion with saints and angels. And as all Jehovah's wonders of grace towards all the heirs of glory and in their mutual usefulness to each other, in their time-state, and in special providence, will then be opened to their glorified understanding clearly, and communicated freely and fully; and the memories of these happy, separate spirits strengthened perfectly to reflect upon all the Lord's wise and and mysterious conduct in all those windings and turnings by which they were led through the wilderness, as having been all subservient to their highest bliss and the right way to the land of promise;—these things, as I humbly conceive, will be matter of their joint praises. For the worship of heaven is social. If the communion of saints on earth is such, and this is a part of their bliss in the state of grace, much more so will be their communion in heaven to their highest felicity, in the state of glory. They say, "Let us be glad and rejoice and give honour to him." And as their love to God and each other is fervent and perfect, they mutually and eternally interest themselves in each other's bliss, and call one another unto joint-praise. And all their innumerable multitude, continually and eternally join in the worship of God and the Lamb, with the triumphant song of "HALLELUJAH!" To which all the glorious angels round the throne join a loud "AMEN!" All the glorified members of Christ's mystical body from him the Head shall be filled brim-full of joy and glory, ineffably and eternally; and all the streams of bliss from him the Fountain shall flow down upon all, and by all, into and through each other; and waft them all in love's endearment and joint praises into God, that vast ocean, from whence they came, that ocean of joy and glory, to a happy eternity! For all the displays of the glory of God which shall then be cast upon us through Christ, will be made in the bright form of love;

which will attract our spirits as so many tongues of fire, in continual ascension, to join with his infinite and eternal flame. Our communion with God, as the God of love, will be full and immediate, uninterrupted and eternal, above. Yea, we shall then love God for himself, first and principally in all his essential perfections and infinite glories; and in all their bright displays, chiefly in that God is glorified thereby. We shall love his glory in our salvation above our own happiness therein, and rejoice in our felicity, as it redounds to Jehovah's glory, his manifestative glory. We shall interest ourselves in God's glory, and rejoice for ever in his essential, immense, and eternal bliss. And passing out of our little selves into the great God we shall live in him, and bathe in his immense pleasures, that vast and endless ocean of felicity, unknown! Full it must needs be, to fill all the vessels of mercy to the utmost of their finite capacities with ineffable and endless joy and glory; since it is full for God himself to a boundless eternity! We shall then by glory-union be "in the Son and in the Father!" Encompassed round with a vast ocean of bliss, immense and endless! And that not simply as single persons, but as a body, collectively, unto social and eternal praise. In which the innumerable company of holy angels will join with their eternal adorations and loud acclamations!

But what will be the joys and glories of Christ's righteousness upon us, in their own vast greatness, clearly and constantly beheld by us; of perfect holiness in principle within us; of immediate vision and full fruition of God and the Lamb; of a full conformity to his image, in the internal acts of perfected graces; of an eternal dedication to his external praise, together with a full and eternal communion with saints and angels,—nothing less than the state of glory itself can inform us.

This, my dear friend, is a weak essay to lisp out the ineffable felicity of happy spirits in a separate state. But O, how small a part of it can be told! It is a subject fit for our admiration, but far surpasseth all expression. And till we also are blessed with sight, we are called to live by faith. That your fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, by the Holy Ghost, may more and more increase unto a growing conformity to the divine image and a more constant employ in Jehovah's praise, until you are called to inherit eternal bliss, is the hearty desire of

Yours, &c.,

ANNE DUTTON.

HE who has the sensible feeling of faith in his heart knows that Jesus Christ is in him.—*Ambrose.*

HE (Christ) is the true Physician which, after he perceived that affliction did fear us, took upon himself to suffer all manner of trouble, yea, the most grievous sorrows and extremities, because he would set and appoint a certain measure and end to our sorrows, and also bless and sanctify, yea, and make pleasant and delectable very death itself unto us.—*O. Vermullerus.*

A SONG OF LUTHER'S.

Written in 1530, at Coburg, during the diet of Augsburg. According to Heine, Luther composed this song on his way to the diet of Worms.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

A MIGHTY castle is our God,
A good help in the evil day ;
A refuge sure,—a firm abode
For them that make of him their stay.

Again the old and wicked one
Against us puts his armour on.
Great is his guile and great his might ;—
'Tis dread the hellish fiend to fight ;
And we on earth shall seek in vain
For one that can the victory gain.

But nothing our poor strength avails,
For we are sunk beneath sin's load ;
Yet there is One the fiend assails,—
One sent and chosen by our God.

Who is this great and mighty One ?
It is the Father's only Son !
He is the Lord of Sabaoth,—
He is the Lord of Sabaoth !
There is no other God but he,
And he must gain the victory.

What, then, though devils triumph here,
And wish the saints of God to slay ;
Their hellish rage we do not fear,
For God is our defence and stay.

This world's dread prince no gain shall see.
In safety shall God's people be.
However dread he may appear,
The little flock need never fear ;
For God himself shall judge the foe,
And hurl him to eternal woe.

But let the Word of God remain,
Then nothing shall we have to fear ;
God with his strength shall us sustain,
Whatever dangers may be near.

Our foes may take our present life,
Our goods and honours, child and wife ;
Yes! They may take them if they will,
But we have things more precious still.
Though they possess them, what their gains?
A kingdom yet to us remains.

J. HUNT.

A MAN often glories more vainly, because he thinks he is not vain-glorious.—*Augustine.*

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

COMING EVILS.

My dear old Father,—I beg your forbearance when I trouble you with these few lines. You see I am here in a strange place far from any acquaintance. What brought me here I know not; it is a very dark and mysterious position that I am in. I will tell you how it came about. I became afraid I should be the means of making a division between the Highlanders and the English-speaking congregation in K., so I refused to continue my meetings any longer, for fear of making a split. After some time doing nothing, Mr. K. wrote and invited me to come to Strathpeffer and labour among the navvies that work at the railway. It occurred to me that I would accept the invitation for a couple of months, and that I would have the benefit of sitting under the gospel preached at Dingwall; so I came here in that mind. And now two months and more are passed, and I find it was easier coming than it is going away.

There is something very grievous to me here at present. There is one English-speaking man sent by some society to labour among the navvies along with me; and he is of that sort of new element called a Revivalist. When I heard that he was to come, I went to Mr. K. for liberty to go home; but he would not hear of it.

Certainly there is the basket of very bad and naughty figs before me in this place as well as in other places; but there is a basket of very good figs here also. There were present at Dingwall communion gospel ministers, Mr. A., an excellent father of a minister, and others, and Mr. K. himself. The question was, Were the King and his spouse communing there? I hope it was the case; but O, dear friend, there is an awful deadness here, as well as in other parts. They seem to have gotten hold of a sound creed and made a sort of pillow of it to lay their heads on, and sleep as soundly as any Pharisee in Scotland. And if you attempt to rouse them off that, they will tell you of their inability to do anything, and take their shelter under that quite contented. I do not say by this that there are none of God's people here. No; I believe that there is a good sprinkling of his among them. Take a good round circle, and you will gather a goodly number of the poor and the needy and the lame.

I am much struck with most of the "men" as they call them. When they begin to speak or lead the flock they do not lead them gently; they seem to have no sympathy with the weak, nor with them that are bearing heavily with young; no, neither with the lambs of the flock. Their leading is not a leading, but a driving; a coarse driving that no lamb or heavy laden will keep up with. And if a poor bleating lamb drawing the first breath cannot swallow the whole counsel of his election in one lump, and in the first morsel of his milk, they are apt to cast him to the dogs.

I believe that a poor broken-hearted babe will have both his

hands full; one full of the burden of sin, both actual and original; and the other full of his inability ever to give up his case to the Redeemer; and that he is made to cry and plead for strength to help his weak and withered hand to lay hold of the promise; and that it must be put into his mouth from above before he can take it. But to press him down when in the birth of his *calling* to know his election, I think it is, saying the least, a real misplacing of the true doctrine.

I know I need not mention to you that the blindness of judgment of our day is in the self-will of men, robbing the Spirit of his blessed work and taking it to itself, and putting it as a crown upon the head of that enemy,—self. O may the Lord in mercy raise up a banner of his truth against the flood! But we have provoked him; so that it is but just for him to give us over to believe a lie. O, dear friend, do you know that I am looking with trembling for fearful times (perhaps I ought to keep it to myself). I look for the time being near that there will not be a body professing to be the church of Christ, that will hold by the truth, in the whole of Scotland. I believe there will be a minister with a few in a corner here and there, just a few, far separate, and not connected. There are more than 20 years since this took hold of my mind; and what confirms it more and more is that I see some other things, connected with this, have happened already. Happy it will be for those of the flock who will be at rest in those times! I do not say but a bright day may dawn upon Scotland yet; but there will be a darker night than we have had yet,—before that will be a night that I will not see the end of in the land of the living.

Allow me to tell you that I go to my meetings here as a trembling leaf, expecting to break down every time I open my mouth; and I go thinking always that this is the last drop of oil in the cruse. O friend, may I ask you to bring my poor soul with you to the throne, if so be that he will give me to stand?

Your affectionate Friend,

ARCHIBALD CRAWFORD.

Strathpeffer, near Dingwall, Feb. 15, 1869.

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE AFFLICTED.

My dear Friend,—I am sorry to hear of your affliction; but since I received your letter, these words have been much on my mind:

“For this correction render praise;

’Tis given thee for thy good.

The lash is steep’d he on thee lays,

And soften’d in his blood.”—*Hymn* 871.

What a mercy, my friend, that you have a good hope; yea, a hope that maketh not ashamed! For the time will come when hope will be lost in sight, and you will see him whom your soul loveth—where there is no alluring world, or tempting devil; nor is there any night there.

“A few more sighs, a few more tears,
And you will bid adieu to pain.”

There you will be for ever and ever shut in with that Jesus whom you have often wished to extol more. O, what a thought!—"Heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." I wish I could feel as sure of myself as I do of S—K—. Still, I have a hope that I shall be there. But this one thing I do well know,—it will not be for any goodness of mine. If ever I get to heaven, it must be by free grace alone.

I hope the Lord will grant you much of his presence, and give you patience to bear whatever he is pleased to lay upon you; and that you may prove it is for your good and the glory of God. I read your letter last Sunday in the chapel. They sympathize with you in your affliction, and send their love to you. I hope Mrs. K. is quite well; and that she may have a token for good, so that she may say, "If it is a rough way, yet it is a right way to Zion."

We should be pleased to see you at East Peckham next Sunday. Still I should advise you to be very careful how you act, and not go out too soon, lest you should renew your complaint. A second attack might be much worse.

That the Lord may bless you both, and that your last days may be your best days, is the desire of

Yours in Love and Affection,

East Peckham, Jan. 25th, 1881.

JAMES STEVENS.

IN THE MOUNT OF THE LORD IT SHALL BE SEEN.

In the mountain of the Lord,
 In the glorious heights above,
 All the things that now seem hard
 Shall be seen,—*the work of love.*
 All the trials and hardships here
 Appear but blessings on yon sphere.
 There the gloomy providence,
 And mysterious paths that are
 Quite confounding to our sense
 Will be found,—*a Father's care.*
 Ways hedged up and friends removed
 Will be there,—*real mercies proved.*
 All to bring us to his feet,
 Humble in us all our pride.
 Every cross, all that we meet,
 Sore afflictions, side by side,—
 All remembered,—*all for good;*
 Now so feebly understood.

G. H. M. READ.

THE rock is first smitten, and then the waters flow. The almighty Sun of righteousness must point the beams of his converting power upon the soul, and then a gracious melting ensues; the frost breaks, the ice dissolves, and the vanquished sinner, who was sometimes afar off, is "made nigh by the blood of Christ."—*Hawker.*

REVIEWS.

The Judgment of the National Synod of the Belgic Reformed Churches, held at Dort, in the years 1618 and 1619, concerning the Five Points of Christian Doctrine contained in the Holy Bible,—the Word of God. Translated into the English language by Owen Jones, Docking, Norfolk.

WE conscientiously object to an established church in any form, believing that such establishments are unscriptural, and always have proved themselves to be, more or less, persecuting bodies. These religious formations stand opposed to the separate, independent churches formed by the apostles under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Every true church is complete in itself.

Viewing, as we do, an established church as an unscriptural one, we cannot admit that it is the guardian of truth. The history of the past up to the present period shows that established religions have failed to preserve in the daily teaching of their church even the letter of truth. The Thirty-nine Articles are a dead letter, and those few who adhere to them are destitute of power to enforce them. And the history of the true church from the time of the apostles proves that she has always been a wanderer in the earth. She has been invaded by erroneous men and their errors; and there is no outward protection promised against their inroads, seeing the Word of the Lord declares heresies must come: "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." (1 Cor. xi. 19.) How solemn are these words! It matters not how long men may stand connected with the church of God; they cannot stand the force of error, if they are not vitally united to Christ. But how strange that the Holy Spirit should purge his people through erroneous men coming in among them! Hence, if we look for the real church of God in still waters, we shall not find her there. She will be found where erroneous men and their errors are continually disturbing her peace. An established church, according to the common acceptation of the term, is not the church of Christ.

As a part of this false system, we object to her synods. That the Synod of Dort, 1618 and 1619, may have been composed of some of the principal leading Protestants of the age we acknowledge; but this does not justify convocations of that kind. Neither is the Synod of Dort an exception to the rule that such bodies imbibe a persecuting spirit; for persecution was carried out by that assembly to a grievous extent. The Synod of Dort not only condemned the tenets of Arminius, but his followers were subjected to persecutions of a most barbarous nature. They were driven into exile and poverty. Such conduct we are compelled to condemn, and wipe our hands clean from any participation therein. It is both unscriptural and unchristian to persecute any one on account of his sentiments. The New Testament gives no authority to the church over others beyond that of separation from herself.

But we have to inquire into a more grievous and fatal spirit of error which is invading almost every professing body in the present day; and many would be glad to trace the same in the articles prescribed by this assembly. The doctrine to which we refer is Baxterianism. We dare not pass it by unnoticed, as we believe an indefinite atonement is openly declared by some whose names appear in the pages of the pamphlet before us. The term "indefinite atonement" is applied to the Baxterian idea of redemption, which is, that the atonement is sufficient for the whole world, if the whole world would believe. Nothing could be more at variance with Scripture, as maintained in the sentiments of Toplady; neither ought such persons to adopt his creed as that of their own, for it is nothing of the kind. But more of this by-and-by.

The extreme repugnance we have, as a body, to the doctrine of an indefinite atonement causes us to raise an alarm whenever we hear of it. By these views persons contradict and throw down the very truths they profess to hold, especially with regard to election. For instance, Fuller says plainly that "none ever did or will believe in Christ but those who were chosen of God from eternity; and the rest are sure to perish." Yet he does not believe in the redemption of particular persons; for he says, "Upon the supposition of the atonement being insufficient for the salvation of any more than are actually saved by it, the non-elect are in the same state, with respect to a being reconciled to God through it, as the fallen angels; that is, the thing is not only morally, but *naturally impossible*. But if there be an objective fulness in the atonement of Christ, sufficient for any number of sinners, were they to believe in him; there is no other impossibility in the way of any man's salvation, to whom the gospel comes at least, than what arises from the state of his mind."

If none ever did or will believe but the elect, what advantage does Mr. Fuller himself find in an objective fulness of the atonement for the non-elect? Seeing these perish in their sins (and he says they are sure to do so), it is true that they can have no more participation in the saving effects of the atonement than the fallen angels.

But these adherents to Baxterian views are afraid to preach election as the Bible teaches it, because they say it might have a bad tendency! Is not this shocking in the extreme?—a Bible truth having a bad tendency! And they put forth the most deceptive arguments and delusive ideas to do away with the truth of election which they cannot deny.

The Synod of Dort met to refute the doctrines of Arminius, and drew up and established as articles of their faith the five points following:

- I. Election and Predestination.
- II. Particular and Eternal Redemption of all the Elect.
- III. The Fall of Man,—Spiritual Death.
- IV. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and Effectual Calling (by Grace).
- V. The Final Perseverance of the Saints.

How many profess these main points of Christian truth, and yet put an interpretation of their own upon them. They are misinterpreted by all who hold an indefinite atonement. The intended meaning of the Synod is further explained in a number of articles on each point; and these for the most part seem to be clear and scriptural. To some of them we shall refer.

1. Concerning predestination, article 5 states:

"The cause or the fault of men's unbelief, and of all their other sins, is not in God, but in men. But faith in Jesus Christ and salvation through him and by him are the free and gracious gift of God, as it is written: 'By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.' (Eph. ii. 8.) Also, 'It is given to you by grace to believe in Christ.' (Acts xviii. 17; Phil. i. 29.)"

This article refers to the truth that man is the author of his own sin, and that Jesus Christ is the Author of salvation. The word "fault" refers to the simple condition of a man in which he fails to believe until the cause of the fault be removed. It cannot be intended to convey any idea that man himself can remove the fault if he will. That would be contrary to the expression of the article, which says that "faith in Jesus Christ is the free and gracious gift of God." We shall have occasion to notice this more fully further on.

The 10th article on the same point is as follows:

"But the cause of this gracious election is the sole good pleasure of God; not consisting in this, that on account of certain qualities or human actions which may be in us that he chose us into a state of salvation; but in this, because, out of the common multitude of sinners, God chose certain particular persons to himself, to be his flock, according as it is written: 'This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise.'" (Isa. xliii. 21.) . . .

Nothing can be more clear than that eternal and personal election is here set forth. And in the 13th, 14th, and 15th articles it is expressly stated that this doctrine should be preached openly as it has been, both under the Old and New Testaments. Baxterian views certainly cannot stand with the teaching of these articles.

The doctrine of particular election is further insisted on in nine statements drawn up to reject the opposite errors; and in these the meaning of the Synod is fairly given in accordance with truth.

We find, however, here and there in the various articles certain expressions which we cannot endorse. The 16th is an instance:

"They who do not as yet effectually perceive and feel within themselves a living faith in Christ, and sure confidence of heart in Christ, peace of conscience, careful study of filial obedience, a rejoicing and glorying in God, through Christ, should nevertheless be exercised in those means in which God hath promised that he himself will work these things in us. They ought not to be terrified by the mention of reprobation, nor think themselves reprobates; but they ought diligently to proceed in the use of the means which God hath ordained, and they ought ardently to desire and long for, and reverently and humbly wait for the hour of more abundant grace. Much less ought they who have been truly converted unto God and regenerated by the Holy Ghost to

be terrified by the doctrine of reprobation; but they should desire and strive to please God, and to be delivered from sin and the body of death, although they cannot as yet proceed in the way of piety and faith, even as they would wish; yet, nevertheless, the merciful God hath promised that he will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed. But this doctrine is deservedly dreadful to those who, forgetting God and the Saviour Jesus Christ, have wholly given themselves over to the world, and to the pleasures of the flesh, so long as they are not truly converted unto God."

The language used above is what every little child, born of God, would soon find to be unsatisfactory. A quickened soul at first generally thinks he is a reprobate; and we are sure that none but God can relieve his fears, or convince him to the contrary.

Part of the 13th, too, is expressed in somewhat unguarded terms concerning man's will; where it says,

"But they who are not willing to walk in the ways of the elect and who refuse to bow to, and to recognize, and to submit to the righteous and just counsel of God, concerning this grace of election, do either rashly presume, or idly and wantonly prate. (1 Jno. iv. 9; 1 Thess. i. 4.)"

Neither can we agree with the 17th article:

"Seeing that it is revealed to us by the will of God in his own Word, which testifieth that the children of the faithful are holy, not indeed by nature, but by the virtue and benefit of the covenant of grace, in which they are included with their parents (see 1 Cor. vii. 14; Acts ii. 22, &c.), pious parents ought not to doubt of the election and salvation of their children whom God calleth in infancy out of this life." . . .

These ideas are a little part of the system of infant sprinkling and a national church. In 1 Cor. vii. 14, the apostle is not referring to covenant holiness, but to marriage holiness. We believe that children dying in infancy are saved; but not by virtue of their parents being included in the covenant of grace.

On the second point, concerning redemption, the 1st article states:

"God is not only infinitely merciful, but also infinitely just; and his justice demands (according as he has revealed in his Word) that our sins committed against his infinite Majesty should be punished, not only with temporal, but also with eternal pains both of soul and body; which punishments we cannot escape unless the justice of God be satisfied." (Lu. xvii.; Rom. v.)

We fully agree with the language of this statement, and also of the 2nd article relating to the satisfaction of justice.

Passing on to the 3rd article we find there an unscriptural sentiment expressed, and one which we believe lies at the bottom of a multitude of errors and all those universal invitations which are commonly held to be gospel:

"This death of the Son of God is the only and most perfect sacrifice and satisfaction for sins. It is of infinite virtue, and infinitely precious, and of infinite efficacy, abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world."

It is very unwise and unsafe to argue upon what is possible with God. "All things are possible with God;" but he doeth

“ whatsoever pleaseth him.” We must not argue that he has created everything that was possible because he had power to do so. We might say the atonement could have been made sufficient for the sins of the whole world; but we nowhere find a word in the Scriptures to warrant the assertion that it *was* so made sufficient. The Word of God simply states for whom redemption or atonement is made, and there is no saving benefit or possibility of salvation procured by it for the rest of mankind. It is written: “ He hath laid upon him the iniquities of *us all*.” If he laid the iniquity of the whole world upon him, he bore the weight of the iniquity of the whole world, and not one sinner could perish. If he did not bear it, that iniquity was not laid upon him. Consequently, there could be no atonement for those whose iniquities were not laid upon him. Therefore we cannot allow that the sufficiency of the atonement extends to all the world; but it is limited to the design and intention of God in providing it.

We think there is more consistency in the Arminians' doctrine, who roundly tell us that the whole world may be saved upon the ground of universal redemption and their free-will. Surely the infinite efficacy of redemption would not be manifest in an extension to all the world, many of whom perish notwithstanding! The Synod itself does in effect contradict its own 8rd article (above quoted), and clear itself from a possible charge of holding an indefinite atonement by a declaration on the succeeding page that they reject the errors of those

“ Who teach ‘That God the Father appointed and ordained his Son to the death of the cross *without a definite and certain and fixed counsel of saving any one by name*; and so that with regard to the impetration or accomplishment of the death of Christ, its necessity, utility, blessing, and dignity would be preserved, and continue sound and perfect in all its parts, and would remain complete and entire, although the redemption obtained should be actually applied and given to no individual whatsoever.’”

By this it may be seen that Baxterians cannot be said to have these divines on their side. Yet it is on such dangerous ground as the sentiment we have just pointed out—of a sufficiency in the atonement for all the world—that Baxterians and others found the most erroneous views. They affirm that the particularity of redemption “ consists in the sovereign pleasure of God with regard to the application of the atonement.” That is, they teach that Christ, by his merits on the cross, gave satisfaction to divine justice sufficient to atone for the sins of the whole world; that he died as much for the non-elect as for the elect; and the reason why the elect are saved is not because Christ died for them specially, but because the benefit of his death is applied to them sovereignly. To put it more plainly,—that all mankind are now brought into a salvable condition, and all might be saved *if they would believe*.

Thus Fuller writes concerning the reconciliation made on the

cross: "I conceive it to be that satisfaction to the divine justice by virtue of which *nothing pertaining to the moral government of God hinders any sinner from returning to him; and that it is upon this ground that sinners are indefinitely invited to do so.*" He also says, "There is not anything in the atonement, or promised to it, which infallibly ascertains its application to all those for whom it was *sufficient.*" And further: "It is a fact that the Scriptures rest the general invitations of the gospel upon the atonement of Christ. (2 Cor. v. 19-21; Matt. xxii. 4; Jno. iii. 16.) But if there were not a sufficiency in the atonement for the salvation of sinners without distinction, how could the ambassadors of Christ beseech them to be reconciled to God?" &c.

Can anything be more fallacious than the sentiments couched in these quotations? The portion of Scripture brought to establish them, 2 Cor. v. 19-21, has no reference whatever to beseeching dead sinners to be reconciled to God. The words are addressed to the church of God, already reconciled by the Lord; and she is exhorted in them, by the power of his reconciliation, to be reconciled to God as her Father, reconciled to his fatherly dispensations, and all his dealings with her.

The following incident illustrates well the meaning of this passage: An old minister in Suffolk, who was also a farmer, had these words applied to his mind early one Lord's day morning: "Be ye reconciled to God." He replied, "Lord, I do not know what the words mean." He rose early and went round his farm; and everything appeared to be right. At last he entered his stable, and there lay his best horse dead. The words came to his mind with some force: "Be ye reconciled to God." He replied, "So I would if it had been one of the other horses; but this is my best horse, and harvest is at hand, and I have not sufficient strength now to gather it in. What shall I do?" "Be ye reconciled to God," came again with more force; but he said, "I would, Lord, if it had not been my best horse." Again the words were repeated: "Be ye reconciled to God." The power which accompanied them this time awoke him as from a dream, and he exclaimed, "Dear me! Why, that is what the text means,—to be reconciled to God for the loss of my horse!" The poor man preached from the words that morning; and as the horse was worth £30, he told the people he had a text which cost him £30 to learn its meaning. When a man gets a knowledge of the truth in such a way he will never blunder about what it means.

The 5th article relates to the simple truth that the gospel is to be preached or proclaimed to all nations:

"Furthermore, the promise of the gospel is that whosoever believeth in Christ crucified should not perish, but have eternal life; which promise, with the command of repentance and faith, ought to be proclaimed and set forth indiscriminately, and without distinction unto all people and men, unto whom God of his own good pleasure sendeth the gospel. (Lu. xxiv. 46, 47; Acts xvii. 30.)"

That the gospel is to be *preached* to "every creature" we fully

believe; but nowhere in the Bible do we read that it is to be offered to any. 'The efficacy of the gospel is from the blessed Spirit alone; and moreover, except he makes it good news to a soul, no man can believe it to be so.

(To be continued.)

Five Sermons preached by the late F. Covell, at Providence Chapel, Croydon.—London: J. Gadsby, 18, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, E.C. Price 6d.

THE name of the late F. Covell, of Croydon, needs no commendation from us. As a preacher he is known far and near as an unflinching upholder of experimental truth. His sermons also have been widely spread over the land, and are well known to thousands. It is because there are some hundreds still in manuscript that they are issued in the present form; and, considering the wide-spread of error, it is hoped that they may be abundantly used as a means of spreading the truth. Here are five excellent sermons for sixpence; and we sincerely desire that the lovers of experimental truth will liberally support their publication.

They will be found suitable to read in places where there is no stated pastor, or on any emergency arising through the absence of a minister. It would also be an act of kindness to send them to the sick and to invalids who are deprived of the preached Word. The richer portion of God's people by this means might bestow a great benefit on the poor and afflicted of the Lord's family, and at the same time bring to light some hundred scriptural sermons, which now lie hidden from view.

Mr. Covell as a preacher specially entered into all the exercises and trials of the living family of God. He scarcely omitted one that might be found embodied in the text he was preaching from. Here he seemed peculiarly happy, describing the path of an exercised soul; so that whatever trial, trouble, or affliction his hearers might at the time be passing through, he would be almost sure to be led into it. Many can affirm how singularly blessed his ministry was to the poor and needy. We will give one extract, and earnestly recommend the sermons to the notice of all lovers of truth:

"What is thy sin to his great grace? God has exalted him. This makes him dear and adorable in the eyes of poor sinners; he can save them; he is willing to save them; he died to save them, and lives to save them; and will bring them home to God as trophies of his blood, that they may sing, 'Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his blood, to him be glory, might, majesty, and dominion.' Here is a Saviour. 'O,' say some before God, 'his ability I do not question, the efficacy of his blood I do not question, but will he save me? Am I the man, am I the woman, he will pick up and take to heaven?' I will tell you whom he will save; see if you can come in. I have just hastily set forth the greatness of this salvation, and that no sins can be too great; most of you may not question that, but it is whether your spot is the spot of God's children. 'O that he would save me, wash me, take me to heaven! O that he would look in pity and compassion on a poor wretch

like me! That is the desire, the sinking, and misgiving of some before God. I will tell you, 'he will save the humble person,' the man that has got low eyes, that sees himself the most unworthy, and most unprofitable, that says in his feelings, 'Will he look upon such a dead dog as I?' Yes, he will; you cannot be too base for him.

" 'Sinners can say, and none but they,
How precious is the Saviour.'

How true are these words of dear Hart :

" 'Sinners are high in his esteem.'

" Is that all ?

" 'And sinners highly value him.'

" What a fit, isn't it? What a coming together! What blessed union! While he embraces them, they embrace him; while such are dear to him, he is dear to them; so there is no love lost between them. As I just said, 'he will save the humble person.' Hast thou low eyes? What do you think of yourself? Honestly, without any canting hypocrisy or lies, how have you felt and seen yourself at times? 'Well,' say you, 'God that searcheth all hearts, to whom I am transparent, knows that at times I have seen and felt myself the least and last.' Then you are just the man. There is nothing in God's Word against you; it all runs in your favour. 'Surely it cannot be so,' you may say. Harken to his Word: 'He lifeth the poor out of the dust and beggars from the dunghill, and setteth them among princes, and causeth them to inherit thrones of glory.'"

Obituary.

THE EXPERIENCE OF MRS. E. NORTON, OF STAMFORD, TAKEN FROM
HER DIARY. WITH A FEW PARTICULARS OF HER LAST DAYS.

(Concluded from p. 323.)

April 11th, 1857. After a few months' doubts and fears I again feel moved to scribble down a little of what is passing in my mind. O my God, among the bustling changes of this mortal life, what a mercy to feel such a going forth after anything spiritual! I trust I have indeed had some sweet promises applied. Surely I am not deceived; they cannot spring from nature's barren soil. O God, go on to bless, and bring me to a full assurance of these things my soul is breaking after. I do indeed feel what a mercy it is to be kept from any outward acts of evil; much more to have a desire after the things of God. But alas! how often do I feel no faith, as I could wish.

These words have been much upon my mind: "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Pet. i. 5.) O how my soul has been blessed with these sweet promises, so that I have been obliged to take up my cross, viz., in the way of reputation, and bless the Lord.

A copy of a letter written to my only daughter, at Brighton :

"My dear girl,—You will doubtless be surprised after so long and many years of trouble to hear that I have, in a sudden and merciful way, been brought to see and feel that it was my privilege to give myself to the Lord in his own appointed way, viz., the way of baptism. I had long wished to make a public profession of his dear Name; but

had always feared I was presumptuous, and doubted at times whether I had part or lot in the matter.

"But O, what abundant cause I have for thankfulness that notwithstanding all my unbelief, the Lord was pleased a few weeks since to manifest himself to me in so sweet and suitable a manner by the application of various texts of Scripture to my mind,—especially this: "Kept by the mighty power of God;" and others equally suitable,—that I could no longer hesitate to come forward. Accordingly I went the following Sunday, and was approved and accepted; and was baptized on May 3rd. I humbly trust I shall be enabled, by divine strength, to walk worthy of the great privileges that are bestowed upon me. My earnest desire is to feel more deeply my own emptiness and Christ's fulness, and to be made sensible of my entire dependence upon him for grace and strength to adorn in all things his doctrine. And I trust that you, my dear child, and many more, dear to me may be brought to know his life eternal.

"It may be that when the hand that now traces these lines is cold in death, the Holy Spirit of God may work upon the minds of some most dear to me.

"From your affectionate mother,

"May 9th, 1857."

"ELIZABETH NORTON."

June 5th. Much blessed under the Word. (Phil. iii. 10.) Much sweetness all night. Dear Lord, it must be thy work, or why these sweet visits. Enable me to live more in the enjoyment of them, and direct my path. O the mercy that the day has dawned, and the way is in some measure pointed out! O Lord, mercies are so mingled with my troubles that I must say, "Father, thy will be done."

Some days and nights of a sweet looking on and into the finished work of Jesus, with love to him for all his mercies, temporal and spiritual, especially for the gift of his dear Son.

June 14th. O, I seem to be weary of life by reason of the painful trials which daily beset me on every side. But bless his dear Name, what sweet promises flow in at the same time! Promises that I shall come forth as gold seven times tried. And that he will reign until he has put all enemies under his feet. Then, that Christ died for the sins of his people, feeling myself one of the very chief. O what are all these painful trials compared with these great promises, when, by divine strength, we are enabled to lay hold! Shall I doubt and tremble again?

June 18th. Heard the Word with much sweetness. (Heb. vi. 18.) O Lord God, thou knowest the way and why my soul has been led to thee for refuge,—because all other has failed, inasmuch that I despaired even of life, for the many years I was seeking, working, and toiling, and always came short of that. My soul has been led to see thee; that Jesus is the only way in which a poor sinner can approach to God.

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

May I be enabled to fight hourly!

Aug. 12th. O Lord, thou knowest the many sorrows which have oppressed my weary soul since I last wrote. But this morning I feel indeed thy hand is in them all. Suffer me not to repine

under all the oppression I am called to pass through in this vale of tears.

These sweet love visits,—how they comfort a poor, weary soul that has been tried for life. Have I not doubted whether thou wouldst ever shine and remove those painful trials. What a mercy thou changest not!

Sept. 4th. O, for the most part, what a path of trial and affliction does mine appear to be! but, blessed be God, by these things my soul is kept alive. O God, I would ask for an unclouded assurance that I may yet rejoice in a good hope; and have such a humbling view of self, and greater discovery of the Lord Jesus Christ, that I might for ever love and adore and bless; and that I might have grace for every day of need.

Sept. 15. O Lord, how many changes has my soul undergone since I last wrote. Troubles and trials have pressed me down so that I have had only just strength enough to crawl about; but what? In the midst thou art pleased to shine, and what light do I see! In thy light surely I am not deceived nor deluded when I say it was in my soul's feelings as if I were taken up to see the beauty of heaven; so much so that I was obliged to say, "O God, what does this mean?"

But alas! how short these sweet visits last! Then what great darkness and trial did bring me down till I felt I must sink into the earth with the sense of my own weakness. What a path of changes and trouble does mine appear to be! But when these things are at peace, does not my heart get hard and stupid?

"Where could my foolish passions rove
Where can such sweetness be
As I have tasted in thy love,
As I have found in thee?"

Oct. 22nd. After many and painful, and weary seasons, when to have penned down my experience would have been sad, alas! how I have had to mourn after an absent God. Yet I dare not say I have not had any sweet promises, and one sweet breaking down of soul, seeing the Lord's hand in all, and every state secure. O if it is the Lord's will that I should for the most part be kept in the wilderness, O that he would give me strength to be coming up leaning on him! My soul aspires to know him more and serve him better. Daily are my trials loathed within and without; but I hope I see that God's ways are best. O that I may be kept steady in the most unpleasant frames of soul, believing all things must work for good. And he is ever mindful of those whose souls are longing to be freed from the painful sorrows which daily distress my soul.

Nov. 1st. I have had great, and blessed, and painful changes passing in my soul. Visiting a niece on her death-bed, who had never made a day's profession, what a consolation to hear her crying for mercy; and then to witness in what a blessed way the Lord appeared for her. I trust it has left a lasting impression on my soul. May I ever be enabled to trust him in the dark

and gloomy seasons, in which I am for the most part called to travel.

For O! this day the Lord only knows what a miserable wretch I feel. I can see the way, but I cannot believe I am in it. O that the Lord would deliver me! When I cannot feel the hand of God supporting, what a miserable state to be in! But thou alone canst remove the load, and help me for the sake of him whom to know is life everlasting.

Nov. 3rd. O what a feeling sense of the unchangeable love of God flowed into my poor barren soul this morning; that however deep the waters of affliction, they cannot quench the love of God in Christ in the poor sinner's soul. Wherever it is implanted it must draw the soul unto him who gave it.

Nov. 16th. Dear Lord, what a mercy to have the preached gospel, and to be blessed with the inward witness of thy Holy Spirit's work upon the soul; for without that, all is vain. Although it was thy will to bless the means yesterday, alas, how little do I retain! But I trust thou hast taught me to see and feel there is nothing to rest upon but the finished work of Jesus.

Nov. 29th. Heard the Word with much sweetness, but on Monday much harassed and perplexed with the scenes of this mortal life. Yet it is in these seasons of trouble he has again and again blessed me with faith to believe I shall one day be delivered; for he has blessed my soul when I have had many a bitter cross upon my back; and caused me to rejoice as well as weep.

Dec. 1st. The Lord was pleased to lay his afflicting hand upon me for five weeks with great darkness of soul; so that I saw nothing before me but hell and the spirits of the damned. In that state I saw no way of escape, but was at my wit's end, with the deep waters of affliction overwhelming me, both in body and soul. But O, it is then the Lord's hand is felt and realized; for he broke in upon my soul with, "Trust in the Lord and do good, and thou shalt dwell in the land; and verily thou shalt be fed." Many hours' thought on that then came in,—how they are fed with manna in the wilderness. O how my poor distracted soul could respond and say, "It was I myself who wanted to rest on the arm of my beloved Jesus;" and I could say, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good." Then for some time sweet promises flowed in with such joy that overwhelmed my poor soul that I was obliged to say, "Dear Lord, it is enough." Many verses rested with me, but one I will mention: "He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." (Job v. 19.)

Then I began to ponder and think something more was at hand. But I soon found my seventh trouble; for my dear partner was laid up with the rheumatic fever, in which trouble I felt indeed the Lord's promise fulfilled.

But alas! I was not to be in that state too long. Darkness and sorrow have overshadowed me again and again since then.

Still I trust the Lord will keep me under all the trials I am called to pass through.

Jan. 19th, 1862. I had never thought I should write down any more of the changes that pass in my soul. But I have had this day such a striking deliverance from the fear of death and the many painful feelings which sorely harass my mind. I rose in the morning in great bondage of soul, and attempted to pour out my soul to the Lord; but not a word could I utter. I was enabled to look up and sigh for help through the dear Redeemer's sufferings; and the sweet deliverance that flowed into my soul by the blessed Spirit I will leave to those who are thus led, to judge. And I was much comforted all the morning.

Our minister preached from Rev. xvi. 4, and in the afternoon from Ps. cxix. 81; and indeed it was a refreshing day to me. But I have to return to my sad state again and feel the evils of my wicked, and desperate, wandering, deceitful heart, only trusting to that Almighty power that the evils I fear and meet with may not lead me to fret and murmur as if God were not my Father, and heaven my expected home. My greatest desire is that he would show me more of the glory of the Saviour's victory over the world that I may share with him in it, and go forth conquering in his strength alone; and that I may have grace given me to regret all the temptation which daily besets me. At this moment how I admire thee! How mercifully I have been kept and led on through all the most painful trials, both in body and mind. O that the Lord would keep me humble at his feet; for there alone I find comfort under all things I am called to pass through.

Some days before Feb. 16th, 1862, I was in a most trying and perplexed state of mind. I hoped the Lord would meet with me on the coming Sabbath, the day for the ordinance, and I was comforted in the morning. But in the afternoon the enemy set in upon me, and my wicked heart, and led me to believe I had no business there, and it was better for me to go out. I scarcely dared take the cup. This indeed did lay me low in my feelings, and I sank into bondage and bitterness of soul, and concluded my supposed faith was all swept away. But, blessed be the God of all grace, wisdom, and power, who comforteth his people when and in what way it is best for them, these words came in the night season, when sleep was gone from me: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden; and I will give you rest;" and other promises quite suitable to such a downcast, tempted, unbelieving wretch as I felt myself to be. O the preciousness of believing after such distracting scenes!

April 10th. After the perplexing circumstances of the day I went to bed much cast down, but in the night was suddenly awaked with these words: "Ye are washed and made white by the blood of the Lamb." I thought at the moment it was an audible voice; but I soon found it was the voice of the Spirit to comfort my poor distracted soul, and to make me believe I should

be kept by the mighty power of God,—a promise given me some years ago. Bless the Lord for his goodness to me in all things.

April 29th. As I was meditating on my deadness and departure from my only and best Friend, there went by a few sheep and lambs; and as I glanced upon them, a ray of light shone into my soul with a feeling sense of being as helpless as those little lambs that were bleating after the sheep, and the sheep after the lambs. It broke my soul down into submission to the Lord's will, to see how I had been kept on through these many years' ups and downs, and that the Lord will not let me go. Notwithstanding all my backslidings what a mercy to be thus led, although painful to the flesh.

Jan. 8th, 1866. I did not think of ever writing again, but I have had such a labouring of soul with sin in my soul, which caused me to sink as low as a poor creature could sink at the foot of the cross. In the night season I exclaimed, "O Lord, without thy help I must sink, if thou dost not see fit to remove these painful exercises of soul;" and those words came as with an audible voice:

"How can I sink with such a prop
That bears the world and all things up?"

O how my heart could say, "It is the Lord;" for I was like a weaned child, and all my harassing feelings fled. Now these deliverances prove to me again and again that this spiritual life has not been all labour; but there are sweet seasons of rest. So after all these things I desire to commit my soul's keeping into the hands of him who giveth songs in the night.

When the waves roll high I am cast down. Then comes a promise, then a hope it will be all well. But for the most part mine has been a life of great changes, as is seen in what I have scribbled down. Should this be thought worth notice it must be taken as from the hand of a broken-hearted sinner.

E. NORTON.

[The few following particulars of Mrs. Norton's death were put down by her granddaughter, who lived with her and waited upon her.]

"In May, 1873, my grandmother had an attack of paralysis on the brain. From this time she was unable to read or write, and only twice attended the means of grace, which was a great trial to her.

"At the commencement of her last illness, Feb. 1st, 1881, she was in a sweet frame of mind for about two months. She would often repeat:

"Yes, I shall soon be landed
On yonder shores of bliss;
There, with my powers expanded,
Shall dwell where Jesus is.'

Then with much emphasis would add, 'O, that will be joyful, won't it?' She often expressed much gratitude for having every earthly comfort, and would say with deep contrition:

"Not more than others I deserve,
Yet God has given me more.'

"She particularly wished me to remember the following verse:

"I waited long and sought the Lord,
And patient I did bear,
Until to me he did record,
"Thy voice and cry I hear."

"She would often repeat:

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

"After this through increasing infirmity, and owing to the nature of the complaint, her mind was too feeble to converse on spiritual things. It pleased the Lord to remove her from this vale of tears, Oct. 8th, 1881, aged 82." R. W. R.

RICHARD MARSH.—On May 6th, 1882, Richard Marsh, of Hindley, near Wigan.

This dear, aged servant of the Lord was well known and highly regarded amongst the Strict Baptist churches in Lancashire and Cheshire.

When God the Spirit first met with him he was, like all of us by nature, wholly taken up with the things of time and sense. He was one of the bell-ringers at the parish church of his native place, Tyldesley, near Manchester, and also a member of a club of hand-bell ringers, to which carnal amusement he was very much attached. However, when the Lord began the work of grace with power in his soul, he was constrained at once to relinquish those so-called pleasures, and to seek for a shelter from the consuming wrath of divine vengeance. So noticeable was the change in his life and conversation that only a few months after the work began his old companions asked his wife what was the matter with her husband. She replied that she could not tell, but should shortly begin to think there was a reality in religion.

The good work commenced at the end of 1830, or beginning of 1831. Mr. Marsh and his sister, being orphans, had been brought up by their grandfather. About the time stated this relative died; and on his death-bed made some solemn remark to his grandson about the careless and sinful life he was leading. These words were impressed on the mind of the latter by the Holy Spirit, and made the means of leading him into a knowledge of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He then, seeing the need of repentance toward God and newness of life, and thinking to satisfy the demands of the law by his own supposed good doings, attended for a short period the services at his parish church. The food offered to him there was not, however, of that nature which could satisfy the cravings of a soul under the teachings of the Spirit; and he, therefore, in anxious search for spiritual sustenance, began to attend Lady Huntington's chapel at Tyldesley. In course of time he was led to hear Mr. Hewlett, a curate in the Church of England at Astley. Here he became a member, and remained about four years, until Mr. Hewlett left

the place. A large number of the congregation then separated from the church, and met for worship in a room under the ministry of the subject of this account, and another brother. These two addressed the people alternately, until 1840, when Mr. Hewlett returned to Astley, and the room was given up. Mr. Marsh then went about to supply at various places without distinction of sect; and being a man who had experienced many spiritual conflicts and temporal privations, his preaching was generally acceptable to the tried family of God.

One incident related by himself will show his simplicity and godly sincerity. Shortly after he commenced to preach, he thought he would give the people a better address than they had ever heard. He therefore borrowed two dictionaries, and picked out as many fine words as possible to help him along. On the Lord's day morning he went to the room primed for the occasion, and priding himself beforehand on the sermon he was to deliver. He gave out his text and entered on his discourse without difficulty. His introduction was well approved; but when he began to open up his text the Lord quite shut his mouth, and he could not utter a single word. So, after looking for a short time at the congregation and they at him, he said, "Friends, I cannot go on. I have been stealing, and the Lord has found me out; but if he will forgive me, I will never do it again."

After several years he married a second time, and became more closely connected with the Strict Baptists, to whom he ultimately united himself in church membership. He continued to supply for several of their churches, until the Lord called him home.

For several years past his aged and frail body has been at times brought very low; and on more than one occasion he and his friends have expected his dissolution. Those who saw him at such times can testify that he always spoke earnestly and comfortably of his desire to depart, and be with Jesus. The Lord, however, saw fit to raise him up, time after time, and to enable him to speak to the exhortation, edification, and comfort of his people.

He was very unwell during the last winter, but again appeared to be improving as the spring returned. He spoke twice, with comfort to himself and a blessing to his hearers, at Hindley, on Lord's day, April 16th. In the evening he complained of feeling greatly fatigued, and from that time gradually and peacefully sank; until he yielded up his spirit into the hand of his Lord and Friend on May 6th. A short time before his death he said, "Give my kindest love to the friends, and tell them I am on the Rock, and that all hell cannot remove me off it." His last words were, "There is no bridge over this river; but I feel a good foothold, and shall get safely through."

WILLIAM SHARP.—On April 25th, 1882, aged 77, William Sharp, eldest son of the late William Sharp, minister at Brighton.

When a lad of 14 years of age he was apprenticed to a grocer in London. At that time his father wrote him a letter of advice for his future observance, containing this remark: "My son, you are placed in a large town wherein are many temptations. But bear in mind that in this world the soul is formed for eternity." This remark weighed upon his mind and led him to ponder his steps well. At length serious impressions arrested him. He was obliged to attend the same place of worship as his master; but he found the ministry there did not meet the exercises of his mind, and at every opportunity he went to hear Mr. Fowler, of Gower Street. Here the Lord was pleased to meet with him, and convince him of his real need of a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. In time the Lord graciously revealed himself to him, to the joy of his heart, by sealing pardon and peace to his soul. With this testimony he waded through many years of difficulties and trials.

Towards the end of his life he was afflicted with five serious diseases at one time, which brought him to his end. About a month previous to his death I visited him, and asked him to tell me, now he was so nearly approaching his end, what result his father's remark before mentioned had produced upon him. He looked up solemnly, and replied, "I do not wish to boast, nor to say anything but what is true. But I can say there is not a cloud nor a bar between me and God. He condescends to commune with me, and permits me to commune with him. He has washed me. He has sanctified me. And now I do not fear to die; for death has lost its sting." And he lifted up his withered hand, saying, "'O death, where is thy sting?' It is lost for ever in the heart of Christ." I reminded him that a bee that had stung one person could never sting another, although it would retain its formidable appearance. And the person stung by it could say, "Don't fear it; it has stung me, therefore, it cannot hurt you." He answered, "No. Death stung the Lord Jesus Christ; therefore it has lost its sting in him. Now death is only a shadow to all those for whom Christ died."

I visited him several times after this, and found him in the same peaceable state of mind. On the day previous to his death he said to me, "I have perfect peace, which the world can neither give nor take away, nor know anything of." These were the last words he uttered of any importance. Thus died my brother in the sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection to eternal life.

CORNELIUS SHARP.

JOHN FORD.—On April 7th, 1882, aged 72, John Ford, a member of the church at Thistle Grove, Fulham Road, S.W.

Our friend was very ill with asthma and dropsy, and not expected to live through last summer; but God raised him up, and he was able to watch the work and protect the building of the new chapel. He had been a member over 30 years at Goring Heath, and was with us three years.

He had many conflicts with Satan on his bed of affliction, and also many sweet visits of mercy. He would often cry for submission to the will of God, and greatly feared murmuring under his pain, which at times was very great. I seldom left him without being refreshed in spirit. Once especially, on March 21st, his mind was sweetly stayed on the Lord, and he spoke with much feeling of God being rich in mercy, and quoted the lines :

“ His grace shall to the end
Stronger and brighter shine.
Nor present things, nor things to come,
Shall quench the spark divine.”

He lay on his bed as a witness of sovereign grace ; and some in the house, being unbelievers, were astonished at his words and the manifest power upon him. For when sin and Satan were subdued in him he spoke with great delight of his loving Lord's grace. His greatly loved text was, “ Your life is hid with Christ in God.” An hour before he died he began to repeat the lines : “ My hope is built on nothing less,” but could not finish them. His lips moved in prayer until he left mortality.

A. BRANDON.

Mrs. WRIGHT.—On May 1st, 1882, aged 69, Mrs. Wright, of Eccles.

My dear wife was favoured with God-fearing parents, who were formerly members at Grove Chapel, Camberwell, under the pastorate of the late Joseph Irons. Her mother was an exceedingly exercised and tried Christian woman ; and on one or more occasions was so tempted to self-destruction that her husband has followed her in the middle of the night to the water's edge. But on each occasion the Lord in tender mercy broke the snare, and delivered her from the grasp of the enemy.

The Lord was pleased to deprive my wife of both her parents when she was about 20 years of age. At that time she had attached herself to Surrey Chapel (late Rowland Hill's), under the ministry of the late James Sherman, in whose Sunday school she diligently laboured for more than 20 years, much beloved by all who knew her. Her cheerful and happy disposition indeed proved a snare to her, by rendering it the more difficult to sever herself from those she so much loved, and with whom she so long laboured. She has often told me that when listening to Mr. Sherman, who in the morning would preach a free grace sermon, and in the evening invite dead sinners to living acts of faith, that her own judgment was far better informed.

After Mr. Sherman's resignation and when Newman Hall came to Surrey Chapel, her mind was more and more disturbed. Still long associations and warm affections prevailed over her until the year 1856.

About this time I became acquainted with her. I was then a widower with eight little motherless ones under 13 years of age.

the youngest only a few months old. I knew her excellent and amiable disposition from my intimacy with her family; but my difficulty arose from my heartfelt desire that I might be blessed with a God-fearing partner, if I ever married again. I was enabled, I trust, to deal very faithfully with her; remembering that in my own case the Lord was graciously pleased, by the faithful words of a dear old saint, who formerly attended the ministry of Huntington, and then of the late Henry Fowler, at Gower Street, to strip me of my filthy rags in a lifeless profession, and bring me, as a poor lost sinner, to cry for mercy. On one occasion I said, "My dear, I want in a wife something more than an amiable professor." I little thought the effect those words would have at the time; but, as she often told me afterwards, she could not get away from them. They sent her in bitterness of soul to the footstool of mercy with the inquiry: "Am I only a professor? O Lord, do undeceive me. Do show to me that I am one of thy redeemed ones. Do have mercy upon me." Very soon after this the ties of Surrey Chapel, that had so long bound her, gave way, and the grand truths of the gospel she had heard in the days of her youth, but which were only known in her judgment, she now began to feel of vast importance.

After our union we resided at Wandsworth Road, and attended the ministry of the late Mr. Rowland (the blind minister). Having given satisfactory evidence of her call by grace, she was admitted in church fellowship. But before her baptism she was sore beset with unbelief, doubts, and fears, that she had neither part nor lot in the matter of salvation and that she would only be adding sin to sin by passing through that solemn ordinance. But on the morning of the day preceding her baptism, the words of the dear Redeemer to Peter were applied to her soul with divine power: "Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." "Where the word of a king is there is power." Satan and unbelief had to slink away, and with a rejoicing heart she followed her Lord in the much-despised ordinance.

In a year or so we removed to Manchester where we were both received into church-fellowship by our friend Mr. Taylor, at Rochdale Road chapel. We had not been there long before my dear wife was laid up with gastric fever. During this severe illness the loving-kindness and tender mercy of the Lord were most graciously made known to her. All thought of business, of my children, and her own little one even seemed as nothing. The blessed manifestation of her dear Redeemer's love appeared to completely ravish her soul. Portion after portion of God's precious Word flowed in with sweetness and unctuous power; and I remember on one occasion some one was about to read Newton's hymn:

" 'Tis a point I long to know,"

when she said, "No, not that hymn. *I do know* that Jesus is

mine and that I am his." One day a friend, Mr. Vaughan, many years superintendent of Rochdale Road Sunday school, remarked to me, "I do not think your dear wife will recover. Her joys appear too great to encourage the hope of restoration to health." But the Lord was pleased to rebuke the disease; and well do I remember as health was gradually returning her joys began to decline. Anxious questions arose: "How is business? Are the children well?" Domestic affairs began to lie heavily on her mind; and like Abraham of old, she returned to her own place. Doubts and fears in course of time prevailed, and she who was once strong in faith and the comforts of the Holy Ghost had to experience that the days of darkness are many.

Circumstances of a business nature obliged our return to London about ten years ago. This, of course, caused our resignation from Rochdale Road; but unexpected and unlooked-for events compelled our return to Manchester. Ultimately we settled down at Eccles, in consequence of the little Bethel there erected; and nearly three years ago we were admitted members.

My dear wife was blessed with a very tender conscience; and if a hasty temper or the least family unpleasantness had troubled her, an almost sleepless night would follow. And in the morning, or if I awoke in the night, I have sometimes found her sobbing with grief from the attacks of the enemy and the unbelief of which she was the subject.

About a year ago her health began to fail; and she became so weak from last July that she was not able to attend our little chapel. But we hoped that a change by the sea-side would again restore her to health. This was tried; but she returned home worse than she went; and her poor frame gradually sank. My hope gave way, and upon my asking her medical man to tell me candidly if there was positive danger, he assured me there certainly was evident doubt of her recovery. This was on the 29th of April, only two days before her death. She continued to be about the house to the last day. In the evening of May 1st she was exceedingly weak and panting for breath, and I took occasion to ask her how she felt in her mind. She replied, "I long for one smile of his countenance." I said, "My dear, it is most precious to have it; but a child put to bed in the dark is as much a child as when favoured with the light." Her faith seemed a little encouraged, and she replied, "'How can I sink with such a prop?' for 'he loved me and gave himself for me.'" In a few minutes more she gave up her expiring breath to him who for 69 years had watched over her. Although deeply feeling my loss, I desire to bow with submission to his sovereign will, and say with resignation, "It is the Lord; let him do as seemeth him good."

W. WRIGHT.

THAT ministry by which God doth not ordinarily humble the soul, and break the heart for sin, doth not convert and draw home to Christ.—*T. Hooker.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

SEPTEMBER, 1882.

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

A PASTORAL ADDRESS TO THE CHURCHES OF
CHRIST THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

BY STEPHEN CRISP.

[Written July 15th, 1690, after a time of great persecution.]

(Concluded from p. 335.)

A HEART that looks upon the substance that is given him as really bestowed upon him as much for the support of charity as for the support of his own body, is a heart made liberal. Where people have this mind given them, they will be afraid of keeping back any of God's part; for he hath in all ages, in a most singular manner, espoused the cause of the poor, the widow, and the fatherless; and hath often signified by his prophets and ministers a special charge upon the rich that they should look to it that they were faithful stewards of what they possessed; and that they might be rich in good works, and might not so cleave to uncertain riches as to neglect the service God had given them the things of this life for, either to give them up when called for in a testimony of his worthy Name, or to communicate of them to those who were in necessity.

Now, as concerning the necessities of the poor, there is a great need of wisdom when we meet together about that affair; for though the worthiness or unworthiness of persons is not to be considered in judgment, yet in charity it is. And you will find some that God hath made poor, and some that have made themselves poor, and some that others have made poor; which must all have their several considerations, in which you ought to labour to be unanimous, and not be taken up with partiality to one person more than another. Every one ought to love every one in the Spirit, and then deal out that love in outward manifestations thereof, according to the measure that the Lord, in his wisdom working in them, shall measure forth to them. And as to those who by sickness, lameness, age, or other impotence, are brought into poverty by the Lord's providence, these are your peculiar care and objects pointed out to you to bestow your charity upon; for by them the Lord calls for it. For as "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," he hath by his sovereign power

commanded, in every dispensation, that a part of what we receive from him should be thus employed. The Israelites were not to reap the corners of their fields, nor to gather the gleanings of their corn or vintage; it was for the poor. In the time of the gospel they were to lay apart on the first day of the week a part of what God had blessed them with, for the relief of those who were in necessity. Nay; they did not confine themselves in this to their own meetings, but had a universal eye through the whole church of Christ, and upon extraordinary occasions sent their benevolence to relieve the poor saints at Jerusalem. And all who feel the power of the same Spirit will be found in the same practice of charity and good works. "To do good and to communicate, forget not."

You will find out the poor's part in the corners and gleanings of the profits of your trades and merchandisings, as the old Israelite did in the corners and gleanings of their fields. And in the distribution of it, you will have regard to comfort the bowels of such as are by the divine providence of God put out of the capacity of enjoying those outward comforts of health which others do enjoy. For if they are partakers of the same faith, and walk in the way of righteousness with you, submitting themselves patiently to the dispensations of God towards them, they are of your household and under your care, both to visit, and relieve as members of one body, of which Christ Jesus is the Head; and he that giveth to such "poor lendeth to the Lord."

But there is another sort of poor, who make themselves poor through their sloth and carelessness, and sometimes by their wilfulness, being heady and high-minded, and taking things in hand that are more than they can manage, and making a flourish for a season, and then, through their own negligence, are plunged into great poverty. These are a sort the primitive churches began to be troubled with in the early days of the gospel; for the apostle took notice of some that would not work at all, and sharply reproofed them, saying that they that would not work should not eat. These are also commonly a sort of busy-bodies, and meddlers with others' matters, while they neglect their own, and run into a worse way than the unbelievers, while they profess to be believers. The charity that is proper to such is to give them admonition and reproof, and to endeavour to convince them of their sloth and negligence. And if they submit to your reproof and are willing to amend, then care ought to be taken to help them into a way and means to support themselves; and sometimes by a little help of this kind some have been reclaimed from the snares of their soul's enemy. But if they will not receive your wholesome counsel and admonitions, but kick against them either in words or actions, friends will be clear of such in the sight of God; for it is unreasonable to feed them who will not be ruled by you. They break the obligation of society by their disorderly walking; for our communion doth not stand in frequenting meetings merely, and hearing truth preached, but in answering the blessed

principle of truth in life and conversation; and therein both the rich and poor have fellowship one with another.

There is another sort that are made poor by the oppressions and cruelties of others. These oppressed poor cry loud in the ears of the Almighty, and he will in his own time avenge their cause. But in the meantime there is a tenderness to be extended towards them, not knowing how soon it may be our turn; and if there be need of counsel and advice in such cases, let all who are capable be ready and willing to advise, relieve, and help. This is an acceptable work of charity, and a great comfort to such in their sharp afflictions; and their souls will bless the instruments of their ease and comfort.

And, dear friends, as God hath honoured you with so high and holy a calling to be his servants and workmen in this great and notable day, and to work together in his power in setting forth his praise and glory in the earth, and gathering together in one the scattered seed in this and other nations, O let the dignity of your calling provoke and encourage you to be diligent attenders upon this work. Let not your concerns in the world draw you from observing the times and seasons appointed to meet together. You that are elders, set a good example to the younger sort by a due observance of the hour appointed. When the time is come, leave your business for the Lord's work. He will take care your business shall not suffer, and will add a blessing which will do more for you than the time can do that might be saved out of his service.

When you have to do with perverse, froward, or disorderly persons, whom ye have occasion to reprove or rebuke for the truth's sake, and you find them stout and high and reflecting upon you, then is the time for the Lord's meekness to shine forth, and for you to feel your authority in the Name of Christ to deal with such a one, and to wait for the peaceable wisdom from above to bring down and confound the earthly wisdom. In this frame of mind you labour together to pull the entangled sheep out of the thicket, and to restore that which is gone astray to the fold again, if you can; if not, yet you save yourselves from his guilt. But, on the other hand, if ye suffer their perverse spirits to enter, and their provocations to have place in you so as to kindle your spirits into a heat of passion, then you get a hurt and are incapable of doing them good. Words will break out that will need repentance, and the wicked will be stiffened and strengthened thereby, and you miss the service that you did really intend. Therefore, dearly beloved, may you keep upon your watch, having on your spiritual armour, your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; and the God of peace be with you, and crown your endeavours with good success to your joy and comfort, and bring up his power over your adversaries and opposers more and more, to which many shall bow and bend in your sight; and bring shame and confusion upon the rebellious, whose hearts are hardened and necks stiffened against the Lord, against his Christ, and

against his kingdom in the hearts of his chosen, which he will exalt in the earth. Notwithstanding all that Satan and all his evil instruments can do to hinder it, “of the increase of his government,” and of the peace of his kingdom, “there shall be no end.”

And now, dear friends, I have cleared my conscience of what has lain upon me for some time, to write to you by way of remembrance. I continue travailing in the spirit for the welfare of Zion; and although the outward man decays, yet the inward man is comforted in beholding daily the great things God hath done, and is still doing, for those who have their sole dependence upon him. So committing you to the grace of God for direction and preservation in your several stations to which God hath called you, that by the operation of his mighty power ye may be kept blameless and unspotted from the world, to his honour and your comfort, and to the universal comfort and edification of the church of Christ, that so praises and thanksgiving may fill your hearts and mouths in the closet and in the public assembly; for he is worthy who is our tower, our support, the Lord of hosts, the King of saints; to whom be glory, honour and renown through this and all generations for ever and ever. Amen.

From your friend and brother in the communion and fellowship of the gospel of peace and purity, STEPHEN CRISP.

[We have been requested to reprint several pieces on the subject of the foregoing letter, and have made choice of the above as the most comprehensive. We think it contains an answer to several queries that have been sent us relating to church order.]

THE TESTIMONIES OF THE LORD TO A POOR SELF-CONDEMNED SINNER.

BEING THE EXPERIENCE OF THOMAS HOBSON, A DEACON OF THE LATE
MR. BURNS'S CHURCH, WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

(Concluded from p. 342.)

ABOUT this time I read Huntington's "Justification of a Sinner." That man and I shook hands together, and we have never been parted since. I believed the Lord the Spirit had given me my religion; and that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost were engaged in the purpose of it.

At another time the Lord discovered to me my ignorance. This was one of the most humbling lessons he discovered to me. I felt so unworthy I was ashamed to go among God's people, being the least of all and the chief of sinners; when these words came with profit: "I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go." (Isa. xlviii. 17.)

Now the providence of God seemed to be darkened. My employers failed on account of the badness of trade; and it threw me out of employ for about five months. We had three small children, and I was brought into trying circumstances. One

morning, while on my knees wrestling with the Almighty to appear and make a way for my relief, these words were applied: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." We had run on a bill at the shop. At breakfast my wife said she would not fetch any more provisions until she had some money. I said, "You will have some money to-day;" for I was directed by the Spirit where to go for relief. I went; and had not been in the house many minutes before the friend asked me if I wanted money; "for," said he, "I have been very much troubled in the night about you. I have put 5*l.* in my pocket for you." I gladly received it with thankfulness and praise to the God of all mercies. After this I found employ, and we were in prosperity for four years.

During this time I was very much tried respecting the religion the Lord had planted in my heart. I was despised and reproached because I professed and declared the blessed truths of the Bible; viz., the precious atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his blessed redemption work, and regeneration, and eternal election by sovereign grace. O my dear reader, how often was I tried with my sins, doubts, and fears. I compared myself to a tree bereft of its branches and only the stump left. The enemy suggested I was not one of God's children, for the Word says he takes "one of a city, and two of a family." But in reply a voice came and said, "There is some good thing found in him towards the Lord God of Israel."

I experienced another precious favour from the Lord, and a very peculiar one. It was a discovery of the mystery of redeeming love, at the same time causing a sense of great bitterness of spirit. It was very precious; it compelled me at one time to leave my work; and going home, I felt I could not endure it. My cry was, "Lord, stay thine hand." Then I received relief from these words: "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." (2 Cor. iv. 10.)

Dear reader, you see I had had a little of the sunshine of God's grace; and now came another dark cloud over providence. My employers closed their works owing to the badness of trade, and I was out of work about four months. I was compelled to go to my old friend again. I had paid him back all I had borrowed before. He asked me if I wanted money. I said, "Yes; that is my business here this morning." He answered that he had been troubled about me, and gave me his purse, and told me to use it as long as I wanted it. I gave it to my wife, and she opened it, and there were 10*l.* in it. Then the Lord turned my captivity into prosperity, and I soon paid my friend back his money.

I was compelled to leave Gurnal for work, and go to a place called Tipton. Two of the members at Gurnal, who were deacons, had also left and settled in this place. In a few days they came to see me, and asked if I would become a member of the Independent church there. I agreed; and also said I would meet with

them in the school-room on Thursday evening. When I went, the room was full of people; and to my surprise they called on me to speak in prayer. I believe what I uttered was from the inditing of the Holy Spirit. There was not any settled pastor; but six gentlemen preached in turns, and five of them were present at this meeting. One old lady said she had never heard such a man before, and asked who I was. Another said I was one of "the elect." I relate this to show the dealings of the Lord with me. I had been received into this church; but it was only for a short time.

On the following Sabbath one of these gentlemen preached. He began to reproach a sect who believed none would be saved but the elect. I felt he was hunting after me, and was persuaded this people and I could not walk together. Another Sabbath came, and another of these men preached. He also began to despise and reproach the same people in his preaching. They all continued in the same strain. When the fifth came up, never shall I forget it. He declared that if it was so, Jesus Christ was a cruel, hard master, and a tyrant, and that such people were not fit to live. His reproaches were too severe for me to utter. So I asked the deacons to put the pen across my name; for there I could not go.

I did not know that the Lord was about to bring me into another fiery furnace. Occasionally I travelled up to Dudley and met with a few people called the Particular Baptists, in a room. I often heard a preacher there of the name of Hatton from Wolverhampton; but I could not find a settled home with these people. I must say I profited under Mr. Hatton's preaching. I continued about 18 months without sitting down at the Lord's table. Now came my heavy affliction; I was laid aside for four months. My neighbours said I could not live, and asked me if I thought I should be restored. I said, "Yes, for the Lord had told me that this sickness was not unto death."

I had another wonderful visit from the blessed Lord in this affliction, and it was the softest bed I ever had. It was in these marvellous words in Pet. iv. 12: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." I seemed to have become such a despised Nazarene in the village. Some threatened more than once to prosecute me for declaring the truth and speaking well of the Lord Jesus Christ. Whilst under my affliction, one of the deacons came to see me, and said it was one of God's judgments for speaking against his servants. This did not hurt me in the least. The great Physician, who takes care of his children, restored my poor body to its wonted health and strength again.

I commenced going to the meeting-room at Dudley again, and heard my friend Mr. Hatton and others. But another trouble seized me, and unavoidably put a stop to my going there.

Now I felt to be in a forlorn condition. I had no one to talk with in the Canaan language; and it was a desolate place to my

poor soul. I was sitting in my house one Sabbath day, bemoaning my sad state and condition, when I thought I would take a walk, and was led to go by the Independent chapel. When a few yards from it these words were applied, and I felt assured they were in the Bible: "And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers." (Isa. xxx. 20.) The next Sabbath I was directed to a place called the Coppice, near Cosely, where a man of the name of William Bridge was preaching. He spoke from the words: "My beloved spake and said unto me, Rise up, my fair one, and come away." This was a reviving and restoring time to my soul. I could say he was all my desire and salvation, and there was none upon earth or in heaven I desired besides him.

The next Sabbath the good man took his text from Jno. x. 27: "My sheep hear my voice; and I know them, and they follow me." He spoke about Jesus Christ being a Baptist, and said that God's heaven-born and heaven-bound children were made willing to follow the Lord Jesus through the ordinance of believer's baptism.

I felt constrained to apply for church fellowship in order to go through that blessed ordinance. Some one told the preacher of my wish, and he made it his business to see me; and we had a little heavenly talk together. I agreed to come before the church; and I did so, and was unanimously received. I was baptized in 1854, in my 44th year; and I stood a member with these people for 11 years.

During this time the Lord filled my hands bountifully with providential mercies. But he added numerous trials, and conflicts, and bereavements. I was soon made to discern there were two sorts of people in this church. They made it manifest that I should have tribulation among them, and told me they would not have my doctrine. I endured many fights and conflicts in this place; and it made me go mourning and sighing to see the walk and conduct of these people. At last the Lord Jesus spoke these words to me: "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion; to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning," &c.

At one time the enemy came with a question, to ask what I knew about being reconciled to God; for the Word says, "Be ye reconciled to God." This made me cry to the Lord to make it manifest that I was reconciled to him. My cry was very vehement for some time. One morning before I went out to work I was led to wrestle with him to make it manifest, knowing he had revealed several Scriptures to my mind to show I was reconciled to him when he hung on the cross. If ever I did beg, it was that morning for the Lord to make it plain. When a few yards from my house my soul was altogether taken up with a heavenly vision. I felt like a weary traveller, and thought I had on a long garment, and had travelled till I was weary and sat down. As I sat, two persons came to me. One said, "Arise and shine; for thy light is come." He took me by the hand, and led me on;

and I beheld another bright person who said, "This is one of our wanderers." He put his right hand into my right hand, saying, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry." The other person stood and looked on. When I came to myself I was nearly at my work, and had walked nearly three miles. I was some time considering how I had come, and whilst thinking over the way these words were spoken in my ears: "For the vision is yet for an appointed time." (Hab. ii. 3.)

But the enemy came in again at another door, saying, "What do you know about the marriage union?" My fears arose and doubts respecting my religion, believing I must be deceived after all. How unbelief showed its ugly face. I was in the dark respecting this suggestion until the Lord broke the snare with these words: "I will betroth thee unto me for ever. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness," &c. (Hos. ii. 19, 20.)

This completely silenced the accuser for a time.

With these people I felt much to cast me down, and was often in darkness and deadness and hardness of heart, unfit in my feelings to meet with the Lord's people. In the midst of my trembling and fears the Lord broke in with these words, which I shall never forget, and I was made to feel my heart burn for that blessed Child: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." (Isa. ix. 6.) Truly I felt I could fall in with that word. And at another time when under the hidings of God's face, be-moaning my sad state, saying and feeling I could not be enlightened, the blessed Sun of righteousness came with these words: "Thy sun shall no more go down." (Isa. lx. 20.)

Our pastor was getting old and infirm, and was often obliged to stay at home. In his absence men were engaged to preach who were of the free-will system. I felt I could not endure such management. I was like a man shut up in prison; my groanings were continual. Then these words came: "To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death." Our old pastor was restored again; and he said he must have a little help, or give up altogether. There was a meeting of the members held, when he made choice of me to help him by speaking in prayer. I felt it as a tribulation, yet I loved some in sincerity and truth. They treated me with hard sayings and words, and began to say they would not come to the chapel or prayer-meeting if I did. But these were only professors; whilst those who were new creatures in Jesus Christ were broken in heart and profited. I beheld a manifested proof of those words: "They shall come with weeping and with supplications will I lead them." Truly it was so; for we met together with weeping and the spirit of supplication.

Our pastor was laid aside again, and in a short time died. As the greater part of the people were free-willers, they threw open their pulpit to such preachers. This was a sore trial to me, and I said I should be compelled to leave them. A few tried to prevail on me to stay; but I remembered a sermon the good old man

had preached from these words: "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph. i. 6); and was led to come out from among them.

I must forbear to enumerate particulars here, or my little book will swell too big. While with these people I was made to endure a bereavement of two of my dear children; one a daughter 26 years of age, and a son younger.

It was made clear to my mind that I must travel for God's truth. The following Sabbath I went to Gurnal to hear a man named Simeon Burns. He preached from these words: "Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Tit. ii. 14.) This was a soul-ravishing time. I felt it was a day of espousals to the Lord Jesus; it was eating of the fatted calf and drinking of the wine of the kingdom. I felt such a liking for that good man that I shall never lose, though now he is not living. I was obliged to go and put my hand into his hand, and tell him the cause of my being there. And I made application for church-fellowship, feeling persuaded that those people were my people, and their God my God, and where they dwelt I must dwell. I was received unanimously by the church; and here I was like a child at home and found a settled rest.

I still experienced that I had to travel much by night, the enemy and my old corrupt nature often intruding into my peace. The old suggestion returned that it was "one of a city and two of a family," and that I must be deceived. Satan has made such attacks upon me that I have been afraid many a time I should fall a prey to this great enemy, till the blessed Overcomer has come with these words: "There is some good thing found in him towards the Lord God of Israel." This was manifested to me one Sunday morning on my way to Gurnal. And then Mr. Burns's text was, "Ye are complete in him." I was assured that morning that I was one of those, having a sweet earnest of my inheritance through eternity, and glory within my soul. But to my surprise and grief the pride of my heart came up, and I was brought into guilt with my eyes. It made me sigh and mourn exceedingly to feel the abominations and the plague of my heart, still throwing up mire and dirt. I felt and said if the people knew me, they would cut me off from being a member. Many a time have I sat with my eyes closed nearly all service time, feeling as if all the Diabolonians were upon me.

I was now laid by with another trying illness, and was expected to die. Two of my daughters sat up with me for four weeks; and they were at last very weary. Then my sons and son-in-law agreed to stay with me in turn. I had not been out of my room till that morning; and feeling somewhat better, I got up and dressed while my family were at breakfast, and fell on my knees, and a most blessed time I had. These words were spoken to my soul,—never can I forget them: "Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faith-

fulness to fail." (Ps. lxxxix. 33.) Truly I felt my soul restored, and my body too; for I had felt my illness was a chastisement from the Lord for my sins. Heb. ix. 14 was another cordial. Hundreds of times have I found Jesus Christ to be exceeding precious to my soul, the only object of my desires, longings, thirstings, and pantings.

About this time the Lord allowed me in his kind providence to make a nest, in which I thought I could rest with great ease and quietness. But I found God's ways were not man's ways, neither his thoughts man's thoughts. He put a thorn or two in this nest. First, by taking a beloved son, the eldest of thirteen. He had been the foreman at Gibbon's works for a number of years; but he was killed very suddenly one Sunday morning. I had seen him about an hour and a half before. He was 38 years of age all but six weeks, and was the ninth child I had buried. I had four left. It was with me then as with David; often since I have buried him I have cried out, "O Absalom, my son!" Would to God I could have died for his precious soul!" Dear reader, I can say assuredly I have six children in heaven, and I have not the least doubt of seven.

The next thorn was this. My wife had a fall and broke her thigh. A fortnight and three days after I had a heavy fall, and lost the use of one arm for some months. My children, neighbours, and the doctor expected every day I should die. Two of my daughters never left me, day or night, for four weeks, and my sleep departed from me. At one time I had a hot conflict within. I swooned into a kind of sleep, and to my mind's eye Satan and his crew besieged my soul. While it lasted I felt as if the Lord Jehovah were watching at my back. I was forced to throw down my arms; and said I should fall a prey to the enemy. Then my blessed Jesus stepped forward, saying, "Enough of this, O Satan!" He fled with his crew in a moment, and the Lord Jesus appeared and spoke to me: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love;" and these words followed: "Nay; in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." I opened my eyes and found there were several persons in the room with my daughters weeping, thinking I was gone to be no more. At the same time the doctor came up, and I was enabled to talk fluently, and tell them that if I died the next minute I should go to glory. I saw the tears rolling down the doctor's cheeks, and he said, "My son and I will sit up with him to-night; for I like to hear him talk." Again, these words were blessed to me: "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." (Eph. i. 11.) The doctor said he thought I was gone three times during that night; and it was about six months before I was restored to my usual health.

Another painful disorder seized me before I could return to my work and for seven years I have been unable to follow my employment. I have had fears at times that the cruse of oil

would run dry and the barrel of meal waste ; but hitherto the Lord has helped me. He has been very bountiful in his providential care of me, so unworthy.

Certain Scriptures have been very blessed to me. When these words were applied, I felt and said they put a crown on all the Lord had done for my poor soul: "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." (Eph. i. 13.) Also these: "He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (Jno. xiv. 26.) And these: "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (Jno. xv. 2.) They brought me to say in reply, "Dear Lord, all the fruit I bear is sin."

At another time I was very much strengthened by the application of this passage: "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." And O how sweet and encouraging were these words made to my heart and conscience: "And the Lord direct your heart into the love of God and into the patient waiting for Christ." The Lord has given me at times to feel a sweet earnest of my inheritance with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I believe the best of all blessings is an application of the precious atoning blood of the Lamb.

At another time when under the hidings of God's face and a sore temptation of the enemy, and in captivity through sin and guilt, I set out for chapel (some miles distant), sighing and groaning and crying vehemently all the way. I was tempted to turn back lest the people should find me out. When my old friend Mr. Burns gave out these words I can never forget the trembling that came upon me: "Judgment also will I lay to the line." But that dear man of God came to me in his experience, and stood beside me, and said, "I have experienced as much of this as you." I was brought to cry with David, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts. And see if there be any wicked way in me; and lead me in the way everlasting." Also, "Teach me to do thy will; thy Spirit is good. Lead me into the land of uprightness." This prayer of the psalmist has been very precious to me; and O how sweetly he and I can agree where he says, "Lead me in thy truth." That word "truth" is very blessed and precious to me.

Dear reader, I must conclude; but all I have said is but one part out of a thousand of what the Lord has done for me in providence and grace. He is the Foundation of all my religion, — of my predestination, calling, and justification by his blessed atoning sacrifice, and of my final perseverance. Many times I have felt assured that my soul stands dressed in that imputed righteousness which he finished when he suffered on the tree; and my prayer is that he will still guide me continually, and bring me to himself with weeping and supplication. In conclusion, I must add feelingly, "Not unto me, not unto me, but

unto his great and holy Name be all the glory." May the Lord own and bless his own truth to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

THOMAS HOBSON.

A LETTER OF JOHN CARELESS, WRITTEN TO MASTER PHILPOT,

BEING AN ANSWER TO THE FORMER LETTER.

THE Father of mercy, and God of all consolation, comfort you with his eternal Spirit, my most dear and faithful loving Friend, good Master Philpot, as you have comforted me by the mighty operations of the same. The everlasting God be praised therefore for ever! Amen.

Ah, my dear heart, and most loving brother, if I should do nothing else day and night so long as the days of heaven do endure but kneel on my knees and read psalms, I can never be able to render unto God condign thanks for his great mercy, fatherly kindness, and most loving compassion, extended unto me, most vile, sinful, wicked, and unworthy wretch. O that the Lord would open my mouth, and give me a thankful heart that from the bottom of the same might flow his continual praise! O that my sinful flesh (which is the cause of my sorrow) were clean separated from me that I might sing psalms of thanksgiving unto the Lord's Name for ever; that, with good Samuel's mother, I might continually record this noble verse following, the which by good experience I have found most true,—praised be my good God therefore!—"The Lord," saith the good woman, "killeth and maketh alive. He bringeth down to hell, and fetcheth up again." Praised be that Lord for ever; yea, and praised be his Name, for that he hath given me true experience and lively feeling of the same. Blessed be the Lord God, whose mercy endureth for ever, which hath not dealt with me according to my deep deserts, nor destroyed me in his displeasure, when I had justly deserved it. O what reward shall I give again unto the Lord for all the great benefits that he hath done for my soul? I will gladly receive the cup of salvation at his hand, and will worship his Name with prayer and with praise.

Ah, my dear heart, yea, most dear unto me in the Lord, think not this sudden change in me to be some fickle fantasy of my foolish head (as indeed some other would surely suspect it to be); for doubtless it is the marvellous doing of the Lord, most merciful unto me his unworthy creature. God, for his great mercy's sake, give me grace to be more thankful unto him than I heretofore have been, and keep me that I never fall forth of his favour again! And know, my dear brother, and most blessed messenger of the Lord, whose beautiful feet have brought much glad tidings unto my soul, what shall I do or say unto you, in the least part to recompense your fatherly affection and godly care that you continually keep for me? O that God would give me the spirit

of fervent prayer, that I might yet that way supply some little part of my duty toward you! Ah, my true, loving friend, how soon did you lay aside all other business to make a sweet plaister for my wounded conscience; yea, and that out of a painful pair of stocks, which place must needs be uneasy to write in! But God hath brought you into a strait place that you might set my soul at liberty. Out of your pinching and painful seat, you have plentifully poured upon me your precious nard, the sweet savour whereof hath greatly refreshed my tired soul. The Lord likewise refresh you, both body and soul, by pouring the oil of his gracious Spirit into your sweet heart. Ah, good Jeremy, hath Pashur put thee in the stocks? Why, now thou hast the right reward of a prophet. Thy glory never began to appear until now. I doubt not but shortly, instead of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Jesus the Son of the living God will come and deliver thee forth of the hands of all thine enemies; and will also make good against them and the antichristian synagogue all the words that thou hast spoken in his Name.

The Lord hath made thee this day a strong defended tower, "an iron pillar and brazen walls against the whole" rabble of antichrist. And though they fight against thee never so fiercely, yet shall they not overcome thee; for the Lord himself is with thee to help and deliver thee; and he will rid thee out of the hands of the wicked, and will deliver thee out of the hands of the tyrants. And in that you are not busy in casting "pearls before swine," nor in giving "holy things unto dogs," you are much to be commended in my simple judgment. And sure I am that your circumspect and modest behaviour hitherto hath been as much to God's glory and confusion of your enemies as any man's doings that are gone before you. Wherefore mine advice and most earnest desire is, with all other of your loving friends, that you still keep that order with those bloodthirsty bishops that you have begun.

For though in conclusion they will surely have your blood, yet shall they come by it with shame enough, and to their perpetual infamy whilst the world doth endure. They would indeed condemn you in "hugger-mugger" to darken God's glory, if it might be; but Satan's thoughts are not unknown to you, and the depth of his subtlety is by you well foreseen. Therefore let them do whatsoever God shall suffer them to do; for I know all things shall turn to your best. Though you lie in the dark, slorried with the bishop's black coal dust,* yet shall you shortly be restored to the heavenly light, and made "as white as snow in Salmon," and as the wings of a dove that is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold. You know, the vessel, before it is made bright, is soiled with oil and other things that it may scour the better. O, happy be you that you be now in the scouring-house; for shortly you shall be set upon the celestial shelf as bright as angels.

* The good man was confined in Bishop Bonner's coal-cellar.

Therefore, my dear heart, I will now, according to your loving request, cast away all care, and rejoice with you and praise God for you, and pray for you day and night. Yea, I will now, with God's grace, sing psalms of praise and thanksgiving with you; for now my soul is turned into her old rest again, and hath taken a sweet nap in Christ's lap. I have cast my care upon the Lord, which careth for me; and will be *Careless* according to my name, in that respect which you would have me. I will leave out my unseemly addition as long as I live; for it can take no place where true faith and hope are resident. So soon as I had read your most godly and comfortable letter, my sorrows vanished away as smoke in the wind, my spirit revived, and comfort came again; whereby I am sure the Spirit of God was the Author of it.

O good Master Philpot, which art a principal pot indeed, filled with most precious liquor, as it appeareth by the plenteous pouring forth of the same! O pot most happy, of the High Potter ordained to honour, which dost contain such heavenly treasure in thy "earthen vessel!" O pot thrice happy, in whom Christ hath wrought a great miracle, altering thy nature and turning water into wine, and that of the best; whereout the Master of the feast hath filled my cup so full that I am become drunken in joy of the Spirit through the same! When martyrdom shall break thee, O vessel of honour, I know the fragrant savour of thy precious nard will much rejoice the heavy hearts of Christ's true members; although the Judases will grudge and murmur at the same; yea, and burst out into words of slander, saying, "It is but lost and waste." Be not offended, dear heart, at my metaphorical speech; for I am disposed to be merry, and with David to dance before the ark of the Lord; and though you play upon a pair of organs,* not very comely or easy to the flesh, yet the sweet sound that came from the same causeth me thus to do.

O, that I were with you in body, as presently I am in spirit, that I might sing all care away in Christ; for now the time of comfort is come. I hope to be with you shortly, if all things happen aright; for my old friends of Coventry have put the council in remembrance of me, not six days ago, saying that I am more worthy to be burned than any that was burned yet. God's blessing on their hearts for their good report! God make me worthy of that dignity, and hasten the time, that I might set forth his glory. Pray for me, dear heart, I beseech you, and will all your company to do the same; and I will pray God for you all so long as I live.

And now farewell in Christ, thou blessed of God's own mouth. I will for a time take my leave, but not my last farewell. Blessed be the time that ever I came into the king's bench, to be joined in love and fellowship with such dear children of the Lord. My good brother Bradford shall not be dead while you be alive; for verily the spirit of him doth rest on you in most ample wise. Your letters of comfort unto me in each point do agree as though

* The stocks.

the one were a copy of the other. He hath planted in me, and you do water; the Lord give good increase! My dear brethren and fellow prisoners here have them humbly and heartily commended unto you and your company, mourning for your misery, but yet rejoicing for your plenteous consolation and comfort in Christ. We are all cheerful and merry under our cross, and do lack no necessaries. Praised be God for his providence and great mercies toward us, for evermore. Amen. JOHN CARELESS.

SHORT PAPERS ON THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT.

I.

THERE are two things wherein the ministry of the Spirit mainly consists:

I. The communication of all grace.

II. The revelation of all truth.

I. Without the first none can please God by any form of worship whatever, and form is all that a natural person can possibly present to God. Such persons may be very devout; yet it is but natural devotion, the same as might be found in a worshipper of idols. They may be zealous; but their zeal is never safe. It is liable to come to utter destruction at any time through the temptations of Satan, the "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." Yea, they may become as zealous in open sin and rebellion against God and his truth as they have apparently been for them, and may become as the "dog that returneth to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." (2 Pet. ii. 22.) The form of godliness and truth in the letter may charm persons so much that they may love the form and the preacher, and think they love God, his people, and his Word; but it is only with natural love.

We are not now speaking of the right or wrong of natural worship being rendered to God; but of natural worship in comparison with that which is rendered to God through Christ. This a natural man cannot perform. Jesus has no real charms to his soul. Hence he may turn to or against any form or worship. Such a person may be as pleased with, and show as great love for, the letter of truth as a Papist would for his form of religion. That which offends a Papist or any other sect offends him,—the work of the Spirit upon the heart of a believer. A searching ministry, with the life and power of the Spirit attending it, and a description of the life of God upon the soul, would soon prove his love to be but natural; for he would scoff at the work of grace upon the heart of God's elect, and despise and speak evil of a minister of the Spirit.

All grace, then, is communicated by the Spirit. Every grace of the Spirit is communicated at regeneration, all at once; but we will notice some of them separately.

1. The grace of life. This quickens a man from a death "in trespasses and sins," and brings him to feel himself to be what he never felt before,—“without God and without hope in the world.” In this pitiable condition, he drops upon his knees for the first time with life in his soul, and pours out his heart before God, begging for an interest in the love, grace, and mercy of God. But instead of “obtaining mercy,” and finding “grace to help,” the commandment comes in power, demanding love unceasing, pure worship, and a sinless life. As none of these things can be found in the heart, the soul is cast into prison until the uttermost farthing is paid. To work he goes with all his might, with an intent to keep the commandments; and tries hard to obtain a sinless life, to worship God purely, and to love him with all his heart. But the more he works, the more he comes behindhand, which raises the natural enmity of the carnal mind against God. The feeling of enmity brings guilt on the conscience with an accusation from Satan that God has given him over to a reprobate mind; and for the first time he feels lost! O that feeling,—lost, lost! God appears just in condemning; for he sees that he is a rebel against the Most High. His mouth is shut by the holy law of God, as saith the apostle: “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.” (Rom. iii. 19.) Now he feels the sentence of death in his soul. Hell appears to be his portion; for he feels condemned and forsaken of God.

Nevertheless, although the soul feels all this, yet this alone would never produce that living cry from the heart, “God be merciful to me, a sinner;” but the contrary, “Mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.” (Rev. vi. 16.) If it were not that the blessed Spirit opened his mouth, and enabled him to cry, his mouth would be shut in everlasting silence; but the Spirit helps his “infirmities with groanings which cannot be uttered.” (Rom. viii. 26.) It requires the same power to produce a living, feeling cry in the heart, such as, “Lord, help me,” as it does to say, “The Lord is my help and my salvation.”

It is only as the Spirit convicts the living soul that he can confess his sins or mourn over them. For when the life of the Spirit is sensibly withdrawn, the child of God finds he can neither mourn, confess, no, nor feel concerned about his eternal interest as he would wish. This makes him pray for his troubles again, thinking that trouble would produce some real concern of mind about his never-dying soul. But it will not. Life is a grace of the Spirit, and *only as the life is communicated can the soul perform spiritual actions.* The energy of the soul is in proportion to the flow of life.

When the sinner is led by the Spirit to give up trying to obtain life by his own schemes, and to fly to the “Prince of life” for life and salvation, he then feels life eternal spring up in his

heart, giving life to every faculty of the mind, and enlivening every grace in the soul,—swallowing up the death which he had felt in his soul in eternal victory! He appears in glory with the Lord as an heir of eternal life (Col. iii. 3, 4), and dies to every other lord and master, and can say, “O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy Name.” (Isa. xxvi. 13.)

The child of God now thinks his foes all dead; but in this he is mistaken; for he will find it as the hymn expresses it:

“My dead foes rise with dreadful power,
And drag me down to hell.”

Yea, they would thrust the soul into hell if it were in their power; but it is not, because the Prince of life (who keeps the keys of death and hell) appears again, and says, “Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.” (Rev. i. 17, 18.) If Jesus keeps the keys of death and hell, in vain Satan boasts of a power to drag a soul unto hell, against whom Jesus has locked the gates of hell for ever.

Where the grace of life is. First, it is made manifest by a quickened conscience; which, while it may be benumbed through sin, the allurements of the world, and the temptations of Satan, yet cannot be finally lulled to sleep, nor hardened through the deceitfulness of sin so as to become a “seared conscience.” For the Spirit convicts, reproves, and rebukes the conscience, and makes it again tender; so that the believer again mourns over his backslidings and turns from the ways of sin.

Secondly, life is manifested by an honest conscience refusing to receive any peace, comfort, or word of promise, until the Holy Ghost applies it with power to the heart. Because the living soul esteems it nothing but robbery to take God’s Word before he speaks,—he cannot, will not, and dare not take it without a divine warrant.

Thirdly, life is manifested by the inability of the person who possesses it to quench his desires, hopes, groans, prayers, and feelings, by the various schemes to which he resorts with an intent to drown the life within. A continual flow of life is kept up in the soul by the Spirit; and flows out in longings after God, thirstings after a knowledge of Jesus, and to be made more like him.

Fourthly, love to God and his Word is a proof of divine life; although against God and his precious Word Satan sometimes raises such a flood of awful blasphemies that the soul stands astonished, and thinks, “Surely I am become like a fiend in hell.” But all this comes from the enemy to overwhelm him in a deluge of horrors (Isa. lix. 19); and this is more especially the case when he feels a great desire after God and his Word, or when he stands most in need of them. Nothing but the life of God in the soul could endure such a storm as this.

Fifthly, life is manifested by a disinterested love to the people of God. Those people they once hated, and whose company they once shunned, now they love; and seek the society of those whom they once esteemed as the "filth and offscouring of all things."

2. Light is a grace which the Holy Spirit communicates. Without light, a man walks in darkness, and knows not at what he stumbleth. A mere professor of religion, who has only a knowledge of truth in the letter and a little natural light in his head, hates and despises that true and spiritual light which has rejoiced the hearts of millions of immortal spirits. The mere professor flees from that which the child of God cleaves unto,—light. For when a believer has rejoiced in the light of God's countenance, and gets into darkness again, he is sure to come to the light to have the truth clearly made manifest. There is nothing that a Christian dreads more than to be deceived about spiritual matters. Therefore he comes before God for him to make it manifest by his true light whether his joy, faith, love, or the profession which he has made is only of the flesh, or whether it is the work of the Spirit in his heart. To this light he would come, if it were to seal his eternal condemnation. For the thoughts of deceiving and being deceived are much more horrible than even death itself. Therefore with a trembling heart and a humble mind he comes before the great "Searcher of hearts," and says, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24.) No hypocrite can use this language with a feeling sense of the solemnity of appealing to the Almighty to decide a case of such vast importance. It is language peculiar to the saints.

By this light the child of God sees sin in some of its hideous forms, and hates it, and loathes himself on account of it; and more so when he sees that *his* sins caused Jesus so much sorrow. How true are the words of Hart:

"O thou hideous monster, sin,
What a curse hast thou brought in!
All creation groans through thee,
Pregnant cause of misery!
Thou hast ruin'd wretched man
Ever since the world began;
Thou hast God afflicted too;
Nothing less than that would do."

Many dark and mysterious providences have been made plain by this light. Sometimes God's people see a "needs-be" for every trial, and what mercy God has displayed in sending every one; and when the believer sees this, he will drop upon his knees and thank God for every cross. Light discovers darkness,—the more light, the more darkness is discovered. But as we shall have to notice light under the grace of faith, we will defer any further remarks on it to that place.

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

REAL FAITH DISTINGUISHED FROM FANCIED FAITH.

Dear Friend,—Your long epistle came safe to hand; for which I desire to thank you. May the Lord reward you for your kind sympathy and fervent desires therein expressed towards me and mine, both for our temporal and eternal good! I feel I can in return express both Mrs. N.'s and my own desire for you that, as far as it may please the Lord to grant it, you may receive every needed and profitable blessing. I dare not say I wish you all that you may think you want, or that Satan may tempt you to think you ought to have. It is a great mercy to have grace in exercise enabling us to say with Agur, "Feed me with food convenient for me." (Prov. xxx. 8.) To my sorrow, I too often find myself dictating to the Lord what he is to give me, and then asking him for it. But if he sees it would not be good for me, he denies it. Then what follows? Why, if left to myself, I fall to murmuring and complaining, because I am refused what I vainly think I ought to have; and sometimes I find myself falling into a fit of sullenness, like a sulky child when it is refused what it vainly thinks it wants. What is this but the very image of fallen nature? Then we begin to say, or if we do not say so, we feel it, "It is of no use to pray; it is of no use to read; and it is of no use to attend the means of grace." Then in comes the devil, suggesting there is no reality in any religion; that the Bible is not true; and all is a mere farce together. This state of things may arise from various causes,—sometimes from our misconstruing some part of God's Word; that is, putting some meaning to it that the Lord never intended, and sometimes from taking an impression of our own for faith. Perhaps we had such and such things impressed upon our mind; and we instantly believed the Lord had given us faith to believe such would be the result, or that such had been the result, just as the case might be, referring to past or future events; whereas the Lord never gave us faith to believe any such things.

I will give you an illustration of this. I know a person, who once believed a certain minister would be the settled pastor of a church in Sussex; and many Scriptures and different words he had, as he thought, from the Lord, to confirm his belief; when presently the minister died, and never was settled over any church. The result was, it almost drove the person to despair. Now this is the craft of the devil; first to entangle us in his net, and then to turn our accuser; and by these means, to try and make us believe, as I have before said, that there is no reality in anything of a religious nature. Now, how shall we know what is of God and what is not? This I dare not determine but by a Scriptural rule, namely, "By their fruits ye shall know them." The fruit of a false impression will be pride. This often works in the form of false humility; in fact, one's own

reputation is at the root. The person may appear very humble; but, if closely examined, it amounts to this,—“Come and see what wisdom I have got; see what the Lord has revealed to me, and not to others.” But the opposite fruit attends real faith,—that is, real humility. The person not only appears, but *is* truly humble. Their will is no longer their own, but the Lord’s; and they inwardly feel themselves to be poor ignorant fools, unworthy of the notice of God or man. Where this faith is in exercise, their own reputation is nothing, while the Lord’s honour is all and in all; and this they seek, not their own.

May the Lord bless these few lines, written entirely without premeditation.

From yours sincerely, to serve in the Gospel,

Southborough, June 21st, 1879.

J. NEWTON.

HELP BY THE WAY.

My dear Sisters in the Path of Tribulation in this Wilderness,—Grace, mercy, and peace be with thee and all thine house. The Lord helping me, I will try to tell thee a little of what has been going on within since my affliction, which is now four months. I shall never be able to describe a thousandth part of the distress of my poor soul, through the many, many sins I felt guilty of.

“Ten thousand monster beasts of prey
Beset my soul by night and day.”

The enemy seemed to have full power over me. O the sighs, cries, groans, and tears that I put up to a gracious God to deliver my poor sin-sick soul! “O Lord, do help me; do appear for me; do send me a token for good. O Lord, do in judgment remember mercy! O do spare my poor soul from hell! I know thou wouldst be just, if thou didst send me there; but O, dear Lord, do remember I am but dust,—I can do nothing without thee. O Lord, do deliver me from the power of the enemy.” Poor Job was a good companion in this path of trial. The Lord suffered Satan to run on with poor Job; but suffered him not to touch his life. So it was with me. Blessed be God, he cannot touch my life.

“His love in times past forbids me to think
He’ll leave me at last in trouble to sink.”

Sometimes the awful suggestions of the enemy as regards my membership would almost drive me to despair: “You a member of a church! What do you think of yourself now? Do you think you would ever have got into this place, if you were a true child of God?” O the agony of my poor soul the Lord alone knows! The enemy cometh in like a flood; but “the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.”

“Times the tempter’s power to prove,
Times to taste the Saviour’s love.”

O bless the Lord, my soul. He is

“Too wise to err, and O, too good to be unkind.”

He has a set time to favour Zion. Blessed be his dear Name I shall never praise him enough for his rich mercy. O his wonderful, wonderful love to me, a wretch so vile! O that never-to-be-forgotten evening!

I went to Shaw's Corner chapel; of course I expected to see our dear pastor. When I saw that dear man, Mr. P., being a stranger to me, I felt very much disappointed; but the Lord knows how to fill his vessels, to suit

“The poor and the needy who knock by the way.”

His prayer was for the afflicted. His text was 2 Cor. iv. 6. O how sweet it was to my taste! O how my heart did burn within me! O what a feast my poor soul had! O how good is the Lord, “a stronghold in the day of trouble.”

“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear.”

“Sinners can say, and none but they,
How precious is the Saviour.”

O the sweet hymns, 714, 706, 623, 201, and many others.

Please kindly remember me to our dear pastor and brothers and sisters in the precious faith. I have great reason to believe there have been many prayers put up on my behalf, as there is such a sweet spirit flowing at times in my heart; and I believe I may truthfully say that my soul has been led out many times in the silent watch of the night to plead earnestly with him for the well-being of our little cause, and the welfare of Zion's church. I beg the Lord to keep us from sinning, to keep us from all errors, from self-conceit, from all forbidden objects, and from pride. O I do beg to be kept from the power of that great enemy.

Tell dear Mr. H. I have been feasting lately on some of his by-gone sermons and sayings that have been brought to my remembrance. One in particular I often fancy I can hear him say:

“None but Jesus, none but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good.”

O how true I have proved it. I hope the Lord will still grant him help and strength to come amongst us, and bless him much in his soul. My dears, when I say amongst us, I do hope I shall be able to meet with the favoured few again; but I fear not just yet, as I find I dare not go far yet. Remember me kindly to both your husband and sister when you see her. I desire to praise the Lord for all his gracious dealings with me, the most disobedient of his family, and sometimes doubting if ever I am one at all. Hoping you are well,

Yours affectionately for the Truth's Sake,

A. COOK.

“Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide;
O receive my soul at last!”

Blindley Heath, Oct. 12th, 1881.

“LINE UPON LINE.”—ISA. XXVIII. 9, 10.

Dear Friend,—I have a desire to return to you my heartfelt thanks for answering the question so nicely, asked by me, and I feel grateful to the dear Lord for enabling you to raise your voice upon the walls of Zion to sound an alarm against an Arian translation. I believe that it will be of use to many of the readers of the “Gospel Standard,” and also to many of God’s servants in declaring the glorious Person of our adorable Redeemer. I hope they will raise the alarm with you. I see this new publication is nibbling at the foundation of our faith, and it seems to me suitable to the times we are living in. I do not want another Bible, and neither did I when I took up the new version; for my old Bible has been a comfort to me many times in deep trials and afflictions, when some portion of it has been applied to me. I love my whole Bible, not a part, and the glorious doctrines contained therein. When I found portions of it left out in the new version, my spirit was grieved; and I then felt I should like to know what right the revisers had to omit them. I will try and put in a few sentences, as short as possible, how I learnt the Trinity in Unity experimentally from the Word of God.

When I was stopped in my mad career of sin and folly I was passing by Zion Chapel, Trowbridge; and I heard that dear man of God’s voice, Mr. Warburton. I could not tell what he said, and once having been a schoolboy there, many reflections crossed my mind in a moment. At that time I was living in open acts of immorality; but I said from what I felt, if I should be spared till another Sabbath, I would attend that house of God; for I believed it was God’s house. From that time till this my ears have been bored to it. I remember the first time I went, on the following Sunday, I felt so ashamed to think I was going to be religious; but after going some time the friends were very kind and showed a Christian spirit towards me. I avoided them as much as I possibly could; for I felt so unworthy. To be short, I began to try and please the Lord by abstaining from outward sins, and attending prayer meetings and reading my Bible; I had it in my hands as much as I possibly could, and my wife used to say, “Do put that Bible away.” As I began to work and try to please the Lord, the Lord began to reveal his holy law in my conscience; and these words used to sound in me: “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.” “He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all.” Away went all my goodness. I began to see that some are “reprobate silver,” rejected of God; and would have concluded that I was one of them, but could not; a hope would spring up. Who could tell? Sometimes a word would drop from the minister’s lips to give me a little encouragement; then I was at it again, and tried to be more diligent, more in earnest. Instead of getting better, I got worse and worse, and sank deeper in the mire. Sometimes I went up to the house of God trembling, fearing that if the servant of God passed sen-

tence upon me, it would be as sure to be carried into execution as I was a living man; and hell would be my just desert. I felt it would be as valid as though the Lord had spoken it from heaven; but generally at such times I did receive a little comfort from his ministry, and a hope would spring up. Sometimes I used to feel the chains taken off; but as soon as I left the Lord's house they were put on again. I remember one particular time going into my garden; it was some distance from my house, and I saw a man sawing off the trunk of his tree near the ground; it was full of leaves, but had no fruit upon it. These words came to me like a clap of thunder: "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" I thought the Lord was about to make a full end of me; the agony I felt I never shall forget, neither can I describe it. But after a few hours a feeling of contrition came over me, and I wept over the condition I was in. I felt more or less of this for nearly five years.

I should like to tell you how I was enabled to leave my companions. Being much pressed to go in with them and have a glass of beer, I did so, thinking there would not be much harm if I had one, and came out again. They fixed me, and tried hard not to let me go; but I felt such indignation against their ungodly company that I said, "I *must* go." I left and went home to my bedroom, and begged the Lord to bring me out from my ungodly companions; and these words were brought with power to my mind:

"The more I strove against sin's power,
I sinn'd and stumbled but the more;
Till late I heard my Saviour say,
Come hither, soul, I am the Way."

I saw he was the way out from ungodly companions, and he must break the cords of these sins, or else I could not be loosed; which he did.

I will come to the morning of my deliverance. My trouble had so brought down my poor frame, I only weighed 113 lbs., and I had a doctor's attendance a good part of the time. My wife was sometimes frowning because she had no companion. I wished that I was a dog, or any living creature that has no soul; but I had a living soul that must endure the wrath of God to a never-ending eternity. O how I wished I had never been born, or had had an untimely birth! I did not know it was the Father revealing his law in me, or the schoolmaster giving me lessons that I have found useful ever since. I have been thankful for his teaching, though he was a hard master; it showed me that sin was exceeding sinful, and that it extended to the thoughts and intents of the heart. I could see God as looking into my heart: "Thou God seest me" in all my actions and movements. I could see him as a just and angry God against sin, and I concluded many times that hell must be my portion. This text used to come: "Ye believe in God; believe also in me;" and, "Think not that I will accuse you unto the Father; there is

one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust." By this I was led to see there were a Father and a Son spoken of in the Word. My eyes were opened by little and little to discover that the Son, spoken of through the Word, was to come in the fulness of time; as it is written: "Lo, I come, to do thy will, O my God." I could see him in a faint glimmer of light, spoken of in the promise in the garden of Eden; in Abel offering the lamb; Abraham offering his son Isaac; and again, that a "Star" should arise "out of Jacob;" that Moses and the prophets spoke of him; that he was personated by David in the Psalms; and I could discover him in Isaiah down to his coming and taking a body; and in that body, that he was to suffer for sin. So intense were my feelings to know that he had come and suffered for me, my thirst was so great, I would have done anything I could, to have procured the knowledge of it; but I saw clearly that if I could have shed tears of blood, it could never atone for one sin. Here I was entirely lost feelingly, and I was shut up in the prison of unbelief, expecting the executioner to come to me. I acquitted a just God of any injustice if he sent me to hell, and I mourned over my dreadful state. I could see that God's dear Son, the Father's gift, came down into this lower world to die for sinners; and I felt assured he had power to save me, if he would. I said, like the poor man, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." I wanted a faith to believe on him that he died for my sin. On the morning of my deliverance I went to my work; but could not remain; being brought so low in body, I was not able to work. I carried a condemned soul in my body, and thought I should soon be laid in the grave. Here I felt myself a dead man to everything beneath the skies, and in a feeling way, I gave up all for lost. But O, the sighs and groans that I had for my deliverance! But I could not tell from whence it was to come, until these words dropped with power: "I will be with thee in six troubles; and in the seventh, not forsake thee;" so that I can truly say, "I looked for hell, and he brought me heaven." I can never express my feelings at that time. I looked for my sins, but could not find them. Such contrition and love flowed into my heart to the dear Lord for pardoning such a poor sinner as I, that I shall never forget it while memory lasts; though I have disputed it many times, and have had thousands of fears respecting its reality. I enjoyed such sweet liberty and communion with the Lord for nearly twelve months, I have felt it sweet to look back upon that memorable time.

When the Lord withdrew his sweet presence from me, I felt my need of the Third Person in the glorious Trinity as the Remembrancer, Comforter, and Revealer. The Lord told his disciples that *he* should abide with them for ever. This Person I have longed for many times in the wilderness, when in trials, exercises, and afflictions. It is said, "He shall take of mine and shall show it unto you." This is how I have learnt experimentally the Trinity in Unity, Three glorious Persons in the Godhead.

I have passed over 30 years' trials in the wilderness, not wishing to intrude; but have written in love as it came to my mind.

Yours in Christian Bonds,

Trowbridge, Sept. 1881.

SAMUEL CHAPMAN.

[The foregoing letter has been in type upwards of six months. Circumstances have compelled us to detain it until now.]

“HATH NOT GOD MADE FOOLISH THE WISDOM OF THIS WORLD?”—
1 COR. I. 20.

Dear Friend,—Since I last saw you I have waded through many nights and days of affliction; and I doubt not but this has been more or less the case with you. Yet blessed be the Lord, he has never dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us after our iniquities; but all these evils are come upon us on account of sin,—both original and our own actual transgressions. The former has induced man (in his fallen condition) to judge and find fault with his Maker, arraigning the Most High at the bar of his own carnal reason—why he did not make man in that state wherein he should not be accountable for Adam's sin? But here we all reason like fools.” Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” Now when we are brought here, and put our mouth in the dust, if so be that we may have hope, and acknowledge from our heart that he is most just and righteous in all his wise dispensations towards the children of men; I say, when we can submit to his sovereignty, and fully acquiesce in his foreknowledge and eternal purpose in choosing, and foreknowing his people in our Lord Jesus Christ, then it is that wisdom has entered into our hearts. “Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom.”

Now this wisdom is our Lord Jesus Christ; and when he comes into the heart of a poor miserable sinner, it is so strange a thing with him that, so far from thinking that Christ is come into his heart to take up his abode there, everything seems quite contrary. The devil that before held possession and kept the goods in peace is disturbed; and the poor soul is disquieted within him. He cannot now find rest and happiness in the things he before delighted in. Though he would fain fill his belly with the husks of this vain world, yet no man gives him anything that will satisfy his soul; and this, at times, works such wrath and anger in the poor sinner, that he is almost at his wit's end what to do. For the law knows of nothing but to convince us of sin, and the dreadful effects of it; as it is written: “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” But poor souls with whom God thus begins are, in general, quite ignorant from whence all their troubles arise, never dreaming that it is God in his holy law, who is discovering that in them there is nothing but sin; and so the apostle saith, “For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.” This is sure to come to pass, when God takes us in hand, as it is said, “When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou

makest his beauty to consume away like a moth; surely every man is vanity. (Ps. xxxix. 11.) Consult Job xxxiii.; and may the Lord give you understanding.

But O my friend, this is a very hard death to die. What! To die to all the good things we love in this world? to give up all our good companions? give up all the pleasures and pastimes that we have so much delighted in? to become an arrant fool? to go about like a thief? to hang our heads down with shame and confusion? What! A man like myself, who has had the reputation for wisdom and knowledge, to come to this? "O!" saith the devil, "I would never submit to it; to unman myself in this way." But if haply God has begun his good work in your soul, this Scripture will roar out against you: "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." (Mark viii. 38.) Again: "And he said to them all, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it." (Lu. ix. 23, 24.)

I can but hope that your present troubles will work together for your good; and that is something akin to what is said in Moses' psalm. "Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men," and further, it is said: "Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." (Jer. xxx. 7.) "The remembrance of my former, yea, and my present troubles, causes me to feel for you, and to beg of God to reveal his dear Son in your heart, "The Hope of glory;" and as soon as this takes place, and you begin to hope in his mercy, and to conceive in your heart that the Lord has thoughts of peace towards you, this will make you to agonize with him; and though this hope should be deferred, which is said to "make the heart sick," yet you will gather hope, if the Holy Spirit helps you to cry, groan, and implore mercy, and give the Lord no rest; for the elect "cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them. I tell you that he will avenge them speedily." May this be the happy experience of yourself and dear wife, is the prayer and desire of your friend in the Lord,

THOS. NUNN.

August 30th, 1842.

SWEETER are the tears falling in prayer than the delights of earthly pleasure.—*Augustine.*

It is a dreadful, dismal condition to be married to the law of works. For (1) the law is a rigid husband. It stands upon exactest obedience in every point; it will not abate anything. (2) It is a weak husband. It presseth duty, without giving ability. (3) It is a merciless husband. It will not bear with the least failing. (4) It is a bloody husband. The law slays and condemns all that are married to it.—*T. Bisco.*

REVIEW.

The Judgment of the National Synod of the Belgic Reformed Churches, held at Dort, in the years 1618 and 1619, concerning the Five Points of Christian Doctrine contained in the Holy Bible,—the Word of God. Translated into the English language by Owen Jones, Docking, Norfolk.

(Conclude] from p. 384.)

WE will quote the late Mr. Gadsby's words on preaching the gospel to sinners, as they coincide exactly with our own views on the subject:

"About 16 years ago I heard a young man from Hoxton Academy pretend to preach, and he made the following remarks: 'I now offer you Christ, and Christ stands with open arms ready to receive you; yea, he begs, he prays, and beseeches you to come to him, and have life, and yet some of you will not come; nay, it is as if God the Father came and fell upon his knees before you, begging and beseeching you to receive Christ and come and be reconciled to him, and yet you will not come.' In this way he continued for a considerable length of time, and this he called preaching the gospel to every creature. From a professed Arminian such remarks might be expected; but for one who professes to believe in eternal and absolute election to use such awful expressions is one of the highest insults that can be offered, in a religious shape, either to God or man. It represents both Christ and God the Father as poor disappointed beings, quite unable to subdue the heart of a poor dying worm.

"And what encouragement can there be in such a gospel as this for any poor, broken-hearted, self-despairing sinner in the world to trust in the Lord for salvation? Who dare trust the concerns of eternity in the hands of a being who cannot obtain a favour which he desires and seeks with earnest supplication on his knees? But, thanks be to God, we have not so learned Christ. We know that 'whatsoever his soul desireth, even that he doeth.' (Job xxiii. 13.) Hence, says Christ, 'All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.' (Jno. vi. 37.) 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.' (Ps. cx. 3.) 'All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children.' (Isa. liv. 13.) 'Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice.' (Jno. x. 16.)

"What has an offered gospel to do with such eternal bulwarks as these? When all free-will offers are sunk in oblivion, God's immutable shalls and wills shall stand. Bless his precious Name, there is nothing precarious in the salvation of his people. He does not leave it to them whether they will accept offered mercy or not. No; they shall hear his voice, and they shall live. They shall be willing in the day of his power, and they shall know the Lord, and they shall be God's people, and he will be their God. He has sent his ministers to preach the gospel, not to offer it, and

he himself has engaged to make it manifest in the hearts of his people. To them the gospel comes not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance."

"I believe that ministers of Jesus Christ are to invite poor sinners to come to Christ; and whosoever reads 'The Perfect Law of Liberty,' which is the book Mr. Gawthorn has written against, will soon be convinced that I invite poor, lost, ruined, self-despairing sinners to come to the Lord Jesus Christ. I admit that I cannot invite a man in full health and strength to come to the Physician and be healed. 'The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.' But I can freely invite every poor and needy, burdened, heavy-laden, hungry and thirsty, sensibly lost and ruined sinner to come to Christ; one who feels himself far from righteousness, and at the far end of all his earthly goodness, and in his own view is without God and without hope in the world; who is willing to be saved in God's own way, but fears he is too lost and wretched to be saved. To such sinners I can say, in the language of divine truth, 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, let him come and buy wine and milk, without money and without price;' and 'whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.' But unless we descend to scriptural characters, we cannot separate between the precious and the vile.

"I know that universal offers and proffers are the fashion of the day, grounded upon its being the duty of all men, where the gospel is preached, to have saving faith in Christ. But if the faith of God's elect is a duty required by the law of works, then real faith in Christ must be a work of the law, and the gospel is established by the works of the law; yea, then God's people are saved by the works of the law; and all the goings out of faith to Christ and his gospel, and all that faith brings into the conscience from Christ, under the unctuous teachings of the Holy Ghost, are all by the works of the law; that is, if the law requires this faith. And when the believer is said to be justified by faith, it means he is justified by the works of the law; and if this faith be a duty required by the law, it must be required by the law as a covenant of works. Hence all that is said about salvation not being of works, lest any man should boast, must be a mere parade; and indeed, all the distinction the apostle makes between the law of works and the law of faith (Rom. iii. 27), and between working and believing (Rom. iv. 5), and of the Jews seeking to be justified, not by faith, but by the works of the law (Rom. ix. 32), must be a wild fancy in his brains. For if this faith be required by the law, then it must be a work of the law; and how faith can be made void, if they which are of the law be heirs (Rom. iv. 14), and if the law requires the faith of God's elect, is a mystery to me."

"Universal offers and proffers may please a promiscuous multitude, but they will not strengthen the diseased, nor heal the sick, nor bind up the broken, nor gather them which are driven away,

nor find them which are lost. We must come down to cases and circumstances to do this; and the Lord is against those shepherds which do it not." (Ez. xxxiv. 1-10.)

By these quotations may be clearly seen what it is to preach to sinners, and likewise that the gospel is for sinners, to whom it is to be preached. In this we agree with the 5th article of the Synod, before quoted, which teaches that the gospel "ought to be proclaimed and set forth indiscriminately unto all people and men," &c. And we trust enough has been said already to prove that the assembly of Dort did not hold an indefinite atonement, and on that ground invite the world to partake of the blessing. As this is an important point, and one very much controverted, we will add two more extracts from the articles on the subject:

"This is what God willed,—that Christ through the blood of the cross (by which he hath confirmed the new covenant) should effectually redeem out of every people, tribe, nation, and tongue, all those,—*and those only*, which were elected from eternity unto salvation, and were given by the Father to him." . . .

The Synod rejected the errors of those "Who teach 'that Christ by his satisfaction merited for none certainly and positively salvation itself, and faith by which this satisfaction of Christ is effectually applied unto salvation; but had only obtained for the Father the power of treating again with men, and of prescribing whatever new conditions he willed, of which the performance depended on the free-will of man; and so that on this account it might come to pass that no one or that all might fulfil them.' For these do judge exceeding contemptibly of the death of Christ, notwithstanding they acknowledge that an eminent fruit or benefit has been obtained through it, and they recall the Pelagian error from hell."

The Synod held the five points of doctrine clearly enough, and the wording of the second,—The Particular and Eternal Redemption of all the Elect—if faithfully followed, must exclude Baxterian views of the atonement. But at the same time, we repeat, we most certainly object to some expressions of the articles wherein the faith of that assembly is given in detail, being fully aware of the undue advantage that is taken of these to support error. Such are some of the following expressions:

"But that many being called by the gospel do not repent, nor believe in Christ, but perish in unbelief; this is not owing to any defect or insufficiency in the infinitely meritorious sacrifice of Christ offered upon the cross, but it is their own fault. (Jno. v. 40; and vi. 36.)"

Also the 4th article on the fourth point of doctrine, regeneration, makes use of similar language:

"But that many being called by the ministry of the gospel do not come and are not converted; this fault is not in the gospel, nor in Christ offered by the gospel, nor in God calling through the gospel, and also conferring various gifts on them, but in the called themselves," &c.

That there is an effectual call of the gospel, and an external call, is acknowledged by all sound divines. The Scriptures speak of some who are "called according to his purpose;" and also say, "Many are called, but few chosen;" thus showing that calling is more extensive than election. Consequently, many of those who are called have only an external call, and will in the end wither away. A natural or letter faith is all that is brought forth if it should go no further than externals, and having no root, it withers and dies. It is at this outward call so many stumble. Let us attempt to show the nature of calling, and wherein the two differ, by placing them both side by side.

Every employment or occupation in life is a calling. For example, Aaron was occupied or employed in the business of the priesthood; and to this employment he was expressly called of God. So also the saints are employed in his service. (Rom. vii. 6.) But whoever serves God acceptably must first be called of God, who will furnish the worshippers with all that is required for the service to which he has called them. As Aaron was provided of God with everything necessary for his priestly office, so those who are effectually called are supplied by the grace of God, and fitted for their calling or employment, that they may worship and serve God according to the mind of God.

Thus they are called to love God; and are furnished with love to fit them accordingly. They are called to believe; and are furnished with a spirit of faith to walk in faith, or serve God as believers. They are called to be pray-ers; and they are furnished with the gift of the Holy Spirit to teach them how to pray, and provide them with a spirit of prayer. And it is the same with all other graces.

But calling has another benefit attached, in that it gives the person a right to act in his calling. Aaron was not presuming when he performed his priestly office; but had he not been called, he would have shared the fate of some who approached the altar without a call. Likewise the children of God who are called, have a right conferred upon them, so that they do not presume when they approach the Lord, whatever may be their felt condition. It is the call gives them their right to come, and not the condition they may be in.

In like manner, the outward call of the gospel gives a person a right to believe in the letter of truth. That is, God grants by an external call a natural faith, and pronounces that to be well in its kind: "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well;"—but this is merely raising believing natural men to a level with devils,—"the devils also believe, and tremble." (Jas. ii. 19.) Therefore that belief is not presumption on his part. Presumption arises from going beyond this, and putting one's own constructions on the letter of truth. So Saul went beyond the word given to him, and performed his own mind instead of the Lord's, in sparing Agag and the best of the cattle, &c. (1 Sam. xv. 9.)

This includes also a general call to all men to believe the Bible to be the Word of God, and outwardly to obey it on account of its supreme authority. But not to regenerate themselves and make their peace with God; nor to exercise any spiritual act. For God never requires what he has not given: "Who hath first *prevented* me, that I should repay him? Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine." (Job xli. 11.) The word "prevent" is literally to *come before*; that is, to be first in doing a service. If, then, God is beforehand with all his creatures, he never requires what he has not first given. (Rom. xi. 35, 36.) Yet the general call to the world has its benefits. What has made the English a great nation? The Bible. And we fear God is tarnishing England's glory because she is casting off national reverence for the Bible.

The benefit of an outward call is in itself,—a moral benefit, which reaches no further than this life. All God's commands and appointments must bring with them some good to men; they have their reward in themselves; and so has the outward call of God to sinners in the gospel. It brings with it a national and individual good wherever it is sent, by effecting a natural reformation.

This calling is very different from exhorting men dead in sin to believe to the saving of the soul. The gospel ministry is not established to give man a right to offer Christ, when he has given no power to man to give effect to the offer. The outward call of the gospel is not merely an ineffectual call, while the other is effectual, but the two relate to widely different things, and both are effectual for what they are appointed. How necessary it is, therefore, to keep them apart, and avoid such language as we have quoted above, which sounds as if many are called by the gospel to believe and repent, and do not do so. When the Lord sent Jonah to preach national repentance to the Ninevites, they "believed God." Here is the effectual nature of a call from God. "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." (Ps. xxxiii. 9.)

We have already explained that the "infinitely meritorious sacrifice of Christ offered upon the cross" has no saving efficacy for any, save the elect. And by eternal and personal election there is no provision made for the salvation of the whole world. The "fault" is not in the gospel, it is true, as the Synod says, but in man;* and the Holy Spirit does not remove that fault and regenerate the soul, for whom there is no atonement.

It was a common word with the old divines,—*"the fault of sin."* What they meant by *fault* one of them shows by the follow-

* A sermon of Mr. Philpot's has just fallen into our hands, containing an illustration of the same point:

"But this gospel comes to some '*in word only.*' It never reaches their conscience, touches their heart, or has any saving effect upon their soul. It is in itself a good gospel, a pure, a dear, free gospel; but as regards many of those to whose outward ears it comes, it produces no divine result, it bears no fruit unto life eternal. As the seed cast forth by the hand of

ing figure. A crooked wheel is a wheel with a fault in it; the more it is turned round, the more it demonstrates its fault. The fault is not in the man who turns the wheel. So unregenerate men are dead in sin; that is, wholly lost in the fault of sin. Hence, whatever natural faith they may have, the fault of sin still remains, and in the end drowns them in perdition. The word *fault* with the divines, so used, expressed a something so deeply rooted in the heart that, except God remove that fault, none can be saved.

If otherwise, and the cause of failure lay in a neglect of performing what man has power to do, then were men not dead, and there would be some merit in those who perform the work required. And this the Synod expressly denies in words that show it did not attach to the term "fault" the modern idea of its meaning. And we take it as used by the Belgic churches to express a *defect*, or the radical badness of the sinner by nature, like other old divines. It is also clear that these churches would not have called those who hold the Pelagian heresy "dear brethren." Let the reader judge for himself:

"The Synod rejecteth the errors of those who teach 'That because some before others are made the recipients and participators of forgiveness of sins, and of eternal life, that that discrimination depended upon their own free-will; they themselves, indifferently, of their own accord, applying for the offered grace; but not from the singular gift of God's mercy, effectually working in them, in order that they might apply to God for that grace before others.' For these, whilst they pretend that they themselves purposed, and made this distinction by their own right sense and superior understanding, do endeavour to make the people drink in the pernicious poison of Pelagianism. (Isa. lix. 5, 6; 1 Cor. i. 4-9; Eph. i. 3, 4.)"

"Faith is the gift of God thus, not on this account, because it is offered by God to the free-will of man no, not so; but because faith unfeigned is given by God to man, and because it is inspired, and poured into the heart of man by God the Holy Ghost. (Col. ii. 12.)"

We must, therefore, give the Synod its due, and free it from any charge of implication in Baxterian errors; or, in other words, of teaching that there is a universal call to sinners, and *all may be saved if they will* on the ground of the atonement. The articles on the 3rd and 4th heads of doctrine, relating to the fall of man and regeneration, give additional evidence that on these main points the Belgic reformed churches were strict advocates for the truth.

the husbandman may be good in itself, excellent of its kind, but if it fall upon the pavement, there it may lie till trodden under foot of men or picked up by the fowls of the air, so if the gospel do not in every instance bear saving fruit, the fault is not in the gospel itself, as there is no fault in the seed which is cast abroad by the hands of the sower. The whole difference is in the ground upon which the seed falls."—*The Gospel, The Power of God unto Salvation.*

We are led to notice the crafty way in which Baxterians disguise their real sentiments from the fact that they wish to keep rank among the old writers who held particular redemption. They profess, indeed, to believe in all the five points, while they in effect deny each of them, and have struck out for themselves a middle path—if such a thing might be. They will not say that Christ died equally for every man, as the General Baptists do, neither will they boldly say Christ died only for the elect, and designed to save them and no more.

But what benefit does the world receive from all this confusion? Fuller says the elect only are all saved, and yet if any of the non-elect should believe, there is an atonement for them; but still, he says, the non-elect are left to perish in their fallen condition. Do the souls of men gain any advantage from this sophistical medium? Not one more gains salvation. The advantage, however, is not small to the preachers and their congregations; the first are well paid, and the second are respectable. And for these things will they set forth the redemption of Christ as the most unjust and deceptive redemption that could have been accomplished. For they represent it to have been obtained for the whole world, and the captives left designedly still bound in the chains of slavery! And they preach an atonement which is never applied, although provided, to remove the guilt of sin!

We trust the importance of preaching the truth only to our fellow-creatures will be a sufficient guarantee of our readers' attention a little further, while we say a few words on the Synod's judgment concerning the 5th and last point, viz., The Final Perseverance of the Saints, and then glance at the translator's part of the book, and so come to a close.

The 1st and 3rd articles on the saints' final perseverance are as follows:

“Those whom God according to his own purpose calleth unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and regenerateth through the Holy Spirit, he maketh them free indeed, and he liberateth them indeed in this life from the dominion and servitude of sin; but not entirely from the flesh and the body of sin. (Jno. viii. 36; Rom. vi. 3; Gal. v. 1; 1 Pet. v. 10; Rom. vii.)”

“On account of the remains of indwelling sin, and moreover, on account of the temptations of the world and Satan, converted persons could not continue in a state of grace if they were left to their own powers; but God is faithful, who having once gathered them together into Christ by his grace, mercifully confirmeth them in the same, even unto the end. (1 Cor. i. 9; 1 Pet. i. 5; Jno. xiii. 1, &c.)”

The perseverance of the saints in grace to glory is a most sweet and comfortable portion of God's truth, and shines at times like the beams of the sun on the pathway of the weary pilgrim, cheering his soul onward in the rough and rugged course he has to travel. It is evident this doctrine was firmly held by the assembly at Dort as one of the “Five Points;” but the greater part

of the articles set forth under this head are far from being clear on the subject. They speak as though the people of God, after having been once set free, were removed beyond the reach of soul conflict with sin and Satan resisting their progress at every step they take. In the words above they do own the saints are "not entirely freed from the flesh and the body of sin;" but soul conflict is more than that. What is the struggle between grace and sin but a deadly combat in which these two are engaged? "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. And these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Gal. v. 17.)

Take, for instance, unbelief, the most obstinate, stout, and deadly foe under which man is held. Most people treat it as if it were the easiest thing possible to put on one side; and it is made the duty of every man to perform acts of faith on which the soul's salvation, peace, and comfort depend. But could unbelief be put away and overcome, the greatest and worst enemy would be under the feet of man. Instead of this, the children of God themselves groan, being burdened with unbelief and fears. Does not unbelief make the saints stagger at the promise? And it is only by strong faith, which is the gift of God, that the weak are strengthened and empowered to "walk in the steps of that faith of their father Abraham."

Such is the strength of sin that it has overcome angels and men; and it is proved in this war that it would finally triumph over the children of God, were it not for the power of Christ. So says the 8th article of the Synod:

"Yet it is not by their own merits or powers or strength, but by the sure and gratuitous mercy of God, they obtain this blessing,—that they cannot totally and finally fall away from the faith and grace and favour of God." . . .

God has said that grace shall reign (Rom. v. 20, 21; vi. 14); therefore the final perseverance of the saints is fixed, and is of the Lord alone. And where sin and unbelief overcome men finally God has never given invincible grace.

Now unbelief is a discredit of the truth and belief of a lie. If the "Five Points" contain the great principles of truth, those who deny them are unbelievers, let them believe what they may. We are persuaded that tens of thousands are exhorting others to believe, who are themselves unbelievers. Every Arminian in heart is an unbeliever; for his Christ is not the Christ of the Bible. Neither is God's Christ owned by any who in heart believe that the atonement was made for persons who never receive the benefit of it. It seems to us surprising that any man can call himself an admirer of both Toplady and Wesley. One may pare down Toplady, and dress up Wesley, and try to make two extremes meet; but when all is done, it is neither the one nor the other that forms the strange amalgamation. Toplady still remains, in his works, a stern rebuker of Wesleyanism, and Wesley a violent opposer of the truths taught by Toplady, and

which were also held prominently by the Synod of Dort. We feel sure of this,—after having waded through the “Judgment of the Synod” on all the “Five Points,” that the members of the Belgic reformed churches were not Baxterians, and that Baxterians have no quarter given them by the Synod.

We will now turn our attention to the book as a whole. Mr. Owen Jones, the translator, is the son of a Welsh clergyman, and appears to retain all the fiery animation of his race. He was in early life a Methodist, and to this day he is far from being clear of Arminian doctrine,—the very doctrine all the Belgic churches united together to denounce. He has written a wordy and lengthy preface, and an address to the “church of God,” whether in the “Church of England,” or Nonconformists, specially naming some of the most ardent upholders of Baxterian views. The preface and address seem to come upon us like rolling waves of the sea,—wave upon wave, until we are fairly out of breath with attempting to keep pace with the writer. That the dregs of Arminianism are still unpurged the following will prove:

“Now, poor sinner, believe in Jesus. Behold the bleeding Lamb! Behold the Lamb of God! Draw near the cross. Thou art a lost sinner. Cry to him out of the depths, and say unto him, ‘O Lord, save me, or I perish. Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.’ May the Lord, poor sinner, call thee by his grace; and may the Lord Jesus Christ himself *give thee grace*, that thou *mayest turn* to the Lord Jesus by praying; and daily search his Word, and never rest content until thou dost find the Lord.”

The italics are ours. Place this beside one of the articles of the Church of England, which the writer of the above professes to be the truth: “Works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of the Spirit *are not pleasing to God*, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ; neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or (as the school authors say) deserve grace of congruity. Yea, rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin.” (*Art. xiii., Church of England.*) Mr. Jones plainly exhorts dead sinners to perform acts before having received the grace of Christ; and all acts done in such a state are “works of the flesh,” and “are not pleasing to God.” (*Rom. viii. 8.*) He exhorts sinners to believe who are destitute of faith, and without the powers of life; they are asked to “look on Christ” while deprived of sight; they are invited to “draw near” while they are without the power of motion; they are told to cry to God for salvation before they have any knowledge of being lost; and after the sinner has been exhorted to perform all this task, the Lord is desired to do it for him. If the last part of the quotation above had stood alone, that is, the simple prayer that God would do it for the poor sinner, we would have endorsed the desire. To require the sinner to perform the impossible task is

unscriptural, and in the same breath to pray God to do it is out of place. If any one were enabled to accomplish the work Mr. Jones lays upon him, we should say he is born again.

We fully believe Mr. Jones possesses the life of God in his soul, and on this ground we are sorry to see him spend his strength in following up Arminian principles, while professedly refuting them. We desire to point out to him this inconsistency, in the hope that he may be able to see the unscriptural character of such language. Whether he is aware of it or not we cannot say, but it is the core of Baxterianism.

Further, a man is known by the company he keeps. Some persons whom Mr. Jones highly extols in these pages, say they have nothing to do with contradictions in doctrine; they take the Bible as they find it, and preach a Calvinistic sermon when they meet with a Calvinistic text, and an Arminian sermon when they find an Arminian text. But how can persons who use the following words find an Arminian text?

“By Arminianism I mean those doctrines taught by those confederacies of unregenerate men unto whom is given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and which opens its mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his Name, and his tabernacle, and them which dwell in heaven. I mean that doctrine which exalts itself above the Scriptures of truth and above God. By Arminianism I mean the doctrine of those who teach that there are thousands of those of whom Christ said, ‘Behold I, and the children which thou hast given me,’—now in hell. By Arminianism I mean the doctrine of those who deny the virtue of the blood of the Lamb by teaching that there are thousands who have found the Lord Jesus, and whose hearts have been sprinkled by the Holy Ghost with the blood of sprinkling,—now in hell, by which accursed doctrine (Gal. i.) they make God a liar, and do pour contempt upon the blood of Christ.” (P. 29.)

We will ourselves endorse this paragraph. But Baxterianism is an attempt to blend together the gospel of the grace of God and Arminianism; which is to make God a liar, who has said, “The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.” (Rom. xi. 7.) There are only two characters,—“the elect,” and “the rest” who are blinded; the former under the covenant of grace, and the latter under the covenant of works. All these universal exhortationists are working hard to blend grace and works together. The Lord’s parable of the marriage of the king’s son is taken for a warrant, and supposed to be a proof of their vain commission. But we defy any one to prove the divine authority of universal exhortations from that parable; for it is evident the man without a wedding garment had no right there; and when asked, “How camest thou in hither?” he was “speechless.” Had he been called to the feast, he could not have been speechless. The reply would have been ready: “Thy servants invited me; they said every one might come if they would, it was open for all.” But he was speechless. Neither could he say, “I

have been told that there is an objective fulness in the satisfaction of Christ, sufficient for the salvation of the whole world, were the whole world to believe; and I have obeyed the call, and come to the feast." Here we see the objective fulness did not meet the man's case; and that "sinners as sinners" are invited to come to Christ in their unregeneracy is a delusion, seeing here is one cast out for lack of righteousness.

We have carefully pointed out the merits and demerits of the book under review; and upon due consideration we have found it is of value as a testimony against Baxterianism. We think it may be of some advantage to ministers of the gospel, that they make themselves well acquainted with the "Five Points," which have been and are now so much misconstrued and perverted, if not openly denied. We hope what we have written will have prepared the way, and be a guard against the few objectionable expressions it contains. On the other hand, they will find in its pages in the words of the principal reformed churches of Europe, of 1618, clear statements and testimonies of the doctrines of Particular Redemption and Election. The importance of the subject and the dangerous effects of ministers' falling into Baxterian contradictions must alone be an apology for the length of this review.

THE WONDER.

By night I sometimes wonder, and wonder oft by day;
I wonder *now*, and wonder shall, while on earth I stay.
'Twill be a pleasing wonder when I shall safely come
Through ev'ry storm to Zion, my peaceful, happy HOME!

The angels altogether will there in wonder be;
Ten thousand times more wonder it will be unto *me!*
That e'er one so *polluted*, so wounded ev'ry way,
Should from the wars returning, be seen in bright array.

Yes, earth and heaven will wonder that I the conquest gain'd,
After so often groaning, half-dead among the slain.
'Twill be an endless wonder that I should safe arrive,
Through *seas of tribulation*, to Canaan's land *alive!*

The saints will greatly wonder, and shout the victor's song;
And I, the greatest wonder, *there* singing in the throng!
A wonder above wonders, to see one black as I,
WHITE, without spot or blemish, among the host on high!

MERCY manifested is the banner and cable whereby God draws us out of ourselves to Christ and his ways.—*Thos. Bisco.*

CHRIST JESUS has bags of mercy that were never yet broken up or unsealed. Hence it is said he has goodness laid up; things reserved in heaven for his. And if he breaks up one of these bags, who can tell what he can do? Hence his love is said to be such as passes knowledge, and that his riches are unsearchable. He has nobody knows what; for nobody knows who. He has by him in store for such as seem in the view of all men to be gone beyond recovery.—*Bunyan.*

Obituary.

A SHORT MEMOIR OF RICHARD DE FRAINE, WHO DIED FEB. 19TH, 1882.

[The following memoir is supplied by Mr. De Fraine's widow, chiefly from recollection, Mr. De Fraine having left nothing written by himself. His friends must not, therefore, expect more than an outline.]

RICHARD DE FRAINE, Baptist minister, Lutterworth, Leicestershire, was born at Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, Jan. 26th, 1808. His father was descended from a French family, who came over to England during the persecution of the Huguenots, and settled here. His parents gave no evidence of being gracious people, though zealous adherents to the Established Church; and they brought up their family to follow in their steps.

When a young man, it pleased the Lord to call my husband by his grace and bring him out from his ungodly companions, of whom he was the life, being of a quick and lively disposition. A few despised people meeting in a chapel very near the house he then lived in, he and his companions in sin ridiculed them, looking upon them as a miserable lot of people; and agreed that he should go there to see what they did, and report to his friends for their entertainment. But the Lord had designed some better thing. The Word had gone forth, "Almighty grace, arrest that man." As the minister entered the pulpit, all enmity of the carnal mind rose up, and I have heard my husband say how he despised the Lord's servants. The prayer being ended, he was about to take up his hat and walk out, but was compelled to remain by an irresistible power; and the minister, looking round the chapel, and fixing his eyes on my husband (as he thought), gave out his text: "These six things doth the Lord hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." (Prov. vi. 16-19.) As he opened up his text, the law of God entered my husband's conscience, and he sat as a guilty, condemned sinner before a just and holy God.

He left the chapel utterly miserable, feeling "without God and without hope;" and instead of returning to his ungodly companions to scoff at these people, he was constrained to go to the chapel every time the doors were open, though often tempted to enter the place no more. The Word was "sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit;" and he found it "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart;" so that he was brought to say as the psalmist, "There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger, neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sins; for mine iniquities are gone over mine head, as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me." (Ps. xxxviii. 3, 4.) He was brought so low in

body, through soul-trouble, he became a mere shadow; and his state was truly as described in the same Psalm: "I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. There is no soundness in my flesh. I am feeble and sore broken; I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart." (ver. 6-8.)

The people, observing his regular attendance at chapel and his dejected looks, sought an opportunity of conversing with him, and found, to the joy of their heart, the Lord had wounded; and they felt sure he would, in his own time, heal. The cause at that time was in a low state and some praying ones had been earnestly entreating the Lord to grant them a token for good in calling some soul through the ministry of the Word. A Mr. Norris, a good man, was the pastor; and my husband always felt the greatest affection and esteem for him.

The conviction of sin he was under was severe; and the enemy tempted him to destroy himself and know the worst, representing that hell could not be greater torment than what he endured. But the Lord upheld him by an unseen hope, and suffered not the enemy to prevail; and though he could say,

"If my soul be sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well,"

acknowledging the justice of God, yet he was made to plead for mercy. And God, "who is rich in mercy unto all who call upon him in truth," sent his Word and healed him, giving him a blessed manifestation of Christ as his Saviour, which filled him with joy and peace in believing. The following portion of God's Word was brought home with power to his heart: "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him." (Lam. iii. 24.) Thus was he brought out of the horrible pit, and his feet set on the Rock; and a new song put into his mouth, even praise unto his God." (Ps. xl. 2, 3.) He was baptized and joined the church at Aylesbury, Aug. 16th, 1829.

The Lord having designed him for the work of the ministry, he had to travel through sore afflictions, temptations, and providential trials, many and various. How many times have I heard him speak of the straits he was brought into, and how he saw the delivering hand of the Lord, having often to pray as hard for a shilling as he did for the salvation of his soul (though not with the same guilt), having a delicate wife and young family. Soon after he began to speak in the Name of the Lord, trials increased, his work fell off, his health failed, and it seemed as if the Lord would pull him to pieces. But all this was to make him acquainted with the ins and outs of God's tried people, so that he might comfort them with the comfort wherewith he was comforted of God. He went about in the villages preaching that Christ he had received, and God gave testimony to the Word.

The church of which he was a member, hearing of his speaking, thought it desirable they should hear him that they might send him forth in an orderly manner. This they did, Dec. 25th, 1833; and he supplied their pulpit several times afterwards.

In 1834 he received an invitation to Earl's Stonham, in Suffolk, where he laboured till 1837, when he resigned his pastorate. We next find him helping Mr. Glover, at Tring; as he, through affliction, could only preach occasionally. He found it very profitable, as a young minister, to have the prayers and advice of this godly man and some of his members. I have heard him relate how one good old man, in prayer, begged that "he might always go into the pulpit on his knees, and leave it ashamed of himself, that he might not be left to preach himself, but lift up a precious Christ."

In 1838 he received an invitation to Faversham, in Kent, where he only remained a short while; leaving his family at Tring. From there he went to Leicester to preach for four Lord's days; and in a letter to his first wife he thus writes: "I have preached six times this week; am 10 miles from Leicester; preached last night in a threshing barn to a number of poor people, who seemed to hear the Word with interest." This was at Smeeton; and some of his members are still alive who were present on that occasion. It was during this visit he received an invitation for a week-night from a few people who met in a room at Lutterworth, 13 miles from Leicester.

On his return to Leicester he found a letter awaiting him, demanding his immediate presence at Tring, a heavy domestic trouble having befallen him. This sudden affliction so affected his health that the friends at Lutterworth, hearing of it, invited him for a month, hoping the change would benefit him. If able, he was to preach; if not, to rest. But the Lord sustained him, and so opened his mouth to speak, and the people's hearts to receive his message, that the room (a ribbon-weaver's shop) soon became full to overflowing. He was begged to remain three months, then six, and finally to settle among them. A chapel was being built adjoining the room, which was used as a vestry or school-room. It was opened Aug. 14th, 1839; when he was affectionately invited to become their pastor; and they began with a good chapel, free of debt.

In the beginning of his ministry at Lutterworth he met with much opposition; but the Lord gave him abundant testimony that he was with him; and he had many souls for his hire and seals to his ministry. People came from the villages round, and the Word was the "savour of life unto life" to numbers; some of whom are now living, and can testify to the power which attended it in those days to their own souls. Others among them, who have been gathered to their eternal rest, have witnessed a good confession, and made a good end. For more than 30 years he was in the habit of preaching three times on Lord's days, and in the villages round during the week; walking all weathers as long as he was able. These seasons were often times of refreshing to himself and to his hearers.

When through the infirmities of age and failing powers he was no longer able to carry the gospel tidings around, his people

were much cast down and began to realize that they might soon lose their beloved pastor; but they little thought the Lord would lay him aside from his much-loved work before he took him to himself. For more than two years he was unable to minister to them in spiritual things; and great sympathy was felt by many of his people, who bore him much in prayer before the Lord. The nature of his affliction was a form of paralysis, gradually increasing the weakness of his mind and body. But though in natural things he became childish, and was sometimes not himself, yet in spiritual things the Lord kept him sound and clear. It was sweet to hear him speak of the Lord's tender compassion and goodness to him. I cannot do better than give a few extracts from a diary I kept, in which I wrote, from time to time, some of the things which fell from his lips.

Sunday, Oct. 19th, 1879. My dear husband was very comfortable in mind, speaking of his call by grace; and he said how he loved that little chapel at Aylesbury, and that he used to feel he should like to be buried by the chapel wall, and have these words put on his tombstone: "This man was born there." He said how good Ps. lxxxvii was to him: "All my springs are in thee." In going into the churchyard with his son-in-law, Mr. Ford, a few days previously, he quoted these lines, dwelling much on the mercy of God:

"Without thy sweet mercy I could not live here;
Sin soon would reduce me to utter despair.
But through thy great goodness my spirits revive,
And he that first made me still keeps me alive."

Dec. 8th, 1879. Our doctor coming in, he said to him, "There is an appointed time for man upon earth. When that comes we must die. I am not concerned about it. The Lord is my stay, and has been for many years, and with him I can leave everything.

"Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee."

Dec. 25th. Two of our members were spending the day with us. He began (thinking aloud) to say how constraint had been laid upon him to preach the gospel the Lord bid him, and as long as he could he preached. That hymn was much blessed to him:

"What object's this which meets my eye" (*Hymn* 950),

repeating the words, "'Tis he, 'tis he,"—though unable to remember the rest until I read it to him. He dwelt then on the goodness of God to him. I said, "Lacked ye anything?" He repeated many times, "Nothing; nothing." The next day our friend I. W. called. His mind was still dwelling on the season of the year, and God's great love to sinners. He said,

"It means thy praise, however poor,
And angel's songs can do no more."

He was quite broken down.

Dec. 28th, Sunday. On returning from the prayer meeting, as I entered the room he smiled, and said,

“On the Rock of ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?”

I replied, “Nothing.

“With salvation’s walls surrounded,
Thou may’st smile at all thy foes.”

He evidently realized the blessedness of it, and spoke of “singing louder and louder in heaven.” At times the trial weighed upon him of being laid aside from serving his Master and the cause of God; but he was kept from murmuring, and was most grateful and satisfied with everything done for him.

Feb. 14th, 1880. He awoke this morning happy in soul with these lines, which he repeated:

“There shall I see his face,
And never, never sin;
But from the rivers of his grace
Drink endless pleasures in.”

And again:

“Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die;”

adding, “We need a song sometimes to cheer us.”

July 8th. Awoke repeating,

“Though long beneath the law I lay
In bondage and distress,
I toiled the precepts to obey,
But toiled without success.”

I said, “You found a more excellent way.” He replied, “Yes
At length the Saviour appeared and set my soul at liberty.”

(To be concluded.)

MARY SEAGRAVE.—On June 26th, 1882, aged 59, Mary Seagrave, of Horsham.

All the time I knew her she was very doubtful of her eternal safety. I have seen her at times a little revived after I had been speaking of the evidences of spiritual life; but the enemy was continually trying to make her believe she had only learnt her religion in her head. Her husband has told me she was first brought into soul-trouble by reading Mr. Philpot’s sermon on “The Heir of Heaven walking in Darkness, and the Heir of Hell walking in Light.”

The Lord laid her on a bed of affliction, where she was much tried in body and mind. Her husband often asked her how she felt, and once she replied,

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

After having passed some days in great bodily pain, she looked up to her husband and said, “William, the Lord has said, ‘My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you.’” She smiled and added, “I have got it.”

Just before she died she said again, "William, it is
 'Sweet to lie passive in his hands,
 And know no will but his.'"

When I heard of the above, it confirmed me in this truth, that those of God's family who are nearly all their lifetime subject to bondage, have liberty in passing from time into eternity.

G. BRADSHAW.

SARAH BRISTOW.—On June 11th, 1882, aged 92, Sarah Bristow, a member of the Temple, Sleaford.

She received her first religious impressions at the age of 14, at a prayer-meeting at Threkingham. Speaking of it in after years, she said, "I know not why, but I was melted into tears the whole time." From that day the Lord began to show her the plague of her heart.

After passing through some years of soul-conflict, she was in a great measure delivered by hearing a sermon in Sleaford chapel, by the late Mr. Cheffins, from Ps. xxiii. 1: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." The same words were especially revived, and blessed to her soul the last two or three years of her life.

For more than 75 years she was a most consistent walker of the gospel of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. She was much led into a knowledge of the deceit and wickedness of her heart, which kept her humble. During her long pilgrimage she was often very fearing; yet in her last illness the enemy was not permitted to harass her. Once she was complaining of bodily infirmities, and I said to her, "A few more sighs and a few more tears, and you will be where there are neither aches nor pains." She replied, "I hope so. Where he has begun the work, he will carry it on. I rest on the finished work of Christ."

In her last illness she more than once repeated the whole of the 23rd and 13th Psalms, calling them her own. On one occasion she went through the whole hymn:

"Yes, I shall soon be landed."

On Sunday, June 11th, her ransomed spirit took its flight to the bosom of Jesus.

Sarah Bristow is the last of the old Huntingtougians whom Mr. Samuel baptized when he first formed the church at Sleaford.

M. L. S.

ELEANOR ANN ARCHARD.—On Feb. 18th, 1882, aged 66, Eleanor Ann Archard, of Hilmarton.

In the providence of God she came to Hilmarton, where she married and settled in 1839. She was ignorant of the way of salvation until the Lord took her in hand about the year 1848. At that time a bakehouse was opened at Hilmarton for the preaching of such men as the late John Mortimer, W. Mortimer, and others, including Mr. W. Ferris, in connection with the cause at Calne. In this place Mrs. Archard first heard the truth, at the beginning merely out of curiosity. Some time

after the Lord applied these words to her: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," when sitting alone in her house. Now her experience was like the psalmist's: "Thy Word hath quickened me;" and she earnestly desired "the sincere milk of the Word" that she might grow thereby.

She never experienced a very deep law-work; but the fear of the Lord was truly planted in her heart, and prevented her from sinning cheaply; and she was blessed with faith to believe that he who had begun the good work would carry it on. She specially profited in reading J. Rusk's writings in the "Gospel Standard;" and was often helped under the preached gospel.

The next word the Lord applied to her soul with power was, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." She walked in much enjoyment for some time during the first part of her pilgrimage.

A chapel was built at Hilmarton and opened in 1849, and several persons were baptized at Calne (Hilmarton not being a separate church until 1864). Mrs. Archard could not see her way clear to join them until the Lord spoke these words to her: "My people shall be willing in the day of my power." She was baptized by Mr. Ferris, Oct. 21st, 1849.

She was generally so favoured as to feel persuaded of her interest in Christ's finished work, and be kept from that sinking in which many are suffered to walk. At one time fearing she maintained too great a confidence, the Lord calmed her mind by applying his Word: "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." (Isa. xxxii. 17.)

For some years her health gradually declined, and in 1861 the Lord laid her on a bed of languishing for the greater part of two years. Before this the promise was given her in Isa. xxx. 20, 21: "And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity," &c. She was also much blessed in reading a sermon on Hosea ii. 14, 15, and many times referred to it as a preparation for what she had to pass through. During that illness the Lord abundantly blessed her soul, and made her perfectly willing to die, had it been his will.

Her health remained in a weak state for some years; and in the winter of 1873 she again took to her bed, and scarcely left it afterwards. She always felt great interest in the cause at Hilmarton, mourning over it (as I can testify) when in adversity, and rejoicing in its prosperity. In 1876 her sight began to fail, and she became gradually blind. After a time of special blessing in her own soul in Nov., 1877, the Lord suffered Satan to try her for a short period, causing her great bitterness of soul. In the end the Lord overruled it all, and restored to her the joys of his salvation. A few months before this I became acquainted with her, and have had many sweet moments in her company.

In July, 1881, she suffered greatly and seemed near her end. When a little relieved she said to her husband, "What a mercy

it is all done!" (meaning her salvation), and expressed her love to the Lord, remembering his mercies, both past and present.

She took cold on Feb. 12th, which proved to be the messenger of death. On the morning of the 17th she said the words had come to her during the past night: "The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms." The verse was read to her:

"Here would I dwell and ne'er remove;
Here I am safe from all alarms.
My rest is everlasting love;
My refuge everlasting arms."

She replied, "That's it." The following day, after being very ill in the night, she was reminded of the same words, and answered, "So they are." She scarcely spoke again, and the same evening peacefully passed away in her sleep.

H. M. HINCHLIFFE.

EMMA SARAH CLEARE.—On April 22nd, 1882, aged 57, Emma Sarah, the beloved wife of Henry Cleare, of Gower Place, Euston Square, a member of the church at Gower Street. Her maiden name was Fowler.

At an early age she was made sensible of her state as a sinner and her need of salvation by Jesus Christ. She was also led to see the ordinance of believer's baptism; and was baptized by Mr. Kershaw at Zoar chapel, at the age of 20. Having to remove in the order of providence to Gower Place, she joined the church at Gower Street in 1868, where she remained till her death.

In the early part of 1880 an alteration was apparent in her countenance, evidently caused by an apoplectic fit, which very much affected her brain; and in June she went to Sudbury. On July 12th she was taken with a second fit. Her husband went down to her, and found her in a happy frame of mind. The Lord seemed to make all his goodness pass before her; and she was able to speak of many Ebenezers and promises, also many passages of Scripture and portions of hymns that had been sweet to her. She was quite resigned to the Lord's will; and her conversation was such that it was a time of spiritual enjoyment and comfort to her husband. To her brother who visited her she exhibited the same spirit, expressing her intense longing to be gone, feeling that she was a burden to her family.

She was able to be brought home at the end of August, though very weak, and paralyzed in the left side; and from that time was quite an invalid till she was taken. She delighted to attend the chapel, which favourably was so near; and was always pleased to hear, and join in spiritual conversation with the members and friends. It was her daily desire to depart and be with Christ. She often used to repeat the lines:

"No chilling winds nor poisonous breath
Shall reach that healthful shore;
Sickness and sorrow, pain and death,
Are felt and fear'd no more."

To her sister-in-law, when last she saw her, she said, with tears in her eyes, what a mercy that she had not now, with great weakness and failing mental power, to seek salvation. This was all done for her; and she was now resting on the promise given to her: "As thy day, so shall thy strength be."

She often spoke of God's faithfulness, saying, "He has been a faithful God to me." She frequently quoted the lines:

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

And,

"Rock of ages," &c.

On the morning of the final attack, while sitting at breakfast, she said, "I have had such a singular dream. I thought the last day was come, and I had lived to see it." And about half-past ten she was seized with the fit, and remained unconscious till Saturday morning when she became sensible, although unable to speak. She wished her husband to read to her, which he did, 2 Cor. v. first ten verses, also Rev. vii., last nine verses. When he exclaimed at the end, "What a glorious prospect!

"There we shall see, and hear, and know
All we desired or wished below;
And every power find sweet employ
In that eternal world of joy,"

her countenance brightened up at the anticipation of soon realizing it for herself. She continued sensible till about four o'clock and saw several friends; all of whom she knew, and seemed to enjoy what they said to her.

After this she gradually subsided into unconsciousness, and remained so till nine o'clock, when she peacefully passed away.

"Safe landed on that blissful shore,
She sings to sorrow here no more."

HENRY CLEARE.

[Mr. Gray, a deacon at Gower Street, adds: "I have often seen Mrs. Cleare during the last two years, since she has been afflicted; and I have found the burden of her desire has been to go home. She felt she had done with earth and earthly things; and often was wishing and longing to lay down the poor tabernacle; and be for ever with the Lord. It was a grief to her that she could not do for her husband and family as she had formerly done; and she sometimes wondered why the Lord kept her here, so helpless and useless as she felt herself to be.

But the dear Lord does nothing wrong; and this she saw and felt, and would beg of the Lord to give her patience and resignation quietly to wait his time, knowing that would be best.

She was a lover of God, his house, his truth, his people, and his ways. We trust the loss to her husband and family may be abundantly sanctified to their spiritual and eternal good.—J. GRAY."]

EMMA ROWBOTTOM.—On Dec. 11th, 1879, aged 17, Emma Rowbottom, of Charlesworth, Derbyshire.

She was brought up to attend the Church of England and Sunday school attached to it, and was confirmed when about 15 years

old. It appears after man had declared her regenerate and her sins forgiven that God the Holy Ghost took her in hand to fulfil the Word: "Ye must be born again;" and "They shall be all taught of God." After her confirmation she became more thoughtful, and withdrew from worldly company.

About the same time the first symptoms of consumption began to appear in her; but the malady was of that character that she believed she should recover. A herb doctor gave her medicine which stopped the bleeding from her lungs; and as she could eat her food, it was thought her strength would return. But a few months before she died her mother became uneasy, and sent for her first doctor again. On examination, he abruptly said, "Why, both her lungs are nearly gone;" and gave no hope of her recovery. This news, spoken so unguardedly, quite overcame her. Her appetite failed; and now she felt the solemn position she was in as a sinner before God. She said she was lost; and, referring to something which had taken place, exclaimed, "O, if Jesus turns me away, what must I do?"

Her fears and distress being very great, the family sent for a minister of the Church of England; and as he could not come immediately, they sent for the Independent minister. Both called to see her at the same time, and tried to comfort her. But she told them she wished she was like them, but she was a great sinner; she thought none were so great as herself. She replied the same to a lady who visited her. The malady of sin was too deep for any mortal to remove. But for the first time, after this lady's visit, Emma was emboldened to kneel in prayer in her family. She found neither christening nor confirmation was of any avail. Man had said her sins were forgiven, but God had not; and for this blessing she longed and prayed.

Having to supply at Charlesworth, I was told by the friends that they hoped God was indeed at work in her soul; but they were not sure that I should be allowed to see her. However, I left word as I passed the door that I would call at noon. I did so, and was pleased with her conversation; but not having much time to spare, I promised to come again after the afternoon service.

One of the members then went with me; and there were present her mother, sisters, brother, and other relatives. She was seated by her uncle, who had come to see her. The uncle remarked, "She a sinner! If it were I, she might talk about her being a sinner. She has no need to fear." He asked how old she was, and being told 17, "O," he said, "what sins has she committed!" He did not know that "the thought of foolishness is sin." When the uncle had finished speaking I related how the Lord began the work of grace in my soul when I was 15 years old, and my distress, so that I could not eat my food; and how the Lord showed me his mercy and forgave my sins. Afterwards the friend who had accompanied me told them of the Lord's dealings with one of her daughters; of her soul trouble, and God's goodness in forgiving her sins, and her dying happily. I then read a chapter.

and we prayed together. When I arose, she got up and grasped my hand with some vigour, and said, "That's it, master; that's it." I said, "Then heart answers to heart?" Most of the family were in tears.

It appears that the visit was made a blessing to her soul. God was pleased to take away her great distress, and give her peace of mind. She died a fortnight afterwards.

On my next visit to Charlesworth I heard she was dead; and being anxious to know how it was with her at last, I went to see her mother. She told me just before her daughter died, she called to her, and said, "Jesus calls me. I must meet him in the better land;" and so joyfully passed away. We are satisfied that every true mourner shall be comforted and rejoice in the mercy of God through Jesus Christ. B. WADSWORTH.

THE LORD REIGNETH.

"Thou rulest the raging of the sea. When the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them."—Ps. LXXXIX. 9.

LORD, thou canst make the storm a calm,
 And bid the waves to cease;
 Thou canst apply the sovereign balm,
 And give my conscience peace.

The winds and waves are in thy hand,
 And all at thy control;
 They rise and fall at thy command,
 In measure or in whole.

Lord, bid the winds and waves assuage;
 Their violence restrain.
 Thy Word can make them cease to rage,
 And make them *still* remain.

The seas and winds are all thine own;
 Without thee cannot move.
 I look to thee, and thee alone,
 To order all in love.

April 26th, 1882.

A. H.

RIVERS are powerful, and run irresistibly; they cannot be driven back by the force of men. Even so are the influences of the Spirit of God when the promise is accomplished: "I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." (Isa. xlv. 3.)—*Erskine*.

O WHAT a comfort will it be to a poor soul in the time of death, when he shall come to render up his soul into the hands of God, that all his sins are wiped out! And then to hear those glad tidings from heaven: "Be of good comfort, poor soul; thou hast seen thy sins; therefore I will not see them; I have made thee remember them and mourn for them; therefore I will never plague thee for them." Who would not see his sins that Christ may cover them in that day of accounts? There was never a sinner broken-hearted, but God did bind him up; and there was never any truly wounded for sin, but God did ever heal and comfort him.—*T. Hooker*.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

OCTOBER, 1882.

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

THE EFFICACY OF REDEMPTION.

THE life of the Son of God was infinitely too precious to be given for perishing things; nor would it be consistent with divine wisdom to venture it for an uncertainty. It had been a light thing for Christ, and not worthy his sufferings, to raise up the ruins made by Adam to such a degree of restorment as would only have set him in his former state, and that upon terms more unlikely to succeed. This had been to give a greater value for things of lesser moment. For it must needs be a happier state to be made upright, without bias to evil, than to be moved with all manner of motives while fettered by unbelief and a natural bent to revolt further. For notwithstanding all these motives and means, not the majority only, but the universality of mankind, might have perished and gone to hell; which would in no wise have answered God's end in making the world, much less in redeeming it.

It was therefore necessary redemption should have a farther reach than to bring men into a mere salvable state; and that could not be less than a state of salvation.

To make redemption larger than electing love is to overlay the foundation; which (all men know) is a very momentous error in building, especially of such a tower whose top must reach to heaven. It therefore behoves us to see that we separate not what God hath conjoined, either by stretching or straining the bounds he hath set. The Jews were opinioned that the promise of the Messiah belonged only to them, exclusive of the Gentiles. Others since would extend it to all the sons of men universally and alike; not considering the reason why the promise was made to the woman's seed, and not to Adam's. But the Messiah himself, who best knew the line of the promise and end of his mission, exempted none; but extends it to all nations indifferently; yet so as that he restrains it to the elect among them, describing them still by such appellations as import a select party. They are called "his seed," and "the travail of his soul;" with respect to whom he should "make his soul an offering for sin." (Isa. liii. 10, 11.) These also he terms "his sheep," and him-

self "the Good Shepherd" (as he well might), whose own the sheep are, and for whom he laid down his life. (Jno. x. 15.) And that he might not be taken to intend those only of the Jewish nation, he presently adds, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring." (Ver. 16.)

It further appears (by Isa. liii. 6) that they were sheep whose iniquities were laid upon Christ; and again (ver. 8), "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." And here let me note (for it is very considerable) that we read not of any party of men termed "sheep," "the people of God," and his "children," in distinction from others, but with respect to some peculiar interest he hath in them above others; and what that interest may be, excepting election, doth not appear to us. For those other sheep were not yet called, and therefore not yet believers and sheep on that account, but as they were of God's elect. For, though all men were lost, Christ was "not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;" that is, those persons of the lost and perishing world whom God hath chosen for his peculiars, as he did the house of Israel from among the nations; and who in that respect were a special type of the spiritual election. And on this account the promises of the new covenant were made to the church under such names and titles as were proper to that people, as distinguished from other nations.

In Lu. i. 72 God's sending of Christ is said to be in performance of his holy covenant, which was first proclaimed in Paradise as made with the woman's seed (Gen. iii. 15); and afterwards renewed with Abraham (Gen. xii. 3); and is therefore termed, "The mercy promised to Abraham and to his seed." And who are Abraham's seed? Not the world, but believers; that is, the elect; for these only obtain faith. (Rom. xi. 7; Gal. iii. 29.) "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed." We also read that it was for a peculiar people that Christ gave himself, and whom he purchased. (Tit. ii. 14.) It denotes some special propriety he hath in them above others; and so a special cause for giving himself for them. It also seems that a *peculiar* people and a *purchased* people are so nearly allied that one word is used to signify both. (1 Pet. ii. 9.) According with this is that in 1 Pet. i. 20, where Christ is said to be "verily fore-ordained, and manifested" for those to whom the epistle is written. That they were persons elected is evident by the first and second verses, and elect "unto the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." As they were elected to it, so in John he professes to make it good: "For their sakes I sanctify myself." And twice in John x. he says he "laid down his life for the sheep" (vers. 11, 15); which is as exclusive of others as where he saith, "My righteousness extends unto the saints;" and, "He that believeth shall be saved;" that is, such, and none else.

It further appears from Acts xx. 28 that it was the church of God he "purchased with his own blood." Now the church and the world are plainly distinct, as a garden enclosed from the

common fields. That the church consists of elect persons is proved before; and that it was the church he died for is proved by this Scripture; as also from Eph. v. 25, where husbands are required to love their wives as "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." This verse shows that as the husband's love to his wife is another kind of love from that he bears to others of the same sex; so is Christ's love to the church; and therefore his death, which was the special effect of that love, is peculiar to the church only.

From all which it seems undeniably evident that as a certain number were elected, so a certain number, and those the very same persons, were redeemed. The ground and truth of this assertion is further confirmed by such arguments as these:

1. The Levitical sacrifices were offered for the house of Israel, exemptive of other nations; and this being a type of the spiritual election, it follows that the sacrifice of Christ (typified by theirs) was also peculiar to Jews in spirit, or spiritual Jews. For he only "is a Jew that is one inwardly." (Rom. ii. 29.) So Aaron's making atonement for his household, and bearing the names of the 12 tribes on his breast-plate, was typical of our great High Priest's bearing the names and sustaining the persons of those for whom he offered himself on the cross. Of all those legal shadows, Christ and the church of the first-born are the body and substance.

2. The right of redemption among the Jews (which shadowed this) was founded on brotherhood. Hence I infer that that relation (spiritually taken) was both the ground and limit of Christ's office as a Redeemer. The apostle's discourse in Heb. ii. seems to point at this; where he says they were brethren, children, and sons, whom Christ should deliver from bondage, make reconciliation for their sins, and bring to glory. But how came they to be God's children, sons, and brethren to Christ, above others? It was by predestination; and that was what entitled them to redemption; as is evident by comparing the 5th and 7th verses of Eph. i.: "Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ; in whom we have redemption through his blood." And it is worthy your notice that by the law of redemption, a stranger (one that was not of the brotherhood) might not be redeemed; but one that was, not before redeemed, must yet go free in the year of jubilee (Lev. xxv. 46, 48, with 54); which shows the peculiar respect the Lord has for his peculiar people.

3. The saving benefits of redemption do not redound to any but elect persons. Whatever in one place is ascribed to redemption as the special fruit and consequent thereof is elsewhere ascribed to election; and to this as the first and original root. And that redemption itself is the fruit of electing love is evident by 1 Pet. i. 2: "Elect unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." They are also said to be "blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ according as he hath chosen them

in him." (Eph. i. 3, 4.) If *all* spiritual blessings be dispensed by the law of election, then all the saving benefits of redemption (which are the same with those of election) must be dispensed by the same rule; and so, to the same persons only.

4. The price of redemption was of that precious and matchless value that it could not be parted with, but with respect to the certainty of the end for which it was paid. Now the end of redemption was the salvation of men; below which there could not be an end worthy the death of Christ; and this nothing could secure but election. The elect always have obtained and shall obtain. This is a rule affirmed in Rom. xi. 7. But for the rest, they are blinded; that is, they are left to their own voluntary misunderstanding; and being so left, not only they do not, but they cannot believe. And Christ knowing "from the beginning who they were that believed not," but who would certainly despise him, to what end should he make his soul an offering for them? Whom the Lord intends to save alive, he appoints an atonement to be made for them (Numb. xvi. 46, 47); but for those he intends to destroy (which is always done justly) he will not accept an offering (Judg. xiii. 23); and therefore not appoint it; as he did not under the law for those crimes for which men were to die.

5. I confine redemption to elect persons, because intercession, which is of equal latitude with redemption, is limited to them, exclusive of others. The priests under the law were to pray for those whose sacrifice they offered, and what they did was a pattern of our Saviour's priestly office, whom likewise we find to sacrifice and pray only for the same persons. He is an Advocate for those for whose sin he is a Propitiation (1 Jno. ii. 1); for whose transgressions he was smitten, for them he makes intercession (Isa. liii. 8-12); for their sakes he sanctified himself; and for them it was that he made that solemn prayer in John xvii. And he prayed for them as being just then upon offering their sacrifice. He also shuts out the world expressly from having any interest in it: "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." And he adds the reason why he would pray for these: "For they are thine;" that is, they were the Father's by election; for in all other respects "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." (Ps. xxiv. 1.)

6. Another argument for peculiar redemption is founded on the merit of Christ's death, together with its efficacy. He was not cut off for himself (Dan. ix. 26); but for those for whom he undertook. And it was to procure them a right to those glorious privileges to which election ordained them. Hence I argue,—
1. That for which Christ laid down his life, that he merited. And
2. What he merited is due to those for whom it was merited. Now the principal thing intended and merited by his death was the justification of sinners; and that God might be just in justifying them (Rom. iii. 26); and finally, that they might have eternal life. (Jno. xvii. 2.) If therefore he merited this for all, then all must be justified and saved (Rom. v. 8, 9, 10); and it

cannot be justly denied to any. For it is their due, by virtue of a price, and that price well worthy of it; which also was paid to that very end; and this by the Creditor's own appointment, who cannot condemn any for whom Christ died. (Rom. viii. 34.) His justice shall not be liable to such a reflection.

Whence it may be rationally concluded that if all men are not justified, justification doth not belong to all; and consequently, that Christ did not give himself for all. And, as for efficacy, Adam's transgression was efficacious on the will and whole man to deprave; why not, then, the righteousness of Christ to restore, since the pre-eminence in that very thing is given to him? "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. 17.)

7. The doctrine of special and peculiar redemption is further confirmed by those perilous consequents which attend the doctrine of general redemption, as it is commonly held forth. For,

(1.) It seems to reflect on the wisdom of God; as imputing to him such a contrivance for men's salvation as was altogether frustrable; which is far from convincing the world that Christ crucified is the Wisdom of God.

(2.) It also seems to tax God of injustice as not discharging those whose transgressions are answered for by their Surety; or else that the sufferings of Christ were not sufficient to make a discharge due to them.

Or (3.) It insinuates a deficiency of power, or want of good will to prosecute his design to perfection.

(4.) It makes men boasters; suspending the virtue and success of all Christ hath done for them upon some work to be done by themselves, which he is not the doer of; and consequently, that men are principals in procuring their own salvation. And so Christ shall have but his thousands, in truth his nothing; while freedom of will shall have its ten thousands to cry up the praise of men. This is not that "the Lord alone should be exalted."

(5.) It would also follow that those who are saved and gone to heaven have nothing more of Christ's to glory in, and praise him for, than those who are perished and gone to hell. For, according to the principles of general redemption, he did and doth for all alike; and no more for one than for another.

(6.) It makes men presumptuous and carnally secure. How many have soothed themselves in their impenitence and hardness of heart, and fenced themselves against the Word, upon this very supposition, that Christ died for all; and why, then, should they not look to be saved as well as any other? And so they lean (pretendedly) on the Lord and transgress, not considering that for those for whom Christ died he purchased a freedom from sin, and not a liberty of sinning, nor impunity; but gives to them faith and repentance. And that the tempter disturbs them not in their rest upon such a foundation, may be one reason why men so stiffly adhere to it, and that those of the

general principle are so seldom troubled with terrors of conscience.

Lastly. There was yet another reason of Christ's dying peculiarly for the elect. They were his designed spouse; and that brought upon him peculiar engagements to die for them.

(1.) As being his spouse, he was chargeable with their debts. They being made under a law, and he assuming them into a spousal relation, he made himself one with them, and answerable for them. It was in the law's account, as well as his own intent, a making himself their Surety (Isa. liii. 8, 11); and consequently, in case of forfeiture, his life must go for theirs. He is therefore said to be "made under the law" (Gal. iv. 4, 5) as they were; and to be "made sin for them" (2 Cor. v. 21); and being so, it behoved him to suffer (Lu. xxiv. 46); and that could not be avoided (Acts xvii. 3). For the law being just and holy, its violation must be answered for, either by principals or Surety. And here it was that mercy and truth, grace and justice, met together, making that due temperament which answers the ends of both. Grace takes hold of him as a Surety, that the sinner might go free; and justice, as of the most responsible party (for none else could answer the law's demands); and being apprehended, he readily yields to make satisfaction, and says to the law (as once to the Jews, when he was on the point of suffering for his spouse): "If ye seek me, let these go their way." (Jno. xviii. 8.)

(2.) Another engagement was the love he bore to them. If possibly he might have been quit of that suretyship engagement, this of his love would have held him to it. He could not bear to see his beloved fast chained, like slaves, to the devil's galleys, and forced to serve against her natural Lord. And this bondage they could not be freed from, but by conquering him whose bond-slaves they were; nor could that be done but by his own death. (Heb. ii. 14; Jno. xii. 31, 33.) And to this his love constrained him (Eph. v. 25; Rev. i. 5; Gal. ii. 20); for love (to be sure his love) is "stronger than death" (Song viii. 6); and accordingly we find that this is still made the ground and motive of his dying.

(3.) As the contract could not be dissolved (for "he hateth putting away"), nor his love taken off, for he changeth not; so neither, as the case stood, could he and they dwell happily together. Creatures defiled with sin were not meet consorts for the Lord of glory; nor could they be brought to a meetness but by being washed in his blood; as he says to Peter: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." (Jno. xiii. 8.) The church must be sanctified and cleansed, "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Eph. v. 26), before she is fit for the presence of Christ in glory. And this could not be effected, but by his giving himself for her. To this, therefore, the spirits of just men made perfect do ascribe their being in heaven: "And they sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed

us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." (Rev. v. 9.)

So dear is the church of Christ that he thinks not himself complete without them. (Eph. i. 23.) It was one of the last requests before he died, that they might be with him. (Jno. xvii. 24.) And if the body must be with its head, the holiest of holies must be their mansion. But such is that place's holiness as not to admit them without a perfect purity; nor could they, if not so purified, bear the holiness of the place. All which, considered together, shows such a reason of Christ's dying for the elect as was not predicable of other men.

For the rest of the world, they were given as handmaids to his spouse, by virtue of which donation they are also his: "He is head over all to the church." (Eph. i. 22.) They are his, but not as his spouse; as Sodom's daughters and Samaria's were to Jerusalem, "but not by her covenant." (Ez. xvi. 61.) His relation to them was not such as to make him responsible for their defaults, or to oblige him for their recovery. Howbeit the price wherewith he ransomed his spouse took in her handmaids also; as Abraham's rescuing his brother Lot brought back the Sodomites with him. All the benefits the world has by redemption they may thank the church for, next unto Christ himself; for they have it upon her account, as the Sodomites theirs upon Lot's. And, to speak freely, the spouse of Christ could not well have been without her handmaids. We little think what service the world does for the church; albeit, because they intend not so, they are not rewardable for it. (Isa. x. 5-12.) I shall only add our Saviour's own assertion in that xviiith of John, where, speaking of those his Father had given him that he might give them eternal life, he saith expressly that for their sakes he sanctified himself (ver. 9); which was to say, in effect, that had it not been for them, he had not stirred out of heaven.

From what hath been said of redemption as peculiar to the elect, I infer,

1. The important necessity of trying the spirits, and the doctrines they bring, whether they be of God. A plausible outside and fair show in the flesh are no argument of truth in the bottom. Takingness of nature should render things suspicious to us, rather than approved. Our best rule of judgment in this case is that of our Saviour: "The tree is known by its fruits." And if by this we measure the point of general redemption, it will be found wanting in what it pretends to be, and not a little reproveable. For,

(1.) Instead of magnifying the grace of Christ and merit of his sufferings, it does, in effect, nullify both. It makes redemption general as to persons, but not as to things. It redeems the whole of mankind from part of their bondage, but no part of them from the whole; or upon such a condition as no man in nature is able to perform; which is too defective to be the device of sovereign wisdom and grace. That cannot be called a catho-

licon or general remedy that suffers itself to be generally worsted by the disease; nor that a perfect redemption which leaves still under bondage. I doubt not at all that the blood of the Son of God in our nature is of infinite merit; but withal that it is of like infinite virtue and efficacy, and will for ever operate accordingly.

(2.) Instead of laying a foundation for faith and a help to believing, the general doctrine muzzles the soul in its unbelief, upon a presumption of power in himself to believe when he will. We little think how much presumption and carnal security derive from this root, whereas peculiar redemption in the vigour and latitude of it (viz., as procuring for us a right to faith and holiness, with the Spirit of Christ to work them effectually in us), is far greater encouragement to apply ourselves to Christ for them as a part of his purchase (Phil. i. 29), and that without which we cannot partake of the other benefits of his death. I cannot but think any man in his right mind (upon a due inquiry and thorough considering the matter) would rather depend upon such a redemption as redeems from all iniquity, though the persons concerned in that redemption be but few, than on that which is supposed to redeem all universally, upon condition of faith and repentance, but does not redeem from impenitence and unbelief. In that redemption let my part be that which saves from sin; that slays the enmity; that reconciles to God effectually; that makes an end of sin, and brings in everlasting righteousness; that does not only bring into a salvable state conditionally, but works also and maintains those conditions and qualifications that have salvation at the end of them.

2. If Christ gave himself a ransom for the elect, then is redemption also of grace, and free as election itself; which bespeaks both our thankful remembrance, and all self-denial. There is a great aptness to forget our original; to pay tribute where it is not due, and to withhold it where it is. It was needful counsel of old, and no less at this day: "Ye that follow after righteousness, look to the rock whence ye were hewn." (Isa. li. 1.) Your Redeemer first brought you out of nothing; and when you had sold yourselves for nought, he himself became your ransom, though he needed you not. See therefore that ye ascribe all to his love.

It was not any betterness of yours that gave you preference in redemption, nor was it your ingenuous compliance that made redemption effectual to you. Those are slight pretences. Had not your Redeemer bought you from yourself, released you from your imaginary freedom, and saved you from unbelief, you had never known what this redemption had meant, nor what it is to be free indeed. No; it was purely your Redeemer's love. He valued you as being his Father's gift, and as given to be one with himself; he therefore loved you and gave himself for you. When you were in your blood and no eye pitied you (no, not your own), then was the time of his love; even then he accepted the motion made by his Father and yours, and signed the contract. He knew both your weight and your worth; your natural unfitness

for him and averseness to the match. He also knew what it must cost him to make you both meet and willing; and that it was so stupendous a work that all the hosts of heaven would have broken under. He further knew that after all he should do and suffer for you, you could not advantage him the least; only he should have the satisfaction to have made you happy against your unrenewed will; and yet he declined it not. He came "leaping upon the mountains and skipping upon the hills" (of death and difficulties), as longing for, and delighting to be in that work. He was straitened until it was accomplished; such was the intenseness of his love to you! And a great deal ado he had with your wills, before you were brought to be willing.

3. Christ's giving himself a ransom for you warrants your largest expectation of good things from him. What sins too great to be pardoned? or iniquities so stubborn as not to be subdued (Heb. ix. 14)? or graces so precious as not to be obtained? The Lord delights in nothing more than mercy. The only bar was sin; which being dissolved by the blood of Christ, grace and glory run freely. The making us "kings and priests unto God," yea, one in the Father and himself (Jno. xvii. 21), being the thing he died for, no inferior good thing can be withholden from us. Faith and holiness are great things indeed, and highly to be valued; yet let me say that even these, and all other good things laid together, will be but a very little heap to that grace which put us into Christ; the honour and privilege of union with him; and the price he hath paid for our ransom. "Herein is love, that God sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins!" (1 Jno. iv. 10.) The purchase is paid, releases are sealed, and he in possession; all things are ready. It is now but his giving forth the revenue that lies by him; which also he delights to do.

ELISHA COLES.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE LORD'S DEALINGS WITH HENRY PARKER,

WHO DIED JULY, 1881, AGED 67.

I was brought up by a godly father, and was a child of many prayers, although they appeared to have no effect on me at that time. I was kept under my father's restraint until I was old enough to take a situation. There I fell in with bad companions, and continued in the same course until I married. Then after a while the thought struck my mind: "This is done only till death shall part us." Well, I thought, "What is to be done?" First, I found I should have to leave all my old acquaintances, if I made a comfortable home for my dear wife; and if it were not a home of comfort, it would be my fault. Therefore I broke off from evil company, and strove for a home. As I began to come to myself, I felt concerned about death; for I well knew that if I died in the state I was, I should be for ever lost.

These fears worked more and more on my mind; and I tried

to ask God to show me what was to be done. While I was in this place, in came Satan, and told me that I was such a sinner, and had been, that I should never find pardon. He brought all my badness to my view; and as he told me there would be no pardon for me, I believed it. I thought I would try the Lord; so I began to pray; and O how broken in heart I felt. The words I used were these: "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." I could ask for nothing else. There were three of us at the plough together. I kept a little behind; and when they were passing, I would look as if there were nothing amiss; and as soon as they were by, I was at it again: "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Satan said, "You see you get nothing by your crying. You had better go on in your old ways. You used to go to church; why not go still? It would fare better far with you than it is likely to do now." From what little judgment I had then I knew there was nothing in church for such a poor, condemned wretch as I felt myself to be. So Satan did not prevail here.

I went on deploring my sad condition till I had an impression to go to a chapel about three miles distant. The only way to it was through my master's yard; and the enemy attacked me again. He said, "You are going to take a wrong step. Your master will see you, and want to know where you are going. You won't like to tell him; and if you do, you will lose your place. Be content and go to church." No, I could not comply; and I went to chapel. I kept going to chapel, having nothing but hard lashes from the enemy, instead of losing any of my load; especially one Lord's day morning I entered the chapel with a broken heart, wishing there might be a word for me, and the minister gave out the hymn:

"The more I strove against its power,
I sinn'd and stumbled but the more," &c.

"O," I thought, "this is I." I could not say the next two lines; nor did I think they would ever belong to me. I returned home with a heavier load than when I went. O never shall I forget that day! What I should do I did not know. When I reached home, my eyes were swelled with sorrow. My wife asked what was the matter; but I said, "I cannot tell you." She had a hot dinner for me. I could not take any, and I said, "This is the last Sunday we will have cooking; for we will both go to chapel." From that time we went together. The mountain Satan had piled up against my going I never proved to be one; for my master did not trouble himself about where we went.

On Christmas-eve it was the custom for my master to give us all a supper. It passed off comfortably till supper was over; but I sat trembling at what was to come. It was this. The master said, "Now, I shall have no more beer drawn until I have a song." I knew it would fall to me to sing, as I had been a notorious song-singer. What to do I could not think; and with a great deal of persuasion, I sang a song through. O the

anguish it caused me to feel! The enemy had full power over me. "There, you have done a pretty thing for yourself now. You will not surely go to chapel any more; for you see after all you are nothing but a hypocrite. I thought I had better comply, and never go to chapel again; but the more I staid away, the worse I felt. This Scripture came to me: "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Deeply lamenting my sin, the Lord gave me courage to go again; and I told some of my friends what had taken place. I thought, from the tenderness they showed me, there was still mercy for me.

The Lord saw fit to take our first-born child at five weeks old. I had many trials about this time; and money was very short. The minister charged us his full fee for the burial, 10s. 6d.; though he always gave it to the church people. Here Satan told me, "You see what you get by leaving the church." I had many heavy trials about this time. I wanted coals; and asked my master for the loan of a horse to fetch them. I had cried to the Lord about it. To my surprise my master asked how many I was going to fetch. I told him a quarter of a ton. He said, "Why don't you bring a ton? I will lend you the money." As I was starting, my mistress came to the gate with two sovereigns in her hand. I was quite overcome by the Lord's goodness. I told her I did not want but one. How the Lord can relieve his poor, distressed people in their time of need! These things cheered me up a little still to hope and trust in him.

I went on more comfortably until the harvest-supper came round. This brought another trial. I was asked to sing. I replied, "I don't intend to sing any more songs; for I have learnt some new ones."

At last I became a member of the Congregational chapel; and I used to attend the prayer-meetings. In course of time I was called upon to pray. "O," I thought, "what shall I do now?" But the Lord gave me a few words to say. When the next prayer-meeting came, I thought I would get something ready to say, if I should be asked. So it turned out; but when I began, all my rotten props gave way. This led me to look to the Lord for his teaching; and I began to feel works and doings were not the Lord's way. O how I felt this,—to think I wanted, as it were, to be beforehand with the Lord. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

Being removed to another place, it became too far for me to attend at my former place of worship. I went to a Baptist chapel nearer; and I felt a desire to be baptized. The deacons warmly complied with my request. After this the enemy set in upon me, and assured me I should lose my master's favour. But again I proved he made a mountain I never had to climb.

I felt at home with the people until there was a change in the ministry. A minister came who wanted to bring in a fashionable religion that did not suit me. He introduced cards for

every member to send in his name when he was present at the Lord's supper. I would not have any cards; and I was sent for in consequence to speak to the minister. I complained to him that he told a poor sinner to come and believe, and then he would receive the Holy Ghost, and not before. This caused him to go to war with me; and he fought with one text and another. I answered him with this one: "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." And, "Not of works, lest any man should boast." "There," I said, "this is the substance of my religion; and this you do not preach." We both got warm; but I believe my sword cut the deepest. I said, "I suppose I shall not be admitted to sit down without a card?" He said, "You can sit down without one; but you will not be happy without one." After this I felt I would have no more to do with it; and I told them to cross my name off their church-book.

The following Sunday I went to a house where there was a prayer-meeting. I liked the service much; but as I went home, Satan said, "That man you have heard to-night is one of the elect. You know you don't like that doctrine; for they preach licentiousness." "Well," I said, "I will not go to church." As the Lord would have it, I went there to learn that doctrine for myself. While the dear old man was preaching, I thought, "If this is licentiousness, let me have plenty of it." I had heard election was a high doctrine; but I felt it to be a low one. It led me into those things which I had been long seeking. Here I proved Satan to tell a lie.

Being too far off to attend so often as I wished, I opened my house for a prayer-meeting, and paid half-a-crown for a licence; for I knew I was surrounded with enemies. I had reason to bless God for his presence in our midst. In number we were often 30 persons. We met together until I removed again; and I am now within reach of the appointed means. Here I feel, "This people shall be my people, and their God my God." I am happy with them; and I can feed on the kernel instead of the shell.

What a mercy that ever the Lord bore with me so long. May "the God of all grace," which has been a sweet word to me, keep me desiring to know more of my Master's will, and to grow more in the things belonging to salvation. Now I can say, and sing too, "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." The last time will soon come with me. This has been my path from 1840 to 1876. I can add with a heart-felt experience,

"'Twas grace that call'd our souls at first;
By grace thus far we're come;
And grace will help us through the worst,
And lead us safely home."

H. P.

THE goodness of God is the cord that must draw us to repentance; not the terrors of the law.—*Thos. Bisco.*

SHORT PAPERS ON THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT.

II.

IN our last paper we began to show that the communication of all grace is the pure work alone of the Holy Spirit; and it is that wherein, with the revelation of all truth, the ministry of the Spirit consists. We noticed separately the graces of life and light.

8. The grace of faith is communicated by the Spirit. It differs from letter-faith as much as a body with a soul differs from a body without a soul: "For as the body without the soul is dead, so faith without works is dead also." (Jas. ii. 26.) This is a true figure of a dead faith. It is full of words, but never performs. It says to a naked or destitute brother or sister, "Depart in peace; be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding we give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" (Jas. ii. 16.) The mere letter of faith in the mouth of a high doctrinal preacher only distresses a poor burdened soul that feels his nakedness, poverty, weakness, unbelief, coldness, and deadness, by continually crying out, "Be warm; be filled;" yet the poor soul comes away as cold and hungry as when he went. No child of God ever received anything of profit by this faith. It is merely like a body without a soul, having all the outward form of true faith. Nothing is lacking, except life.

First. It has eyes; for it sees all that is true reversed. (Isa. v. 20, 21.) It never saw God for itself.—"I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh" (Num. xxiv. 17); is the best sight it will ever have, either in this world or that which is to come. It never saw the way which leads to life, "the path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen." (Job xxviii. 7.) It never saw the beauty there is in a promise when applied to the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost: "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." (Prov. xxv. 11.) It never saw darkness become light before it, nor crooked things straight. It never saw God appear in a time of need, sending help out of the sanctuary, both in providence and grace. It never saw "the King in his beauty," nor "the land that is very far off." (Isa. xxxiii. 17.)

Secondly. It has ears, for it hears false teachers and false christs. But it never heard the voice of God saying, "Live," nor the sentence of condemnation spoken by divine authority in the conscience. It never heard the sound of the jubilee trumpet with its welcome news, nor the sweet voice of God the Spirit, crying, "Abba, Father." It does not know the voice of the Good Shepherd; therefore, never follows him.

Thirdly. It has hands, for it robs God of his glory, and steals his Word; and it may hold fast the form of godliness without the power. But it never handled the Word of life, nor laid hold on eternal life. It never holds fast the faithful Word, nor yet the Head; but has often let one go, and sold the other.

Fourthly. It has feet, for it walks after the flesh. But it never set a foot in the way which is called "the way of holiness," nor ever ran "in the way of God's commandments." It never put its foot on the neck of its enemies, and cried, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." (Mic. viii. 8.) It never followed the Son of man "in the regeneration," nor "through evil and good report." It never went forth "in the dances of them that make merry," nor sank "in deep waters where there is no standing."

Fifthly. It has a mouth; for it is always prating of its joys and making great professions, which never show themselves by actions. It never tasted that the Lord is gracious, nor found the Word and ate it. It never opened its mouth in prayer, in mourning, in confession, in singing, and in communion with God. It was never filled with laughter at seeing the delivering hand of God made bare in its behalf.

Being merely a body without a soul, natural faith never breathes, pants, hungers, nor thirsts after God. It is a form of faith, *dead* to spiritual things, and therefore destitute of all the exercises which are peculiar to the faith of God's elect.

The grace of faith is a living, active principle in the hearts of the children of God. Christ is its Author (Heb. xii. 2.); a Triune Jehovah its Object (1 Jno. v. 7); and the salvation of the soul its end. (1 Pet. i. 9.) By faith the child of God believes that "God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. xi. 6.) Faith believes in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Saviour; and love, mingling with faith, pants, longs, hopes, and cries after the living God, and enables the soul to feel willing to leave and give up every earthly comfort, rather than die without a knowledge of God.

The faith of God's elect is animated by a living soul. Hence it possesses,

First. A seeing eye, and sees the lost condition the soul is in, and cries for mercy. And as soon as the poor sinner has nought to pay, faith sees mercy flowing through Jesus' wounds, and flees to the Fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. And when admitted to the flowing stream, it sees all the guilt and filth of the soul taken way, and sings,

"The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there have I, as vile as he,
Wash'd all my sins away."

Faith sees the nakedness of the soul, and is led by the Spirit to see the righteousness of Christ, and to hunger and thirst after it. When righteousness is obtained, the soul by faith sees it is made "meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light." Robed in this garment, the sinner sees all his spots and wrinkles are gone, and sees that he is "perfect in the Beloved." "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." Let this

be seen by faith, and unutterable joy will spring up in the heart.

By faith the soul sees "him who is invisible," and leaves the world, sin, pleasures, riches, pomp, vanities, father, mother, sister, brother, husband, wife, child, houses, or lands; and denies himself, takes up his cross, and follows the Lord Jesus Christ through evil and good report; "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." (Heb. xi. 25, 26.)

Faith sees the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, that dwell within, and mourns on account of them, and prays to be led into the garden of Gethsemane to see the agony of Jesus, and sympathize with a suffering Saviour, knowing that the foot of the cross is the place where lust and pride dare not show their heads.

"Thy garden is the place
Where pride cannot intrude;
For should it dare to enter there,
'Twould soon be drown'd in blood."

Sometimes every door in providence seems closed against the child of God; and in a short time (to his apprehension) the enemies of God will rejoice, and shame will cover his face. But God makes bare his holy arm, and defends him from all his foes; opens a way for him, which makes his heart leap for joy at the manifestation of God's mercies.

Sometimes faith is indulged to see what God has laid up in store for the soul. This sight draws his attention away from every earthly object; for vanity of vanities is seen stamped upon all earthly things. When the believer sees his inheritance he envies not a monarch of the crown, nor the great men of the earth their wealth; but he chooses his own lot, murmurs not against God, but submits to his will and is reconciled to his hand in all things. He sees the meaning of the apostle's words: "Be ye reconciled to God." (2 Cor. v. 20.)

Secondly. Faith has an open ear, and hears the truth of God, and is persuaded of it. When the condemning sentence of the law is heard in the soul, faith will receive no comfort until it hears the still small voice of the Son of God speaking peace. But when the sweet voice of the Spirit is heard, faith sets the heart all in a flame; every grace buds forth,—prayer becomes a pleasure, worship pleasant, precepts easy, burdens light, and reproaches for Christ's sake an honour.

Faith knows the joyful sound, and can distinguish between truth in the letter, and truth in the power of the Spirit. The one comes "in word only," but the other comes "in power" also: "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." (1 Thess. i. 5.) Faith knows the voice of the Good Shepherd, and can distinguish betwixt the Shepherd's voice and that of a hireling. A soul in possession of this faith flees from a hireling, and will not follow

a stranger: "And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers." (Jno. x. 15.) But it will cleave to the Shepherd; and when he speaks, how sweet is his voice to the ear of a poor, burdened, dejected sinner, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. xi. 28.) O how sweet to follow Jesus when we can hear his voice bidding us come!

"If Jesus kindly say,
And with a whispering word,
'Arise, my love, and come away,'
I run to meet my Lord."

Thirdly. Faith has a hand, by which the soul lays hold on eternal life, and escapes eternal death. Such is the hold the believer sometimes gets of the Saviour that, notwithstanding the guilt of the conscience, the frowns of God, and the temptations of the devil, he cannot be shaken off; but he feels determined, if he is to perish, to perish at the feet of Jesus suing for mercy. When the Spirit brings a promise to faith, it lays hold of it, and is enabled to plead it before God in time of trial and desertion. When the soul is cast down on account of the coldness, indifference, worldly-mindedness, and love of sin, which he finds dwell within, the Spirit enables him by faith to lay hold on a crucified Saviour, and sweetly draw life and power from the cross of Christ, which causes him to mourn and loathe himself before God. When love and grief spring up in the soul, faith lays hold on self, and crucifies it; sin is hated, and the soul becomes dead to the world.

When a storm arises and the heavens grow dark with clouds, the Sun of righteousness is not seen, neither moon nor stars make their appearance, but a dark dispensation hangs over the soul, the hand of God appears withdrawn, devils roar, men rage, rebellion rises high, the winds gather from all quarters, and the very things which the soul feared are come to pass; at such times faith is led by the Spirit to lay hold on the hope set before it, and say, "Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope." (Ps. cxix. 49.) And again: "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?" (Ps. xiii. 1.) The soul holds on by faith until the Lord appears; and it is kept off the rocks, shelves, and quicksands that lie in the way by the unerring wisdom of the Pilot, who sits at the helm, guiding it safely along, and not suffering it to be dashed to pieces by the rough winds. And by-and-by the storm blows over: "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them to their desired haven." (Ps. cvii. 29, 30.)

Fourthly. Faith has a living, moving foot, which walks in obedience to the truth. This is a peculiar feature of true faith. "Devils believe and tremble;" but they never obey the truth. Letter faith never obeys God. See the obedience of faith in Abra-

ham: "By faith Abraham when he was called to go out unto a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and went out, not knowing whither he went." (Heb. xi. 3.) Thus God calls,—faith obeys; and leaves the world, the ways of sin, and the pleasures of life, to find a heavenly country. By faith the child of God obeys the gospel in every branch of it. Without the obedience of faith God is not pleased. (Heb. xi. 6.)

By faith the soul moves from the City of Destruction towards the New Jerusalem, and treads in that way which is hid from the natural eyes of all living. By faith the soul walks through this wilderness, guided by the Holy Spirit, and kept from being destroyed by the many snares and dangers which lie in the way. By faith the believer walks in the "footsteps of the flock," in all the ways and ordinances of God.

To walk in the preceptive part of God's will is to feel the power of the Spirit moving the soul in sweet obedience to the commands of the gospel; as David says, "I will run the way of thy commandments when thou shalt enlarge my heart." (Ps. cxix. 32.) To walk in love is to feel love moving the soul's affections, and opening the heart to receive God, his people, his Word, his ways; and feelingly to rejoice and delight in them. To walk by faith with God is to feel the carnal mind subdued, fleshly reasonings struck dumb, pride laid low, unbelief shamed out of countenance; to have no confidence in the flesh, but to rely on the oath and promises of the Lord. It is to have no will of our own, but to submit to the will of God, knowing that all his ways and works are done in infinite wisdom. In a word, it is to be perfectly of the same mind with the Lord, to hate what he hates and love what he loves; to be reconciled to him in all things; for "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos iii. 3.) To walk in the truth is to feel the love of the truth in the heart, and to embrace it with all the affections of the soul. When the power of the Spirit attends the Word, it is sure to open the heart and draw out the affections of the soul after the truth; and faith will bow in obedience to it. All real walking depends upon the power of the Spirit.

Many appear to run well for a time, and outstrip a child of God, leaving him far in the rear; while it causes him many groans and tears to think he gets on no faster. The Word of the Lord declares, "He that believeth shall not make haste." Let the child of God watch these light-heeled professors, and he will find they do not run in the way of God's commandments with their hearts, but with their judgments only. If the believer were to run in judgment only, he would soon outstrip them; for his judgment is often far in advance of his soul, and he very seldom overtakes it; but his judgment is often brought back to the present experience of the soul. The heart advances as faith is drawn out by the Holy Spirit; and no faster. The language of the church is, "Draw me; we will run after thee." As God draws, the soul by faith runs after God, through snares, allure-

ments, disappointments, and buffetings from Satan; and escapes Satan, the world, and false guides; and arrives safely at last in everlasting bliss.

Fifthly. Faith has a mouth; and drinks the water of life, and eats the Bread of God. But when bread cannot be had, and the water is cut off, both appearing to fail, then unsavoury things become the sorrowful meat of the soul; and sometimes there is no getting at any salt, which makes the soul choose strangling rather than life. When a child of God has plenty of food, it is sure to make him quiet. "Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass? or loweth the ox over his fodder?" (Job vi. 5.) It is the work of the Spirit to quicken the appetite of the soul; then what with a keen appetite and "a mighty famine in the land," the poor sinner feels ready to perish. This state of feeling makes him an excellent beggar; and like the prodigal son he feels determined to go and confess his sins, and beg a little bread to satisfy his famishing soul. Also like the woman in the gospel, he must have it, if it is but the dog's share. There is no danger of the poor sinner taking offence at the rebuffs he may meet with. His hungry soul is a sufficient defence against that; for he is determined not to be offended, let the Lord call him what he will. If he say, "Thou art a dog," the soul will reply, "Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." (Matt. xv. 27.) A soul like this is sure to obtain, because he cannot be put off; and as Jesus said to the woman, so he says to every hungry soul: "Great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt." The Lord prepares a feast of fat things for his hungry people; and when they eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ, they find it to be strength to their hearts and life to their souls.

But they have to go in the strength of this meat many days, through many rough paths, trying scenes, sore conflicts with Satan, world, self, and sin. After a long fast with hard fighting the Lord appears again, and says, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." How sweet are the words of God's mouth to the mouth of faith! When the Word of God is found, faith eats it; and it is the "joy and rejoicing of the heart." When the soul feels fainting under the pressure of a vehement thirst after God, his living truth, and his righteousness, and goes to seek water to quench his thirst, but finds none, how sweet to find this promise fulfilled: "I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry ground springs of water." (Isa. xli. 18.) Here the soul by faith drinks of the river of life, and "forgets his poverty, and remembers his misery no more."

Faith, then, is a living principle, by which the soul lives, runs, fights, prays, and watches. By it many millions of sinners have obtained a good report from the God of heaven; though they have been esteemed by men as "the filth of the world and off-scouring of all things." (Heb. xi.; 1 Cor. iv. 9-13.)

BROKEN CISTERNS.

My cisterns are broken, yes, broken for ever;
 No water of life can such vessels contain;
 But O! May my thirsty soul drink at the river,
 The river of life, which will ever remain!
 My heart pants for thee,
 And the land of the free,
 In this dreary wilderness where I abide.
 Fain would I aspire,
 With ardent desire,
 And flee for a refuge to thy loving side.
 Yes, e'er in the midst of my sore tribulation,
 My spirit rejoiceth in Jesus, my King;
 And feeling the sweets of his rich consolation,
 A poor wounded spirit its tribute would bring.
 An anthem of praise
 I would thankfully raise
 To him who upheld me in furnace and flame;
 I would lift up my voice,
 And in Jesus rejoice,
 Who in chastening taught me to trust in his Name.
 O! Weary I feel of the wilderness wanderings;
 But soon my free spirit shall enter its rest.
 Even now when my heart on his mercy is pondering,
 I feel a sweet foretaste of joy with the blest.
 But can it be real,
 This hope that I feel?
 O! Shall I for ever be free from all sin?
 Shall I really be there,
 His glory to share?
 And never more battle with Satan and sin?
 Yes; surely I feel that the earnest of heaven
 Is in my poor heart, though so prostrate with grief.
 Ah! Do I not feel that my sins are forgiven,
 That Jesus is ready to give me relief?
 Yes, bless his dear Name,
 He is ever the same,
 Though all things around me are fleeting and frail.
 I know I shall stand
 At his blessed right hand,
 And through his rich mercy shall surely prevail.

Lutterworth.

C. SPIRE.

THE law of Moses was never intended for a bridle, or guard of restraint, to believers in these days of grace. Saints are now restrained and kept in from sin, not by slavish terrors and threats, but by the glorious love of God shed abroad in their hearts and mercy manifested. They are drawn out of sin by the golden cords of love, and kept from sin by a strong guard of love and peace.—*T. Bisco.*

ROMANISM.

A LIE engendered by the prince of darkness, and formed into one vast system of the most deadly hatred to the truth, has been the progenitor of Romanism; whence has sprung the pope and all his offspring. There is a power in the father of lies beyond that of the pope himself, in which the whole system is carried on. On the other hand, there is an invincible, opposing power in HIM who is the Truth itself, by which real Christianity is founded and maintained. It is not the Christians who give being to Christianity; but from its source they receive their being. So also the pope, priests, and all their fraternity owe their being to the power of a lie. (Rev. xiii. 2.)

This systemized falsehood never deviates from its course as a lie in opposition to truth. Accordingly, it has swept along the surface of the earth like a mighty torrent, carrying before it everything that is honourable to man possessing a reasonable soul, and leaving behind it the marks of its own destructive nature to all that is true. It breaks every bond of society, and destroys the ties of relationship and ordinances of man ordained of God. And having risen into a gigantic system of tyranny, it enforces its own spirit of falsehood throughout society, by means of false dogmas and secret actions.

The character of Romanism, its origin, nature, course, and ultimate aim, was before revealed in Scripture as that of a great lie. Therefore, an *appearance* is presented before the eyes of many millions of all the sanctity of truth and holiness, in order that men may be deceived. A lie is always made to deceive; it must appear to be something it is not. The power and success of this great deception is fully borne out by the Word of God, where the coming of "that Wicked" is declared to be "after the working of Satan *with all power and signs and lying wonders and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness* in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall *send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*" (2 Thess. ii. 9-12.)

Our object in placing these few remarks before our readers is to warn them against the subtle craft of Romanism, and to awaken them to a real sense of the danger that is being plotted against our privileges. Does the foe speak fair words? Remember, a lie cannot change. What it has done it will do again. An example of this has lately been brought to our notice in a little book called "The Escaped Nun." In it is a fresh display of Rome's spirit of deception, the true spirit of all her words and deeds. We have taken from it the following statement, as one instance out of many others which are continually coming to light from time to time:

"Dear Madam,—When I attended your first lecture in Platt's

Hall, as a Roman Catholic, I was so prejudiced against you that I thought there was nothing bad enough could be done to get you out of the way. I am an honest man; and when I had heard your lecture, I had to acknowledge that every word you said about the power of the priests over us, and their extortion from us, was perfectly true. Whatever you suffered in the convent I knew nothing; but I felt the force of the truth of all that you said. My sympathies were with you so much that I attended every one of your lectures. When I came away last night from your fourth lecture, my conscience as a Roman Catholic was filled with remorse. You know I had committed a grievous sin by endangering my faith in attending your lectures; and my faith was so much in danger that I was all in doubt in regard to it, and all in sympathy with you. Whenever I experienced any unusual remorse of conscience I was in the habit of confessing to the Jesuits. The Jesuit College was on my way home from the hall. I went into the college with the intention of making my confession. While I was sitting in the corridor waiting for one of the Fathers to hear my confession, I overheard through the door of the reception-room (which was slightly ajar), near which I was sitting, and from the lips of those whom I thought were holy men, a conspiracy or plot against you. Your lectures are doing the Church so great an injury they are going to get you abducted, or bribe men to perjure their souls to defame your character. I cannot write you any more, but I write you this and warn you to be on your guard. You may be sure I did not go to confession. It is my last confession, thank God!

“Yours faithfully,

“San Francisco, June 23, 1872.”

“THOMAS MEAGHER.

Popery is an aggressive power. It must either be resisted, or we must yield to all it requires, wherever it gains the ascendancy. This character was foretold of it expressly (Rev. xiii. 15, 16, 17): “And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” Every person who enters the Roman Catholic communion is bound by the authorized creed of Pope Pius IV. to carry out the spirit of this prophecy; and must, if he had power, carry it out to the letter. For by this creed he is required to swear true obedience to the pope as the vicar of Jesus Christ, and to all the canons held to be sacred by the church and general councils, especially by the Council of Trent; and likewise to enforce that all who are under his authority shall profess and teach the same. Now in the Roman decrees it is plainly declared that all heretics are to be brought to salvation *by force*. This is the faith which every Catholic is held under an oath to maintain. Therefore no per-

son can be an honest Roman Catholic unless he exerts all his power to rule over the consciences of others, either to their submission or death. So to this day Popery proves itself to be, to the extent of its power, what has been well proved in days not long past:

“The lie that made our sires bleed.”

The cause of Romanism is one that increasingly affects us;* and the danger is by no means past to England. The pope has not yet received his final overthrow, which is promised in Scripture; and who knows to what a height his spiritual power *may* rise immediately before his notable fall? The fact of his growing power in this country is undeniable. We learn from the Papal statistics given in the little tract before mentioned, “The Escaped Nun,” that the number of priests in Great Britain has risen since 1870 from 1,727 to 2,353; and the number of monasteries, in the same time, from 69 has reached 165. Also we take from it the following extract:

“The influence of popery in the Legislature may be surmised when we learn that there are 29 members of the House of Lords and 56 members of the House of Commons Roman Catholics; and that their undivided allegiance must be given to the pope against England.”

Shall we silently watch the increasing strength of an inveterate foe? Some knowledge of Rome’s true character must have solid weight in the minds of persons who are at this time exposed to the influence of her many secret friends.

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE.

My dear Friend,—Before I left my bedroom this morning my thoughts were led back to the time when I used to hear you at Smallfields, I think over 28 years ago; and I remembered the solemn feelings under which I used to walk the lonely road there. How I envied the beasts, and everything that had no soul to appear before a holy God. Before this I used to go to hear you with my dear departed mother, who was then in great concern about her soul, and was much attached to your ministry; but I had no real concern for my own soul. I used to notice remarks you made upon persons *feeling* themselves sinners; but I could not understand it, as I had never felt myself to be under the feelings you described.

But on hearing you one Sunday I came away from the chapel with an arrow in my soul, which I would have extracted, but could not. I wished, for a time, I had not gone to hear you, and I thought then I should not have felt as I did. I have no doubt you well recollect the time when my dear mother sent and

* We would refer our readers to the late Mr. Philpot’s “Advance of Popery,” published by J. Gadsby, price 1s. 6d.; and to Dr. Wylie’s “History of Protestantism,” three large volumes of well-written, easy reading, invaluable to a Protestant country.

asked you to visit me, which you kindly did. I then felt myself to be a *lost sinner*. What a solemn sight I had at that time of the separation between the righteous and the wicked. I felt cut down for my presumption in mixing with the people of God, and joining in the singing, &c.; though I had never made a profession of knowing the truth. But though I felt such a condemned sinner and not fit to mix with the people of God, I could not keep from going to hear; and I believe the real language of my heart was, "Give me Christ, or else I die." Yet I often feared it was only the fear of hell that moved me to seek the salvation of my soul; and how I have been distressed at the thought of being left to blaspheme his holy and blessed Name, if sent there. I believe I then saw the world in its true colours, as good Bunyan describes it, "The city of destruction;" and my cry was, "Life, life, eternal life!"

I used to read and hear about the children of God passing under a law-work; how I feared I knew nothing of that. How I used to tell the Lord in my simplicity to let me pass through any amount of trouble, so that I might have the right teaching. I was encouraged in hearing you preach from these words: "And we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." You said God's people were brought to judgment here. But the hardness and impenitence of my heart tried me the most. I thought if I were a child of God, I should be able to repent. How I proved the truth of Hart's words:

"Law and terrors do but harden
All the while they work alone."

And as I felt more and more of my destitution and poverty of spirit, I sank lower and lower. I had occasional gleams of light and hope, which drew my soul upwards, and humbled my heart; but they were so transitory. And as Mr. Newton says of a flash of lightning in a dark night, "It left me darker than before." Thus I went on with many ups and downs, sometimes so burdened with trouble I could not attend to my duties; at other times fearing I had lost my trouble, and it was gone off the wrong way; as the hymn says,

"Uneasy when I feel my load,
Uneasy when I feel it not."

But one never-to-be-forgotten day, when I felt so low in my mind as if I must sink for ever, I went into my bedroom, a *sacred spot to me*, when unexpectedly the crucified Man, Christ Jesus, was presented to the eye of my faith as suffering for me; and the scales fell from my eyes. I now saw it was not *my* repentance that was to save my poor soul, but the sufferings, blood, and righteousness of my crucified Redeemer. O what a sin-killing sight! I never saw sin in such a light before. I dropped on my knees; but I felt it was to praise instead of pray. And while on my knees I had by faith a blessed sight of the covenant of grace, and the Three divine Persons in the blessed Trinity, engaged to save my soul. I seemed to have heaven in my

soul. Truly "old things" were passed away, and all things became "new;" for I seemed as if I were in a new world.

And though I have passed through many painful years of darkness, this blessed season has never been obliterated from my memory. I have not then been able to receive any comfort from it, the enemy of souls being permitted to spread his hand upon all my "pleasant things." But I have had to bless and praise the dear Name of the Lord for leading me in those trying, distressing paths; for when the true Light shone again in my poor soul, he endeared himself to my heart more than ever. For he caused me to return to the days of my youth, and opened a door of hope in the valley of Achor, and caused me to sing there, as in the days when he brought me up out of the land of Egypt.

I feel I owe you a debt of gratitude for your labour of love and care for my soul when under your ministry. I have thought of you in your affliction, and was pleased to read in the "Gospel Standard" that it had been sanctified to you. I should be pleased to hear from you that you are better in health. May the Lord still bless your labours. I fear it is a day of small things in the quickening of souls under the ministry of the Word. How few seem to be crying out, "What must I do to be saved?" I think the true ministers of God must feel tried about it. It seems a dark day in which we live, a day of great profession; but the life and power of real, vital godliness seem at a very low ebb. What a mercy to have a grain of saving religion!

I remain, dear friend, Yours in the Bonds of the Gospel,

Rotherfield, March 28th, 1862.

J. E. RUSSELL.

FELLOW-SUFFERERS WITH CHRIST.

My dear Christian Friend,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied to you by and through the Lord the Lamb.

I was glad to hear by the mouth of your beloved husband of your welfare. . . . How many times in my life, especially of late, have I been astonished and confounded at the kindness and compassion of so holy, pure, and righteous a God to so vile a wretch as I daily feel myself to be, who justly deserves to be spurned from his presence, and consigned to that dread abode where hope and mercy can never reach. I have often said and say again that there are thousands in the pit that have never played the fool half so much as myself, both before my call by grace, and since. O, how sovereign, rich, and free,—to be favoured with, I trust, a "good hope through grace!" "I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion;" and what are we to say to these things but, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Thanks be unto God for a throne of grace, for a Mediator between God and us, "the man, Christ Jesus."

My poor mind at times is favoured to run out in sweet meditation thus;—viewing his dear Person as he was in the days of his flesh on earth; according to the Scripture, "He was despised

and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" and all this as a pattern for his suffering members, who in all ages are called to have fellowship with him in his sufferings. "For unto you it is given, on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." And many such passages of divine inspiration, both in the Old and New Testaments, go to prove that if we are members of his mystical body, we are called to suffer affliction with our once suffering, but now exalted, Head.

"The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown."

"Most qualified they are in heaven to dwell
Who see themselves most qualified for hell."

Jesus Christ, touching his manhood, was a man of Bible experience. All his suffering saints before his incarnation were the same. How many, many times in various parts of the Prophets, and especially the Psalms, by the Spirit of prophecy, are the sufferings of Christ as plainly set forth as if the writers had been eye and ear witnesses of the future events carried out in the sufferings of the Son of God. All, all the New Testament saints down to the present age are made to be experimentally acquainted with a Bible experience. And many a time it has gladdened my heart when I have felt to be one with them in Spirit, and felt the communion of saints, and in my measure of faith been enabled to say with the apostle, "But we have the mind of Christ." You know, my dear friend, if two are agreed, they can walk together, but not without; there would be sure to be a jar.

May the God of all grace, so far as is consistent with his mind and will, bless these poor, rambling lines, and pardon all the imperfections; and he shall have the praise. Wishing you both every new covenant blessing, in which is the "promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come,"

We remain, Yours in the best of Bonds,

A. P. Asylum, Hornsey Rise, Oct. 17th, 1873. W. AND S. ASKER.

HE (Christ) tasted and drank of the cup before us that we, being sick and weak, might the rather drink and taste of it after him; forasmuch as no evil mishappened unto him thereof; but immediately he rose up again from death. O! If the knowledge and remembrance of this might remain in our hearts upright and shine continually before us! Then should we never sink nor faint, nor yet despair of the mercy and goodness of God, although we should labour in never so dangerous and grievous a battle; and though we ourselves should taste and feel the due punishments that our sins have deserved. Then we should be able to stand stiffly against the gates of hell. And even this is the highest and most special comfort that ever was heard or read of from the beginning of the world. He is only alone sufficient to plant and graft such a mind in us that we shall not only not sorrow nor be heavy, but also triumph and rejoice in and of our misery and affliction; as Paul: "If God spared not his own Son, but freely gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?"—O. *Wermullerus*.

INQUIRIES AND ANSWERS.

I.

Dear Sir,—If you will kindly spare time and space in the "Gospel Standard" to answer the following inquiry, I shall esteem it a favour. Will you give your thoughts on 1 Cor. xv. 24–28, especially verses 27 and 28? I have read explanations which appear to me to be far from correct. It cannot surely mean, as some represent, that Christ will *then* have ceased to be "all in all."

A CONSTANT READER.

ANSWER.

Immutability belongs only to God. Hence it is impossible that an immutable being should be a created one, or that a creature should be in its own peculiar constitution immutable. The creature, whether angels or men, must necessarily be in its first creation liable at any time to change; and this sad change took place as soon as God subjected the creature, either angels or men, to trial.

But God had far more exalted designs in creating man than merely to form a creature. He had designed to produce from this creature, by regeneration or a new birth, inconceivably glorious beings, who should reflect his eternal praise for ever and ever. He therefore exalted this human form, in Christ Jesus, far beyond the grasp of our present minds to conceive; and he will also in the end people heaven with the vast multitudes he has redeemed for himself; that they should show forth his praise eternally, without liability of mutation. To effect this gracious purpose the eternal Three entered with an everlasting covenant, wherein the Son of God engaged to become incarnate; and on his incarnation he became "Immanuel, God with us." Yet the two natures remain distinct; for humanity can never be changed to Deity, nor can Deity ever be changed to humanity. Moreover, both natures have their glory. It is in the union of these two natures in the Person of the Son of God that he becomes God-man, the great Mediator between God and man; and in him the church is secured and rendered like himself, safe from finally falling.

As Mediator, being both God and man, a mediatorial life was given him by the Father: "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." (Jno. v. 26, 27.) He is also a mediatorial King set up (Ps. ii. 6); and has a kingdom appointed unto him (Lu. xxii. 29). He therefore holds his kingly sceptre by those human hands which were pierced with nails; and as the rightful Sovereign of heaven, earth, and hell, he rules thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, according to his own will. As Lord of the whole earth, he sets up one and pulls down another of its monarchs and rulers according as he sees fit.

This is the mediatorial King, to whom a kingdom has been given of the Father, who is referred to in the portion of the Word

you name. The Holy Spirit, by Paul, introduces this sublime subject by calling attention to the death in Adam: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. xv. 22.) He does not here speak of the death of the soul in sin, and the quickening operations of the spirit in regeneration, which is so frequently understood by it); but the death of the body, and its resurrection by the Lord Jesus. All, with a few exceptions (1 Cor. xv. 51), die through Adam; and the resurrection of the body, both of the just and the unjust, is accomplished by Christ; some being raised "to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." (Dan. xii. 2.) It may easily be perceived by a little attention that death and resurrection are the points brought under notice here: "For since by *man* came death, by *man* also came the resurrection of the dead." (Ver. 21.) "But every man in his own order; Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (ver. 23); that is, "the dead in Christ shall rise first" at the general resurrection; and after them, the wicked: "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." (Jno. v. 28, 29.)

Ver. 24.—"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father." The "end" here spoken of is the end of all things that God designed to accomplish *in time* with regard to the salvation of the church, the glorification of his Name, and his people's eternal safety. Then it is that the Son as Mediator will give up his mediatorial "kingdom to God, even the Father." But as one of the divine Persons in the Trinity, he does not give up anything; for as God, he is equal with the Father and the Spirit. What he then gives up is all the authority that has been given him connected with his mediatorial kingdom, as shown in the passage before cited: "And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man;" and others.

But before he resigns this authority, he will first "put down all rule and all authority and power." (Ver. 24.) Yes, he will put down and place in subjection all rule, authority, and power, which has been usurped by Satan, under the dominion of the mediatorial King of heaven; together with that which was given him by God. So it is written of the seed of the woman, that is, Christ: "It shall bruise thy head" (Gen. iii. 15); and his victory is to be extended to all his mystical members: "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." (Rom. xvi. 20.) Moreover, he will put down all idolatry, and sink it into everlasting oblivion before the presence of the majesty of the Lord. Antichrist will share the same destruction: "Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs

and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." (2 Thess. ii. 8-10.)

Everything that is not of Christ will fall under this general destruction. It is not the mere name of Christ that will preserve anything from the universal doom awaiting error and erroneous men. Thousands believe in a *Christ*, but not the Christ of God. The faith of such persons will avail them nothing. There is an identity in the Christ of God with the object of the faith of God's elect. But the faith of multitudes differs according to the difference of the Christ believed. There are many Christs in the world; but as there is only one right one, we ask, "Whose Christ is the right Christ?" "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." (Matt. xxiv. 4, 5.) The Christ of God is he who could say, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." (Jno. xvii. 2.) The Christ that has not "power over all flesh" is not the Christ of God. If any man can resist him, or prevent him in any way, he has not power over all flesh; but the Scripture says he has. This power is given him that he should give eternal life to as many as God has given him. There can be, therefore, no contingencies in or about the Christ of God. Then every Christ that cannot effect his purposes without the help of man, is not the Christ of God, and must be put down.

Infidelity, another power, is now rising from hell, and is making its appearance in a shameless manner. It is coming on with rapid strides, driving before it all that is unable to stand the shock of its onward course; and on it will come till it has run its race. Yet it comes on only to be destroyed in the end; for its doom is fixed, and the end determined upon. God has foretold the days, and described the features of this coming blasphemer: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts." (2 Pet. iii. 8.) It makes light of sin, and openly makes a mock at real religion. It jeers at those who dare to make any outward show of godliness, and treats with scorn and derision the Name of Christ. These things are now passing on before our eyes; but we have this consolation, to believe that its days will be few, and that it is one of those powers that Jesus will shortly subdue.

Ver. 25.—"For he must reign, till he hath put all things under his feet." Jesus reigns, and will reign, over all his foes, and conquer them in the end. Amidst all the confusion in the world, divisions and dissension among professors, and the abundant errors which are being propagated by nominal Christians, still, Jesus reigns.

Ver. 26.—When all these enemies have been put down, death, the last enemy, will be destroyed. All other enemies must first be subdued, before death is laid low. Then life and immortality will sweetly triumph in eternity.

Ver. 27.—For these purposes God has put all things under his feet; so that every enemy that rises up is subjected to the will and power of the Lord Jesus. Nothing comes by chance; nor does anything happen that was not afore-determined to be done. Every minute circumstance in the world and attending individuals is under the control of the mediatorial King.

“But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.” (Ver. 27.) That is, God the Father, who subjected all things under the Mediator, did not in that general subjugation, wherein he left nothing that was not put under him, become himself subject. Neither the Father, nor the Spirit is included in the things put under Christ.

Ver. 28.—“And when all things shall be subdued unto him,”—when the actual subjugation has been accomplished, and death has been destroyed, “then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him.” The subjection of the Son evidently refers here to the laying down of his mediatorial character and work in those things which were given him to carry out, for the accomplishment of the will of God *on earth*. He is a King *set up*; and all power in heaven and earth is *given* to him. He is God’s *servant*: “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” (Jno. vi. 38.) When, then, this will is completed, the Mediator will lay down all the *given* authority, power, and dominion; and in this respect, having yielded up his kingdom “to God, even the Father,” from whom he received it, he will become subject to God,—not to God the Father *personally*, but to God *essentially*, Father, Son, and Spirit. Because everything originated from God *essentially*, and to God it must return. It is the dispensatory kingdom Christ yields up; and in this becomes subject to God; that God, Father, Son, and Spirit, may be an immediate source of fulness to the saints. It will not then be teaching the knowledge of God as it is revealed in the Word, by the Spirit, and leading the soul by faith to Jesus, as in the present dispensation; for that will be laid aside, and God will be “all in all.” “When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” “For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face. Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” (1 Cor. xiii. 10, 12.)

But Jesus will never cease to be the glorious God-man. He will still be “the King of glory;” and will retain his priesthood for ever. He will also be the Prophet; and his teaching will be a divine opening up of the glories of the everlasting covenant. From the Triune Jehovah the Spring-head of Deity, the Father’s love to the church through the God-man will gush out directly from himself. The eternal Son will be viewed as one with the Father, revealing the unutterable and inconceivable glory of his whole work in time and eternity. The Spirit will be discovered in his gracious and divine influences.

Thus, then, the subjection of the Son to God, in resigning all time offices, is that God essentially may flow through the Mediator directly to the saints. So that God the Father will be "all in all;" God the Son will be "all in all;" and God the Spirit will be "all in all;" Three Persons in the One undivided Godhead.

II.

Dear Mr. Editor,—When a church after due consideration has decided upon the use of a harmonium or organ to assist in the singing, and a minister, being invited to supply, finds such an instrument in the chapel, has he any kind of right to interfere with a deacon in the matter, even if it does not accord with his own views and opinions?

Again, is it kind, wise, courteous, justifiable, and in accordance with the loving and affectionate spirit of the gospel for a minister to stand up in a pulpit and sour the minds and wound the tender feelings of the people, who out of love invited him to preach the Word of life to them, by denouncing and condemning the use of such instruments, and that perhaps in a language and tone somewhat censorious and dogmatical? Where difference of views and opinion exists upon matters of minor importance, does not gospel charity demand that we should bear and forbear, and kindly agree to differ?

As this is really an important matter touching the peace and quietude of many churches, in these days of contention and strife, ought not ministers of Christ to give the subject prayerful, kindest, and most affectionate consideration?

Yours in Christ Jesus,

A LOVER OF ZION'S PEACE.

ANSWER.

Being passionately fond of music ourselves, and the sound of an organ almost at any time being enough to bring us to a stand, we assure our querist that we shall not utter one word prejudicial to his musical ears; but we are bound to condemn the spirit manifested in the tone of the query. It furnishes a striking example of the partial way in which queries are frequently put. A harmonium is established in a place of worship, supplied by various ministers, whose feelings have had no voice in the decision of the church and congregation on the subject. A supply comes who objects to the use of instruments in public worship, and is compelled to sacrifice all his feeling, and to submit to that which he believes to be unscriptural, and which at the same time may be a perfect torment to him, under the pain of being called "censorious," &c. He must abstain from expressing his dislike, on the ground that he has no right to do so!

But a minister has a right to interfere with whatever he believes to be an innovation in the worship of God. Suppose in the case of a funeral service, as soon as the coffin is brought into the chapel and placed on the stand, some one lays a cross of

immortelles upon it. The minister objects; and he is told he has no right to interfere, as it is a custom the people have adopted! Is it so? Is the minister quietly to go on with the service, and allow so flagrant an action and a popish deed to be transacted under his eyes, and have no right to interfere? For ourselves, we could not proceed unless the cross were taken away.

To tie up a minister's lips would make a pulpit worse than a pillory. He might go to the pillory with a good conscience; but could not have one in the pulpit where he objects to the form of worship in which he is taking the leading part. He cannot become a kind of preaching apparatus, to tell his tale through, leave the surroundings, preach on, and when he has done, be gone. We fear our correspondent would call some of the best ministers who ever went into a pulpit not only "somewhat censorious," but *very much* so, if he knew what they have said against the use of instruments in the worship of God.

We are taking this course to point out that there is another and more important side to the question, which must not be unnoticed. Singing may be better dispensed with than the preaching of the Word of God. Ask the hungry poor of God's flock which is the most important to them. And not only so; but doubtless the apostle's injunction is equally binding on musicians as on eaters of meat: "But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably." (Rom. xiv. 15.) It is here plain that charity is to be shown by the players on instruments towards those who object to instrumental music; for this passage applies to anything at which one is grieved, whether it is lawful for another to partake of it or not. It is certainly lawful to partake of meat, even if offered to idols; but yet, does eating meat grieve another? Then, saith the apostle, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." (Ver. 21.)

Suffer us to give a word of advice on the subject. Remember that musical instruments are an innovation in the worship of God. Public worship is the assembling of the saints together, from *two persons* and upwards; and the Lord promises to meet with them and bless them. What more do you want? The organ and all its accompaniments are out of place here; and would be lost in the far more heavenly and sweet sound of the voice of the Son of God. Something to please the ear or attract the eye must be an innovation. The introducers of instruments are the offending persons, not the objectors. There is no warrant for the use of them in the Word of God; and we wish they were banished from the places of worship.

But it will be said they assist the singing. We will remind our correspondent that if we were to consult our own natural inclinations, we should take his side of the question; but truth compels us to differ from our natural inclinations. Is not melody in the heart better than melody with the voice? Do instruments

help persons to sing with melody in the heart? Then they do not assist in the worship at all. Let us weigh up their worth in a profit and loss account in the spiritual worship of God. "Are we, then," it may be said, "to go on in a miserable way, and be a laughing-stock to the parish?" We sympathize with the dread of bad singing; discordant sounds make our flesh creep; but which are we to endure, an innovation in the worship of God, or an innovation in the natural feelings? And if good singing cannot be obtained without bad feelings, let us avoid that which gives rise to bad feelings.

There are some obstructions to good singing which an instrument cannot remedy. We are sorry to say the worst singers generally sing the loudest; and walk contrary to the precepts of the gospel by persisting in giving offence to a musical ear. There are others who sing so wholly out of time, not to say tune, that the sounds are a discordant mass of confusion. These are quite as objectionable in a place of worship as an organ or harmonium, because they violate the feelings of others, and render it impossible for others to worship with them. We will venture to add, therefore, a hint to those who take part in congregational singing. It is out of all reason and order to sing too loudly. It strains the voice and destroys the melody. Will not persons who have loud and strong voices try to modulate them in public worship, for the sake of not giving offence to others?

Our correspondent ought not to call his question a matter "of minor importance" on the minister's point of view, while he afterwards confesses, "This is really an important matter touching the peace and quietude of many churches." So it is; and touching also the simplicity of the public worship of God according to Scripture. (Matt. xviii. 20.)

REVIEW.

Infant Baptism demonstrated to be Reasonable, Historical, and Scriptural. By Jas. Malcolm, Missionary. London: Houlston and Sons, 7, Paternoster Buildings; Glasgow: Porteous Bros., 85, West Nile Street; or from the Author, 108, Buccleugh Street.

MR. MALCOLM comes before his readers fully persuaded in his own mind that he has swept the ground from under the feet of the poor Baptist at last, and left him prostrate on the earth. But why all this determined opposition to a plain truth? Why so much zeal and warmth is there manifested in an old and oft-exploded argument? The whole strength of the arguments brought forward in the work before us is the old, erroneous idea that baptism came in the room of circumcision. It is a notion that takes strong hold of some people's minds; and of such persons it demands close investigation to see how far the Word of God warrants their conclusion. The following truths are worthy of their consideration:

1. Circumcision is most explicitly stated in Scripture to be a token of the covenant which God had made with Abraham: "And he received the *sign* of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised." (Rom. iv. 11.) Abraham, then, was a believer before he was circumcised; and his faith was imputed to him for righteousness while he was yet in uncircumcision. Faith and circumcision are opposed to each other. Faith has to do with the promises; circumcision with the ceremonial law;—two subjects at variance one with the other, differing as much as life and death differ. He who was circumcised became a debtor to do the whole law; and justification to him was by works, and not by faith. (Gal. v. 3, 4; ii. 16, 18.) But immersion is not of the law, neither is there a law imposed on a baptized person. (Gal. v. 23.) These two opposites could not merge one into the other. This is one proof that baptism could not come into the room of circumcision.

2. The true antitype of circumcision is circumcision of the heart. The type and antitype are described in Scripture as the one being "made by hands" (Eph. ii. 11), and the other "without hands." (Col. ii. 11.) There is a circumcision, then, made by the Lord, of which that in the flesh is a type: "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." (Deut. xxx. 6.) "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." (Col. ii. 11.) This is the operation of the Spirit of Christ. Nothing here relates to the outward sign of baptism; for that is made with hands.

Spiritual circumcision takes place when any one is cut or pricked to the heart (Acts ii. 37), by which act the heart is made single. "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." (Rom. ii. 28, 29.)

Paul shows in these words that the true antitype, or spiritual circumcision of the heart, had now followed in the room of the outward sign; and was the mark of all God's spiritual Israel; just as circumcision in the flesh had distinguished all who were God's people outwardly or nationally. Again he says, "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." (Phil. iii. 3.) How, then, could baptism also be said to have followed in the room of circumcision? To say it has done so is putting it into the place of spiritual circumcision; which is little short of profanity.

Here is a second reason why baptism could not have followed in the place of the ancient Jewish rite.

3. Further, the national Jew had some confidence in the flesh that he was chosen of God above others. (Phil. iii. 4.) There must be some confidence in the flesh in those who cling to infant baptism—some idea that baptized infants share God's favour more than others, at least as much as the national Jew; for baptism is as much an act on the flesh as circumcision. But God has not made any nation his peculiar people, except the Jews of old. When, therefore, they were rejected, a rite extending to all infants would no longer be of any use, nor even allowable. This is a third reason why baptism could not hold the place of circumcision to the Jew.

There is in all the Scriptures not a tittle of evidence, nor yet the shadow of inferential evidence, that baptism came in the room of circumcision. We are struck with the remarkable silence maintained throughout the above work, on the subject of the new birth. There might be no such truth revealed in God's Word.

4. Baptism is set forth in Scripture as a burial and resurrection. (Col. ii. 12.) If a rite is deprived of its scriptural meaning, it may mean anything a fruitful imagination chooses to put upon it. With all due deference to the Scriptures, we hold that burial and resurrection are the two great features of the signification of that ordinance.

The two cardinal points of faith revealed in the whole of Scripture are the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Concerning the first we read, "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22), and that "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor. xv. 3); and concerning the second: "If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." (1 Cor. xv. 16, 17.) It appears to us that we have two standing ordinances in the Lord's house to represent these two cardinal doctrines. The one shows forth the Lord's death till he comes (1 Cor. xi. 26); the other, the certainty of his resurrection and that of the church with him. To the last the apostle applies the figure of baptism: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are *buried* with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was *raised* up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Rom. vi. 3, 4.) Here, as in Col. ii. 12, before cited, we have the spiritual meaning of believer's baptism declared. Now circumcision in the flesh had no symbolical reference to the death and resurrection of Christ; therefore here is a fourth reason why baptism could not possibly have come in its room. If, then, baptism did not come in the room of circumcision, the whole of Mr. M.'s labour is labour spent in vain.

5. The symbolical meaning of literal circumcision exactly agrees with its antitype. The figure is applied by the Holy Spirit in various places to the act of rendering the heart single: "Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart." (Jer. iv. 4.) "Circumcise therefore the foreskin of

your heart, and be no more stiffnecked." (Deut. x. 16.) And other passages bear reference to the same figure: "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God." (Col. iii. 22; Eph. vi. 5; Acts ii. 46; Matt. vi. 22.) But the symbol of baptism, whether by immersion or sprinkling, infant or adult, has in itself no allusion to the penetrating power of God's Spirit in the conscience, producing singleness of eye and heart before God. This is a fifth reason why water baptism and circumcision in the flesh have no reference to each other, and one could not occupy the other's room. Two distinct places they had assigned to them, one in the law and one in the gospel; and two great truths are set forth by them.

The rest of the author's arguments need no especial notice; for having made for themselves such an imaginary foundation,—viz., a supposed similarity between the position of baptized infants and that of the circumcised children of old, they depend mainly on the ancient covenant of circumcision to give the colour of Scripture authority to the custom of sprinkling infants. Therefore, this foundation being removed, the whole theory will doubtless fall to the ground.

"AND TO WAIT FOR HIS SON FROM HEAVEN."

WAITING for him in the gospel,
 Waiting for him in his pow'r,
 Waiting for him in the Spirit,
 Waiting for him hour by hour.

Waiting for the revelation
 Of his precious love to me;
 Waiting for the sweet unfoldings
 Of the hidden mystery.

Christ in me the Hope of glory,
 Christ in me a living pow'r,
 A sacred, firm reality;
 Having him I want no more.

O! I wait for thy appearing!
 Once more whisper, "I am thine."
 Be my present great salvation,
 Mine in fellowship divine.

Fulness thou of ev'ry blessing,
 Now, and through eternity!
 Fill, O fill my empty vessel;
 Overflowing let it be.

Aug. 14th, 1881.

E. B.

THERE are two things hardly known,—what God is, and what our sins are; or else we hardly have the knowledge of them applied to ourselves.—*Hooker*.

Obituary.

(Concluded from p. 418.)

A SHORT MEMOIR OF RICHARD DE FRAINE, WHO DIED FEB. 19TH, 1882.

Aug. 28th. Though suffering much from painful disorders, he was most patient, and with much feeling repeated,

“All hail the power of Jesus' Name!
Let angels prostrate fall.
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all.”

Yes! ‘Crown him Lord of all.’ I love the harmony of these things, though my day is past for exalting the blessed Lord publicly. I will pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love her.” Later in the evening, when his old friend, Mr. Stephens, came in, he spoke very nicely about his interest in Christ’s blood and righteousness, and said, come life or death, he felt sure it would be well with him. Mr. S. said, “This world is not your rest; it is polluted.” He replied, “No sin *there*,—no sin *there*.”

Sept. 4th. Somewhat better, and fully alive to spiritual things. Mr. Popham coming into the room, he began to speak, saying, “I know my transgressions are put away. ‘I know in whom I have believed.’ You can never perish. The love of God forbids it.” He then tried to repeat, “How firm a foundation,” &c. On our friend taking leave, and hoping the Lord would be with him, he replied, “He is, he is; I could not do without him.

“‘I would not change my blest estate
For all the world calls good or great.’”

For a short season the Lord hid his face, and he became restless and troubled, and said, “I want the Lord to come.” I said, “He will come again; you had a blessed visit yesterday.” “Ah!” he replied, “I want him *now*.” Presently he said, “There, he came just like a ray of light, but is gone again.” The Lord was very merciful to his servant, and kept his mind much stayed on himself with child-like simplicity. Now and again Satan was permitted to harass and distract him, which was soon evident to those who were with him, not only from what he said, but from the distress of his countenance; nor could he be comforted until the Lord returned.

On Sunday, the minister supplying coming in and speaking of the Lord’s being ready to come to his people, he said, “Yes, he cometh on the wings of the wind. I am well persuaded he changeth not, though I cannot always feel his presence.”

10th. Very ill; lost all power, and not able to speak.

11th. Still very ill, composed and sensible. In the evening broke out in prayer and praise to the Lord for all his mercies, saying it would soon be over with us all. A friend repeated, “Even to hoar hairs I will carry you.” He said, “Yes, he has said, and he will do it.” I said, “You do not fear to cross the

river?" He replied, "No; telling the triumphs of my King." Seeing me distressed, he tried to comfort me, and then said, "We can have no better foundation. It is laid in Zion: 'This is my rest for ever; I have desired it.'" About eight in the evening symptoms of another fit came on. We used the usual remedies; and after getting him to bed, he said, "No fear, no fear."

12th. Revived, and said to a friend, "All ready; only waiting for the signal." The last verse of Medley's hymn (987) he much liked.

"To sinners poor like me and you

He says he'll freely give.

Come, thirsty souls, and prove it true;

Drink, and for ever live."

Oct. 16th. Calm and sensible. On the waters of Bethlehem being mentioned, he said, "He had drunk of those waters and his soul loved them. He had no fear of death when the Lord's time came. Blessed water! Precious water!" To his eldest daughter he said, "My child, may the Lord give you to taste through his grace of the water of the well of Bethlehem."

Sunday, 17th. "'I am a worm and no man.' I am so weak, so helpless, so wretched, that unless it comes down from above I can get nothing; as poor, yet possessing all things." Again in the evening he said to me, "I got a little this morning; it was very sweet. 'A little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry' beyond his appointed time;" and repeated the portion I had been reading, Gal. i. 5, especially: "To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen!" To a friend who had been with him during the day he said, "We have spent one more day together. What will it be to spend eternity together?" Later on I read to him from 1 Pet.; and he dwelt very sweetly on the eternal love of God, and the enjoyment of that love in the soul, and the full enjoyment of that love in heaven, saying,

"'There shall I see his face,

And never, never sin,' &c.

'There remaineth a rest for the people of God;' and I trust I shall obtain it."

Nov. 5th. During the day he said with much feeling, "My treasure is in heaven; and 'where your treasure is there will your heart be also.'"

Sunday, 7th. Very pleased to see some of his old friends, and spoke nicely to them on the things of God, saying, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant." He spoke of the way in which the Lord first brought him to Lutterworth, and how he had upheld him and blessed him more than 40 years; had given him many seals to his ministry and souls for his hire; and then said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul." Those were precious days. O! those were glorious days. The Lord was with us,—but

"'All must come and last and end,

As shall please our heavenly Friend.'

Many a precious portion has dropped into my soul."

9th. On awaking this morning he spoke of the sweetness of the Name of Jesus to poor, needy sinners; of his robe of imputed righteousness to cover them; and he added, "How many care nothing for it; but how glad the poor sinner is to receive it; and it shall be upon all that believe." And that "Christ had fulfilled the law and made it honourable; his precious blood had atoned for sin, and he had for ever put it away by his death on the cross. Those only would prize this salvation who felt what vile sinners they were.

"What comfort can a Saviour bring
To those who never felt their woe?"

"O the righteousness of Christ! It completely covers the sinner.

"The terrors of law and of God
With me can have nothing to do;
My Saviour's obedience and blood
Hide all my transgressions from view."

Later on in the day he said, still dwelling on the same things,

"A sinner clothed in this rich vest,
And garments washed in blood,
Is rendered fit with Christ to feast,
And be the guest of God" (*Hymn* 805).

I found the hymn and read it. He said, "O, I am the chief of sinners and least of saints." Many times Cowper's lines were in his mind, and he would repeat them:

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread,
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head."

Feb. 4th, 1881. Bodily and mental weakness increasing; and the power of swallowing becoming difficult, this morning he was almost choked. In the evening he revived, but seemed troubled and became restless, when suddenly he exclaimed,

"Ye elder sons, be still;
Give no bad passions vent.
Enough it is your Father's will,
And you must be content."

He became quiet, and sat down by a friend, who, speaking of the things of God to him, quoted some portions of God's Word, and this text especially comforted him, "The peace of God which passeth all understanding keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. iv. 7.) Happy in soul, he retired to rest, still repeating portions of Scripture and hymns until he fell asleep. At midnight he awoke and became very restless; and the following day his bodily affliction increased, and the mind became wandering. He sat in his chair for hours, being unable to lie down. His breathing becoming impeded, and articulation indistinct, we could only catch short sentences, as follows:

"And shall I his mercies forget,
And fly in the face of my God?"

"Salvation is of grace." He tried to sing, his soul seemed so

full of the Lord's loving-kindness; and he was quite sensible, though we could not understand all he said. Between two and three o'clock he was exhausted and dozed. I lay down to rest, and at five the nurse called me. A great alteration had taken place, and we thought the end was near. With difficulty we lifted him from his chair to the bed, and he said, "All my trust is in the Lord," and remarked it was more comfortable in bed.

He was so ill, the medical man was sent for, who ordered the usual remedies, but gave little hope of recovery. Yet it pleased the Lord to restore him for a time, and enable him to speak to those about him of the love and mercy of God; and to make it manifest that what the Lord had wrought in his soul would stand. After this attack, though the mind became greatly weakened so that in natural things he was like a child, yet the spiritual understanding was unimpaired, which was a great comfort to witness.

On the 6th, Sunday, a friend who was preaching for him came in, and spoke of the preciousness of Christ, and that though the outward man must perish, the "inward man is renewed day by day." I said to my husband, "All your springs are in him, are they not?" He replied, "Yes! Every one; not one in myself, not one." I added, "You will crown him Lord of all?" "How I long to go and do it; it will be sweet work."

On the 7th as I sat beside him he said, "'The blood of Jesus Christ, God's dear Son, cleanseth from all sin.' O, without that blood my sin would remain; but he has washed it all away. How precious is that blood to sinners. There are four words in the 8th of Romans: 'No condemnation,' 'no separation,'" referring evidently to verses 1 and 39. "The blood of Jesus,—how precious that Name! I love it."

Towards the morning of the 9th, the choking in his throat returned, and he looked ill; but his mind dwelt on the best things, and he prayed that the Lord would be with him through the valley, that he would have mercy on him and not forsake him, but be very near him; adding,

"Then will I tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour I have found."

"The way I take cannot be wrong,
If Jesus be but there."

"We cannot despair, for Jesus is our Hope against despair; and 'hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.'" I said, "My dear, you feel all is right, and you are happy?" He replied, "Yes! Yes! Christ is all in all. I will put the crown on Jesus' head.

"Sovereign Ruler of the skies,
Ever gracious, ever wise,
All my times are in thy hand,
All events at thy command?"

March 16th. I was sitting by my dear husband, and he began talking to me, commencing that hymn of Hart's:

"Keep close to me, thou helpless sheep."

I finished it for him, and he took up the next,

“Thy whole dependence on me fix,
Nor entertain a thought
Thy worthless schemes with mine to mix,
But venture to be nought;”

adding, “A good place to be brought to.” Then, as if in prayer, he begged to have his mind kept in perfect submission to the will of God in all things, saying, “Jesus said, ‘Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest.’ He says, ‘Because I live, ye shall live also.’” I said, “He is mighty to save from sin, death, and hell;” which he repeated, and added, “I never shall realize it more than I do this day, and when I am dying. ‘Lead me to the Rock, which is higher than I.’ O my dear, the Foundation of my hope is Jesus, a precious, precious Christ. I long to love more than I can.”

He gained a little strength, and on May 11th, coming across the room to where I was, said to me, “When Jesus Christ was crucified, he took all the sins of his people and bore them away; so that when sought for they shall not be found. He bore all that agony without a murmur, and when he rose from the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea he had done all his work. No need for him to die again. He once for all made atonement for the sins of his church, and put them all away.” I said, “He died that we might live. ‘Because I live,’”—and he finished the sentence, adding, “Blessed Lamb! Precious Jesus!” He was able to read his Bible, which I felt very thankful for; and at times would find hymns which suited his feelings.

Nov. 13th, Sunday. He read both in the Psalms and hymn book, evidently finding comfort from them, and desiring me to read with him. That hymn especially was good to him:

“Behold, from the desert of sin.”

His soul was full of joy, and he said how he longed to sing. Then, as if filled with a holy awe, he desired to be undisturbed, and seemed to ponder on what he was enjoying. From this, he continued much in the same way, only becoming weaker, but gentle and submissive, and as if waiting for the Lord to call him. He suffered little pain, and was pleased to see any of the friends, especially those with whom he had walked in union in the time of health.

A fortnight before his death I saw an alteration; and on the Sunday previous to his last we found his left side paralyzed. His strength was gone; but having seen him rally so often, I cherished the hope he would again revive; nor did I realize death was approaching, until two days before he was taken. On Wednesday he was reading his Bible for some time; when, looking up, his face beaming with pleasure, he said, “How glorious! Can’t you sing?” The following day about mid-day he had a partial seizure, which was followed by a similar attack each day; but he was sensible for the greater part, and knew us, thanking me for my care and attention. He asked if I had been praying that

he might get better, and said, "We must submit to the Lord's will."

On Saturday, Feb. 18th, it was evident the end was near. In the afternoon he said much to me, but I could not understand all. He kissed me as if bidding me farewell, and a blessed peace rested on his face, betokening the glory on which he was about entering. I caught the words: "Moses,—sing, sing." A friend coming in, said, "The Lord has been with you hitherto; he will not forsake you now." "No," he replied; "he is here." From this time he became unconscious, and gradually sank; and at 12.45 on Lord's day, Feb. 19th, he sweetly fell asleep in Jesus; the Lord granting him his desire, he had so often expressed, that he might begin the Sabbath on earth and end it in eternity.

On Friday, the 24th, my beloved husband's remains were committed to the tomb by our friend Mr. Popham, of Liverpool. He was requested to perform this last sad rite, being Mr. de Fraine's son in the faith, and a member at Lutterworth.

I feel I have lost a kind and affectionate husband and friend, and, with the church at Lutterworth, mourn the loss of a true pastor; for though there be "ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet are there not many fathers."

E. S. DE FRAINE.

EBENEZER CHURCH.—On July 20th, 1882, aged 83, Ebenezer Church, of Beckenham, Kent.

He was sweetly set at liberty in the year 1823, while hearing Mr. Henry Fowler at Gower Street Chapel, from Jno. xiv. 22: "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" While the preacher enlarged upon the subject, the preacher's God deigned to draw nigh and shine into his soul, and at once melted him into tears of contrition and godly sorrow, mingled with the unspeakable joy of full assurance, causing him to loathe and abhor himself more than any other object on the face of the earth. With wondrous rapture he was constrained to exclaim, "Lord, how is it thou hast passed by thousands and looked upon me?"

Since that time he has been the subject of many conflicts, being often faint, yet pursuing. Upon one occasion, when hedged in upon every hand with dark clouds above and sinking fears within, he had the 3rd verse of the 37th psalm very powerfully applied to his soul, lighting up his path and removing all his fears: "Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." He lived to see that promise most abundantly fulfilled. Indeed the whole psalm has been so often and conspicuously verified in his experience that he used to call it his psalm.

His last illness only continued three weeks; and he kept his bed but a week. He did not enjoy that felt nearness to the Lord that he so longed for; but he felt a sweet composure of mind in resting on the faithfulness of that God who had caused him to hope in his mercy, and had appeared for him in so many marked

instances by the way. He could not converse for the last week, and towards the end he could not speak; but we caught a sentence now and then. One of the last was, "What a wonder it will be, if I am found in heaven!" Upon being asked nearer his end if he felt more comfortable in his mind, he nodded his head in the affirmative.

He gradually sank into the arms of death; and we feel we can say, "In sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection."

E. C.

EMILY BALL.—On March 10th, 1882, aged 39, Emily Ball.

My dear wife has often told me that she felt herself a sinner before a holy God when about the age of 14 years. She then had such a fear of death and felt so guilty before God, she believed that if she died her soul would sink where hope and mercy could not reach. She was under this bondage for some time.

She was brought up to attend where the truth was preached, at Avebury, her father and mother being members. Sometimes she was encouraged under the Word, by the Lord's sent servants. She has told me that she heard the late Mr. Tanner with sweetness, but not to her soul's satisfaction. Thus she went on hoping and repenting for about five years, until the Lord's set time was come to favour her soul. At length these words were applied with power: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God." The sweetness of them remained a considerable time.

She removed in the providence of God to Winchester, and there had not the privilege of hearing the truth very often, which was a trial to her for two or three years. Afterwards she lived at Bradford-on-Avon, where she spent many happy seasons under Mr. Spencer's preaching. She was baptized by him at the age of 21 years. She said she felt Christ so precious to her soul while in the water that she could not help exclaiming, "O how good the Lord is!"

After this she was left to walk in the dark, and called all her religion into question; and feeling her wicked heart, she was often crying for mercy. When she could not hear to her soul's satisfaction, how low she would sink; but the Lord comforted her at times through his ministering servants.

I must pass over many years of her life, and come to the last three weeks she spent in this vale of tears. She was taken ill with a bad cold, which proved to be bronchitis, and she gradually became weaker in body, although she expected soon to recover. She had not that sweet assurance she desired until the day before she died, when these words were applied to her soul: "In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

The day after this she sank again very low; and Satan would tell her he would drag her soul to hell. O how she entreated the Lord to come and reveal himself to her. It was more than I could bear to see the agony of her mind for five or six hours before her death. She would say to me, "Do pray for me." About two hours before her end she exclaimed, "He is the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely." I said, "You are not afraid to die now, are you?" She answered, "I have not got what I want. He is showing himself through the lattice." At 10 o'clock she said, "Sweetest, loveliest face to view! I want to see the mansions more clear. Do come, Lord Jesus, and not leave me so dark!" She seemed almost in an agony of soul, and said, "I can from all things parted be,
But never, never, Lord, from thee!"

At 10.30 she said, "Thou hast loved me with an everlasting love." I said, "Yes; and he will never forsake you, but will love you throughout a never-ending eternity." She replied, "Not enough,—I have not got the sweetness that I want to feel. I fear now that I shall die in the dark." I said, "The Lord will never forsake you, my dear, as you are his child, and he will have his own." She lay quietly until 11.15, when she said, "Do, Lord, show me the mansions more clear, more bright. I am without the gate. Do open and let me in that I might see my mansions for myself that are prepared for me." Then she rose up in bed, saying, "It's all right,—very precious,—'tis well,—'tis well,—*I have got safely there!* Lord, what a bright home,—sweet home,—glorious home! I have been travelling in the road many years." I said to her, "You are happy now?" She said, "I am happy,—I am happy!" and her happy spirit took its flight to be for ever with the Lord, whom she had sought for many years.

O that my end, too, may prove that I have not only a form of religion, but the power, which is God's gift. W. BALL.

JAMES BAMFORD.—On April 28th, 1882, aged 60, James Bamford, of Accrington, Lancashire, for 12 years minister of the gospel.

He commenced writing a little of his life, which runs thus:

"And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these 40 years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.' (Deut. viii. 2.)

"I was born on April 22nd, 1882, near the town of Bacup. My parents were very poor; and when I became old enough for schooling there was no money for that purpose. Therefore I was sent early to work to earn my bread.

"I very early proved what the Holy Bible says, that I was born in sin and shapen in iniquity, by the development of every evil propensity common to fallen humanity. Deep poverty was made a blessing in disguise, as it was the means in the all-wise

providence of God to restrain me from many evils. About the age of 14 years, I was called to undergo the painful trial of losing my dear father. I was the eldest of eight, my mother being then about 40.

“I had taken the liberty, when my father was ill, to carry out more fully the desires of my wicked heart. It fell on the night that my father died that I made an excuse to go to a prayer-meeting, thinking thereby to get out of the house. My mother wished me to stay, saying father might die at any time. But my father said, ‘If he wants to go to a prayer-meeting, let him go.’ Instead of going to the meeting for prayer, I went after that which was more to my mind. About one or two in the morning we were all called up to see him for the last time. He took the youngest by the hand, bidding him adieu, and so to all the rest. But when I drew near for the same purpose, he pulled in his hand, saying, ‘I will have nothing to do with you; you are a bad lad.’”

At this solemn point our friend left off writing. When his father died, he began to attend chapel more regularly. He was led to feel himself a hell-deserving sinner. He had a dream in which he looked down from the edge of a precipice upon a burning lake below; and feeling the ground shake under him, in terror, he clung to a rock. This dream he ever remembered. It was some years before he was brought out from the General Baptists, where he attended. He was baptized by them at the age of 15, and was employed to preach for them. At one time a passage of Scripture forcibly prevented him preaching, lest he should preach error. At another time the doctrine of God’s sovereign election took such hold of his mind that he could not refrain from preaching it, which gave great offence. This doctrine took deeper root in his heart, and he was convinced that without election there was no salvation for a poor, feelingly helpless, ruined, and lost sinner.

He joined the Particular Baptists, and was baptized again in 1854; and afterwards became a member at Cave Adullam, Haslingden. He was sent out by this church to preach, after speaking before them on the first Lord’s day in February, 1870.

He was taken suddenly ill three weeks before his death. While lying on his bed these words came with power to his mind: “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby.” Also these: “In all their affliction he was afflicted; and the angel of his presence saved them.” He said, “I have no desire to get better. If the Lord is pleased to raise me up, well; if not, well.” Two days before he died, he said, “‘The Lord is gracious, full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy.’ Not my will, but thine be done. Dying to live.”

May the Lord raise up many more faithful labourers in his vineyard.

J. S.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

NOVEMBER, 1882.

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

ON TEMPTATION.

The end wherefore Christ was led to the wilderness. Holiness, employment, privileges, exempt not from temptation. Of temptations that leave not impressions of sin behind them. How Satan's temptations are distinguished from the lusts of our own hearts.

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil."—MATT. IV. 1.

THERE was no other design, in the main, of Christ's being led up, and into the wilderness, but that he might be tempted. In this two things seem to be matter of equal wonder.

First. Why Christ would submit to be tempted. For this many great and weighty reasons may be given. As,

1. Thus was Christ evidenced to be the second Adam, and the Seed of the woman. His being tempted, and in such a manner, doth clearly satisfy us that he was true man; and that in that nature, he it was that was promised to break the serpent's head.

2. This was a fair *preludium*, and earnest of that final conquest over Satan, and the breaking down of his power.

3. There was a more peculiar aim in God by these means of temptation to qualify him with pity and power to help. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." (Heb. ii. 18.) And having experience of temptation himself, he became a merciful High Priest, apt to be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. (Heb. iv. 15.)

4. The consequence of this experimental compassion in Christ was a further reason why he submitted to be tempted, to wit, that we might have the greater comfort and encouragement in the expectancy of tender dealing from him. Hence the apostle (Heb. iv. 16) invites to come boldly to the throne of grace at any time of need.

5. A further end God seemed to have in this, viz., to give a signal and remarkable instance to us of the nature of temptations, of Satan's subtlety, his impudency, of the usual temptations which we may expect; as also to teach us what weapons are necessary for resistance, and in what manner they will be effectual.

Secondly. It seems as strange that Satan would undertake a thing so unfeasible and hopeless as the tempting of Christ. What

expectation could he have to prevail against him who was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows? Some answer,

1. That Satan might possibly doubt whether Christ were the Son of God or not. But the improbability of this I shall speak of elsewhere.

2. Others attribute it to his malice, which indeed is great, and might possibly blind him to a desperate undertaking. But,

3. We may justly apprehend the power of sin over Satan to be so great that it might enforce him to the bold attempt of such a wickedness. We see daily that wicked men, by the force of their own wicked principles, are restlessly hurried upon acts of sin, though they know the prohibition, and are not ignorant of the threatened danger. Satan is as great a slave to his own internal corrupt principles as any. And whatsoever blind fury is stirred up in man by the power of his lust, we may very well suppose the like in Satan.

4. There is a superior hand upon the devil, that sways, limits, and orders him in his temptations. He cannot tempt when he would; neither always what he would; but in his own cursed inclinations, and the acting of them, he is forced to be subservient to God's designs. And in this particular, whatever might be Satan's proper end or principle, it is evident that God carried on a gracious design for the instruction and comfort of his children.

The end of Christ's going to the wilderness being that he might be tempted, if together with this, the holiness and dignity of Christ in respect of his Person and office be considered, we may note from it, that neither height of privilege, nor eminency of employment, nor holiness of person will discourage Satan from tempting, or secure any from his assaults. The best of men in the highest attainments may expect temptations. Grace itself doth not exempt them.

For 1. None of these privileges in us, nor eminencies of grace want matter to fix a temptation upon. The weaknesses of the best of men are such that a temptation is not rendered improbable, as to the success, by their graces. Nay, there are special occasions and inclinations in them to encourage temptations of pride and neglect. He found, indeed, nothing in Christ that might offer the least probability of prevalency; but in the best of men, in their best estate, he can find some encouragement for his attempts.

2. None of us are beyond the necessity of such exercises. It cannot be said that we need them not; or that there may not be holy ends wherefore God should not permit and order them for our good. Temptations, as they are in God's disposal, are a necessary spiritual physic. The design of them is to humble us, to prove us, and to do us good in the latter end. (Deut. viii. 16.) Nothing will work more of watchfulness, diligence, and fear in a gracious heart than a sense of Satan's designment against it. Nothing puts a man more to prayer, breathing after God, desiring to be dissolved, and running to Christ, than the troublesome and

afflictive pursuits of Satan. Nothing brings men more from the love of the world, and to a delight in the ordinances of God, than the trouble which here abides them unavoidably from Satan. This discipline the best have need of. There are such evils in them that if God should not permit these pricks and thorns to humble them, and thereby also awaken them to gracious watchfulness, they would be careless, secure, and sadly declining. This made Augustine conclude that it was no way expedient that we should want temptations; and Christ taught us as much when he directed us, not to pray that we should not be tempted, but that we might not be led into the power and prevalency of temptation.

3. The privileges and graces of the children of God do stir up Satan's pride, revenge, and rage against them. And though he hath no encouragement to expect so easy a conquest over these as he hath over others, who are captivated by him at pleasure, yet hath he encouragements to attempt them for the singular use and advantage he makes of any success against them; the difficulty of the work being recompensed by the greatness of the booty. For the fall of a child of God, especially of such as are noted above others, is as when a standard-bearer fainteth, or as the fall of an oak that bears down with it the lower shrubs that stand near it. How the hearts of others fail for fear, lest they also should be overcome! How the hearts of some grow thereby bold and venturesome! How a general disgrace and discredit thereby doth accrue to religion and the sincere profession of it, are things of usual observation. If such men had not in them something of special prey in case of conquest, his pride would not so readily carry him against the heads and chiefs of the people, while he seems to overlook the meaner and weaker. Out-houses, though more accessible, are not the objects of the thief's design; but the dwelling-house, though more strongly built and better guarded, because it affords hopes of richer spoil, is usually assaulted. Neither do pirates so much set themselves to take empty vessels, though weakly manned; but richly-loaden ships, though better able to make resistance, are the ships of their desire.

Application i. This may be applied for the encouragement of those that think it strange that temptations do so haunt them; especially that they should, in their apprehension, be more troubled by Satan when they fly furthest from him. The consideration of this will much allay these thoughts, by these inferences which it affords:

1. There is nothing unusual befalls these complainants. Satan frequently doth so to others; they cannot justly say their case is singular, or that they are alone in such disturbances; it is but what is common to man. If they urge the incessantness of the devil's attempts; Christ and others have felt the like. If they object the peculiar strangeness and horridness of the temptation as most unsuitable to the taste of an upright soul; Christ met

with the like. He was tempted to self-destruction, to distrust, to blasphemy itself in the highest degree.

2. There is a good advantage to be brought out of them; they are preservations from other sins that would otherwise grow upon us.

3. These temptations to the upright do but argue Satan's loss of interest in them, and their greater sensibility of the danger. The captivated sinners complain not so much, because they are inured to temptation, that they mind not Satan's frequent accesses. He that studies humility is more sensible of a temptation to pride than he that is proud..

Application ii. This is also of use to those who are apt to be confident upon their successes against sin through grace. Satan, they may see, will be upon them again; so that they need be prepared as mariners, who, when they have got the harbour and are out of the storm, reckon for fresh storms, and put not to sea again unprepared.

Lastly. If we consider the unspotted holiness of Christ, and his constant integrity under these temptations, that they left not the least taint or sinful impression upon him, we may observe, that there may be temptations without leaving a touch of guilt or impurity behind them upon the tempted.

It is true this is rare with men; the best do seldom go down to the battle, but in their very conquests they receive some wound. And in those temptations that arise from our own hearts, we are never without a fault; but in such as do solely arise from Satan there is a possibility that the upright may so be kept that the wicked one may not so touch him as to leave the print of his fingers behind him. (1 Jno. v. 18.)

Question. But the great difficulty is, how it may be known when temptations are from Satan, and when from ourselves?

Answer. To answer this, I shall lay down these conclusions:

1. The same sins which our own natures would suggest to us, may also be injected by Satan. Sometimes we begin by the forward working of our own thoughts upon occasions and objects presented to us from without; or from the power of our own inclination, without the offer of external objects, and then Satan strikes in with it. Sometimes Satan begins with us, and by his injected motions endeavours to excite our inclinations; so that the same thing may be sometimes from ourselves, and sometimes from Satan.

2. There is no sin so vile but our own heart might possibly produce it without Satan; evil thoughts of the very worst kind, as of murder, adulteries, thefts, false witness, and blasphemies may, as Christ speaks (Matt. xv. 19), be produced naturally from our own hearts; for seminally all sins, the very greatest of all impieties, are there. So that from the greatness and vileness of the temptation we cannot absolutely conclude that it is from Satan; no more than from the commonness of the temptation, or its suitability to our inclination, we can conclude infallibly that its first rise is from ourselves.

8. There are many cases wherein it is very difficult, if not altogether impossible, to determine whether our own heart or Satan gives the first life or breathing to a temptation. Who can determine in most ordinary cases, when our thoughts are working upon objects presented to our senses, whether Satan or our own thoughts do run faster? Yea, when such thoughts are not the consequent of any former occasion, it is a work too hard for most men to determine which of the parents, father or mother, our own heart or Satan, is first in the fault. They are both forward enough, and usually join hand in hand with such readiness that he must have a curious eye that can discover certainly to whom the first beginning is to be ascribed.

The difficulty is so great that some have judged it altogether impossible to give any certain marks by which it may be determined when they are ours, and when Satan's. And indeed the discoveries laid down by some are not sufficient for a certain determination; and so far I assent, that neither the suddenness of such thoughts, for the motions of our own lusts may be sudden, nor the horridness of the matter of them, are sufficient notes of distinction. That our own corrupt hearts may bring forth that which is unnatural and terrible cannot be denied. Many of the sins of the heathens, mentioned in Rom. i., were the violent productions of lust against natural principles; and to ascribe these to the devil as to the first instigator, is more than any man hath warrant to do. Yet though it be confessed that in some cases it is impossible to distinguish, and that where a distinction may be made, these notes mentioned are not fully satisfactory; there may, I believe, be some cases wherein there is a possibility to discover when the motions are from Satan; and that by the addition of some remarkable circumstances to the fore-named marks of difference.

4. Though it be true, which some say, that in most cases it is needless altogether to spend our time in disputing whether the motions of sin in our minds are firstly from ourselves or from Satan, our greatest need being rather to seek God to resist than to difference them; yet there are special cases wherein it is very necessary to find out the true parent of a sinful motion; and these are where tender consciences are wounded and oppressed with violent and great temptations, as blasphemous thoughts, atheistical objections, &c. For here Satan, in his furious molestations, aims mainly at this, that such afflicted and tossed souls should take all these thoughts which are obtruded upon their imaginations, to be the issue of their own hearts. As Joseph's steward hid the cup in Benjamin's sack, that it might be a ground of accusation against him; so doth the devil first oppress them with such thoughts, and then accuseth them of all that villiany and wickedness the motions whereof he had with such importunity forced upon them. And so apt are the afflicted to comply with accusations against themselves, that they believe it is so; and from thence conclude that they are given up of God, hardened

as Pharaoh, that they have sinned against the Holy Ghost, and finally that there is no hope of mercy for them. All this befalls them from their ignorance of Satan's dealings; and here is their great need to distinguish Satan's malice from their guilt.

5. Setting aside ordinary temptations, wherein it is neither so possible nor so material to busy ourselves to find out whether they are Satan's or ours as in extraordinary temptations, such as have been now instanced; we may discover if they proceed from Satan (though not simply from the matter of them, nor from the suddenness and independency of them, yet) from a due consideration of their nature and manner of proceeding, compared with the present temper and disposition of our heart. As,

ii. *First.* When unusual temptations intrude upon us with a high impetuosity and violence while our thoughts are otherwise concerned and taken up. Temptations more agreeable to our inclination, though suddenly arising from objects and occasions presented, and gradually proceeding after the manner of the working of natural passions, may throng in amidst other thoughts or actions that have no tendency that way, and yet we cannot so clearly accuse Satan for them. But when things that have not the encouragement of our affections, are by a sudden violence enforced upon us while we are otherwise concerned, we may justly suspect Satan's hand to be in them.

Secondly. While such things are borne in upon us against the actual loathing, strenuous reluctancy, and high complainings of the soul, when the mind is filled with horror, and the body with trembling at the presence of such thoughts. Sins that owe their first original to ourselves, may indeed be resisted upon their first rising up in our mind; and though a sanctified heart doth truly loathe them, yet are they not without some lower degree of tickling delight upon the affections; for the flesh in those cases presently riseth up with its lustings for the sinful motion. But when such unnatural temptations are from Satan, their first appearance to the mind is a horror without any sensible working of inclination towards them; and the greatness of the soul's disquiet doth show that it hath met with that which the affections look not on with any amicable compliance.

Thirdly. Our hearts may bring forth that which is unnatural in itself, and may give rise to a temptation that would be horrid to the thoughts of other men; but that it should of its own accord, without a tempter, on a sudden bring forth that which is directly contrary to its present light, reason, or inclination; as for a man to be haunted with thoughts of atheism, while he is under persuasions that there is a God; or of blasphemy, while he is under designs of honouring him, is as unimaginable as that our thoughts should of themselves contrive our death, while we are most solicitous for our life; or that our thoughts should soberly tell us it is night, when we see the sun shine. Temptations that are contrary to the present state, posture, light, and disposition of the soul, are Satan's. They are so unnatural as to

its present frame that the production of them must be from some other agent.

Fourthly. Much more evident is it that such proceed from Satan when they are of long continuance and constant trouble; when they so incessantly beat upon the mind that it hath no rest from them, and yet is under grievous perplexities and anxieties of mind about them.

Application. The consideration of this is of great use to those that suffer under the violent hurries of strange temptations.

1. In that sometimes they can justly complain of the affection of such temptation, when they have no reason to charge it upon themselves as their sin. It is one thing to be tempted, and another to consent or comply; to be tempted, and not to be brought into temptation, is not evil. Satan only barks when he suggests; but he then bites and wounds, when he draws us to consent.

2. That not only the sin, but the degree also, by just consequence, is to be measured by the consent of the heart. If we consent not, the sin is not ours; and the less degree of consent we give, the less is in the sin.

RICHARD GILPIN.

I HAVE lived to see the greatest plague on earth,—the contemning of God's Word, a fearful thing, surpassing all other plagues in the world; for thereupon most surely follow all manner of punishments, eternal and corporal. Did I desire for a man all bitter plagues and curses, I would wish him the contemning of God's Word; for he would then have them all at once come upon him, both inward and outward misfortunes. The contemning of God's Word is the fore-runner of God's punishments; as the examples witness in the times of Lot, of Noah, and of our Saviour.—*Luther.*

A GOSPEL PREACHER.—“And he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee.” What a free grace preacher was Moses! Moses sustained two characters. He was the mediator of the law; and as such he preached the law powerfully. And as the man of God, he preached the gospel, too, blessedly; for his doctrine dropped as the rain, and his speech distilled as the dew, when he testified of the Rock that “his work is perfect.” There is sweet gospel wrapped up in what Moses spoke here. There is no appeal to the creature. When he delivered his parting discourse and preached his farewell sermon, he does not lay a load of exhortation on the people. They were not bidden to cultivate piety; to make themselves holy; to overcome their sins in their own strength; that it was their duty to repent and believe, and do a number of good works. No. Moses, like a faithful preacher, kept the law and gospel separate; and in preaching the gospel to the people in this his dying sermon, did not load their shoulders with heavy burdens. But he points the eye of their soul up to God; he leads them away from the wretched, fallen creature, and directs their minds to their blessed Creator, who could work in them that which is well-pleasing in his sight. “He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee.” But must not *they* do something? Must not they fast and pray? Must not they put their hand to the work? Must not they be up and doing? And would not that be amply sufficient to overcome all their enemies? No; we find nothing about that. The Holy Ghost by Moses says nothing of what man is to do there. He says, “He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee.” (Deut. xxxiii. 27.)—*J. C. Philpot.*

MEMOIR OF THE EARLY LIFE OF WILLIAM COWPER,

AUTHOR OF "THE TASK," &c.

[Considering that so many lovers of Cowper's hymns are unacquainted with his true history, and the incorrect impressions that many entertain of him with regard to the attempt he made upon his life, by supposing that attempt was made after his conviction of sin, and not prior to it, which was really the case, we feel desirous of laying his own narrative before our readers, written by himself. It bears several important and remarkable features of the character of men who are influenced by the power of the Word without life; and shows the vast distinction, effected by the power of the same Word, between this state and one after life has been communicated.]

Cowper's constitution and temperament were eminently formed for retirement. He shrank from the presence of strangers, and appears to have been deficient in the ordinary confidence required to push through life, except with great difficulties. The natural timidity of his character, and the internal struggles it produced in his mind, give an intensity of point to the narrative, beyond what is common to most.

Cowper's sufferings while under conviction of sin were very severe, and his mind completely gave way under the trouble of his soul. But while in this apparently incurable condition, God gave him a sight of the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, and both soul and body were immediately made whole. He has beautifully described the cure he felt so effectual in the well-known hymn: "There is a fountain filled with blood," &c.

Both before and after this great change took place, he was attacked at different times by fits of melancholy, to which his sensitive mind always bore a strong tendency.

We think, therefore, in the whole of his experience we have a striking example of the work of God in the heart being uninjured by natural melancholy or unsound mind. Cowper's natural tendency must itself have been heightened by his soul-trouble; but it could not have any hand in producing a genuine conviction of sin, with an abhorrence of it; nor could it stay for a moment the cure for a sin-stricken conscience when God was pleased to apply it. Before his conviction of sin, his troubles tended to bring him to despair and self-destruction. Afterwards, they led him to acknowledge his desert, and justify God. In the former nothing was visible but the sorrow of the world that worketh death; in the latter was manifested repentance unto salvation not to be repented of.]

I CANNOT recollect that till the month of December, in the 32nd year of my life, I had ever any serious impressions of the religious kind, or at all bethought myself of the things of my salvation, except in two or three instances. The first was of so transitory

a nature, and passed when I was so very young, that, did I not intend what follows for a history of my heart, so far as religion has been its object, I should hardly mention it.

At six years old I was taken from the nursery, and from the immediate care of a most indulgent mother, and sent to a considerable school in Bedfordshire. Here I had hardships of different kinds to conflict with, which I felt more sensibly in proportion to the tenderness with which I had been treated at home. But my chief affliction consisted in my being singled out from all the other boys by a lad about 15 years of age, as a proper object upon whom he might let loose the cruelty of his temper. I choose to forbear a particular recital of the many acts of barbarity with which he made it his business continually to persecute me. It will be sufficient to say that he had, by his savage treatment of me, impressed such a dread of his figure upon my mind, that I well remember being afraid to lift up my eyes upon him higher than his knees, and that I knew him by his shoe-buckles better than any other part of his dress. May the Lord pardon him, and may we meet in glory!

One day as I was sitting alone on a bench in the school, melancholy, and almost ready to weep at the recollection of what I had already suffered, and expecting at the same time my tormentor every moment, these words of the psalmist came into my mind, "I will not be afraid of what man can do unto me." It was applied to my own case with a degree of trust and confidence in God that would have been no disgrace to a truly experienced Christian. Instantly I perceived in myself a briskness of spirits, and a cheerfulness, which I had never before experienced; and took several paces up and down the room with joyful alacrity,—*his* gift in whom I trusted. Happy had it been for me if this early instance of a dependence on a blessed God had been frequently repeated in me. But, alas! it was the first and last instance of the kind between infancy and manhood. The cruelty of this boy, which he had long practised in so secret a manner that no creature suspected it, was at length discovered. He was expelled from the school, and I was taken from it.

From hence, at eight years old, I was sent to Mr. D., an eminent surgeon and oculist, having very weak eyes, and being in danger of losing one of them. I continued a year in this family, where religion was neither known nor practised; and from thence was despatched to Westminster. Whatever seeds of religion I might carry thither, before my seven years' apprenticeship to the classics was expired, they were all marred and corrupted. The duty of the school-boy swallowed up every other; and I acquired Latin and Greek at the expense of a knowledge much more important.

Here occurred the second instance of serious consideration. As I was crossing St. Margaret's churchyard late one evening, I saw a glimmering light in the midst of it, which excited my curiosity. Just as I arrived at the spot, a grave-digger, who was at work by the light of his lantern, threw up a skull, which struck

me upon the leg. This little incident was an alarm to my conscience ; for that evening may be remembered among the best religious documents which I received at Westminster. The impression, however, presently went off, and I became so forgetful of mortality that, strange as it may seem, surveying my activity and strength, and observing the evenness of my pulse, I began to entertain, with no small complacency, a notion that perhaps I might never die ! This notion was, however, but very short-lived ; for I was soon after struck with a lowness of spirits, uncommon at my age, and frequently had intimations of a consumptive habit. I had skill enough to understand their meaning, but could never prevail upon myself to disclose them to any one ; for I thought any bodily infirmity a disgrace, especially a consumption. This messenger of the Lord, however, did his errand, and perfectly convinced me I was mortal.

That I may do justice to the place of my education, I must relate one mark of religious discipline, which, in my time, was observed at Westminster ; I mean the pains which Dr. Nicholls took to prepare us for confirmation. The old man acquitted himself of this duty like one who had a deep sense of its importance ; and I believe most of us were struck by his manner, and affected by his exhortation. For my own part, I then, for the first time, attempted prayer in secret ; but being little accustomed to that exercise of the heart, and having very childish notions of religion, I found it a difficult and painful task ; and was even then frightened at my own insensibility. This difficulty, though it did not subdue my good purposes till the ceremony of confirmation was past, soon after entirely conquered them. I relapsed into a total forgetfulness of God, with the usual disadvantage of being more hardened for having been softened to no purpose.

At 12 or 13 I was seized with the small-pox. I only mention this to show that at that early age my heart was become proof against the ordinary means which a gracious God employs for our chastisement. Though I was severely handled by the disease, and in imminent danger, yet neither in the course of it, nor during my recovery, had I any sentiment of contrition, any thought of God or eternity. On the contrary, I was scarcely raised from the bed of pain and sickness before the emotions of sin became more violent in me than ever, and the devil seemed rather to have gained than lost an advantage over me, so readily did I admit his suggestions, and so passive was I under them.

By this time I became such an adept in the infernal art of lying, that I was seldom guilty of a fault for which I could not, at a very short notice, invent an apology, capable of deceiving the wisest. These, I know, are called school-boy's tricks ; but a total depravity of principle, and the work of the father of lies, are universally at the bottom of them.

At the age of 18, being tolerably furnished with grammatical knowledge, but as ignorant in all points of religion as the satchel at my back, I was taken from Westminster ; and having spent

about nine months at home, was sent to acquire the practice of the law with an attorney. There I might have lived and died, without hearing or seeing anything that might remind me of a single act of worship, had it not been that I was at liberty to spend my leisure time (which was well nigh all my time) at my uncle's, in Southampton Row. By this means I had indeed an opportunity of seeing the inside of a church, whither I went with the family on Sundays, which probably I should otherwise never have seen.

At the expiration of this term, I became, in a manner, complete master of myself; and took possession of a complete set of chambers in the Temple, at the age of 21. This being a critical season of my life, and one upon which much depended, it pleased my all-merciful Father in Christ Jesus to give a check to my rash and ruinous career of wickedness at the very outset.

I was struck, not long after my settlement in the Temple, with such a dejection of spirits as none but they who have felt the same can have the least conception of. Day and night I was upon the rack, lying down in horror, and rising up in despair. I presently lost all relish for those studies to which I had before been closely attached; the classics had no longer any charms for me. I had need of something more salutary than amusement; but I had no one to direct me where to find it.

At length I met with Herbert's Poems; and, Gothic and uncouth as they are, I yet found in them a strain of thought which I could not but admire. This was the only author I had any delight in reading. I pored over him all day long; and though I found not in them what I might have found,—a cure for my malady, yet it never seemed so much alleviated as while I was reading him. At length I was advised by a very near and dear relative to lay him aside, for he thought such an author more likely to nourish my disorder than to remove it.

In this state of mind I continued near a twelvemonth, when, having experienced the inefficacy of all human means, I at length betook myself to God in prayer. Such is the rank our Redeemer holds in our esteem that we never resort to him but in the last instance, when all creatures have failed to succour us! My hard heart was at length softened, and my stubborn knees brought to bow. I composed a set of prayers, and made frequent use of them. Poor as my faith was, the Almighty, who will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, was graciously pleased to hear me.

A change of scene was recommended to me; and I embraced an opportunity of going with some friends to Southampton, where I spent several months. Soon after our arrival we walked to a place called Freemantle, about a mile from the town. The morning was clear and calm; the sun shone bright upon the sea; and the country on the borders of it was the most beautiful I had ever seen. We sat down upon an eminence at the end of that arm of the sea which runs between Southampton and the New

Forest. Here it was, on a sudden, as if another sun had been kindled that instant in the heavens, on purpose to dispel sorrow and vexation of spirit, I felt the weight of all my misery taken off; my heart became light and joyful in a moment; I could have wept with transport had I been alone. I must needs believe that nothing less than the Almighty *fiat* could have filled me with such inexpressible delight; not by a gradual dawning of peace, but, as it were, with a flash of his life-giving countenance. I think I remember something like a glow of gratitude to the Father of mercies for this unexpected blessing; and that I ascribed it to his gracious acceptance of my prayers. But Satan and my own wicked heart quickly persuaded me that I was indebted for my deliverance to nothing but a change of scene, and the amusing varieties of the place. By this means he turned the blessing into a poison; teaching me to conclude that nothing but a continued circle of diversion and indulgence of appetite could secure me from a relapse.

Upon this hellish principle, as soon as I returned to London, I burnt my prayers; and away went all thoughts of devotion and of dependence upon God my Saviour. Surely it was of his mercy that I was not consumed. Glory be to his grace!

Two deliverances from danger were experienced without making any impression. Having spent about 12 years in the Temple, in an uninterrupted course of sinful indulgence, and my associates and companions being either, like myself, professed Christians, or professed infidels, I obtained at length so complete a victory over my conscience that all remonstrances from that quarter were in vain, and, in a manner, silenced; though sometimes, indeed, a question would arise in my mind, whether it were safe to proceed any farther in a course so plainly and utterly condemned in the Word of God. I saw clearly that if the gospel were true, such a conduct must inevitably end in my destruction; but I saw not by what means I could change my Ethiopian complexion, or overcome such an inveterate habit of rebelling against God.

The next thing that occurred to me, at such a time, was a doubt whether the gospel were true or false. To this succeeded many an anxious wish for the decision of this important question; for I foolishly thought that obedience would presently follow, were I but convinced that it was worth while to attend to it. Having no reason to expect a miracle, and not hoping to be satisfied with anything less, I acquiesced, at length, in favour of that devilish conclusion, that the only course I could take to secure my present peace was to wink hard against the prospect of future misery, and to resolve to banish all thoughts of a subject upon which I thought to so little purpose. Nevertheless, when I was in the company of deists and heard the gospel blasphemed, I never failed to assert the truth of it with much vehemence of disputation; for which I was the better qualified, having been always an industrious and diligent inquirer into the evidences by which it was externally supported. I think

I once went so far into a controversy of this kind as to assert that I would gladly submit to have my right hand cut off, so that I might but be enabled to live according to the gospel. Thus have I been employed, when half intoxicated, in vindicating the truth of Scripture, while in the very act of rebellion against its dictates! Lamentable inconsistency of a convinced judgment with an unsanctified heart! An inconsistency, indeed, evident to others as well as myself, inasmuch as a deistical friend of mine, with whom I was disputing upon the subject, cut short the matter by alleging that if what I said were true, I was certainly damned by my own showing.

By this time my patrimony being well nigh spent, and there being no appearance that I should ever repair the damage by a fortune of my own getting, I began to be a little apprehensive of approaching want. It was, I imagine, under some apprehensions of this kind, that I one day said to a friend of mine, "If the clerk of the journals of the House of Lords should die, I had some hopes that my kinsman, who had the place in his disposal, would appoint me to succeed him." We both agreed that the business of that place, being transacted in private, would exactly suit me; and both expressed an earnest wish for his death that I might be provided for. Thus did I covet what God had commanded me not to covet; and involved myself in still deeper guilt by doing it in the spirit of a murderer.

It pleased the Lord to give me my heart's desire, and in it and with it an immediate punishment for my crime. The poor man died; and by his death, not only the clerkship of the journals became vacant, but it became necessary to appoint new officers to two other places, jointly, as deputies to Mr. Grey, who at this time resigned. These were the office of reading clerk, and the clerkship of the committees, of much greater value than that of the journals. The patentee of these appointments (whom I pray to God to bless for his benevolent intention to serve me) called on me at my chambers, and having invited me to take a turn with him in the garden, there made me an offer of the two most profitable places; intending the other for his friend Mr. A.

Dazzled by so splendid a proposal, and not immediately reflecting upon my incapacity to execute a business of so public a nature, I at once accepted it; but at the same time (such was the will of him whose hand was in the whole matter) seemed to receive a dagger in my heart. The wound was given, and every moment added to the smart of it. All the considerations by which I endeavoured to compose my mind to its former tranquillity did but torment me the more; proving miserable comforters and counsellors of no value. I returned to my chambers thoughtful and unhappy; my countenance fell; and my friend was astonished, instead of that additional cheerfulness he might so reasonably expect, to find an air of deep melancholy in all I said or did.

Having been harassed in this manner, by day and night, for the space of a week, perplexed between the apparent folly of

casting away the only visible chance I had of being well provided for, and the impossibility of retaining it, I determined at length to write a letter to my friend, though he lodged in a manner at the next door, and we generally spent the day together. I did so, and therein begged him to accept my resignation, and to appoint Mr. A. to the places he had given me, and permit me to succeed Mr. A. I was well aware of the disproportion between the value of his appointment and mine; but my peace was gone; pecuniary advantages were not equivalent to what I had lost; and I flattered myself that the clerkship of the journals would fall fairly and easily within the scope of my abilities. Like a man in a fever, I thought a change of posture would relieve my pain; and as the event will show, was equally disappointed. At length I carried my point, my friend, in this instance, preferring the gratification of my desires to his own interest; for nothing could be so likely to bring a suspicion of bargain and sale upon his nomination, which the Lords would not have endured, as the appointment of so near a relative to the least profitable office, while the most valuable one was being allotted to a stranger. The matter being thus settled, something like a calm took place in my mind.

I was, indeed, not a little concerned about my character, being aware that it must needs suffer by the strange appearance of my proceeding. This, however, being but a small part of the anxiety I had laboured under, was hardly felt when the rest was taken off. I thought my path towards an easy maintenance was now plain and open, and for a day or two was tolerably cheerful. But, behold, the storm was gathering all the while; and the fury of it was not the less violent from this gleam of sunshine.

In the beginning a strong opposition to my friend's right of nomination began to show itself. A powerful party was formed among the Lords to thwart it, in favour of an old enemy to the family, though one much indebted to his bounty; and it appeared plain that if we succeeded at last, it could only be by fighting our ground by inches. Every advantage, I was told, would be sought for, and eagerly seized, to disconcert us. I was bid to expect an examination at the bar of the House, touching my sufficiency for the post I had taken. Being necessarily ignorant of the nature of that business, it became expedient that I should visit the office daily, in order to qualify myself for the strictest scrutiny. All the horror of my fears and perplexities now returned; a thunderbolt would have been as welcome to me as this intelligence. I knew to demonstration that upon these terms the clerkship of the journals was no place for me. To require my attendance at the bar of the House, that I might there publicly entitle myself to the office, was, in effect, to exclude me from it. In the meantime the interest of my friend, the causes of his choice, and my own reputation and circumstances, all urged me forward; all pressed me to undertake that which I saw to be impracticable. They whose spirits are formed like mine, to whom

a public exhibition of themselves, on any occasion, is mortal poison, may have some idea of the horror of my situation; others can have none. My continual misery at length brought on a nervous fever; quiet forsook me by day, and peace by night; a finger raised against me was more than I could stand against.

In this posture of mind I attended regularly at the office; where, instead of a soul upon the rack, the most active spirits were essentially necessary to my purpose. I expected no assistance from any one there, all the inferior clerks being under the influence of my opponent; accordingly I received none. The journal books were indeed thrown open to me; a thing which could not be refused; and from which, perhaps, a man in health, and with a head turned to business, might have gained all the information he wanted. But it was not so with me. I read without perception, and was so distressed that had every clerk in the office been my friend, it would have availed me little; for I was not in a condition to receive instruction, much less to elicit it out of manuscripts, without direction.

Many months went over me thus employed, constant in the use of means, despairing as to the issue. The feelings of a man when he arrives at the place of execution are probably much as mine were every time I set my foot in the office, which was every day for more than half a year together.

At length, the vacation being pretty far advanced, I made shift to get into the country, and repaired to Margate. There, by the help of cheerful company, a new scene, and the intermission of my painful employment, I presently began to recover my spirits; though even here, for some time after my arrival (notwithstanding, perhaps, the preceding day had been spent agreeably, and without any disturbing recollection of my circumstances) my first reflections when I awoke in the morning were horrible, and full of wretchedness. I looked forward to the approaching winter, and regretted the flight of every moment which brought it nearer, like a man borne away by a rapid torrent into a stormy sea, whence he sees no possibility of returning, and where he knows he cannot subsist. At length, indeed, I acquired such a facility of turning away my thoughts from the ensuing crisis that for weeks together I hardly adverted to it at all. But the stress of the tempest was yet to come, and was not to be avoided by any resolution of mine to look another way.

“How wonderful are the works of the Lord, and his ways past finding out!” Thus was he preparing me for an event which I had least of all expected, even the reception of his blessed gospel, working by means which in all human contemplation must needs seem directly opposite to that purpose, but which, in his wise and gracious disposal, have, I trust, effectually accomplished it.

About the beginning of Oct., 1763, I was again required to attend the office, and to prepare for the push. This no sooner took place than all my misery returned. Again I visited the scene of ineffectual labours; again I felt myself pressed by necessity on

either side, with nothing but despair in prospect. To this dilemma was I reduced,—either to keep possession of the office to the last extremity, and, by so doing, expose myself to a public rejection for insufficiency (for the little knowledge I had acquired would have quite forsaken me at the bar of the House), or else to fling it up at once, and by this means run the hazard of ruining my benefactor's right of appointment, by bringing his discretion into question. In this situation such a fit of passion has sometimes seized me, when alone in my chambers, that I have cried aloud, and cursed the hour of my birth, lifting up my eyes to heaven at the same time, not as a suppliant, but in the hellish spirit of rancorous reproach and blasphemy against my Maker. A thought would sometimes come across my mind that my sins had perhaps brought this distress upon me; that the hand of divine vengeance was in it; but, in the pride of my heart, I presently acquitted myself, and thereby implicitly charged God with injustice, saying, "What sins have I committed to deserve this?"

I saw plainly that God alone could deliver me, but was firmly persuaded that he would not, and therefore omitted to ask it. Ask it, indeed, at his hands I would not; but, as Saul sought to the witch, so did I to the physician, Dr. Heberdon; and was as diligent in the use of drugs as if they would have healed my wounded spirit, or have made the rough places plain before me. I made, indeed, one effort of a devotional kind; for having found a prayer or two, I said them a few nights, but with so little expectation of prevailing that way that I soon laid aside the book, and with it all thoughts of God and hopes of remedy.

I now began to look upon madness as the only chance remaining. I had a strong foreboding that so it would one day fare with me; and I wished for it earnestly, and looked forward with impatient expectation. My chief fear was that my senses would not fail me time enough to excuse my appearance at the bar of the House of Lords, which was the only purpose I wanted it to answer. Accordingly the day of decision drew near, and I was still in my senses; though in my heart I had formed many wishes, and by word of mouth expressed many expectations to the contrary.

Now came the grand temptation, the point to which Satan had all the while been driving me,—the dark and hellish purpose of self-murder. I grew more sullen and reserved, fled from all society, even from my most intimate friends, and shut myself up in my chambers. The ruin of my fortune, the contempt of my relations and acquaintance, the prejudice I should do to my patron, were all urged upon me with irresistible energy. Being reconciled to the apprehension of madness, I began to be reconciled to the apprehension of death; though formerly in my happiest hours I had never been able to glance a single thought that way without shuddering at the idea of dissolution. I now wished for it, and found myself but little shocked at the idea of

procuring it myself. Perhaps, thought I, there is no God; or, if there be, the Scriptures may be false; if so, then God has nowhere forbidden suicide. I considered life as my property, and therefore at my own disposal. Men of great name, I observed, had destroyed themselves, and the world still retained the profoundest respect for their memories. But above all, I was persuaded to believe that if the act were ever so unlawful, and even supposing Christianity to be true, my misery in hell itself would be more supportable.

I well recollect, too, that when I was about 11 years of age, my father desired me to read a vindication of self-murder, and give him my sentiments upon the question. I did so, and argued against it. My father heard my reasons, and was silent, neither approving nor disapproving, from whence I inferred that he sided with the author against me; though, all the time, I believe the true motive for his conduct was that he wanted, if he could, to think favourably of the state of a departed friend, who had some years before destroyed himself, and whose death had struck him with the deepest affliction. But this solution of the matter never once occurred to me; and the circumstance now weighed mightily with me.

At this time I fell into company, at a chop-house, with an elderly, well-looking gentleman, whom I had often seen there before, but had never spoken to. He began the discourse, and talked much of the miseries he had suffered. This opened my heart to him; I freely and readily took part in the conversation. At length self-murder became the topic; and in the result we agreed that the only reason why some men were content to drag on their sorrows with them to the grave, and others were not, was that the latter were endued with a certain indignant fortitude of spirit, teaching them to despise life, which the former wanted. Another person, whom I met at a tavern, told me that he had made up his mind about that matter, and had no doubt of his liberty to die as he saw convenient; though, by the way, the same person, who has suffered many and great afflictions since, is still alive. Thus were the emissaries of the throne of darkness let loose upon me. Blessed be the Lord, who has brought much good out of all this evil! This concurrence of sentiment in men of sense, unknown to each other, I considered as a satisfactory decision of the question, and determined to proceed accordingly.

One evening, in Nov., 1763, as soon as it was dark, affecting as cheerful and unconcerned an air as possible, I went into an apothecary's shop, and asked for a half-ounce phial of laudanum. The man seemed to observe me narrowly; but if he did, I managed my voice and countenance so as to deceive him. The day that required my attendance at the bar of the House being not yet come, and about a week distant, I kept my bottle close in my side-pocket, resolved to use it when I should be convinced there was no other way of escaping. This, indeed, seemed evident

already, but I was willing to allow myself every possible chance of that sort, and to protract the horrid execution of my purpose till the last moment. But Satan was impatient of delay.

The day before the period above mentioned arrived, being at Richard's coffee-house at breakfast, I read the newspaper, and in it a letter, which, the further I perused it, the more closely it engaged my attention. I cannot now recollect the purport of it, but before I had finished it, it appeared demonstratively true to me that it was a libel or satire upon me. The author appeared to be acquainted with my purpose of self-destruction, and to have written that letter on purpose to secure and hasten the execution of it. My mind, probably, at this time began to be disordered. However it was, I was certainly given up to a strong delusion. I said within myself, "Your cruelty shall be gratified; you shall have your revenge;" and, flinging down the paper in a fit of strong passion, I rushed hastily out of the room, directing my steps towards the fields, where I intended to find some house to die in; or if not, determined to poison myself in a ditch, when I should meet with one sufficiently retired.

Before I had walked a mile in the fields, a thought struck me, that I might yet spare my life!—that I had nothing to do but to sell what I had in the funds (which might be done in an hour),—go on board a ship, and transport myself to France. There, when every other way of maintenance should fail, I promised myself a comfortable asylum in some monastery, an acquisition easily made by changing my religion. Not a little pleased with this expedient, I returned to my chambers to pack up all that I could at so short a notice; but while I was looking over the portmanteau, my mind changed again, and self-murder was recommended to me once more in all its advantages.

Not knowing where to poison myself,—for I was liable to continual interruption in my chambers from my laundress and her husband,—I laid aside that intention, and resolved upon drowning. For that purpose, I immediately took a coach, and ordered the man to drive to the Tower Wharf, intending to throw myself into the river from the Custom-house Quay. It would be strange, should I omit to observe here how I was continually hurried away from such places as were most favourable to my design, to others where it was almost impossible to execute it;—from the fields, where it was improbable that anything should happen to prevent me, to the Custom-house Quay, where everything of that kind was to be expected; and this by a sudden impulse, which lasted just long enough to call me back again to my chambers, and which was then immediately withdrawn. Nothing ever appeared more feasible than the project of going to France, till it had served its purpose; and then, in an instant, it appeared impracticable and absurd, even to a degree of ridicule.

My life, which I had called my own, and claimed as a right to dispose of, was kept for me by him whose property indeed it was, and who alone had a right to dispose of it. This is not the only

occasion on which it is proper to make this remark; others will offer themselves in the course of this narrative, so fairly that the reader cannot overlook them.

I left the coach upon the Tower Wharf, intending never to return to it; but upon coming to the Quay, I found the water low, and a porter seated upon some goods there, as if on purpose to prevent me. This passage to the bottomless pit being mercifully shut against me, I returned to the coach, and ordered the man to drive back again to the Temple. I drew up the shutters, once more had recourse to the laudanum, and determined to drink it off directly; but God had otherwise ordained. A conflict that shook me to pieces suddenly took place; not properly a trembling, but a convulsive agitation, which deprived me in a manner of the use of my limbs; and my mind was as much shaken as my body. Distracted between the desire of death, and the dread of it, twenty times I had the phial to my mouth, and as often received an irresistible check; and even at the time it seemed to me that an invisible hand swayed the bottle downwards, as often as I set it against my lips. I well remember that I took notice of this circumstance with some surprise, though it effected no change in my purpose. Panting for breath, and in an horrible agony, I flung myself back in a corner of the coach. A few drops of laudanum which had touched my lips, besides the fumes of it, began to have a stupefying effect upon me.

Regretting the loss of so fair an opportunity, yet utterly unable to avail myself of it, I determined not to live; and already half dead with anguish, I once more returned to the Temple. Instantly I repaired to my room, and having shut both the outer and inner door, prepared myself for the last scene of the tragedy. I poured the laudanum into a small basin, set it on a chair by the bedside, half undressed myself, and lay down between the blankets, shuddering with horror at what I was about to perpetrate. I reproached myself bitterly with folly and rank cowardice, for having suffered the fear of death to influence me as it had done; and was filled with disdain at my own pitiful timidity. But still something seemed to overrule me, and to say, "*Think what you are doing!—Consider and live.*"

At length, however, with the most confirmed resolution, I reached forth my hand towards the basin, when the fingers of both hands were so closely contracted as if bound with a cord, and became entirely useless. Still, indeed, I could have made shift with both hands, dead and lifeless as they were, to have raised the basin to my mouth; for my arms were not at all affected. But this new difficulty struck me with wonder; it had the air of a divine interposition. I lay down in bed again to muse upon it; and while thus employed, I heard the key turn in the outer door, and my laundress's husband came in. By this time the use of my fingers was restored to me,—I started up hastily, dressed myself, hid the basin; and, affecting as com-

posed an air as I could, walked out into the dining-room. In a few minutes I was left alone; and now, unless God had evidently interposed for my preservation, I should certainly have done execution upon myself, having a whole afternoon before me.

Both the man and his wife being gone, outward obstructions were no sooner removed than new ones arose within. The man had just shut the door behind him, when the convincing spirit came upon me, and a total alteration in my sentiments took place. The horror of the crime was immediately exhibited to me in so strong a light that, being seized with a kind of furious indignation, I snatched up the basin, poured away the laudanum into a phial of foul water, and not content with that, flung the phial out of the window. This impulse, having served the present purpose, was withdrawn.

I spent the rest of the day in a kind of stupid insensibility, undetermined as to the manner of dying, but still bent on self-murder as the only possible deliverance. That sense of the enormity of the crime which I had just experienced, entirely left me; and unless my eternal Father in Christ Jesus had interposed to disannul my covenant with death, and my agreement with hell,—because I was for ever included in the covenant of mercy,—I had at this time been a companion of devils, and the just object of his boundless vengeance.

In the evening a most intimate friend called upon me, and felicitated me on the happy resolution which he had heard I had taken, to stand the brunt, and keep the office. I knew not whence this intelligence arose; but did not contradict it. We conversed awhile with a real cheerfulness on his part, and an affected one on mine; and when he left me, I said in my heart, "I shall see thee no more!"

Behold into what extremities a *good sort of man* may fall! Such was I, in the estimation of those who knew me best. A decent outside is all a good-natured world requires. Thus equipped, though all within be rank atheism, rottenness of heart, and rebellion against the blessed God, we are said to be good enough; and if *we* are damned, alas! who shall be saved? Reverse this charitable reflection, and say, if a *good sort of man* be saved, who then shall perish? and it comes much nearer the truth. But this is a hard saying; and the world cannot bear it.

(To be concluded.)

God is not more niggardly in giving than he is in promising.—*Romaine.*

THE consciousness of that unceasing warfare with which the child of God is exercised day by day, and will be exercised while travelling through this howling wilderness, O how it doth endear the Person of Christ, and render him increasingly precious, as he becomes increasingly necessary to bring through and bring home all his redeemed to glory! With what endearment of affection will Jesus daily and hourly appear more and more lovely, as the soul daily and hourly feels the need of Jesus amidst the conflicts of sin and Satan!—*Hawker.*

ANTICIPATIONS OF GLORY; AND FEARFUL FOREBODINGS FOR SCOTLAND.

THE consolation of the Holy Ghost be multiplied unto you by Jesus Christ. Often and many times, Christian and elect lady, I have desired the opportunity to be comforted with that consolation wherewith it hath pleased God, of his free grace and mercy, to fill and furnish you. Your remembrance is very sweet and comfortable to my very soul. Since the time I knew you in Christ Jesus I have even been mindful of you unto the Lord; and now, not being able to refrain any longer, I could not omit this occasion; not knowing how long it may please the Lord to continue my being in this tabernacle, or give me further occasion of writing to any.

Although I have not great matter at this time, yet, in remembrance of your labour of love, hope, and patience, I must needs salute your ladyship, knowing assuredly you are the chosen of God, set apart before ever the world was, to that glorious and eternal inheritance. Being thus comforted in your faith and hope, I am fully assured, though we never have the occasion of meeting here, yet we shall reign together in the world to come.

My desire to remain here is not great, knowing that so long as I am in this house of clay I am absent from God; and if it were dissolved, I look for a building, "not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." For in this I groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with my house which is from heaven. If so be that being clothed I shall not be found naked. For I that am within this tabernacle do often groan and sigh within myself, being oftentimes burdened; not for that I would be unclothed, but clothed upon; that mortality might be swallowed up of life. (2 Cor. v. 1-4.) I long to eat of that Tree which is planted in the midst of the paradise of God; and to drink of the pure river, clear as crystal, that runs through the streets of the New Jerusalem. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." I long to be refreshed with the souls of them that are under the altar, who were "slain for the Word of God, and the testimony which they held;" and to have those long, white robes given me, that I may walk in white raiment with those glorious saints who have "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Why should I think it a strange thing to be removed from this place to that? wherein my Hope, my Joy, my Elder Brother, my Crown, my Head, my Father, my Comforter, and all the glorious saints are; and where the song of Moses and of the Lamb are sung joyfully; where we shall not be compelled to sit by the rivers of Babylon, and to hang our harps upon the willow-trees; but shall take them up and sing the Hallelujah!

“Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” What is there under the old vault of the heavens, and in this old worn earth which is under the “bondage of corruption,” groaning and travelling in pain, and shooting out the head, looking, waiting, and longing for the redemption of the sons of God?—What is there, I say, that should make one desire to remain here?

I expect that “new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness,” wherein I shall rest for evermore. I look to get entry into the New Jerusalem, at one of these twelve gates, whereupon are written the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. I know that Christ Jesus hath prepared them for me. Why may I not then, with boldness in his blood, step into that glory, where my Head and Lord hath gone before me? Jesus Christ is the Door, and the Porter; who then shall hold me out? Will he let them perish for whom he died? Will he let them, poor sheep, be plucked out of his hand, for whom he hath laid down his life? Who shall lay anything to the charge of the man for whom Christ hath died, or rather risen again? I know I have grievously transgressed; but “where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound.” I know my sins are red as scarlet and crimson, yet the red blood of Christ, my Lord, can make them as white as snow or wool. “Whom have I in heaven but thee?” Or whom desire I in the earth besides thee? O thou, the Fairest among the children of men, the Light of the Gentiles, the Glory of the Jews, the Life of the dead, the Joy of angels and saints, my soul panteth to be with thee. I will put my spirit into thy hands; and thou wilt not put me out of thy presence. I will come unto thee; for thou castest away none that come unto thee. O thou, the Delight of mankind! Thou camest to seek and to save that which was lost. Thou, seeking me, hast found me; and now, being found by thee, I hope, O Lord, thou wilt not let me perish. I desire to be with thee; and do long for the fruition of thy blessed presence, and the joy of thy countenance. Thou, the only good Shepherd, art full of grace and truth; therefore I trust thou wilt not thrust me out of the door of grace. “The law was given by Moses; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” “Who shall separate *me* from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?” . . . Nay, in all these things I am more than conqueror, through thy Majesty who hast loved me. “For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers . . . nor any other creature shall be able to separate *me* from the love” of the Majesty, “which is in Christ Jesus *my* Lord.” (Rom. viii. 35–39.) I refuse not to die with thee, that I may live with thee. I refuse not to suffer with thee, that I may rejoice with thee. Shall not all things be pleasant to me, which may be the last step, by which and upon which I may come unto thee? When shall I be satisfied with thy face?

When shall I be drunk with thy pleasures? Come, Lord Jesus, and tarry not. The Spirit says, "Come;" the bride says, "Come;" even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly, and tarry not.

Why should the multitude of my iniquities, or the greatness of them, affright me? Why should I faint in this my desire to be with thee? The greater sinner I have been, the greater glory will thy grace be to thee unto all eternity. O unspeakable joy! endless, infinite and bottomless comparison! O sea of never-fading pleasures! O love of loves! O the "breadth and length and depth and height" of that love of thine that passeth all knowledge! The love of Jonathan was great indeed to David. It passed the love of women; but thy love, O Lord, passeth all created love! O uncreated love! beginning without beginning, and ending without end. Thou art my Glory, my Joy, and my Gain, and my Crown. Thou hast set me under thy shadow with great delight; and thy fruit is sweet unto my taste. Thou hast brought me into thy banqueting house, and placed me in thy orchard. "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick," and my soul is wounded with love. "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast dove's eyes. Behold, thou art fair, my Beloved; yea, pleasant; also our bed is green. The beams of our house are cedars, and our rafters of fir." How fair and how pleasant art thou, O full of all delights! My heart is ravished with thee. O when shall I see thy face? How long wilt thou delay to be with me as a roe or a young hart, leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills? As a bundle of myrrh be thou to me, and lie all night betwixt my breasts. "Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth." Therefore desire I to go out of this desert, and to come to the place where thou sittest at thy repast, and where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon.

When shall I be filled with his love? Surely, if a man knew how precious it were, he would count all things dross and dung to gain it. Truly I would long for that scaffold, or that axe, or that cord, that might be to me that last step of this my wearisome journey, to go to thee, my Lord. Thou who knowest the meaning of the Spirit, give answer to the speaking, sighing, and groaning of the Spirit. Thou who hast enflamed my heart to speak unto thee in this silent, yet lovely language of ardent and fervent desires, speak again to my heart, and answer my desires which thou hast made me speak unto thee. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth me the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. xv. 55.) What can be troublesome unto me, since my Lord looks upon me with so loving and amiable a countenance? And how greatly do I long for these embracements of my Lord! O that he would "kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! For his love is better than wine." (Song i. 2.) O that my soul were the throne wherein he might dwell eternally! O that my heart

were the temple wherein he might be magnified, and dwell for ever!

All glory be unto my God! Angels and saints, praise ye him. O thou earth, yea, hills and mountains, be glad. You shall not be wearied any more with the burden of corruption, whereunto you have been subject through the wickedness of mankind. Lift up your heads and be glad; for a fire shall make you clean from all your corruption and vanity, wherewith for many years you have been infected. Let the bride rejoice; let all the saints rejoice; for the day of the marriage with the Bridegroom (even the Lamb of God) is at hand; and his fair white robes shall be given her. She shall be arrayed with the golden vestry and needlework of his manifold graces, that shall be put upon her. He who is her Life shall quickly appear, and she shall quickly appear with him in the glory and happiness of a consummate marriage.

But I must remember myself. I know I have been greatly strengthened and sustained in your prayers, honourable lady, and dearly beloved in our Lord Jesus. O may you continue as you have begun, in wrestling with the Lord for me, that Christ may be magnified in my mortal body, whether living or dead; that my soul may be lifted up to the third heavens; that I may taste of these joys that are at the right hand of my heavenly Father; and that with gladness I may let my spirit go thither, where my body shall shortly follow. Who am I that he should first have called me, and then constituted me a minister of the glad tidings of the gospel of salvation these years already; and now, last of all, to be a sufferer for his cause and kingdom?

Now let it be so, that I have fought my fight and run my race; and now, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim. iv. 8), and who witness this,—that Jesus Christ is the King of saints, and that his church is a most free kingdom; yea, as free as any kingdom under heaven; not only to convocate, hold, and keep her meetings and conventions and assemblies, but also to judge of all her affairs in all her meetings and conventions amongst her members and subjects. These two points: 1, That Christ is the Head of his church; 2, That she is free in her government from all other jurisdiction except Christ's,—these two points, I say, are the special causes of our imprisonment, being now convicted as traitors for maintaining thereof. We have been ever waiting with joyfulness to give the last testimony of our blood in confirmation thereof, if it should please our God to be so favourable as to honour us with that dignity. Yea, I do affirm that these two points above written, and all other things which belong to Christ's crown, sceptre, and kingdom, are not subject, nor can be, to any other authority, but to his own altogether. So that I would be most glad to be offered

up as a sacrifice for so glorious a truth. But, alas! I fear that my sins and the abuse of so glorious things as I have found deprive me of so fair a crown. Yet my Lord doth know, if he would call me to it and strengthen me in it, it would be to me the most glorious day and gladdest hour I ever saw in this life. But I am in his hand to do with me whatsoever shall please his Majesty.

It may suffice me I have had so long a time in the knowledge of the gospel; and that I have seen the things that I have seen, and heard the things that I have heard; and through the grace of God I have been so long a witness of these glorious and good news in my weak ministry; and that my witnessing hath not been altogether without fruit and blessing. So that I hope at that day I shall have him to be my Crown, my Glory, my Joy, and Reward; and therefore, boldly I say with Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,"—not in a peaceable dying in my body, but by rendering up to him my spirit, and the sealing and stamping this truth with my blood. I desire not to have it remedied; but let my Lord's will be done.

Now that prophecy is at hand, which these two worthy servants of the Lord, Mr. George Wishart and Mr. John Knox, my father-in-law, spake; which was, *that Christ should be crucified in this kingdom, but glorious should be his resurrection*; as Mr. Knox with his own hand did write upon the margin of Calvin's "Harmony upon the Passion;" which is yet extant. But alas for this kingdom! My testimony now doth not differ from that of many before this time, who said that the kingdom of Scotland should be blood. A furbished and glittering sword is already drawn out of the scabbard, which shall not return until it be made drunk with the blood of the men of this land; first, the heavy intestine sword, and then the sword of the stranger. O doleful Scotland! Well were he that were removed from thee, that his eyes might not see, nor his ears hear all the evils that are to come upon thee! Neither the strong man by his strength, nor the rich man by his riches, nor the nobleman by blood, shall be delivered from the judgments. There is a great sacrifice to be made in Bozrah in thee, O Scotland, of the blood of all sorts in the land. Ephraim shall consume Manasseh, and Manasseh Ephraim; brother against brother; and every man in the judgment of the Lord shall be armed to thrust his sword in the side of his neighbour; and all for the contempt of the glorious gospel. And that blood which was preached to thee, O Scotland, in so plenteous a manner that the like thereof hath not been preached among any nation; therefore thy judgment shall be greater. But the sanctuary must be begun at; and the measure is not fulfilled till the blood of the saints be shed. Then the cries will be great, and will not stay, till they bring the Lord down from heaven, his throne, to see if the sins of Scotland be according to the cry thereof; neither shall there be any subject in the land from the greatest to the meanest guiltless.

The guilt of our blood shall not only lie upon our prince, but also upon our own brethren, bishops, councillors, and commissioners. It is they, even they, that have stirred up our prince against us. We must therefore lay the blame and burden of our blood upon them especially, however the rest above written be partakers of their sins with them. And as to the rest of our brethren, who either by silence approve, or by crying, "Peace, peace," strengthen the arm of the wicked that they cannot return; in the meantime making the heart of the righteous sad; they shall all in like manner be guilty of high treason against the King of kings, the Lord Jesus Christ, his crown and kingdom. Next unto them, all our commissioners, chancellor, president, comptroller, advocate; and next unto them, all that first or last sat in the council, and did not bear plain testimony for Jesus Christ and his kingdom, for which we do suffer. And next unto them, all those who should have at present, and who should at such times, have come and made open testimony of Christ faithfully, although it had been contrary to plain law, and with the hazard of their lives.

When the poor Jews were in such danger that nothing was expected but utter destruction, Queen Esther, after three days' fasting, concluded thus with herself: "I will go in to the king, though it be not according to law; and if I perish, I perish." (Esth. iv. 16.) With this resolution, such as are born chancellors should have said, "Christ's kingdom is now at hand; and I am bound also and sworn by a special covenant* to maintain

* This refers to the "National Covenant" for reformation in Scotland, which was renewed several times in the 16th and 17th centuries. According to Knox and others what was called the first covenant was entered into at Edinburgh, Dec., 1557; the second at Perth, May, 1559; the third at Edinburgh, 1560. What is called the "National Covenant" was entered into in 1581; and subscribed again, 1590; and renewed by the Assembly, 1596; and afterwards sworn with great solemnity by all ranks through the land, 1638. The Solemn League and Covenant was sworn, 1648. These covenants were taken by the king (Charles II.) and others, 1650; and were renewed by a small number of witnesses at Lanark, 1666. Twice in the heat of a 28 years' persecution they were publicly burned, 1662 and 1682.

The first covenant ran in the following terms: ". . . We do therefore promise before the majesty of God and his congregation that we by his grace shall with all diligence continually apply our whole power, substance, and our very lives, to maintain, set forward, and establish the most blessed Word of God and his congregation; and shall labour by all possible means to have faithful ministers, truly and purely to minister Christ's gospel and sacraments to his people. We shall maintain them, nourish them, and defend them, the whole congregation of Christ, by our whole power, and at the hazard of our lives, against Satan and all wicked power, who may intend tyranny and trouble against the said congregation. . . ."

The great fault and, we may say, the bane, at times, of society has been, and still is, a humanly established religion. It is necessarily unscriptural; for the Word of God has never established a national religion but one, that of the Old Testament. That was not human, but of God; and it was removed at the resurrection of Christ. Human establishments of the church become even in the hands of reformers a strange mixture of law and gospel, of New Testament order and human inventions. A national church is a min-

the doctrine and discipline thereof, according to my vocation and power all the days of my life, under all the pains contained in the Book of God, and danger of body and soul, in the day of God's fearful judgment. And, therefore, though I should perish in the cause, yet will I speak for it, and to my power defend it, according to my vocation."

Finally, all those that counsel, command, consent, and allow, are guilty in the sight of our God. But the mourners for these evils, and the faithful of the land, and those who are unfeignedly grieved in heart for all these abominations, those shall be marked as not guilty. (Ez. ix.)

I know not whether I shall have occasion to write again; and therefore by this letter, as my latter will and testament, I give testimony, warning, and knowledge of these things to all men, according to the Lord's direction to the prophet: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman," &c. (Ez. xxxiii. 7.) Therefore I give warning to all men hereby, that no man's blood be required at my hands.

Thus desiring the help of your prayers, with my humble commendations and service in Christ to my lord your husband and all the saints there. The messenger of peace be with you all for evermore. Amen.

Yours to my full power, for the time Christ's prisoner,

Blackness, Jan. 6th, 1606.

JOHN WELCH.

gling of divers seeds, forbidden of God, and cannot have his blessing. The church of Christ is a company of faithful men and women gathered out of the world, who congregate for the express purpose of meeting with the Lord. But we find that even John Knox says in the "Confession of Faith," which was drawn up by him and adopted by the kirk, "We assuredly believe that by baptism we are engrafted into Jesus Christ, to be made partakers of his justice (righteousness), by which our sins are covered and remitted." Baptismal regeneration has a foundation in such a sentiment. A national church requires a national religion; and there being no such religion in God's Word, a fundamental fault ran through the fabric of their system, and was the cause of their universal exhortations to enter into covenant with God.

We are no more advocates for national covenanting than we are for a national church. The reformers were led, in maintaining the covenants, to take up arms for the defence of religion, which time proved to be a serious error. A national church is always upheld by temporal power, as it was and is with Popery. Another evil effect is that as the life of Protestantism declines in an established church it leaves a fabric ready for the return of all the old Popish ceremonies.

We cannot, however, forget the times in which these servants of the Lord lived; the persecutions and trials they endured; and moreover, that they were some of the greatest preachers that ever stood up to proclaim God's truth. Neither can we forget that they stood up to resist a national religion of the most debased kind; and set themselves against it with all their power; and when able, brought temporal power to their aid. And although there is no New Testament authority for binding a nation under an oath to maintain the true faith, it was done by the Scotch reformers and nation to maintain the reformed religion; and as such, nationally, the departure of the church from the reformation is a breach of that oath, which God will be sure to require at her hands.

SPIRITUAL LETTER.

THEM THAT HONOUR ME I WILL HONOUR.

My dear Friend and Brother beloved, in the covenant of mercy and grace, which includes the names of the most guilty and de-prayed of Adam's numerous race, if *mine* is recorded there,—I felt very much comforted and gladdened in reading your kind and savoury letter, as it seemed to me to breathe the Spirit of Christ and love of his holy gospel and his eternal Godhead, Sonship, and ever-precious Name.

My heart greatly rejoiced to find that you had been so sweetly confirmed in what you had before through grace believed, through the instructing energy and power of God, by the Person of the Holy Ghost. None teacheth *like him*. He never taught one of God's children that Jesus Christ was the *eternal Son of God* and then taught another that he was *not*; but always acts in holy harmony with the divine perfections of the Three-One Jehovah.

The Father delights to honour the Son. He loveth the Son. He loveth him for *what*? In the first place he loveth him for what he is in himself, as his only begotten well-beloved and well-pleased-with Son, the Son of his love. That is the very Son of himself, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Ghost, Three distinct Persons in one all-glorious God. And had he never taken our nature upon him, he would have self-existed as the eternal *God the Son*, by whom the worlds were made; for not a single thing was made by other hands than his. Angels bow to the mystery with adoring wonder of the love of the Father to the Son.

“The *first-born* sons of light
Desire in vain its depths to see.
They cannot search the mystery,
Its length, its depth and height.”

Then the Father loveth the Son for what he has done, his obedience to his Father's will. And his darling Son manifested his love to his divine Father in receiving the gift of his children to redeem them from the deplorable ruin that would accrue from the guilty fall of our two first parents. For the Father loved the children with the *self-same* love wherewith he loved his Son.

“With Christ their Lord they share a part
In the affections of his heart;
Nor shall their souls be thence removed
Till he forgets his *First-Beloved*.”

I hope and pray that the dear Spirit of God will help you to maintain this truth, and uphold his glorious Name, the Name of the exalted Man whom the Father delights to honour! It is an awful truth that the very Name of the eternal Son of God is the scorn of men and the rage of devils. But it fills with infinite delight the hearts of his saints, and the ears of God the eternal Father. O what unwearied enmity I have seen and known against it! What scorn, derision, and persecution I have felt in my poor feeble attempts to stem the torrent of opposition against it. O what poor, weak instruments the Lord uses; and yet it

pleased him to work the deliverance of the church at Zoar from the error that had been so long shaking the churches. And when at last the storm burst with such a tremendous crash upon poor old Zoar, to stain the pride of all human glory, he chose such a weak, sinful, polluted worm as myself to purge the error clean from us. And, as dear Mr. Philpot said, this church taking such a firm decided stand had the thanks of all the churches of experimental truth throughout the length and breadth of the land. For I believe it decided the case of many churches throughout the land, by confirming them in the faith of God's eternal Son.

I am quite sure that while you grow in the love of this ever-precious truth, and preach his Name, his Godhead, his Person, and his grace, the Spirit of God will honour you in honouring him. You will suffer much, but your consolation in him will abound; and when favoured with a transient glimpse of his face, you will sing,

“Nor earth, nor seas, nor sun, nor star,
Nor heaven, his full resemblance bear;
His beauties we shall never trace
Till we shall see him face to face.”

O what grace to have the *hope* of seeing that great rising day that shall restore our flesh and

“When all our rising bones shall say,
Lord, who is like to thee?”

And yet I feel myself so unfit to take his blessed Name within my polluted lips, such a base, vile, stupid, hard-hearted sinner as I feel myself to be. It seems too much to believe that I can be chosen of God to eternal salvation. But

“The vilest sinner out of hell,
Who lives to feel his need,
Is welcome to the throne of grace,
The Saviour's blood to plead.”

O how unbelief fights against his love and his promises. O that I could believe and love him more! Lord, help me to believe what I do believe! O help my unbelief!

I am thankful you have been to Zoar; and I believe the Lord will bless your visits to the furtherance of the gospel among the churches.

“Who feel the heaviest load
Will prize forgiveness most.”

The Lord keep you meek and humble, and patient under persecution, which will assuredly be your lot while faithful to his Name and cause. Be afraid of *self*. It is a monster of unfaithfulness and iniquity, and will continually tempt you to forsake the Fountain of living waters to drink the polluted streams of creature good. It is a terrible wilderness to go through; and we are “scarcely saved.” But the only blessed persons are those whose strength is in the Lord, “whose hope the *Lord is*.”

I am, my dear Brother, Yours in this Hope,

D. P. GLADWIN.

109, Commercial Street, Spitalfields, March 9th, 1861.

SUBMISSION.

Now in this solemn hour, O God of grace,
 My soul's best Friend, help me to dedicate
 My all to thee! The eye of feeble sense
 A gloomy catalogue of ills surveys,
 And sheds the tear, as falt'ring accents speak
 My stubborn will not subject yet to thine.
 But thou, great Judge of what is fittest, best,
 Well know'st *how* all is working for my good.
 I would not shrink from my appointed lot;
 Nor charge thee foolishly; nor vainly deem
 The cross *too heavy* that thy *love* ordains.
 No, gracious God! Though earthly members dread
 These pains incessant, and this toil,—my mind,
 Renew'd by energy divine, welcomes
 Thy righteous will. Thou canst not injure me!
 Transgressor though I am of all thy laws,
 By inward thought, if not in outward deed;
 Conceived in sin, and born a child of wrath,
 Jesus my Lord for me has magnified
 Thy righteous law; for me its curse endur'd
 As creature, man or angel, never could!
 Cloth'd in his righteousness, and through his blood,
 I stand discharged before the throne of God
 From spot, from wrinkle, and from ev'ry blame!
 Eternally discharged! Complete in him!
 And with him one in purpose, so in truth,
 Claim justice, infinite as mercy, *mine*,
 And God *my* Father through his dying Son!
 "Cast down but not destroy'd." I bless the hand,
 My Father's hand, which *strengthens* while it *wounds*.
 And should the furnace rage with seven-fold heat,
 My Father's even there! Mighty the waves,
 But mightier he above, who calms the storm!
 Dark and mysterious the pilgrim's way;
 But lo! The "Sun of righteousness" shines forth,
 And cheers my soul with healing in its beams.
 I know the voice that call'd me from the world,
 And in the chamber of affliction, taught
 Eternal truths, on which I love to dwell.
 "The school of suff'ring is the school of light!"
 'Tis here I learn to trample on the world,
 And justly estimate all earthly good.
 'Tis here each hour informs me I must die!
 Whilst here, thy Word assures me I shall *live*!
 Live, when this world's enwrapt in flaming fire,
 And all its transient glories pass'd away!
 ONE WHO WAS AFFLICTED FOR THIRTEEN YEARS.

THERE is but one testimony throughout the Bible.—*Romaine*.

INQUIRIES AND ANSWERS.

I.

Dear Sir,—I see by your remarks you refer to Mr. — as a minister of the gospel, and to his being invited to preach. Will you kindly inform me in your next issue if I am not to consider the ordinances, assembling for prayer, and church discipline, part of the gospel? And if so, are we to look upon a man who sets these aside as a minister of the gospel, in the spirit and proper sense of the word, or of a part of the gospel? Also, is it consistent with the order or rule of the Strict Baptist churches to have a minister again and again to preach who belongs to no church, and unites with no ordinances? Is it not usual to ask a preacher to what church and people he belongs? I am asking these questions for others as well as myself. I am, yours truly,
Sept. 4th, 1882. J. H.

ANSWER.

It is with feelings of deep regret we feel ourselves obliged to answer questions such as the foregoing; because they involve personalities, and give needless pain and offence. "Why, then, answer them?" says one. If we do not, a charge might be brought against us of swerving from the truth; and to prevent this in the present case, an answer appears to us imperative.

We have already said no Strict Baptist would attempt to justify in Mr. — a swerving from the ordinances of God's house. The real question resolves itself into this form:

1. "Is the minister referred to a gospel preacher in the spirit and proper sense of the word?" We have spoken of him as a "minister of the gospel," which has given rise to the question. We ask J. H. if he will undertake to say that Mr. — is not a minister of the gospel? If so, what would he say of Luther, Calvin, Bunyan, Huntington, Berridge, Fowler, Hart, and many others of like character? Are we to pronounce all who differ from us deceived men? Are we to reject the whole of the writings of these men because they are not Strict Baptists? If they are not ministers of the gospel, how can their writings be received as gospel? And after the same rule we ought to expunge every non-Baptist hymn from our hymn-book. It would be of no avail to say that some of these had churches, and held infant sprinkling, and kept what they believed to be ordinances of God's house; for we could not admit that the churches formed on Independent or Open Communion principles were gospel churches in our view as Strict Baptists. All the names above, then, must come to one common level, as not adhering to the ordinances of the gospel. Yet we dare not say they were not ministers of the gospel.

2. "Is it consistent with the order or rule of the Strict Baptist churches to have a minister again and again to preach who belongs to no church, and unites with no ordinances?" It appears that it has been the usual order for Strict Baptists to

invite such to preach to them ; and Strict Baptists have also preached among Independents, as the following will prove from the "G.S.," June, 1839 :

"Mr. Abraham, the Jew, is expected at Manchester on the 9th and 16th, and on the evenings of the 11th and 18th. Also at Liverpool, on the 12th and 13th ; and at Brunswick Chapel, Shelton, Potteries, on the 19th."

"Mr. Gadsby is expected at Brighton on the 2nd and 9th, and one evening in each of the weeks following ; and at Mr. Abraham's chapel, near the City Road, London, on the 16th ; at Godmanchester, on the 19th ; at Leicester, on the 20th ; and at Manchester, on the 23rd."

And the names of Gadsby, Warburton, Philpot, M'Kenzie, and Kershaw appear mixed with the above non-Baptist names, as preaching in harmony together. This, we think, is proof sufficient that Strict Baptist churches have been in the habit of inviting men acknowledged as ministers among them, though not Strict Baptist.

In dealing with the ministry of the Word and God-sent ministers we are brought to a solemn subject. No person has any right to preach the gospel, under any pretence whatsoever, unless he has a divine commission from the Lord. There is an inward or internal call of a man to the ministry, which is the immediate act of God and of God only. Here the hand of man has no authority, neither to the advancement nor obstruction of the workman. In this act God is a sovereign, and takes whom he will ; and it is certain that he gave this internal call to those whose names are produced above as God-sent servants, and yet who have not walked in the outward rule of his Word, as laid down in that divine Oracle. But as they have been commended to the consciences of godly persons, who have felt assured that they were internally called of God to the work, Strict Baptists have united with them in the preaching of the gospel, but no further in their church order. That God gave the persons above named commission to preach we think J. H. will not deny. Moreover, God owned and honoured their ministry. Why he did not bring them to see the ordinance of believers' immersion we cannot tell. We would rather leave it in his hands.

3. "Is it not usual to ask a preacher to what church and people he belongs?" With regard to the usages among *Strict Baptists*, it has been their custom from time immemorial to require a person to exercise his gifts before the church to which he belonged, before he went out to preach elsewhere ; and this appears to us a right mode of procedure in so momentous a matter. Indeed, it looks like an insult to the church where the man is a member for another church or minister to start him in the work without consulting his own church. There has been no such usage allowed in the churches, and it ought not to be practised. Though the internal call is God's act, the external one is that of the church. After a man had received this sanction,

he was then eligible, if required, to take the pastoral office. These were good customs among the old Strict Baptists; but now, how loosely are they practised! Sometimes a man has been preaching for a long time, unknown to the people who have the greatest right to know what "he doeth." And what is worse, the office of pastor is almost banished from the churches, and the supply system substituted in its room. Is this because we are become so deplorably deficient in God-sent men that we are glad to accept whom we can get? Are the supplies believed to be sent of God? If so, why do Strict Baptist churches walk so disorderly as to refuse men as pastors whom God has sent? The supply system openly declares there are but few men worthy to become pastors, or else few churches gracious enough to receive them.

No Strict Baptist in former times was allowed to preach unless he was a member of some church; neither is it right that he should do so, being Strict Baptist. The orderly method of entering upon the office of the ministry is aptly laid down by Dr. Gill; and we will add his words to our own, as most appropriate to satisfy the minds of inquirers on the subject. First, he says, it is required that there should be:

"1. An internal call; which lies in gifts bestowed, and in the furniture of a man's mind, and in the disposition of it to make use of them in the service of God; for God never calls a man to any service but he gives him abilities for it; which, when a man is sensible of, and is satisfied God has bestowed a gift upon him, he cannot be easy to wrap up his talent in a napkin, but is desirous of making use of it in a public manner; not by a mere impulse, through vanity of mind, and with ambitious views and sordid ends; but from a principle of love to the souls of men, and to the glory of God. This is the internal call of which a man's gifts are an evidence to himself and others.

"2. The outward call is not immediately by Christ, as the twelve disciples were called and sent forth by him to preach the gospel; and particularly as the apostle Paul was called to be an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father; but mediately by the church. It being by some means or another made known to the church that such a one is thought to have a gift for public usefulness, the church calls him to exercise it before them, and submit it to their examination and trial. And having sufficiently tried it, and being satisfied of it, the church calls and sends him forth in the name of Christ, to preach the gospel where he may be directed in providence to do it. And being thus called and sent forth, he is eligible to the office of a pastor of a church who shall think fit to choose him.

"*Secondly.* The procedure of instating him into the office of a pastor, or the ordination of him, is in this manner:

"1. He must be a member of a church to whom he is to be ordained as a pastor. So an extraordinary officer, an apostle, was chosen and ordained to be one in the room of Judas, from

among the disciples who had accompanied Christ and his apostles from the baptism of John; and so inferior officers, deacons, were selected out of the church, and appointed to that office, Acts i. 21-23; vi. 3, 5; and so Epaphras, a faithful minister of Christ for the church at Colosse, is said to be *one of you*, a member of that church, Col. i. 7, and iv. 12. One that is not a member of the church cannot be a pastor of it.

“2. His qualifications, such as before observed, must be known by the members of a church, and must be proved and approved of by them. Yea, they must be satisfied that he has gifts for *their* edification; for a man may have gifts for the edification of one church which are not for the edification of another; and this should be known previous to their choice and call of him.

“3. After sufficient trial and due consideration of his gifts, to satisfaction, and after seeking the Lord by prayer, for everything is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer, the church proceeds to the choice and call of him to be their pastor; for every church has a right and power to choose its own officers, pastors, and deacons.

“4. The choice and call being signified to him, he taking proper time, and seeking the Lord also, accepts thereof, and shows a readiness and willingness to take the *oversight* of them, 1 Pet. v. 2; for there must be a mutual consent and agreement in this affair.”

But with regard to persons who are *not Strict Baptists*, we have no authority over them, and could not enforce these regulations. Where these ministers are admitted into our pulpits, their call of God to the ministry is so evidently manifested that we can have no hesitation in hearing them. This is a distinction which has always been observed among the churches; and we see no reason why it should be altered.

II.

Dear Sir,—I wrote to you about the middle of June last, asking for your thoughts through the “Standard” on 1 Cor. vii. 39, and 1 Tim. iii. 11; which you answered in the August number. Allow me to trouble you once more, while I try to make the case clear. I am a member of a church where there is a rule that if a believer marries an unbeliever, they will not have fellowship with him or her. But the church is now divided about it; and the greater part wants to do away with the rule, while the rest would hold to it.

I do not write to know if it would be right for me to take an unbelieving partner; for I hope the Lord the Spirit has given me the desire in my heart if it is his will I should have a partner in life, that he would give me one that was blood-bought and Spirit-taught; for any other would be a snare to me. But my trouble comes from seeing the church of God in such a divided state over (shall I say?) a trifling matter. For I feel that if they were under the sweet leadings of the Spirit, the less they had to do

with the world, the better they would be pleased. And I write knowing that the church must come to a point sooner or later about it.

Fearing I should do wrong, or that I should not understand the following Scriptures, will you please give your thoughts on 1 Cor. vii. 39, where it says, "Only in the Lord?" Also on 1 Tim. iii. 11; if you think the apostle means that the deacon is to have a believing wife, *i.e.*, if he has one at all. And if so, does not the same command rest upon all believers? Also Josh. xxiii. 12; if it has any reference to natural marriage in our day, or not. There are many here who would be glad to have your understanding of the above. Hoping the Lord will guide your heart and pen,

Yours, I hope, in the Love of the Truth,
Wallacetown, Canada, Aug. 20th, 1882.

R. C.

ANSWER.

Marriage was instituted of God in Paradise, and is said to be "honourable in all." (Heb. xiii. 4.) But of all the undertakings of men and women in life, this is one of the greatest importance; because it is for the duration of the life of one of the married persons. And seeing there are many cases in which it fails to hold good for so long a period, with what care and consideration ought it not to be entered upon!

But we have to do with the marriage of Christian people. Is it right for a believer to unite him or herself with an unbeliever? No. Various reasons can be urged against a union of body where there is no union of soul; above all, that it is forbidden in Scripture. And the misery of such unions ought to be a sufficient reason to deter any one from entering into an alliance of so momentous a nature. Let us view the subject in an instance or two of a most difficult character.

1. Two persons become engaged to be married; both are unbelievers. In process of time, and before the marriage has been solemnized, one of them is quickened into divine life. What is to be done? If the engagement is broken, will it not bring a disgrace on the Name of God? Will it commend religion, if a life of suffering is entailed on the rejected person by such an act? These are not light considerations. Yet if the conscience of the quickened party feels so strongly on the matter that it would be to him or her a violation of the precepts of the gospel to proceed a step further, how could the union be desirable? It could not be accomplished in faith; and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." But can it be justifiably broken off? Certainly the greater burden would be in fulfilling the agreement. It is possible to withdraw from it in an honourable way, by showing the other party concerned the grounds of such conduct, and making him or her every compensation that is in one's power.

2. But suppose the believing person is a member, and marries an unbeliever. According to the rule of your church, that member must be separated from church fellowship. This, we think, is

pressing church authority beyond the warrant of Scripture; because it places you in this fix, That you can never forgive the offence so long as the unbelieving partner lives; and we cannot see where any church has jurisdiction in a matter in which repentance cannot be allowed, and forgiveness on that act of repentance. By repentance here we mean a hearty turning from and forsaking of the deed. For open breaches of plain gospel precepts there is no authority to forgive the offender, except he repents and forsakes. And in the case of marriage, the breach being caused by the lasting and binding consequences of a single deed, which is done in the first place considerably for life, there can be no literal forsaking it. Should the offender be restored to the church upon a profession of repentance, he would be restored in the same condition in which and for which he was separated, viz., as a believer united with an unbeliever; and as such the church nullifies its own former judgment.

In our view, therefore, we consider that your rule could not be scripturally borne out. But feeling persuaded God himself will be the judge of such matters, we say to all who are contemplating so serious a step, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!" In nine cases out of ten, though the church should not separate the guilty member for the marriage, the consequences of that marriage finally bring him or her to a separation.

The power of the church to act goes no further than this,—when the occurrence is likely to take place, the offending member should be warned, cautioned, and the probable consequences of the deed be pointed out; and every means used to show him how contrary is his conduct to the Word of God, and that God may probably (as he says) walk contrary to him; and that if he will go headlong, with his eyes open, into such a breach of gospel precepts, the result will be a reaping as he has sown. The church, having gone to the uttermost to prevent the sin, can then only commit that member into the hands of God, who will judge righteously in a matter that is beyond their reach.

We have ourselves known several like cases; and in every one the outward profession became almost abandoned, and the fearful consequences of the sin embittered the remainder of the person's life. Our advice would therefore be to the unmarried believer,—Avoid being drawn into a snare which may be a blight upon your life all your days. It is better to suffer a natural disappointment than to suffer God's displeasure in your soul. This, we think, fully answers your query both as to the rule of your church, and also the 1 Cor. vii. 39: "Only in the Lord."

With regard to 1 Tim. iii. 11, the choice of deacons is set forth in that chapter as an act of the church; and the Holy Spirit, to guide them in that act, describes the qualifications necessary for a deacon's wife. It is plain that the deacon's wife must be a believer. But we are fully aware that in some cases it is difficult, if not impossible, to carry out that regulation. Yet even then we

think that the propriety of the exception would be plainly manifested by there being no other suitable person for the office of deacon. This ought to be an exception, and not a rule; as the children of Israel, who "eat the passover otherwise than it was written." (2 Chron. xxx. 18.) We think that 1 Tim. iii. 11 should be as strictly adhered to as the rules relating to the passover.

The other portion you mention, Josh. xxiii. 12, most certainly bears upon believers in the Christian dispensation. Israel was a typical people, and their law of marriage with strange nations was typical. Besides, the judgment of the Word has decided the point that a believer ought not to marry an unbeliever.

REVIEW.

Regeneration as at Antagonism with New Creation; or, The Razing to its Foundation of the Bulwark of Antinomianism, &c. By William Robertson Aikman, a Servant of Christ, and steadfast Witness to the Truth. Printed for private circulation in the Calvinistic churches. London. 1881.

"A SOUND heart is the life of the flesh." (Prov. xiv. 30.) The Scriptures attribute to the heart deeds which can only be accomplished by the mind; and the assertions of the Bible are made on the best authority,—that of the Holy Spirit. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is 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.) And again: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Pet. i. 21.) Now it is to the spirit, not to the flesh, that the Scriptures direct their testimony. Therefore, there must exist analogous properties in the human heart to that in the spirit which is answerable to it. The mind is undoubtedly most frequently intended by the term *heart*, for if the word *mind* is substituted for *heart*, in most places the sense will remain precisely the same. The heart is not the body, nor is the mind the soul or spirit of man itself. What the soul is, the manner and nature of its existence, is beyond our comprehension.

If the construction of the human heart is examined, the reason why the sacred penmen were led to impute to it the powers of the mind, as reason, will, and affections, may appear more obvious.

The heart may be viewed in its relationship to the body as the roots of a tree to its trunk and branches. The functions of the roots consist in absorbing the aliment and moisture necessary for the growth of the tree, and conveying them through its whole structure. If the roots suck up matter deleterious to its nature, the poison becomes quickly distributed over the whole extent of the tree, and its injurious influence soon makes itself manifest. So likewise the heart receives from the stomach, after they have

passed through a marvellous process, those elements which compose the wonderful fluid, the blood, which contains within itself all the materials required to sustain and renovate the human frame; and the blood, according to the Word of truth, is the life of all flesh: "For the life of all flesh is the blood thereof." (Lev. xvii. 14.)

The work of the heart is to propel the life-supporting, renovating fluid to every part of the system, yielding to every individual and most minute organ of the body its vital, nutritive properties.

It is not necessary for our purpose to describe fully the complex and wonderful structure and curiously wrought apparatus of the human heart. "For thou hast possessed my reins; thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." (Ps. cxxxix. 13-15.) Enough is said to show that if the blood is what it ought to be, and the organs of the body perfect, the heart is really a well of life to the body. But if the blood should be impure, or contain poisonous matter, the heart assumes more the nature of a well of disease and death; for it forces the contaminations along with the blood. There is, moreover, a strong sympathy between the action of the heart and the state of the whole human being, body and soul. It is evident that the heart is affected by circumstances affecting the mind, as well as the mind influenced by the state of the heart.

Being once in company with a medical gentleman, we heard him state that the term *heart*, as used in the sacred Scriptures, conveyed no real sense to a physiologist, inasmuch as the heart had no more powers of consciousness than the arm. This led us to consider carefully what the heart is to the body, and what the mind is to the soul, and what likeness there is in one to the other. And we found, according to the Bible, that what one is, so is the other, as a receiver, circulator, and impulsive power of either health or disease, good or evil. Every one knows that a medical man feels the pulse to ascertain the state of a patient's health. In like manner, we are commanded to try the spirits; and the way to prove them is through the mind, by what it circulates in the person's actions; and to test that by the Word of God.

Mind possessing infinitude within itself, wherein dwells intelligence unlimited, is found to exist in the Divine Being, who is the sole Author of all created minds. Mind, with all the functional powers of will, reason, &c., is found in angels, in whom it dwells in its most pure and energetic capacity, as originally created. Mind also, apart from the animal structure, the brain, which it once possessed, being perfected by grace and glory, exists in "the spirits of just men made perfect." Devils, too,

and lost human souls, retain the powers of the mind, as is fully demonstrated by Satan's reasoning with his Creator concerning Job, and the parable of the rich man in hell. (Lu. xvi. 19-31.) In their conversation is exhibited intelligence, thought, memory, and will; and the Lord Jesus never would have set forth and taught such great truths by a false representation. Besides, the mind of the righteous, enjoying peace with God, fears not death, and is conscious it will not become annihilated as a *willing*, intelligent power. "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord." (2 Cor. v. 8.)

Hence it will be seen that we cannot agree with some men of science, who ascribe to the brain the capacity of reason, &c. Such a conclusion is not borne out by the Word of God and experience. The brain appears necessary for man to communicate his thoughts to his fellow-men, but not to give being to his thoughts. That the mind develops itself, and accomplishes deeds in and by the body, appears correct; and that both the mind and heart receive impressions through the brain and nervous system is also clear. But the seat of the powers of the will, reason, and affections, is rather in the mind itself; for these faculties certainly exist and retain all their force in the soul during the absence of the brain. They are as immortal as the soul, and must rise or sink with it.

From the foregoing conclusions, it would appear that the spirit or soul of man is the proprietor of the mind, and by it the whole soul is biassed in its actions. The mind determines the deeds of the person, and is consequently that which God subjects to trial. Great pretensions to holiness have no weight with God. If the performer of external devotions will but search the Word of truth, he will there find that God loves internal religion, or that which springs from a spiritual mind. (Jno. iv. 23, 24.) As the human heart first receives and then communicates the blood, whether good or bad, to the whole human frame, so likewise does the mind receive either truth or falsehood, and then affect the whole soul by what has entered therein. We wish to lay these truths clearly before our readers, that the confusion and falsehood of the work we are about to notice may be brought to full view, and placed in contrast with the teaching of God's Word.

Through the mind, death at first found a passage to every part of the soul. For although "God created man upright," and endowed him with a mind free from all disposition to evil, his bodily frame, during the state of innocency, offering no obstruction to the right and full development of his immense intelligent powers; yet the father of lies overcame him, and seduced his mind from his rightful Sovereign. (2 Cor. xi. 3.) Entering the garden of Eden, fully bent on mischief, Satan accosted the woman, and commenced his operations with her, and first defiled her pure mind by suggesting a lie: "Ye shall not surely die. For God

doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." (Gen. iii. 4, 5.) Sad knowledge! Concupiscence having entered her mind, she was drawn away of her own lust, and enticed. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food (which was the working of "the lust of the flesh," begotten by the devil; for that could not be good which God had forbidden), and that it was pleasant to the eyes ("the lust of the eyes"), and a tree to be desired to make one wise ("the pride of life"), she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." (Gen. iii. 6.) From that time and circumstance the soul of man has been (by nature) a perverted and darkened habitation of Satan. The carnal mind entered into him, the offspring of Satan, and he became a child of the devil: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." (Jno. viii. 44.) "He that committeth sin is of the devil." (1 Jno. iii. 9.)

This carnal mind is said to be "enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be.*" (Rom. viii. 7.) Enmity to God, therefore, is circulated by the natural mind throughout the whole soul and all its faculties, carrying murder along with it, and working anger in the spirit "without cause," against the children of light. Wherefore all moral influence and restraint are the gift of God; not the fragments of ruined nature.

1. Man's judgment is perverted. Whatever God has declared to be evil, fallen man has esteemed to be good and worthy to be partaken of; and it is pleasant in his eyes; wherefore he admires that which is an abomination to the Lord. His soul is set upon it, believing he may thereby, and only thereby, become wise. But the curse of God rests upon all who live and die in this sin of perversion: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (Isa. v. 20.) Such is the darkness of every unregenerate individual since the fall. For the natural mind, by that awful transgression, lost the light of God, and became darkness itself through the ignorance that took possession of it; and God was rendered to it an unknown object. By the highest pitch of human wisdom to which it is possible for it to rise, it cannot discern its Maker: "For the world by wisdom knew not God." (1 Cor. i. 21.) And again: "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." (1 Cor. ii. 14.)

If a man in this state turn his attention to religion, his mind circulates nothing but death in every performance. Dead works can only be brought forth by the dead. His faith is dead (Jas. ii. 26); and his formal prayers are a mocking insult to his Maker. (Lu. xviii. 9-12.) Nothing can he perform as a living soul; because he is "dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. ii. 1.)

2. His will and affections are corrupt. Consequently, whatever sect he embraces, even if it be "the form of godliness," he cannot, by any moral persuasion, be induced to love disinterestedly the truth, nor its Author. Having a corrupt mind, all its emotions are necessarily impure. Instead of love to God and his neighbour, all those fearful evils recorded in the three first chapters of the Epistle to the Romans are conceived in and performed by it. Spiritual worship is altogether out of the question, and utterly impossible; for there is not the most remote, latent capacity in the natural man to turn himself to God, and serve him with a pure mind. "An evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth evil things;" which are circulated through every faculty of the soul, breeding corrupt passions and actions. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Matt. xii. 34, 35.) One more Scripture shall seal the utter depravity of man: "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." (Isa. i. 5, 6.) Though this is applied to Israel as a kingdom, it is equally said of man individually.

Seeing, then, the total and general depravity of mankind,—for "there is none righteous, no, not one,"—there is an indispensable necessity of a radical change being wrought in the *soul* and all its faculties, before a man can be at peace with God. Being in his natural state a subject of the devil, he must be born of God, and God must be his Father, that he may become a living child of God. (Jno. i. 12, 13.) So it is written: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for *his seed* remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (1 Jno. iii. 9.)

The Lord Jesus Christ had the condition of fallen man in view when he uttered the following important truth: "Ye must be born again." (Jno. iii. 7.) This is a settled point in God's Word. There must be a new-born man, living a new life, having new actions, and, in a word, all must be new. It is essentially necessary that a creature should *be*, before he can be brought to act; and man has no spiritual being until he is vitally united to his spiritual Head, from whom he receives the principle of grace.

This is what the Holy Spirit calls "the *new man*, which after God is *created* (it is a new creation) in righteousness and true holiness." (Eph. iv. 24; Col. iii. 10); a "*new heart*," and "*spirit*" (Ezek. xxxvi. 26; ix. 19); and the "*incorruptible seed*" (1 Pet. i. 2, 3); "the *inward man*" (Rom. vii. 22); and "*mind*," or "*spirit*," in distinction to the "*flesh*." (Jno. iii. 6; Gal. v. 17; Rom. vii. 25.)

No sooner is a man endued with this entirely new and holy principle than the light of truth enters through it with quickening power into the innermost parts of the soul, and commences

a vigorous search, discovering hidden and unthought-of evils, to the terror and amazement of the now awakened conscience. In hopes to appease insulted and offended Majesty, the man promises amendment of life, and vows to forsake the ways of sin. But the Word, which is "quick" (living) in the hand of the Spirit opposes all dead works, and reveals the necessity of a living religion, and spiritual worship. Life, therefore, becomes the incessant pursuit of the new spiritual mind; neither can anything alter its course; and constant is its cry: "Let my soul live; and it shall praise thee."

But the sword of the Spirit makes terrible havoc with the soul and its righteousness. For (1) being "quick and powerful," it ceases to be a dead letter, but executes its threatenings; and like a living person, it explains its own meaning, and extinguishes every other interpretation the mind could have put upon it, rendering it an impossibility for another sense of the Word to be received. (2.) Being "sharper than any two-edged sword," it pierces the heart" (Acts ii. 37), spreading alarm to every faculty of the soul. The Spirit, with his sword, now begins to dissect the man,—his life, and, if he had any, his religion.

1. He divides asunder soul and spirit.

Spirit here means the influence one breathes with his words and actions; that which is communicated to others, and that which pervades the words and actions of the person himself. This spirit God dissects by the Word, and shows it to be as evil as the soul's action; to which we now refer, as what is said of one may be said of the other.

He anatomizes the soul, and declares it to be full of all concupiscence and vitiation; and continually working all manner of inordinate affections in the members. These discoveries produce great consternation in the mind; and to strike deeper dismay, the commandment makes a forcible entry into the soul, saying, "Thou shalt not covet." The motions of sin which have slept undisturbed for a long time are aroused by the law; and their presence and actions being forbidden by the law, it stirs up the enmity of the *carnal mind*; and rising up in direct opposition to the commandment, it is discovered to be determinately bent to do whatsoever is prohibited by the Word of God. "To bring forth fruit unto death" seems now as though it were the soul's only aim. Were it not for some faint, living hope in the atonement, these things would drive the soul into despair. But this gives a plea: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness." (Zech. xiii. 1.)

But the sword of the Spirit makes further disclosures, and reveals the soul's ignorance of God; the folly of its whole career; the loss of original righteousness; and the shame and confusion of face that must inevitably follow all those who are found at the last day without the wedding garment. As Adam and Eve, upon the discovery of their nakedness, "sewed fig-leaves together, and

made themselves aprons;" and yet durst not meet their Maker in the covering they had provided themselves with, but "hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden;"—so the now awakened soul tries to clothe itself with good deeds, thoughts, and desires, and after all, fears to meet God, and would hide its guilty head from the face of the Lord. But no such hiding-place is to be found. Wherefore, guilt seizing the conscience and producing a fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation, the soul exceedingly quakes and trembles at the consequences. The sentence of death is pronounced within, and it feels itself utterly lost; because it is evident that it has sinned against God, and acted perversely and corruptly ever since it had a being,—a corrupt mind having perverted its whole course.

2. The sword of the Spirit cuts the "joints" asunder. The bones, being the supporters of the fleshly portions of the body, and the protectors of the vital parts, must be disjoined, that they may form no protection to, nor uphold the person against whom the Lord is revealed in terrible majesty. The strong bony structure must be touched by the finger of God as well as any other part; and though it be built up and made fast as with bars of iron, the joints must part one from the other. For a firm step (in fleshly confidence), a straight back (of natural uprightness), a vigorous arm, a stout heart, a stiff neck, and a high look, in a supposed saint, partake more of the nature of a monster than of one born in Zion; especially when he is supposed to be mourning for sin. Yet there are those whose strength has never been taken away, and yet who wish to pass themselves off for Christians.

The brain, heart, and other vital organs, are shielded by the bones; but they must be exposed to the scrutiny of God's Word. The simple meaning of "dividing the joints" seems to be that no part, however secret, nor any action, however much disguised, shall be hid from God; nor yet any portion or the whole of a man shall be defended from wrath by nature's covering. Therefore, before a man can prize Jesus Christ, he must be anatomized. And the children of God, after having once had their bones severed, pass through the operation again and again. For the rebuke of God vexed the bones of David (Ps. vi. 2); and the hiding of his countenance put all his bones out of joint. (Ps. xxii. 14.) God's displeasure manifested for sin committed broke his bones. (Ps. li. 8.)

3. The Word divides the marrow,—the spinal cord, including the whole nervous system. If this were done literally in the body, instant death would ensue. All the powers of voluntary motion, sensation, speech, sight, hearing, smell, and taste proceed therefrom. God will know and expose the cause why a man moves after anything; what produces the motion of the passions, and after whom they rove; what are the words, good or bad, which have been spoken, and why they have been uttered; after what the soul has panted, and upon what it has fed. And by

the Word he discovers the whole to have been filled with virulent matter in regard to God and truth. The knowledge of the motives which have been the secret springs of his thoughts and deeds kills the man to his natural hopes of ever producing one good thing out of his heart towards God. It causes him to abhor himself, and "repent in dust and ashes;" and the necessity of a "new man" is clearly revealed to him by the Spirit.

4. The Word of God is a "discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart," or mind; and proves them not to be God's thoughts; neither has he ever dwelt in the thoughts of such a heart. But his piercing eye discovers it to be "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" as it is written, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Gen. vi. 5.) To the truth of which every quickened soul will subscribe who has espied the hidden motions of carnal nature. What a scene for the eyes of him to behold, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity! But he is the Searcher of hearts; and in all his inquisitions of that depraved thing, he never found one with any remains of truth in it. (Rom. iii. 10-18.) Every soul that is brought to the light feels the substance of David's words: "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

Thus the heart or mind is demonstrated to its possessor, by the Spirit, to be naturally a proud, hard, corrupt heart; the wickedness of which has been infused throughout every design, desire, and action of the mind. Whatever evils the Word of God declares proceed out of the heart of man are, sooner or later, perceived by the child of God to dwell therein, and their vitiating properties to be circulated through his whole nature, to the discomfort of the soul.

But the Bible reveals the covenant promise of God to give a new heart, which it names as wise, good, pure, and understanding; and to take away the stony one. (Ezek. xxxvi. 26.) This new heart receives the impression of grief and godly sorrow for sin, and puts a stop to the mirth-making propensities of the natural mind. "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth; surely every man is vanity." (Ps. cxxxix. 11.) As the promise of the new covenant is revealed to the needy soul, the cry of his heart answers to it: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." (Ps. li. 10.)

Let us now turn to the book under review, and examine the doctrine it teaches, and test it by the Word, and the teaching of the Spirit in the heart. Mr. Aikman, the author, addresses it especially to the Calvinistic churches, and levels his arguments in it directly against the true doctrine of the new birth, by denying the new nature, and insisting on progressive sanctification. He labours to prove that a man is regenerated by the Holy Spirit,

without a new nature being implanted within him; in fact, that his carnal mind is nothing more nor less than the soul itself, and is gradually and partially sanctified in this life.

First, it is required to know what ground he builds upon. By what he calls "highly simple tracing," Mr. Aikman states that the expressions "two natures," "two persons," and "two men," "in connection with the state of being of a regenerate man, are precisely equal to each other." (P. 8.) He says, "When, therefore, under the term nature you have gathered together and arranged every attribute without exception which can be found in the human soul, you have positively done nothing more than, as it were, to take the soul itself, and piecemeal, or in its separate parts, place that soul before the mental eye." (P. 9.) And that "the use of the less offensive language, 'two natures,' instead of the more offensive, viz., 'two persons,' or 'two men,' does not at all alter the reprehensible fact that a Christian who is but one man is affirmed to be two distinct beings; i. e., to consist of two different persons lodged in one body." (P. 10.) One more quotation here shall suffice: "But since, as we have already seen, the immortal soul is *the man*, therefore, nothing can alter or explain away the repulsive fact that those who, in describing the state of being of a regenerate or truly Christian man, persist in representing it as consisting of 'two principles,' or 'two natures,' do certainly affirm and maintain the error that a Christian embodies in his own flesh two distinct men, or is a human frame occupied or inhabited by two absolutely different immortal souls." (P. 10.)

On reading this startling announcement, we are inclined to inquire, Is Mr. Aikman in his right mind when he tells us that the "new heart," which God has promised to put within every child of his (Ezek. xxxvi. 26), must necessarily be another immortal soul? And when he insists that there is no alternative between believing this "repulsive fact," and denying altogether the new creation,—which he prefers to do himself?

Would this be gospel to the poor, convinced sinner, who has felt his heart laid "naked and open to the eyes of him with whom he has to do," and is reaching after the good things in the covenant, as his only hope of ever seeing the face of God with joy? Shall one tell him there is no such thing as a "new heart?" And that his corrupt nature,—which he sees and feels cannot cease its evil workings, and "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be,"—if he were regenerate, would change its course, and become meet for the inheritance of the saints in light? This would be to cause him to err, and to destroy the way of his paths. (Isa. iii. 12.)

We maintain that there is an "old man" and a "new" spoken of in the Word of God; and this "old man" is more than the "taint of evil." (P. 114.)

The soul and body together make one man; not (as Mr. Aikman affirms) the soul only; neither soul nor body alone is the

man. The evil principle is neither soul nor body, but something so closely allied to both that instead of being termed in Scripture a *taint*, it is identified with the man (Rom. vi. 6), and cannot be separated but by regeneration of the soul; yet it is not God's workmanship. It is born with the man, and hence said to be born of the flesh (Jno. iii. 6), although Satan is its first father. (Jno. viii. 44; 1 Jno. iii. 9.) It is called a "man" by the Holy Spirit, because it exercises the same parts, members, and qualities as the *mind* (only) of a man, and rules the natural man, influencing his members to work wickedness before God. But we must keep in mind that this "old man" does not become constitutionally one with body and soul, but ever remains distinct from both; and accordingly it passes under no change when the soul is regenerated, but remains a carnal mind until God makes an end of sin in the death of the righteous.

The "new man" is not the soul, but the spirit of grace, which is born of the Spirit. It is a new creature. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature;" and it is called a man, because it also exercises the parts, members, and qualities of a man's mind equally with the "old man." That the soul and body are affected by these two men is self-evident to every quickened child of God. The "new man" is not born again, because it never was born before.

The Bible gives a full description of both the "old man" and the "new." They are opposed in their origin: "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh." (Jno. iii. 6.) They are distinguished by their powers of perception: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." (Cor. ii. 14.) They are opposite in their will and affections: "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Gal. v. 17.) Their affections and actions are opposite. (Gal. v. 19-23.) And they cause the soul to walk in opposite paths: "Walk in the spirit; and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." (Gal. v. 16.) Now consciousness, will, and affections may be considered to include all the powers of a man's mind. It is therefore plain that the soul of man is capable of possessing two minds, and that this is the distinguishing mark of a regenerate man. Numerous other Scriptures set forth the two minds,—one carnal, the other spiritual; one holy, the other unholy; one of God, the other of Satan, in the living soul.

But we nowhere find the life itself explained. From the lowest order,—what it is that animates the plant, or what manner of being it is that distinguishes between a dead insect and a living one,—to the immortal created spirit that is in man, we must confess life itself is a mystery.

We see there is in the lower creation what is meant by *life*, without the possession of a mind at all. And though the spirit

of man comes altogether from a higher source, and is of a different nature, yet we have continual proofs that the mind is not essentially the life. The natural mind may be affected by disease of the brain, and be unable to govern its thoughts or passions; at the same time the man continue to live as before, but has lost consciousness; and the mind thinks and acts without the consent of the soul.*

Judging from the quotations we have given, we find that Mr. Aikman has not yet discovered that the spirit or soul of man is a mystery; nor (may be) can he conceive that it is one of many mysteries which the finite mind of man cannot grasp. He has not dived further into the nature of man's being than the powers of his mind, which are apparent to all. The existence of the soul in the body, and the mind in the soul, is too deep a subject to be traced out; we can only know something of them by their actions, and by the Word of God.

From all that has been advanced, the inference may be fairly drawn that a man's body can as well exist in life without the human heart, as that a fallen man should become regenerate, and live a new life, without receiving a new holy principle in his soul.

(To be concluded.)

Obituary.

MARTHA NORMAN.—On Dec. 30th, 1881, aged 59, Martha Norman, wife of William Norman, of Over, Cambridgeshire, a member of the church at the Strict Baptist Chapel, Over.

She lived for 41 years without the fear of God in her soul. She was brought up to attend the Church of England; but in after-years often went to no place of worship at all. At the time the Lord was pleased to open her heart, and show her the awful state she was in as a sinner by nature and practice, she had an occasion to go to one of the deacons of the Baptist chapel about some business. He asked her where she went on the Sunday. She said, "Nowhere very often; but when I do, it is to church." The deacon said, "Why do you not come to chapel with your husband?" She replied, "No, I will not go there, for I am no scholar; everybody there has books, so that I cannot think of going there." The deacon said, "Then you ought to go and hear the Word of God preached." This had such an effect upon her mind that she was constrained to go the next Sabbath day. She looked at the minister, and thought she should not hear what he had to say. It was Mr. Haynes, of St. Ives, who was supplying the pulpit. He read for his text, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. ii. 10.) The words were fixed as a nail in a sure place in poor Martha's soul; and from that time a change became mani-

* "G. S." 1882, p. 314.

fest in her character and life; and she had the greatest desire after this to get to the chapel. The Lord convinced her what a lost sinner she was, and kept her crying for mercy until she had a hope of salvation raised up in her soul. She was baptized, and was a member of the church for 17 years.

She was no great talker in religion, but was often much cast down with doubts and fears about her state, fearing she had no part nor lot in the matter; but she was a consistent walker, and a lover of peace among the children of God. She was the mother of nine children; and a truly good mother she was, and a most industrious and kind wife. A long and trying affliction of one of her daughters, which terminated the daughter's life, seemed to have a great effect in undermining her own constitution. She waited upon her daughter during the nine months of her illness; and only half an hour after her death, she was taken worse, and died during the same month. When she was asked if she wanted to go, she would say, "I wish to be submissive to the Lord's will." She said Jesus was precious to her soul. She would repeat the lines,

"Weary of earth, myself, and sin," &c.

and

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come."

Both were her favourite hymns. Her end was peace. She has left a husband and four children to mourn their loss. Her husband has been a member of the church 16 years. C. H.

THE DIVINE PRESENCE.

COULD I for a moment deem
 God is not in all I see,
 O how dreadful were the dream
 Of a world devoid of thee!
 No protector,—none to guide,
 None to turn the shafts of ill;
 All the powers of death might ride
 O'er them prostrate at their will.
 But because I know that thou
 Rulest all that falls to me,
 I can smile at sorrow now
 Since it comes in love from thee.

Spiritual Gleanings.

WHOSO acknowledges that the writings of the evangelists are God's Word, with him we are willing to dispute; but whoso denies this, with him we will not exchange a word. We may not converse with those who reject the first principles.—*Luther.*

Erratum.—On page 467 it is stated that James Bamford was born in 1862. It was extremely careless in both compositor and reader to pass such an error. It should have been 1822.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

DECEMBER, 1882.

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

SHORT PAPERS ON THE MINISTRY OF THE
SPIRIT.

III.

THE Christian proves experimentally that "the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." All God's children receive the ministration of the Spirit. God has promised that they shall all know what it is for the veil to be taken away, and for God to shine in their hearts in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. iii. 18; iv. 6); which is effectually done when the Lord sheds abroad his love in their hearts. Then the ministration of the Spirit is sensibly felt within them in all the operations of his grace. Some of these we have spoken of already, as life, light, and faith.

4. Love is a grace of the Spirit communicated to the soul. This love is not the natural love of a person turned into another channel, as some say; but the love of God,—a love which never was there before, but comes down from above. Therefore it is impossible to possess it until it is communicated by the Spirit. Love is a member of the new man. Love is a proof of the heavenly birth; and of a true knowledge of God. These words of John will prove what I say: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God" (mark from whence it comes); "and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." (Jno. iv. 7.)

The love of God in the heart is made manifest by a real change of pursuit. The heaven-born soul can no longer pursue the vanities of this life; for he sees death stamped on every earthly object; which makes him flee from the world and the things thereof as from the face of a deadly foe. The world, with its pomp, riches, pleasures, and vanities, is hated. But we must not suppose that the natural enmity of the carnal mind is destroyed, nor yet always in a state of subjection and inactivity. But when Jesus speaks peace to the conscience, it is quiet. At other times the soul will find that love and enmity are at continual warfare one with the other,—love labouring to love God,—enmity hating God and everything like God; which puzzles the believer not a little. Satan brings all this enmity as a proof against the soul, and charges it upon the child of God

as springing from his heart, from a determined opposition to the rule and will of God. And so dexterously does he perform this part of his business that the believer thinks he really does hate God. But it is not so; for the soul grieves on account of this state of things, and loathes himself before God. Here is nothing more nor less than love in mourning. The presence of love is detected by the soul's cleaving to God, though he appears like an angry judge, ready to condemn him; and the prayer of the soul is, "Let my sentence come forth from thy presence." It chooses rather to wait for God to decide the point than to be deceived on such an important subject as the salvation of the soul.

Love and grief mingled together make the sorrows of the believer very bitter; yea, more bitter than death itself. For the thought of never seeing the lovely face of God with joy, but to be cast out among those who hate God, and to mingle with them that curse him, is a bitter ingredient in the cup of sorrows, which no lost soul ever felt. Sometimes the poor sinner feels a determination rise up in his breast that he will never curse God; no, not even though God should send him to hell; but he prays to be allowed to love God and speak well of him even there.

Love and enmity, hope and despair, life and death, faith and unbelief, freedom and bondage, produce such a strange complication of feelings that is not easy to describe. The enmity of the carnal mind is never perceived nor felt until love enters the heart. Love detects it, hates it, mourns on account of it, and wars with it. Sometimes in the apprehension of the soul the battle appears to be in favour of the old man. Then a gloom is cast over the future prospects of the believer. But again Jesus appears; puts his foes to flight; and all is right between him and God.

Love brings a person to be attached to the family of God, and to seek their society, though it be at the loss of the friendship of father, mother, sister, husband, or wife. Love opens a person's heart to will good to the saints, if not able to perform any acts of kindness towards them. Love keeps a person from exposing the faults of a brother or sister to any one; but it leads one honestly to tell the offender his or her fault between themselves alone. Love keeps a person from swerving from the truth. Love warms the heart, and gives a liveliness to the soul; which makes a man "glory in tribulation," and rejoice that he is "counted worthy to suffer shame" for the Name of Jesus Christ; "knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Rom. v. 3-5.) The love the quickened soul possesses will endure for ever, because it is the love of God,—love without which a man is nothing, though he possess many great and rare gifts. But he who hath it will be esteemed at the last day by the God of heaven and earth.

5. Hope is a grace communicated by the Holy Spirit. The grace of hope differs greatly from the hope of a hypocrite, which is to perish. The hope of a hypocrite, or that of a mere professor, is like the lamp of the foolish virgins;—it goes out when it is most needed. Every one who makes any pretensions to religion will tell you he has a hope; but probe it, and in many cases it will be found rotten at the core. The knife of God's truth lays open a false hope to the mortification of the possessor; which makes him hate the truth and a minister of truth. The hope of a letter Christian rests in a form of godliness; but he denies the power. The hope of a free-willer rests in his own arm; but when God dries up his right arm, in that very day his hope perishes.

But true hope rests in God, and has its being from Christ formed in the heart; which is the real ground of a good hope. The mere "mystery of Christ among the Gentiles" a man may know in word, and yet be nothing; but the riches of the glory of this mystery are known only to God's elect. In the understanding of mysteries rests the hope of a mere professor; but the hope of a child of God is founded in a knowledge of the "riches of the glory of the mystery,"—Christ in the heart. So saith the apostle: "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col. i. 27.) Christ, then, in the heart is the foundation of true hope. The believer knows that if Christ is not formed in the heart, it matters not what he may possess besides; as knowledge, faith in the letter, zeal, understanding, or natural charity so as to bestow all his goods to feed the poor and give his body to be burned. All these things, with a thousand more, are not things on which the believer can place his hopes of eternal happiness. That alone is a good hope, which is founded in the possession of Christ in the heart. It may be recognised by its rising or sinking according as the truth is revealed to the heart, or as evidences become darkened. When the way-marks are plain, and Jesus is seen and felt within, then true hope rises; but when the soul feels dead, barren, and cold, then hope sinks, and neither can nor will rise until the Spirit reveals the truth, and makes it plain to the heart that Christ is formed there.

Hope keeps the soul from utter despair. Although it is often damped, it will never finally yield; no, not if the soul sink in the belly of hell in its feelings; for "out of the belly of hell cried I," said the prophet Jonah. Hope sometimes appears "removed like a tree;" then the soul is filled with desperation. But when a few heavenly showers descend upon the heart, hope revives again, takes courage, and waits upon the Lord. Hope is an "anchor of the soul;" and is as needful to it as an anchor to a ship. A ship without an anchor cannot rest in the harbour, but must be carried down the stream. So a man without the grace of hope can never wait upon God; but is carried down the stream

of presumption until he meets with some rocks, against which he is dashed, and becomes a complete wreck. Hope keeps the soul from giving up under the chastening hand of God, a persecuting world, and a tempting devil. Hope rests in the blood of Jesus alone for pardon, in his righteousness for acceptance, and in his salvation for eternal deliverance from death, hell, sin, and the grave.

6. The fear of God is a grace communicated by the Spirit. The fear of the Lord makes the conscience tender, and is an effectual barrier against licentiousness. It makes a liar speak the truth, a thief honest, a drunkard sober, a covetous man liberal, an unclean person chaste, a swearer fear an oath, a persecutor of the saints a friend of God's people; and makes a false professor (when it gets into his heart) strip himself of all his varnished religion, and come before God in meekness, sincerity, and an unassuming simplicity. Thus "the fear of the Lord is clean;" and a soul cleansed by the blood of Jesus, and under the sanctifying influence of the Spirit, often looks back to the days of his sin and ignorance, and feels ashamed of his ways; and in humbleness of heart, thanks God for the grace of fear, saying, "So do not I any of these things now, because of the fear of God;"—boasting is excluded; grace is magnified; and God alone is exalted by the fear of the Lord all its days.

The fear of God makes a man honestly confess to whatever he is convicted of by the Holy Ghost. It keeps a person from calling God, "Father," before he has received the Spirit of adoption; and from saying his sins are pardoned, before he has received the atonement; and that he is sure of heaven, before he has received the righteousness of Christ; but it makes him wait for the testimony of the Spirit.

The fear of the Lord fortifies the soul against temptation, against the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; and its language is, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" But when the believer has sinned against God, the Spirit convicts his conscience of guilt, and the fear of God works godly repentance to salvation, not to be repented of. The fear of God receives rebukes of the Spirit, and produces "carefulness" (under the sanctifying influence of the Spirit) lest we should sin against God in thought, word, or deed; a "clearing" of ourselves from the charges brought against us, by being enabled to forsake the evil; "indignation" against sin, self, Satan, and our foolish ways; a humble "fear" of God in the heart, which keeps the soul from presumption; "vehement desires" after renewed tokens of love, and more spirituality, power, life, and uprightness; "revenge" upon self, and a crucifying it; and upon the world, and an overcoming it by faith. (2 Cor. vii. 10, 11.)

THE delights in Christ are such as none can reach unto but those that are brought to receive Christ, and walk in him.—*Erskine.*

MEMOIR OF THE EARLY LIFE OF WILLIAM COWPER,

AUTHOR OF "THE TASK," &c.

(Concluded from p. 488.)

I WENT to bed, as I thought, to take my last sleep in this world. The next morning was to place me at the bar of the House; and I determined not to see it. I slept as usual, and awoke about 8 o'clock. Immediately I arose, and by the help of a rushlight found my penknife, took it into bed with me, and lay with it for some hours directly pointed against my heart. Twice or thrice I placed it upright under my left breast, leaning all my weight upon it; but the point was broken off square, and it would not penetrate.

In this manner the time passed till the day began to break. I heard the clock strike seven, and instantly it occurred to me that there was no time to be lost. The chambers would soon be opened, and my friend would call upon me to take me with him to Westminster. "Now is the time," thought I; "this is the crisis,—no mere dallying with the love of life." I arose, and, as I thought, bolted the inner door of my chambers, but was mistaken; my touch deceived me, and I left it as I found it. My preservation indeed, as it will appear, did not depend on that incident; but I mention it to show that the good providence of God watched over me, to keep open every way of deliverance, that nothing might be left to hazard. Not one hesitating thought now remained; but I fell greedily to the execution of my purpose. My garter was made of a broad scarlet binding with a sliding buckle, being sewn together at the end. By the help of the buckle I made a noose, and fixed it about my neck, straining it so tight that I hardly left a passage for my breath or for the blood to circulate; the tongue of the buckle held it fast. At each corner of the bed was placed a wreath of carved work, fastened by an iron pin, which passed up through the midst of it. The other part of the garter, which made a loop, I slipped over one of these, and hung by it some seconds, drawing up my feet under me that they might not touch the floor; but the iron bent, and the carved work slipped off, and the garter with it. I then fastened it to the frame of the tester, winding it round and tying it in a strong knot. The frame broke short, and let me down again. The third effort was more likely to succeed. I set the door open, which reached within a foot of the ceiling; and by the help of a chair I could command the top of it; and the loop being large enough to admit a large angle of the door, was easily fixed so as not to slip off again. I pushed away the chair with my feet, and hung at my whole length. While I hung there, I distinctly heard a voice say three times, "'Tis over!" Though I am sure of the fact, and was so at the time, yet it did not at all alarm me, nor affect my resolution. I hung so long that I lost all sense, all consciousness of existence.

When I came to myself again, I thought myself in hell; the sound of my own dreadful groans was all that I heard; and a feeling like that produced by a flash of lightning just beginning to seize upon me, passed over my whole body. In a few seconds I found myself fallen with my face to the floor. In about half a minute, I recovered my feet, and reeling, and staggering, stumbled into bed again. By the blessed providence of God, the garter which had held me till the bitterness of temporal death was past, broke just before eternal death had taken place upon me. The stagnation of the blood under one eye in a broad crimson spot, and a red circle about my neck, showed plainly that I had been on the brink of eternity. The latter, indeed, might have been occasioned by the pressure of the garter; but the former was certainly the effect of strangulation; for it was not attended with the sensation of a bruise, as it must have been, had I, in my fall, received one in so tender a part. And I rather think the circle round my neck was owing to the same cause; for the part was not excoriated, nor at all in pain.

Soon after I got into bed, I was surprised to hear a noise in the dining-room, where the laundress was lighting a fire. She had found the door unbolted, notwithstanding my design to fasten it, and must have passed the bedchamber door while I was hanging on it, and yet never perceived me. She heard me fall, and presently came to ask if I were well; adding, she feared I had been in a fit. I sent her to a friend, to whom I related the whole affair, and despatched him to my kinsman, at the coffee-house. As soon as the latter arrived, I pointed to the broken garter, which lay in the middle of the room; and apprised him also of the attempt I had been making. His words were, "My dear Mr. Cowper, you terrify me;—to be sure you cannot hold the office at this rate. Where is the deputation?" I gave him the key of the drawer, where it was deposited; and his business requiring his immediate attendance, he took it away with him; and thus ended all my connection with the Parliament House.

To this moment I had felt no concern of a spiritual kind. Ignorant of original sin, insensible of the guilt of actual transgression, I understood neither the law nor the gospel; the condemning nature of the one, nor the restoring mercies of the other. I was as much unacquainted with Christ, in all his saving offices, as if his blessed Name had never reached me. Now, therefore, a new scene opened upon me. Conviction of sin took place, especially of that just committed; the meanness of it, as well as its atrocity, were exhibited to me in colours so inconceivably strong that I despised myself with a contempt not to be imagined or expressed, for having attempted it. This sense of it secured me from the repetition of a crime which I could not now reflect on without abhorrence.

Before I arose from bed, it was suggested to me that there was nothing wanted but murder, to fill up the measure of my iniqui-

ties; and that though I had failed in my design, yet I had all the guilt of that crime to answer for. A sense of God's wrath, and a deep despair of escaping it, instantly succeeded. The fear of death became much more prevalent in me now than even the desire of it had been. A frequent flashing, like that of fire, before my eyes, and an excessive pressure upon my brain made me apprehensive of an apoplexy; an event which I thought the more probable, as an extravasation in that part seemed likely to happen in so violent a struggle.

By the advice of my dear friend and benefactor, who called upon me again at noon, I sent for a physician, and told him the fact, and the stroke I apprehended. He assured me there was no danger of it, and advised me, by all means, to retire into the country. Being made easy in that particular, and not knowing where to betake myself, I continued in my chambers, where the solitude of my situation left me at full liberty to attend to my spiritual state; a matter I had, till this day, never sufficiently thought of.

At this time I wrote to my brother at Cambridge to inform him of the distress I had been in, and the dreadful method I had taken to deliver myself from it; assuring him, as I faithfully might, that I had laid aside all such horrid intentions, and was desirous to live as long as it would please the Almighty to permit me.

My sins were now set in array against me; and I began to see and feel that I had lived without God in the world. As I walked to and fro in my chamber, I said within myself, "*There never was so abandoned a wretch; so great a sinner!*" All my worldly sorrows seemed now as though they had never been; the terrors of my mind which succeeded them seemed so great and so much more afflicting. One moment I thought myself shut out from mercy by one chapter, and the next, by another. The sword of the Spirit seemed to guard the tree of life from my touch, and to flame against me in every avenue by which I attempted to approach it. I particularly remember that the parable of the barren fig-tree was to me an inconceivable source of anguish; and I applied it to myself with a strong persuasion in my mind that when our Saviour pronounced a curse upon it, he had me in his eye; and pointed that curse directly at me.

I turned over all Archbishop Tillotson's sermons in hopes to find one upon the subject; and consulted my brother upon the true meaning of it; desirous, if possible, to obtain a different interpretation of the matter than my evil conscience would suffer me to fasten upon it. "O Lord, thou didst vex me with all thy storms; all thy billows went over me; thou didst run upon me like a giant in the night season; thou didst scare me with visions in the night season."

In every book I opened, I found something that struck me to the heart. I remember taking up a volume of Beaumont and Fletcher, which lay upon the table in my kinsman's lodgings;

and the first sentence which I saw was this: "The justice of the gods is in it." My heart instantly replied, "It is a truth;" and I cannot but observe that as I found something in every author to condemn me, so it was the first sentence in general I pitched upon. Everything preached to me, and everything preached the curse of the law.

I was now strongly tempted to use laudanum, not as a poison, but as an opiate to compose my spirits; to stupefy my awakened and feeling mind, harassed with sleepless nights, and days of uninterrupted misery. But God forbid it, who would have nothing to interfere with the quickening work he had begun in me; and neither the want of rest nor continued agony of mind could bring me to the use of it. I hated and abhorred the very smell of it.

I never went into the street, but I thought the people stood and laughed at me, and held me in contempt; and could hardly persuade myself but that the voice of my conscience was loud enough for every one to hear it. They who knew me seemed to avoid me; and if they spoke to me, seemed to do it in scorn. I bought a ballad of one who was singing it in the street, because I thought it was written on me.

I dined alone, either at the tavern, where I went in the dark, or at the chop-house, where I always took care to hide myself in the darkest corner of the room. I slept generally an hour in the evening; though it was only to be terrified in dreams; and when I awoke, it was some time before I could walk steadily through the passage into the dining-room. I reeled and staggered like a drunken man. The eyes of man I could not bear; but when I thought that the eyes of God were upon me (which I felt assured of), it gave me the most intolerable anguish. If for a moment a book or a companion stole away my attention from myself, a flash from hell seemed to be thrown into my mind immediately; and I said within myself, "What are these things to me, who am damned?" In a word, I saw myself a sinner altogether, and every way a sinner; but I saw not yet a glimpse of the mercy of God in Jesus Christ.

The capital engine in all the artillery of Satan had not yet been employed against me. Already overwhelmed with despair, I was not yet sunk into the bottom of the gulf. This was a fit season for the use of it; and accordingly I was set to inquire whether I had not been guilty of the unpardonable sin; and was presently persuaded that I had. A neglect to improve the mercies of God at Southampton, on the occasion above mentioned, was represented to me as the sin against the Holy Ghost. No favourable construction of my conduct in that instance; no argument of my brother's, who was now with me; nothing that he could suggest in extenuation of my offences, could gain a moment's admission. Satan furnished me so readily with weapons against myself that neither Scripture nor reason could undeceive me. Life appeared to me more eligible than death, only because

it was a barrier between me and everlasting burnings. My thoughts in the day became still more gloomy, and my night visions more dreadful.

One morning, as I lay between sleeping and waking, I seemed to myself to be walking in Westminster Abbey, waiting till prayers should begin. Presently I thought I heard the minister's voice, and hastened towards the choir. Just as I was upon the point of entering, the iron gate under the organ was flung in my face with a jar that made the Abbey ring. The noise awoke me. A sentence of excommunication from all the churches upon earth could not have been so dreadful to me as the interpretation which I could not avoid putting upon this dream.

Another time I seemed to pronounce to myself, "Evil, be thou my good." I verily thought that I had adopted that hellish sentiment; it seemed to come so directly from my heart. I arose from bed to look for my prayer-book; and having found it, endeavoured to pray; but immediately experienced the impossibility of drawing nigh to God, unless he first draw nigh to us. I made many passionate attempts towards prayer, but failed in all. Having an obscure notion of the efficacy of faith, I resolved upon an experiment, to prove whether I had faith or not. For this purpose I resolved to repeat the Creed. When I came to the second period of it, all traces of the former were struck out of my memory, nor could I recollect one syllable of the matter. While I endeavoured to recover it, and when just upon the point of doing so, I perceived a sensation in my brain, like a tremulous vibration in the fibres of it. By this means, I lost the words in the very instant when I thought to have laid hold of them. This threw me into an agony; but, growing a little calm, I made an attempt for the third time. Here again I failed in the same manner as before.

I considered it as a supernatural interposition, to inform me that, having sinned against the Holy Ghost, I had no longer an interest in Christ, or in the gifts of the Spirit. Being assured of this with the most rooted conviction, I gave myself up to despair. I felt a sense of burning in my heart, like that of real fire, and concluded it was an earnest of those eternal flames which would soon receive me. I lay myself down, howling with horror, while my knees smote against each other.

In this condition my brother found me, and the first words I spoke to him were, "O brother, I am damned! Think of eternity, and then think what it is to be damned!" I had, indeed, a sense of eternity impressed upon my mind, which seemed almost to amount to a full comprehension of it. My brother, pierced to the heart with the sight of my misery, tried to comfort me; but all to no purpose. I refused comfort, and my mind appeared to me in such colours that to administer it to me was only to exasperate me, and to mock my fears.

At length I remembered my friend Martin Madan, and sent for him. I used to think him an enthusiast, but now seemed

convinced that if there was any balm in Gilead, he must administer it to me.

On former occasions, when my spiritual concerns had at any time occurred to me, I thought likewise of the necessity of repentance. I knew that many persons had spoken of shedding tears for sin; but when I asked myself whether the time would ever come when I should weep for mine, it seemed to me that a stone might sooner do it.

Not knowing that Christ was exalted to give repentance, I despaired of ever attaining to it. My friend came to me; we sat on the bed-side together, and he began to declare to me the gospel. He spoke of original sin, and the corruption of every man born into the world, whereby every one is a child of wrath. I perceived something like hope dawn in my heart. This doctrine set me more upon a level with the rest of mankind, and made my condition appear less desperate. Next, he insisted on the all-atoning efficacy of the blood of Jesus, and his righteousness for our justification. While I heard this part of his discourse, and the Scriptures on which he founded it, my heart began to burn within me, my soul was pierced with a sense of my bitter ingratitude to so merciful a Saviour; and those tears which I thought impossible, burst forth freely. I saw clearly that my case required such a remedy, and had not the least doubt within me but that this was the gospel of salvation. Lastly, he urged the necessity of a lively faith in Jesus Christ; not an assent only of the understanding, but a faith of application, an actual laying hold of it, and embracing it as a salvation wrought out for me personally. Here I failed, and deplored my want of such a faith. He told me it was the gift of God, which he trusted he would bestow upon me. I could only reply, "I wish he would;"—a very irreverent petition, but a very sincere one, and such as God, in his due time, was pleased to answer.

My brother, finding that I had received consolation from Mr. Madan, was very anxious that I should take the earliest opportunity of conversing with him again; and for this purpose pressed me to go to him immediately. I was for putting it off, but my brother seemed impatient of delay, and at length prevailed on me to set out. I mention this to the honour of his candour and humanity, which would suffer no difference of sentiments to interfere. My welfare was his only object; and all prejudice fled before his zeal to procure it. May he receive, for his recompense, all that happiness the gospel, which I then first became acquainted with, is alone able to impart!

Easier, indeed, I was, but far from easy. The wounded spirit within me was less in pain, but by no means healed. What I had experienced was but the beginning of sorrows, and a long train of still greater terrors was at hand. I slept my three hours well, and then awoke with ten times a stronger alienation from God than ever.

Satan plied me closely with horrible visions, and more hor-

rible voices. My ears rang with the sound of torments, that seemed to await me. Then did the pains of hell get hold on me; and before daybreak the very sorrows of death compassed me. A numbness seized the extremities of my body; and life seemed to retreat before it. My hands and feet became cold and stiff; a cold sweat stood upon my forehead; my heart seemed at every pulse to beat its last, and my soul to cling to my lips as if on the very brink of departure. No convicted criminal ever feared death more, or was more assured of dying.

At 11 o'clock, my brother called upon me; and in about an hour after his arrival, that distemper of mind which I had so ardently wished for, actually seized me. While I traversed the apartment in the most horrible dismay of soul, expecting every moment that the earth would open and swallow me up, my conscience scaring me, the avenger of blood pursuing me, and the city of refuge out of reach and out of sight, a strange and horrible darkness fell upon me. If it were possible that a heavy blow could light on the brain without touching the scull, such was the sensation I felt. I clapped my hand to my forehead, and cried aloud through the pain it gave me. At every stroke, my thoughts and expressions became more wild and incoherent; all that remained clear was the sense of sin and the expectation of punishment. These kept undisturbed possession all through my illness, without interruption or abatement.

My brother instantly observed the change, and consulted with my friends on the best manner to dispose of me. It was agreed among them that I should be carried to St. Alban's, where Dr. Cotton kept a house for the reception of such patients, and with whom I was known to have a slight acquaintance. Not only his skill as a physician recommended him to their choice, but his well-known humanity and sweetness of temper. It will be proper to draw a veil over the secrets of my prison-house. Let it suffice to say that the low state of body and mind to which I was reduced was perfectly well calculated to humble the natural vanity and pride of my heart.

These are the efficacious means which Infinite Wisdom thought meet to make use of for that purpose. A sense of self-loathing and abhorrence ran through all my insanity. Conviction of sin and expectation of instant judgment never left me from Dec. 7th, 1763, until the middle of July following. The accuser of the brethren was ever busy with me night and day, bringing to my recollection in dreams the commission of long-forgotten sins, and charging upon my conscience things of an indifferent nature, as atrocious crimes.

All that passed in this long interval of eight months may be classed under two heads: conviction of sin, and despair of mercy. But blessed be the God of my salvation for every sigh I drew, for every tear I shed; since thus it pleased him to judge me here, that I might not be judged hereafter.

After five months' continual expectation that the divine ven-

geance would plunge me into the bottomless pit, I became so familiar with despair as to have contracted a sort of hardness and indifference as to the event. I began to persuade myself that while the execution of the sentence was suspended, it would be for my interest to indulge a less horrible train of ideas than I had been accustomed to muse upon. "Eat and drink; for tomorrow thou shalt be in hell," was the maxim on which I proceeded. By this means I entered into conversation with the doctor, laughed at his stories, and told him some of my own to match them; still, however, carrying a sentence of irrevocable doom in my heart.

He observed the seeming alteration with pleasure. Believing, as well he might, that my smiles were sincere, he thought my recovery well nigh completed; but they were, in reality, like the green surface of a morass, pleasant to the eye, but a cover for nothing but rottenness and filth. The only thing that could promote and effectuate my cure was yet wanting,—an experimental knowledge of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

I remember, about this time, a diabolical species of regret that found harbour in my wretched heart. I was sincerely sorry that I had not seized every opportunity of giving scope to my wicked appetites, and even envied those who, being departed to their own place before me, had the consolation to reflect that they had well earned their miserable inheritance, by indulging their sensuality without restraint. O merciful God! What a tophet of pollution is the human soul! Wherein do we differ from the devils, unless thy grace prevent us?

In about three months more (July 25th, 1764), my brother came from Cambridge to visit me. Dr. C. having told him that he thought me greatly amended, he was rather disappointed at finding me almost as silent and reserved as ever; for the first sight of him struck me with many painful sensations, both of sorrow for my own remediless condition, and envy of his happiness.

As soon as we were left alone he asked me how I found myself. I answered, "As much better as despair can make me." We went together into the garden. Here on expressing a settled assurance of sudden judgment, he protested to me that it was all a delusion; and protested so strongly that I could not help giving some attention to him. I burst into tears, and cried out, "If it be a delusion, then am I the happiest of beings." Something like a ray of hope was shot into my heart; but still I was afraid to indulge it. We dined together; and I spent the afternoon in a more cheerful manner. Something seemed to whisper to me every moment, "Still there is mercy." Even after he left me, this change of sentiment gathered ground continually; yet my mind was in such a fluctuating state that I can only call it a vague presage of better things at hand, without being able to assign a reason for it. The servant observed a sudden alteration in me for the better; and the man, whom I have ever since retained in my service, expressed great joy on the occasion.

I went to bed, and slept well. In the morning I dreamed that the sweetest boy I ever saw came dancing up to my bedside; he seemed just out of leading-strings, yet I took particular notice of the firmness and steadiness of his tread. The sight affected me with pleasure, and served at least to harmonize my spirits; so that I awoke for the first time with a sensation of delight on my mind. Still, however, I knew not where to look for the establishment of the comfort I felt; my joy was as much a mystery to myself as to those about me. The blessed God was preparing me for the clearer light of his countenance by this first dawning of that light upon me.

Within a few days of my first arrival at St. Alban's I had thrown aside the Word of God as a book in which I had no longer any interest or portion. The only instance in which I can recollect reading a single chapter, was about two months before my recovery. Having found a Bible on the bench in the garden, I opened it upon Jno. xi., where Lazarus is raised from the dead; and saw so much benevolence, mercy, goodness, and sympathy with miserable man in our Saviour's conduct that I almost shed tears even after the relation; little thinking it was an exact type of the mercy which Jesus was on the point of extending towards myself. I sighed, and said, "O that I had not rejected so good a Redeemer, that I had not forfeited all his favours!" Thus was my heart softened, though not yet enlightened. I closed the book, without intending to open it again.

Having risen with somewhat of a more cheerful feeling, I repaired to my room, where breakfast waited for me. While I sat at table, I found the cloud of horror which had so long hung over me, was every moment passing away; and every moment came fraught with hope. I was continually more and more persuaded that I was not utterly doomed to destruction. The way of salvation was still, however, hid from my eyes; nor did I see it at all clearer than before my illness. I only thought that if it pleased God to spare me, I would lead a better life; and that I would yet escape hell, if a religious observance of my duty would secure me from it. Thus may the terror of the Lord make a Pharisee; but only the sweet voice of mercy in the gospel can make a Christian.

But the happy period which was to shake off my fetters, and afford me a clear opening of the free mercy of God in Christ Jesus, was now arrived. I flung myself into a chair near the window, and seeing a Bible there, ventured once more to apply to it for comfort and instruction. The first verse I saw was the 25th of Rom. iii.: "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." Immediately I received strength to believe, and the full beams of the Sun of Righteousness shone upon me. I saw the sufficiency of the atonement he had made, my pardon sealed in his blood, and all the fulness and completeness of his justifica-

tion. In a moment I believed, and received the gospel. Whatever my friend Madan had said to me so long before revived in all its clearness, with demonstration of the Spirit and with power.

Unless the Almighty arm had been under me, I think I should have died with gratitude and joy. My eyes filled with tears, and my voice choked with transport. I could only look up to heaven in silent fear, overwhelmed with love and wonder. But the work of the Holy Spirit is best described in his own words; it is "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Thus was my heavenly Father in Christ Jesus pleased to give me the full assurance of faith; and out of a strong, unbelieving heart, to "raise up a child unto Abraham." How glad should I now have been to have spent every moment in prayer and thanksgiving! I lost no opportunity of repairing to a throne of grace; but flew to it with an earnestness irresistible and never to be satisfied. Could I help it? Could I do otherwise than love and rejoice in my reconciled Father in Christ Jesus? The Lord had enlarged my heart; and I ran "in the way of his commandments."

For many succeeding weeks, tears were ready to flow, if I did but speak of the gospel, or mention the Name of Jesus. To rejoice day and night was all my employment. Too happy to sleep much, I thought it was but lost time that was spent in slumber. O that the ardour of my first love had continued! But I have known many a lifeless and unhallowed hour since; long intervals of darkness, interrupted by short returns of peace and joy in believing.

My physician, ever watchful and apprehensive for my welfare, was now alarmed, lest the sudden transition from despair to joy should terminate in a fatal frenzy. But "the Lord was my strength and my song, and was become my salvation." I said, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. He has chastened me sore, but he has not given me over unto death. O give thanks unto the Lord, for his mercy endureth for ever."

In a short time Dr. C. became satisfied and acquiesced in the soundness of my cure; and much sweet communion I had with him, concerning the things of our salvation. He visited me every morning while I stayed with him, which was near 12 months after my recovery; and the gospel was the delightful theme of our conversation.

No trial has befallen me since but what might be expected in a state of warfare. Satan, indeed, has changed his battery. Before my conversion, *sensual gratification* was the weapon with which he sought to destroy me. Being naturally of an easy, quiet disposition, I was seldom tempted to anger; yet that passion it is which *now* gives me the most disturbance, and occasions the sharpest conflicts. But Jesus being my strength, I fight against it; and if I am not conqueror, yet I am not overcome.

I now employed my brother to seek out an abode for me in the neighbourhood of Cambridge, being determined, by the Lord's

leave, to see London, the scene of my former abominations no more. I had still one place of preferment left, which seemed to bind me under the necessity of returning thither again, but I resolved to break the bond, chiefly because my peace of conscience was in question. I held, for some years, the office of commissioner of bankrupts, with about 60*l.* per annum. Conscious of my ignorance of the law, I could not take the accustomed oath, and resigned it; thereby releasing myself from an occasion of great sin, and every obligation of returning to London. By this means, I reduced myself to an income scarcely sufficient for my maintenance; but I would rather have starved in reality than deliberately offend against my Saviour; and his great mercy has since raised me up such friends as have enabled me to enjoy all the comforts and conveniences of life. I am well assured that while I live, "bread shall be given me, and water shall be sure," according to his gracious promise.

After my brother had made many unsuccessful attempts to procure me a dwelling near him, I one day poured out my soul in prayer to God, beseeching him that wherever he should be pleased in his fatherly mercy to lead me, it might be in the society of those who feared his Name, and loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; a prayer of which I have good reason to acknowledge his gracious acceptance.

In the beginning of June, 1765, I received a letter from my brother, to say he had taken lodgings for me at Huntingdon, which he believed would suit me. Though it was 16 miles from Cambridge, I was resolved to take them; for I had been two months in perfect health; and my circumstances required a less expensive way of life. It was with great reluctance, however, that I thought of leaving the place of my second nativity; I had so much leisure there to study the blessed Word of God, and had enjoyed so much happiness. But God ordered everything for me, like an indulgent Father, and had prepared a more comfortable place of residence than I could have chosen for myself.

On the 7th of June, 1765, having spent more than 18 months at St. Alban's, partly in bondage, partly in the liberty wherewith Christ had made me free, I took my leave of the place at four in the morning, and set out for Cambridge. The servant whom I lately mentioned as rejoicing in my recovery, attended me. He had maintained such an affectionate watchfulness over me during my whole illness, and waited on me with so much patience and gentleness, that I could not bear to leave him behind, though it was with some difficulty the doctor was prevailed on to part with him. The strongest argument of all was the earnest desire he expressed to follow me. He seemed to have been providentially thrown in my way, having entered Dr. Cotton's service just time enough to attend me; and I have strong ground to hope that God will use me as an instrument to bring him to a knowledge of Jesus. It is impossible to say with

how delightful a sense of his protection, and Fatherly care of me, it has pleased the Almighty to favour me, during the whole journey.

I remembered the pollution which is in the world and the sad share I had in it myself; and my heart ached at the thought of entering it again. The blessed God had endued me with some concern for his glory, and I was fearful of hearing it traduced by oaths and blasphemies, the common language of this highly-favoured, but ungrateful country. But "fear not; I am with thee," was my comfort. I passed the whole journey in silent communion with God; and those hours are among the happiest I have known.

I repaired to Huntingdon the Saturday after my arrival at Cambridge. My brother, who had attended me thither, had no sooner left me, than finding myself surrounded by strangers, and in a strange place, my spirits began to sink; and I felt (such were the backslidings of my heart) like a traveller in the midst of an inhospitable desert, without a friend to comfort, or a guide to direct me. I walked forth towards the close of the day, in this melancholy frame of mind; and having wandered about a mile from the town, I found my heart, at length, so powerfully drawn towards the Lord that, having gained a retired and secret nook in the corner of a field, I knelt down under a bank, and poured forth my complaints before him. It pleased my Saviour to hear me, in that this oppression was taken off; and I was enabled to trust in him that careth for the stranger, to roll my burden upon him, and to rest assured that wheresoever he might cast my lot, the God of all consolation would still be with me. But this was not all. He did for me more than either I had asked or thought.

The next day I went to church for the first time after my recovery. Throughout the whole service I had much to do to restrain my emotions, so fully did I see the beauty and glory of the Lord. My heart was full of love to all the congregation, especially to them in whom I observed an air of sober attention. A grave and sober person sat in the pew with me; him I have since seen and often conversed with, and have found him a gracious man, and a true servant of the blessed Redeemer. While he was singing the psalm, I looked at him, and observing him intent on his Christian employment, I could not help saying in my heart, "Bless you, for praising him whom my soul loveth!"

Such was the goodness of the Lord to me that he gave me "the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;" and though my voice was silent, being stopped by the intensesness of what I felt, yet my soul sang within me, and even leapt for joy. And when the gospel for the day was read, the sound of it was more than I could well support. O what a word is the Word of God, when the Spirit quickens us to receive it, and gives the hearing ear, and the understanding heart! The harmony of heaven is in it, and discovers its Author.

The parable of the prodigal son was the portion of Scripture. I saw myself in that glass so clearly, and the loving-kindness of my slighted and long-forgotten Lord, that the whole scene was realized to me, and acted over in my heart.

I went immediately after church to the place where I had prayed the day before, and found the relief I had there received was but the earnest of a richer blessing. How shall I express what the Lord did for me, except by saying that he made all his goodness to pass before me? I seemed to speak to him "face to face, as a man speaketh with his friend," except that my speech was only in tears of joy, and "groanings which cannot be uttered." I could say, indeed, with Jacob, not "how dreadful," but how lovely "is this place! This is none other than the house of God."

Four months I continued in my lodging. Some few of the neighbours came to see me; but their visits were not very frequent; and in general I had but little intercourse, except with my God in Christ Jesus. It was he who made my solitude sweet, and the wilderness to bloom and blossom as the rose; and my meditations of him were so delightful that if I had few other comforts, neither did I want any.

One day, however, towards the expiration of this period, I found myself in a state of desertion. That communion which the Lord had so long maintained with me, was suddenly interrupted. I began to dislike my solitary situation, and to fear I should never be able to weather out the winter in so lonely a dwelling. Suddenly a thought struck me, which I shall not fear to call a suggestion of the good providence which had brought me to Huntingdon. A few months before, I had formed an acquaintance with Mr. Unwin's family. His son, though he had heard that I rather declined society than sought it, and though Mrs. Unwin herself dissuaded him from visiting me on that account, was yet so strongly inclined to it that, notwithstanding all objections and arguments to the contrary, he one day engaged himself, as we were coming out of church after morning prayers, to drink tea with me that afternoon. To my inexpressible joy, I found him one whose notions of religion were spiritual and lively; one whom the Lord had been training up from his infancy for the service of the temple. We opened our hearts to each other at the first interview, and when we parted I immediately retired to my chamber, and prayed the Lord, who had been the Author, to be the Guardian of our friendship, and to grant to it fervency and perpetuity, even unto death. And I doubt not that my gracious Father heard this prayer also.

The Sunday following I dined with him. That afternoon, while the rest of the family were withdrawn, I had much discourse with Mrs. Unwin. I am not at liberty to describe the pleasure I had in conversing with her, because she will be one of the first who will have the perusal of this narrative. Let it suffice to say I found we had one faith, and had been baptized with the same baptism.

When I returned home, I gave thanks to God, who had so graciously answered my prayers by bringing me into the society of Christians. She has since been a means in the hand of God of supporting, quickening, and strengthening me, in my walk with him. It was long before I thought of any other connection with this family than as a friend and neighbour. On the day, however, above mentioned, while I was revolving in my mind the nature of my situation, and beginning, for the first time, to find an irksomeness in such retirement, suddenly it occurred to me that I might probably find a place in Mr. Unwin's family as a boarder. A young gentleman who had lived with him as a pupil was the day before gone to Cambridge. It appeared to me at least possible that I might be allowed to succeed him. From the moment this thought struck me, such a tumult of anxious solicitude seized me that for two or three days I could not divert my mind to any other subject. I blamed and condemned myself for want of submission to the Lord's will; but still the language of my mutinous and disobedient heart was, "Give me the blessing, or else I die."

About the third evening after I had determined upon this measure, I, at length, made shift to fasten my thoughts upon a theme which had no manner of connection with it. While I was pursuing my meditations, Mr. Unwin and family quite out of sight, my attention was suddenly called home again by the words which had been continually playing in my mind, and were at length repeated with such importunity that I could not help regarding them: "The Lord God of truth will do this." I was effectually convinced that they were not of my own production, and accordingly I received from them some assurance of success. But my unbelief and fearfulness robbed me of much of the comfort they might have conveyed; though I have since had many a blessed experience of the same kind, for which I can never be sufficiently thankful. I immediately began to negotiate the affair; and in a few days it was entirely concluded.

I took possession of my new abode, Nov. 11th, 1765. I have found it a place of rest prepared for me by God's own hand, where he has blessed me with a thousand mercies, and instances of his Fatherly protection; and where he has given me abundant means of furtherance in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus, both by the study of his own Word, and communion with his dear disciples. May nothing but death interrupt our union!

Peace be with the reader, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!

W. COWPER.

THERE is a golden promise given to all believers that though sin has its dwelling in them while they dwell on earth, yet it shall not have dominion over them. The reason that is given why sin shall not be prevailing and predominant in the saints is because they are not under the law, but under grace; they are under the reign of free grace, the apprehension of forgiving grace, and promise of mortifying grace.—*T. Bisco.*

THE CONSOLATION OF ISRAEL.

Written by a hearer of the late Mr. Freeman's, of Liverpool, on being set at liberty through a sermon he preached from Lu. ii. 29.

Thou minister of the Spirit,
 What life, light, love, and pow'r
 Through thee, the Lord's anointed, stream'd!
 O sweet and sacred hour!
 The temple of Jerusalem,
 Though with Shekinah blest,
 E'en in the Holy of holies,
 Had never such a Guest.
 Priests, prophets, patriarchs, and kings
 Those sacred precincts trod;
 But that first temple never saw
 Jesus, the mighty God,
 The Root of David, and Offspring,
 The bright and morning Star,
 Decreed of old in cov'nant love
 With sin and death to war.
 Who would have thought when Mary brought
 The Babe, with accents mild,
 Asking the rites of Judah's law
 For Bethleh'm's lowly Child,—
 Who would have thought that this was he,
 By prophets long foretold
 To come and rescue fallen man,
 To sin's deep slavery sold?
 No conquering bands, no royal guards
 Attend his infant train,—
 Alone to fight the strongest foe
 That ever yet was slain.
 One man by faith awaiting HIM,
 Love burning in his breast,
 Came in the Spirit to adore
 The long-expected Guest.
 The Holy Ghost, in days long past,
 Within his bosom seal'd
 That Simeon should rejoice at last
 When Jesus was reveal'd.
 But Simeon's hair was growing grey;
 His eyes were waxing dim.—
 "O when will come that glorious day
 To end this reign of sin?"
 At last it came, O wondrous day!
 His heart beat high that morn!
 The Holy Ghost no doubt reveal'd
 That Jesus had been born.

And in the Babe in Mary's arms,
 Radiant with truth and grace,
 He, by the Spirit's secret pow'r,
 Beheld his Saviour's face.

Earth's glories to Immanuel's charms
 Were darkness to the sun!
 When Simeon took him in his arms,
 He felt God's will was done.

He saw the law fulfilled now,
 And Satan's reign was o'er.
 And as he kiss'd his Saviour's brow,
 He pray'd to live no more.

"Lord, let thy servant now depart,
 My sin and sorrow cease;
 Thy great salvation I have seen;
 Let me depart in peace."

There is but one salvation,—one
 Faith, one Christ of God,
 Revealed by the Holy Ghost,
 And seal'd with Jesus' blood.

The hart for water ne'er so pants
 With thirst in its worst forms,
 As sinners for a lovely Christ,
 To hold him in their arms.

"Where's the promise of his coming?"
 How unbelief would cry.

"Begone! My God's a faithful God,"
 Old Simeon would reply.

So *I* have said, while twenty years
 Pass'd since the promise given,
 "Thou liar! He will come at last;
 My sins shall be forgiven."

Like Simeon, to God's temple I
 Would bend my willing feet;
 And often groan'd, and often sigh'd
 That I with Christ might meet.

"It is written, it is written,"
 When tempted I'd reply;
 "God's word is pass'd, and cannot fail;
 I'll see him ere I die."

Yes, twenty years had worn away,—
 God's temple was the place,
 Of death the shadows turn'd to day
 Before his glorious face.

Al! Little, little did I deem
 That I should meet Christ there.

In fear and dread my eyes beheld
The gate of dark despair.

But in the twinkling of an eye,
Amid the soul's deep storms,
The Lord the Spirit witnessed
That Christ was in my arms.

The mountains of my sin were lost
Within that Hiding-place;
Instead of God my Judge, I saw
My Father's smiling face.

I hearken'd to the wondrous words
He deign'd to speak to me:
"Poor sinner, when I see the blood,
I will pass over thee."

God's peace my purged conscience felt;
Love fill'd my ravish'd heart;
With Simeon I began to cry,
"Lord, let me now depart."

And when I saw the man of God
Dispense the broken bread,
A heav'nly light upon my path
Th' Eternal Spirit shed.

The blood is for a token
Both in sunshine and in storm.
What God the Spirit promises
Christ will himself perform.

So while the preacher, Spirit-taught,
Was telling Simeon's state,
By faith I follow'd, step by step,
Within the temple gate.

And I with him and all who find
This glorious Hiding-place,
On Christ will place the brightest crown
And shout Free, sov'reign grace.

O this is where the serpent's head
Is bruised well within;
For mourning over Calvary's love,
I crucify my sin.

The Name of Christ be on my tongue,
The last on earth that's given;
And thy sweet face the first I view,
Ent'ring the gate of heaven.

O then shall heaven's arches ring
With sweetest notes of all;
And lowest before my Saviour King,
For evermore I'll fall.

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

THE COMFORTABLE ASSURANCES OF A WELL-FOUNDED HOPE.

Dear Brother,—I thank you for yours, and felt a little thankful that you are still living under the shadow of the Almighty, teaching and enjoying the mercy that flows in and through the blessed fountain of Jesus' precious blood.

What a mercy to know the Lord! It is "life eternal to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent." To have a sweet, solemn hope and belief that I am interested in Jesus' dying love, how it makes the things of time sink! As divine realities are seen and felt, the world and time things sink. I wish I was more drawn above; for when the mind is spiritual, there is peace. But I have no might nor power of my own. In myself I am a foolish, wandering creature, and truly seeing and knowing it.

Mercy and eternal love in and through Jesus appear greater and shine brighter. What infinite love in God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to enter into covenant love to save lost ruined sinners! And that we should be raised up and made like him, O what love, what mercy! and how little is it enjoyed! Sometimes I have a little sight and feeling of it; and it leads to humility, and a desire to live to him. What comes from him leads up to him. "We love him, because he first loved us." What a mercy to believe that we have redemption through Jesus' precious blood! What a solemn, solid peace it gives in believing! He that believes in Jesus enters into rest. O that I felt it more! It is a mercy to know a little of that dying love; and more so at my time of life. What a mercy to have a hope that is entered into that within the veil, even in Jesus! I hope sometimes I can feel and say I bless his Name for his dying love and mercy to a hell-deserving and backsliding sinner which I have been. O what mercy to heal all our backslidings, and to love us freely! "Mercy shall be built up for ever." It is everlasting mercy to save ruined sinners like myself. Let what will come, it shall be well with the righteous; although it is likely that troublesome times are near. I was struck by seeing a crucifix on the little New Testament at the assize, Thursday last. These things speak; first the bud, and soon the flower.

May the Lord lead me and all Zion's family to look more to him; and may I with Zion be more continually a beggar at the door of mercy, begging wisdom, and direction. May the blessing of the Lord rest much on you in his work; and he own and bless the Word.

Grittenham, April 4th, 1866.

JACOB BURGHELL.

THE VICTORY GIVEN.

My dear Friend,—You will think me unkind and very forgetful in not answering your kind letter sooner; but the truth is I have nothing to say but to talk about trouble upon trouble; and you have enough of that commodity of your own,—a sick wife, a young

family, a wicked heart, a frowning world, an absent God, a darkened mind, and a tempting devil. And may be you feel and find yourself in a careless, prayerless state of soul with little access to God, and your old man roaring, and raving, and stamping, and your old enemy saying, "Now where is your God?" Well, I think I know something about all this; and feel that if a breath of prayer would bring me heaven, I cannot produce one breath of prayer; no, nor one act of vital faith.

Sometimes I try to say,

"Come, Holy Spirit, calm my mind,
And fit me to approach the Lord."

But O the sinkings felt within, the fits of rebellion I am the subject of, that if the Lord ever saves me, it will be grace triumphant reigns over every opponent, and none greater than myself. What can we say to all these things? "If God be for us, who can be against us?" But O to walk in the feeling blessedness of it, or else I conclude all things are against me.

I hope you and your wife are better. My love to you all.

Wolverhampton, Sept. 3rd, 1858.

WILLIAM HATTON.

To Mr. Glover.

CHRIST OUR LIFE.

Dear Friends,—I suppose you will have heard from some part of my family of my rather sudden departure from home; also the cause. How very frequently I realize the truth of the passage: "We know not what an hour may bring forth." I felt sorry to be so soon again deprived of hearing the gospel preached. I lament to say this is a dark place; but, bless the Lord, he is not confined to means. I was much favoured last Sunday whilst alone in the house. The young people and the servant having gone to their various places of worship, I spent my time in reading the Bible and "Gospel Standard." Whilst reading, the Word was blessed, and I was brought to the feet of Jesus, clothed with his righteousness, and in my right mind. My heart was thawed, which had been cold and frozen the previous week. I had struggled with the flesh and the devil, the flesh striving against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. But, blessed be God, when he appears, confusion ceases, foes are put to flight, a new song is put not into my *mouth* only, but also into my *heart*. I can then

"Praise him for all that is past,
And trust him for all that's to come."

My mind was at "Providence," and I felt great union to yourself and the little church. I am looking forward with pleasure to the prospect of being privileged to meet oftener with you in the sanctuary, as well as privately. May the Lord bless us together; may brotherly love continue amongst us. The Lord help us to walk worthily as becometh Christians. May our conversations be pleasing to the Lord and profitable to ourselves.

Probably some of the members may be ready to condemn my frequent absence. If you feel it right, please give my Christian

love to each of them; and tell them though I am absent in body, I am present in mind, wishing they may enjoy the same favours I have been indulged with during this week. I have sat under the Apple-tree with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. These visits do not lead to selfishness. O no! I would that all could partake of the same. . . .

I do not know exactly when I may return; when I do, I expect it will be to our new residence. May the Lord graciously preside over and in it. Do pray that I may be kept where I ought to be, and where I love to be, blessing and praising God for his abounding mercies to one of the most unworthy, who loathes and abhors herself in dust and ashes. What a mercy sinners Jesus came to save!

With love to Mrs. C. and yourself, I remain, Yours, &c.,

Matlock Bridge, Sept. 2nd, 1881.—To Mr. Carr.

S. C.

THE DESIRE OF NATIONS.

HAIL, glorious Sun of righteousness!

Hail, everlasting Prince of Peace!

Hail, thou by angel-hosts adored!

Hail, thou, the everlasting Lord!

Hail, sweetest Gift from heaven above!

Hail, holy Lord of life and love!

Hail, thou, the nations born to rule!

Hail, thou whose Name is Wonderful!

Hail, thou sweet Messenger of grace,

Born to redeem a chosen race!

Hail, thou, by all who on the earth

Know something of thy saving worth!

Hail, thou, the meek and lowly Child,

By sin untouched, all undefiled;

Begotten of the Holy One,

The Father's well-beloved Son!

Hail, thou, the Mighty One to save

Thy people from the darksome grave!

Hail, thou in whom they all unite,

Their Life, their Liberty, their Light!

Hail, thou, all-merciful and kind,

Who camest broken hearts to bind;

Who camest sin-sick souls to cure;

To preach glad tidings to the poor!

Hail, thou, and let thy kingdom come

To all who from thee blindly roam;

Let such as *shall be saved by thee*

Thy wonders in salvation see.

And with them, Lord, whom thou *hast blest,*

May I still hang upon thy breast;

Thus prove, while still I dwell on earth,

The blessings of a second birth.

ALFRED SMITH.

THE OLD LAMP LIT UP AFRESH.

No. VII.

My dear Friend,—When I read your letter I felt in my soul here is a sister in Christ. I was even melted to tears, particularly when you said you had felt some of those lonely visits which I mentioned to you I had had on the bridge. What I did feel at that time was the exceeding preciousness of my Lord to my soul; and here our sympathies meet together. . . .

An infallible mark that we are right is that we love Christ better than all; yes, at times are ready to give up all for his sake, whether worldly good, friends, or relations, or even our own lives also. For his commands are to give up all and follow him. "O," perhaps you say, "here I shrink, and doubt whether I could give up everything and life too." So have I doubted hundreds of times; but at the present moment I am satisfied I could give up all for my precious Jesus. So do I believe you would, if it should come to the test. For the Lord has promised to give strength in the day of battle, and to make us perfect out of weakness,—yes, through floods and flames, if Jesus lead.

How is it with our souls? How is it between us and God? This is a question we often need to put to ourselves as we journey onwards. What are we doing? Are we really going forward or not? I have been thinking with what a delusion Satan continually aims to blind the minds of men as to the uncertainty of human life. How often does he prevail even with the real Christian!

On looking back upon the past 70 years of my life,—what a dream! How much like a vision does it appear! How little has been spent to the real glory of him that gave it! I cannot trace a single thing that I ever did in my whole life that affords me any pleasure to look back upon. O, if we had nothing more to comfort us, we should be wretched creatures indeed! I know and feel what a believer in Christ should be who is an heir of a crown of glory, and a disciple of him who was not of the world. But how far short do I come! Sometimes when at a throne of grace I can see and feel the littleness of everything around me; and when I have a little glimpse of God as he is in himself, as well as in what he is to my soul, I sink into nothingness; and, being melted into love at his feet, what should I do but for Jesus, precious Jesus! I love thee as the Chief among ten thousand, the altogether lovely.

I am wearied with the creature; for Ichabod and disappointment are written upon the dearest object here below. But in thee there is no disappointment, thou blessed One! O that I could love thee as I wish, and serve thee with all the powers of my mind! Let not my heart wander from thee; but keep me under the shadow of thy wing till the storm of life be past.

I am obliged to cast my whole soul with all its weight of sin on him, the Rock of Ages, the sure Foundation. I feel that my

affections are entwined around him, and that his love is in my heart; nor can I believe we shall ever part. Still, the sorrows of my heart are enlarged, because I cannot cease from sin, and because sin separates me from my God. O Lord, let thy grace be sufficient for me. These are part of the desires that heave my throbbing breast. I feel but little desire for talk, and less for company, except with a few with whom I feel a union of spirit; for, like Moses, I am "slow of speech," and like David, I am "small and despised." But "the Lord thinketh upon me." But most of all, my soul desires to be like Christ.

Now I must tell you a little of my present feelings. I have told you I was well in soul on Friday; yes, quite well. On Saturday I felt my joys going down, and I feared I should lose all my comforts. For I am so afraid, when I feel a decline in my feelings, I shall get into a barren, lifeless state, and that I shall have to mourn an absent God. How I did wrestle in prayer with the Lord on Saturday night that he would support me, and keep his fear alive in my soul. All day on Sunday I felt low; and what added much to it was I could not get on in my hearing. Everything seemed lifeless, especially in the forenoon; and I felt I could not just then write to you. And lest you should be disappointed I told you I must defer it for a while. O what shortsighted creatures we are! On Sunday evening I felt better. I bless my gracious God, he heard my cry, and brought me up into a wealthy place. How blessed it is to be enabled to stand on our watch-tower. O for the spirit of prayer! When faith is in exercise with it, it breaks iron bars, and opens brazen gates.

I had a desire to write and tell you of the Lord's dealings with me; for "as iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." I hope I shall not tire you by my long scribble, for love constraineth me. We must work while it is day; for "the night cometh wherein no man can work."

Yours in Jesus,

Penshurst, May 22nd, 1863.

H. CONSTABLE.

REPLY.

My dear Friend,—I do desire to esteem you very highly in love for your work's sake. Your letters have been greatly blessed to me. I believe the Lord intended it should be so, and inclined you to write. He saw the state I was in; that when I attempted to pray, the heavens were as brass, and he seemed not to hear me. But I think he did; and opened a way for me where I least expected it; and caused me to feel a sweet union and fellowship with you in some parts of your experience, which you related. O, my friend, how sweet it is to have a lively hope in his mercy, and to trust him where we sometimes cannot clearly trace him!

I thought I was enjoying the truth of what dear Mr. Covell said when he was tracing out the experience of God's people, and what the blessed Spirit of all truth taught the soul to know and feel. I felt I knew something of it; but after that he said, "Such a soul would not be content with man's testimony." No,

I knew that; but O, it sounded in my heart, "Had I been doing so?" And my soul sank in distress. I lost my comfort directly, and felt very low all the week; not without hope, but with many doubts and fears. Since then, the words, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some *strange thing* happened unto you," have been in my mind with some power. I feel a hope that "when he has tried me, I shall come forth." But O, what an inconsistent creature I am! I often beg of the Lord to "search me and try me;" and he says he will "search Jerusalem with candles." And I sometimes believe "all things shall work together for good;" yes, "to them that *love God*." I know they do; but I feel myself

"A learner yet,

Unskilful, weak, and apt to slide."

May the Lord continue to bless you, dear friend, and shine upon you to the end of your days, is my earnest desire. Wishing you Benjamin's blessing,

I remain Your Friend in Jesus, I trust,

June 2nd, 1863.

J. RICHARDSON.

REVIEW.

Regeneration as at Antagonism with New Creation; or, The Razing to its Foundation of the Bulwark of Antinomianism, &c. By William Robertson Aikman, a Servant of Christ, and steadfast Witness to the Truth. Printed for private circulation in the Calvinistic churches. London. 1881.

(Concluded from p. 515.)

WITHOUT the fulfilment of the new covenant promise: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh" (Ezek. xxxvi. 26), it is certain there can be no true regeneration of the soul. The faculty of receiving grace, knowing the things of God, hearing his words, knowing his voice, loving him and all that is of him, all are wanting. Without the new creation, there is no good thing in the soul. (Rom. vii. 18.) And God has said, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by his fruit." (Matt. xii. 33; vii. 17, 18.)

By this new mind good and entirely new things are circulated through the whole spirit. New faculties have been brought into being, which the man was not born with, nor ever had before. These are the graces of the Spirit, which begin to move and exercise the soul in opposition to the workings of his fleshly lusts. New necessities, too, are felt in the "new man;" its desires, pursuits, feelings, affections, will, knowledge, and understanding are all new. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. v. 17.)

It is our object now to notice some of the powers or faculties which belong to the new man of grace, through union with its spiritual Head, that are wanting in every soul destitute of the new creation.

First, those relating to intelligence; as,

1. Perception. God, his holy Word, his worship, and his people are viewed in a new light. "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.)

By this blessed illumination the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are perceived; and the worth of the soul ascertained to be of more value than the whole world. Moses, being thus enlightened, made choice of the reproaches of Christ, and the afflictions of God's people, rather than the treasures of Egypt; "for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward;" and like a good merchantman, turned his back on unprofitable pursuits, and bent all his energies to obtain the "true riches," coveting earnestly the best gifts. The "path which the vulture's eye hath not seen" is descried; and the soul "takes hold on the path of life." "The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath." (Prov. xv. 24.) The sight of this causes the person to flee the last, and seek the first. As the Author and Way of wisdom and understanding are perceived, the soul becomes a follower of him, and a walker "in the way of good men;" and "walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." (Ps. i. 1.)

Spiritual perception is an unspeakable blessing. It discovers the Person of the Good Shepherd; and follows him, because he has "the words of eternal life." What is truth and what is error is known by it; and also the nature of sin that dwells within, and of grace which is in Christ Jesus. A man sees sufficiently thereby, in the light of God, to hate himself as a sinner, and love the Saviour as the sinner's Friend.

2. Faith. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." (Rom. x. 10.) The faith of God's elect believes only the truth as it is in Jesus. All belief not founded on truth will fail; and the soul that enters an eternal world trusting in it, will be lost. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie. That they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess. ii. 11, 12.) So, then, the question is not, "Do you believe?" but, "Do you believe the truth?" Christ is the Truth; and he only can be the Author of true faith. (Heb. xii. 2.) The Spirit's revelation of Christ is the discovery of truth; consequently faith is raised up in the heart to receive it and hold it fast. "Faith cometh by hearing."

No man without faith can possibly believe that he himself is the helpless, ruined sinner described in the Word of God; or that

it is *himself* that is declared to be an enemy to God. But the quickened soul perceives the presence of the very same evils in the carnal mind that the Bible declares to exist therein. The Word is a witness to the facts it records, and the Spirit bears the same testimony; so that by these two witnesses the truth is established; and living faith is brought into action as the effect of their testimony. Also, whatever portion of truth the soul desires to know and enjoy, if it please the Holy Spirit to give light to apprehend something of its signification, and then attach his seal to it, the act of faith is the immediate consequence. Hence it is impossible for a man to believe to the salvation of his soul, before a revelation of truth has been made to his heart. But when the truth has once been revealed to the heart by the Spirit of truth, it remains unalterable in its nature. Satan may suggest that the Bible is not true, and the soul may stagger thereat; but one thing is certain to his mind, that if what he has received by the power of the Spirit is not right, there is no truth to be found on earth.

To believe is the act of the living, not of the dead. Consequently, to assert that faith is all that God requires from a dead sinner is to deceive souls, and to make faith stand for regeneration; and men are not born again by faith. That is, faith does not put the new principle into the soul; but it is a part of the new man of grace, which is born of the Spirit at the new birth.

8. Wisdom. "The wise in heart shall be called prudent." (Prov. xvi. 21.) The grace of wisdom appears to be the power of receiving a right and just conception of the truth, moving a man to think and act wisely. It equips the mind with ability to discern the emptiness, foolishness, and uncertainty of worldly things, however pompous; and to discover that the end of those things is death. Therefore it causes the soul to flee from them, and from the wrath to come. It seeks a way of escape; and it will not return; because destruction is perceived to be behind it. As the way of life has been dimly seen afar off, it turns the whole mind to find it; and counts the cost, arriving at a just and proper estimation of the value of life or death. If the soul recede, death is there. If it advance, the loss may be great in a worldly point of view. Wisdom decides the case. The mind is fortified by its decision, and launches forth, it may be, on a troubled sea of life, "in hopes to see his face." This determination is farther encouraged by the fame of wisdom's words, which reach the heart: "My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver. I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment. That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures." (Prov. viii. 19-21.) To these words the fool pays no regard; but to the wise man they contain the very things his soul desires to possess, and, in the hand of the Spirit, fire his mind in pursuit of them. The professing fool spends his days in working out a righteousness to appear in before his Judge; and at last

ventures before him, to his awful confusion, with, "Lord, Lord, open to us;" grounding his plea upon having "prophesied, cast out devils, and done many wonderful works" in the name of Jesus. But the wise in heart approaches the Lord with a different cry altogether: "God be merciful to me, a sinner." Neither will he venture to wait for the coming of the Bridegroom with nature's best stock of religion, but seeks oil in his vessel, or grace to endure to the end. As a wise man, he gladly parts with his filthy rags for a change of raiment; and forsakes the bed which is too short for him to stretch himself upon, and the covering which is too narrow to wrap himself therein,—for the promised rest: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest."

The Holy Spirit teaches the soul its own folly, and enables it to become a fool in itself that it may be wise. They who have undergone much teaching, and they who are passing through the operation, know what mortifying work it is to be brought to submit to "become a fool." No sinner can receive the instructions of wisdom until a new heart is put within him. (Prov. ix. 7-9.)

4. Knowledge. "Apply thine heart unto my knowledge." (Prov. xxii. 17.) The human faculty of knowledge appears to attain a practical acquaintance with men and things; and with the memory, it supplies ability to know again what has been before seen, heard, tasted, smelt, or handled. But by spiritual knowledge, a man recognises something of the nature of sin and salvation. By it he knows himself and all men to be sinners; and by practice in the exercise of knowledge, he discovers sin where he once, from the lack of knowing better, thought there was only zeal for God. By the blessing of true knowledge a man sees the difference between zeal without knowledge, and zeal according to it. Truth is known by it, and distinguished from error by the practical influence what is true or false bears upon the mind. The joyful sound is known when it is heard; and the Person of Christ is recognised, when he appeareth by the description the Holy Spirit has given of him to the mind. (Gal. iii. 1.) The voice of the Shepherd is known by its blessed effects,—calmness, reconciliation, resignation, and a powerful drawing of the soul away from earthly objects to heavenly ones: "Where the word of a king is there is power."

Experience in knowledge makes known the difference between flesh and spirit, law and gospel, bondage and liberty, will-worship and spiritual communion, professor and possessor. Without knowledge of these things, how can a man be at a point? (Rom. xiv. 5.) And if destitute of all knowledge, the Athenian inscription may be written on all his devotions: "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD."

"Every heart knows its own bitterness." Some of God's dealings are, at times, exceedingly bitter. Yet the soul knows that the presence of the Lord would sweeten all things; and like the lion which roared against Sampson, and yet its carcase

yielded him honey; so does a trial add knowledge to the heart,—and “knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul.” Also: “They that know thy name will put their trust in thee.” This is among the great benefits acquired by the above gift. And while all boasting in man is excluded, to glory in the knowledge of the Lord is encouraged. (Jer. ix. 23, 24.)

5. Understanding. “The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge.” (Prov. xv. 14.) Understanding differs from either of the two last-named graces, though closely allied with them. A man may know something is a fact, and yet not understand how it is so. Human understanding is some apprehension of the nature of things, and can only be acquired by learning or experience.

A godly person knows a little of the plague of his own heart; but he understands it less. The craft of Satan is not unknown; but how little of his ways is understood! This grace of understanding is developed by constant exercise: “Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breast. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little.” (Isa. xxviii. 9, 10.) Much of the after-life of the saints is occupied in being taught to understand in some degree what they already know. They begin with a knowledge of God in his law, and themselves as lost sinners; and by lesson upon lesson on these subjects does the Spirit cause the soul to understand them better. Likewise grace, by exercise, is made more plain, and its operations more clearly understood. But, at first, a child of God understands very little of the nature of sin, the violent hatred of his carnal mind to God, the power and craft of Satan, the determinate opposition and malice of the old man against the new man, his own wickedness, and the continual need of Christ's power to keep him every moment, and to hold him up lest he should fall.

When God first sets the soul at liberty, the man generally thinks himself wonderfully wise, and stands ready to give a reason of his hope to any one he may meet; he seldom waits to be asked, and at times pushes his religion where it is not wanted. But after Satan has questioned him on that subject a time or two, and a suspicion crosses the mind that all is not right (for Satan is exceedingly clever at shooting these darts), he finds that “a still tongue makes a wise head.” He wishes to be asked no questions about his religion, lest he should not be able to give an answer.

When the Spirit opens the understanding to penetrate into the spiritual meaning of the Scriptures, what a vast difference is observed in the reading of them. What were formerly dark things and sayings now strike the mind with an amazing perspicuity, under the illuminations of the Holy Ghost. The Person, work, and character of Christ become transcendently admirable as they

are understood in their suitable nature to a poor, lost, ruined sinner. O how precious is Christ then to the soul!

Secondly. The new man possesses a gracious will. "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." (2 Cor. viii. 12.) The will is not an independent faculty, but dependent on preceding causes. Consequently, the actions of the will cannot be absolute determinations within itself. The man who says, "I will," without a cause for willing, must be a madman; or he says it in word only, like the elder son in the parable, who answered his father's request by affecting a willingness: "I go, Sir; but he went not." It is an impossibility for the will to be independently free, as generally understood by man. It is governed by the soul's judgment and affections. For instance, if a man would buy a horse, he probably does not make choice of the first animal he sees, without examination of it. He brings his wisdom, knowledge, and understanding to bear on the point at issue. If, according to the judgment of his mind, the horse is pronounced good, the man's affections move towards the possession of it, and his will closes the debate by choosing it. But if the animal is rejected by the understanding, the will cannot act otherwise than refuse it. Yet the act of volition is free inasmuch as it cannot be forced; otherwise there could be no motion of the will to choose or refuse.

In like manner, man will never come to Christ that he may have life (Jno. v. 40), if he possess no will but that which is led and governed by his darkened judgment and corrupt affections. He can neither will what he hates, nor refuse what he loves in his heart. If he be destitute of grace to receive the light of life, and to love righteousness and hate iniquity, his will is influenced to choose what is evil, and refuse what is good.

But the will of the new man is under the sway of spiritual wisdom, knowledge, and understanding; and the power of God brings it into operation in the soul: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." (Ps. cx. 3.) The person then willingly with the mind forsakes the world, the flesh, and the devil; because he knows well the end of such a course; and in heart hates it. Therefore he freely wills to part from all sin. He knows the reality of God's truth, and loves it; wherefore he as willingly makes choice of a life of truthfulness, inasmuch as it is a pleasure to his mind. How willingly the sheep of Christ follow him; because they discover in him the words of eternal life; and after him they will go, for life is what they are seeking. How freely, with the mind, would the children of God serve and fear him, love and honour him, and, forsaking all others, cleave only to him! "O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name." (Isa. xxvi. 13.) The presence of Christ, when felt in the soul, produces a readiness to depart and be for ever in glory with him; and gladly would they shake off the body of sin and death

to crown Jesus Lord of all. The saints themselves never willingly submit to afflictions and adversities, until they discern their real worth. This discovered, they thank God for them; seeing that afterwards they have yielded the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

Thirdly. The new man possesses spiritual affections.

1. Love. "Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." (1 Jno. iv. 7.) Love being the bond of perfectness, it binds the mind to the truth, enabling a man to receive it in the love of it. The love that is born of the Spirit is, in the nature of it, like his own,—unconditional. It is not, by any means, mercenary in its tendencies. God loves the persons of his elect; and they love his Person. It is a mutual, personal esteem, regard, and affection for each other. It is true the acts of God's lovingkindness draw forth the love of his children; but these do not give existence to it; God alone is its Author. There is love to God in the mind, though he appear as an enemy to the soul as revealed in the law. And God loved his child when that child was a real foe to him. There is love to Christ in the new-born soul when there is no felt union to him, but rather a fear that it has no part nor lot in the matter. And Christ loved his sheep when they were estranged from him. There is love to the Spirit, though he appears to fight against the soul with his two-edged sword. And the Spirit loved the child even when that child was fighting against him; and in his love quickened him to love his Creator. There is a love to the gospel, while at the same time it may yield no felt sweetness to the heart. There is a love to the saints when, to all appearance, death will sever them from the soul for ever. This is the charity that never faileth (1 Cor. xiii. 8); without which a man is nothing, though he could remove a mountain by his word (1 Cor. xiii. 2). It furnishes the soul with an attachment to righteousness, and makes it a lover of good men.

2. Joy. "My heart rejoiceth in the Lord." (1 Sam. ii. 1.) Why? Because he had heard and answered her prayer, and delivered her from the taunts and jeers of her adversary; and not only so, but had removed the cause of her enemy's triumph over her,—her barrenness. God having removed the cause, the effects must cease. Who would not have reason to rejoice when a trouble is removed for ever, and a foe driven into perpetual silence, and become, in that matter, as dead as a stone? This is the time to shout aloud for joy, and praise the Lord.

The prophet's heart rejoiced in the consolation of God's Word: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." How precious is the Word when it becomes a light to guide, food to eat, a sword to fight with, and a glass to reflect the image of Christ! The presence of God gives fulness of joy; and his love shed abroad in the heart "makes the bones fat." When the Comforter speaks comfortably to the soul, joy and peace succeed: "And when ye

see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb." (Isa. lxvi. 14.)

Sometimes joy springs up in the midst of temptation, and enables the soul to "count it all joy" when it falls into divers temptations. This is not often easy to do; but at times the soul knows that in the end the trial will terminate in mercy and compassion; as it is written: "Behold we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." (Jas. v. 11.) Job, in the midst of his trial, felt joy break forth from his mind, in the knowledge that he had a living Redeemer, though his family and friends were as good as dead; and that he would surely arise and succour him, and deliver him, in his own time. He rejoiced also in the knowledge that the furnace would purify him exceedingly: "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." (Job xxiii. 10.) The ways of God produce joy: "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart." At such times the Christian runs without weariness, and walks without fainting.

3. Heat or zeal. "My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned; then spake I with my tongue." (Ps. xxxix. 3.) Godly zeal is a grace, and not the natural fervency of the disposition. Without spiritual zeal the heart is cold and indifferent, and worship becomes formal. Zeal without knowledge renders man blindly bigoted, and a child of God extremely hard and severe. Fellowship with Christ, while he opens the Scriptures, causes the heart to burn with vehement love to his sacred Name, with a heavenly ardour to his cause, and with fervent attachment to his saints. The enlivening influence of the Spirit, put forth in the Word, makes the whole mind burn with earnest desire to be conformed to the image of Christ, and revives the hope of the glory of God. And the revival of hope warms the soul's affections, and stimulates it to run on its way with increasing energy.

4. Sorrow. This also will heat the heart with indignation against sin, self, and Satan; and while the Spirit is working the grace of prayer in the heart, godly sorrow will give it fire at the throne of grace. (2 Cor. vii. 10, 11.) As the fool drinks in pleasure, loves mirth-making, and hardens himself against the rebukes of conscience; thoughts of death, hell, and eternity are put away, and he sports and dances upon the brink of eternal ruin; so the wise man is brought to consider his ways; and godly sorrow puts a stop to his fleshly amusements, and creates a mourning spirit. Eccles. vii. 2-6 points out this distinction between the wise man and the fool. Hence arises the soul's repentance unto salvation, abhorrence of sin, self-loathing, and bitter weeping in secret before the feet of his Saviour.

Lastly. Prayer is a grace employing every faculty of the new mind. "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also." (1 Cor. xiv. 15.) It is as Bunyan says "a

sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the soul to God through Christ." True prayer is always accompanied by faith. (Rom. x. 14; Heb. xi. 6.) The man or woman possessing the new mind prays as did the blessed Lord. He was perfect and holy, yet he was often in prayer. So will the regenerate person be led to follow his example, and cry with the Spirit as he did; which is what no natural man, without the holy principle in union with Christ, can perform.

The new heart is further described as possessing various qualities; but we must only notice these in short, and pass on. Let it be remembered that a man destitute of the new creation is destitute of every one of these marks, which are its peculiar properties.

1. Purity. "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." (Matt. v. 8.) It is pure, because it is the new heart, "created in Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 10), and is the habitation of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. (Jno. xvii. 23; 2 Cor. i. 22.) The Word of God is lodged in it, and "the words of the Lord are pure words." Truth is planted within it; and as it hates all lies, it is pure in its intentions. It is the dwelling-place of faith, by which it purifies the soul from error, superstition, and lying vanities. Faith in the blood of Christ dwells there, and purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God. And the blood of sprinkling sanctifies it, and makes it a fit residence for God. The new heart is pure in its affections; for it will entertain no rival to Jesus its Lord. It groans under the oppressive power of sin, which obstructs the free circulation of grace over the whole soul. It delights in attaching the soul's desires to heavenly things, and causing it to recognise its rightful Sovereign only. When its influence predominates in the soul, hypocrisy and lukewarmness are hated; and sin, with perfect hatred to its exceeding sinfulness, is confessed or forsaken. Real indignation against sin cannot so much as be imitated to the life, in that soul where purity is not to be found. The saints themselves cannot command it. It never made, nor yet influenced, a mumping professor, since the world had a being. Pure truth, clean and good, is its food; and pure water of life its drink. For the crime of fouling the water, and treading down the good pasture, God has threatened to enter into judgment with the hireling shepherds of Israel. (Ezek. xxxiv. 18, 19.)

2. Truthfulness. "And speaketh the truth in his heart." (Ps. xv. 2.) This God imparts to every spiritual worshipper; and wherever it is not found, all the services are mere lip devotion, and rejected of God. "Thou desirest truth in the inward parts." (Ps. li. 6.) But he who possesses it speaks the truth both before God and man. He will not say God is his Father, until the Spirit declares it to be a truth. Neither will he appropriate to himself an interest in God's covenant of pro-

mise, except it is revealed as a truth. The pith of real worship is found in the following words: "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." (Heb. x. 22.) The Lord has put his law in his inward parts, and written it in his (new) heart (Jer. xxxi. 33); wherefore no error can find harbour therein.

3. Tenderness. "Because thine heart was tender." (2 Kings xxii. 19.) Where this is, a sacred reverence to the holy Name, Word, and ways of the Almighty will be manifest. Evil sorely grieves and wounds the tender heart; and a sense of the soul's declension causes it to go in sackcloth, and lie in ashes. It fears to move in any matter without the mind and will of God being made known. It *will* take stock, and see how the soul stands for eternity; and what has been lost or gained by trading in heavenly things. It must have a true balance-sheet; suspense is terrible to it; and separation from Christ it cannot endure. No place is more fitted for the tender heart than the garden of Gethsemane, with a suffering Saviour. There it can weep, condole, repent, rejoice, and feel the whole amalgamation of joy and sorrow, which those who have once felt would be glad to experience again.

4. Fixedness. "My heart is fixed, O God; my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise." (Ps. lvii. 7.) It is at a point that if salvation is not wholly of grace, there is no salvation at all. The mind becomes fixed in the truth of the gospel, being satisfied that no other interpretation can truthfully be put on the Scriptures than that which the Spirit has revealed in the heart. It is the new heart or mind, not the natural judgment, that is fixed. Therefore it requires much exercise or drilling of the soul before that is fixed experimentally in the full assurance of the understanding of its interest in the counsels of Jehovah, the Person, work, and character of Christ, and fellowship of the Spirit, so as to feel the support of these truths in dark paths. But at times the child of God is enabled to commit body, soul, and circumstances into the keeping of his heavenly Father, firmly fixed that his oath and promise both combine to make all things work together for good on his behalf,—fixed that he will be to him an all-sufficient Friend through life, and for ever. Such a heart is not blown about by every wind of doctrine, being "steadfast in the faith;" and Paul prays that those who possess it may, after they have suffered a while, be made perfect, and be established, strengthened, and settled. (1 Pet. v. 9, 10.)

Where these graces and qualities of the new man are in existence in the *soul*, there is "a sound heart," which is "the life of the flesh." But they must not be viewed as though they worked alone. The saints of the Lord do not possess one or all of them without any opposing force; both flesh and spirit are in the field, warring one against the other, as two contending armies with deadly enmity between them. (Gal. v. 17; Gen. iii. 15.)

We come next to inquire what in the place of the new heart Mr. Aikman has set up. He shall speak for himself: "Regeneration is a divine dealing with the fallen soul of man, even the quickening of that soul in the divine life by the Spirit of God. To deviate, therefore, from this revealed truth, and set up the anti-scriptural notion that the soul of fallen man receives of the Eternal Spirit no quickening or renewing, but remains in its natural, unquickened, and spiritually dead state, while in place of personal regeneration, God calls into existence a new, a distinct, and an altogether immaculate man, is directly—and very sadly—to contradict the Son of God (Jno. iii. 3, 5, 7), and affirm that there is no such thing as regeneration, that is, no spiritual birth of the man whose first birth was merely natural." (P. 11.)

We answer, without a holy principle implanted, there is no regeneration of the fallen soul;—holiness is wanting, and "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." The faculty of knowing the things of God is wanting; and the promise is, "All shall know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord." All the graces of the Spirit, above described, are wanting; for grace in the soul is itself the new creature. And union with Jesus Christ is wholly dispensed with; for the man in his natural state is darkness itself, and "what communion hath light with darkness?" Therefore to say that "God calls into existence a new, a distinct," holy creation is to affirm that *there is such a thing as regeneration*; and that by means of a new heart, the man "whose first birth was merely natural," is born again into a new life, which he never felt nor conceived before.

Further, Mr. Aikman says, "With regard to the Lord's chosen method of dealing, the Holy Scriptures and all corroboratory experience make manifest that it is,—By actual contact of the Eternal Spirit with the soul and the application to it, along with his own quickening or regenerating power, of those august facts, truths, or realities which relate to God and its personal salvation." (P. 96.) In place, then, of receiving a new heart, the dwelling-place of the Most High, we have here the "actual contact of the Eternal Spirit with the soul," &c. And the effect of such contact Mr. A. describes: "Thus the mind or soul is by the victorious power of the divine renewing subdued, reduced to an humble and filial state of obedience."

That is, there is fellowship of righteousness with unrighteousness, communion of light with darkness, concord of Christ with Belial. Here is an agreement between the temple of God and idols,—the Holy Spirit in a heart where nothing but idols are adored; and between the truth of God and an infidel. Only when these things can agree,—for there is no good thing in the heart of the natural man,—will the fallen mind be reduced to a humble and filial state of obedience. And when this is accomplished, it may be said and proved that *the carnal mind IS subject to the law of God, and indeed can be.*

The presence of God to the saints themselves is "like a re-

finer's fire, and like fuller's soap." (Mal. iii. 2.) To unregenerate sinners the Scriptures compare it to "consuming fire." Such will God's presence be found to be at last to all who die without possessing the new man of grace in their souls. So says the apostle, "Let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire." (Heb. xii. 28, 29.)

Turning over page after page, we find no fresh argument brought forward; the old one which we have fully discussed,—viz., that the fallen mind, which is taken for the soul, is regenerated; and that a new nature implanted involves the existence of two souls in one body,—is made the ground of numerous and various false assertions. Some of these we will proceed to notice, so as further to show the fallacy of Mr. Aikman's teaching; for "no lie is of the truth."

1. With regard to repentance Mr. A. uses the following words: "REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD.—With regard to this fundamental grace two distinct things may at a glance be seen: the first that it neither is, nor by any possibility can be, a state or disposition which can exist or be equitable in the bosom of a new, a wholly immaculate, and an eternally incorruptible creature—that is, such a creature as has by those who practically deny the grand doctrine of regeneration been imagined. And, secondly, that being in a state or disposition only capable of existing, and only equitable in the guilty or old creature, therefore if ever it is in the bosom of such a fallen, sin-hardened, and as a consequence naturally impenitent creature to have effect, it must, without fail, be by Hand Divine wrought into the deepest fibres of the soul. When, then, at any time such a saving blessing has in a human soul been wrought, this mercy on the part of the Deity cannot with truth or justice be regarded, and the assertion at the same time bē maintained that God does nothing for the soul of such a fallen yet elect creature." (P. 82.)

Having already spoken of the grace of true repentance as a part of the new man, in its operations upon a quickened soul, and shown how it exists *necessarily* "in the bosom of a new, a wholly immaculate, and an eternally incorruptible creature" implanted in a regenerate person, we need add nothing on this point. It will be seen at a glance that the bottom of the error here lies in the supposition that the new creature is a second, independent soul. There is not a hint concerning its vital union and relation to the natural soul, nor of its relation to Christ its spiritual Head, both of which are necessary to produce repentance. This relationship (as we have said) cannot be defined; but we know it exists, and the mind and soul are inseparable. As the old man is identified with the fallen soul (Rom. vi. 6), so also the new man becomes one with the regenerate soul, and is called "a new creature" (2 Cor. v. 17), and said not to sin. (1 Jno. v. 18.) We know nothing of any motions of the old man or of the new, apart from

the soul; we know them only by the soul's action. It is the soul that acts, and accordingly is judged. God never charges man's sin upon the sinful principle, but upon the man. Likewise a Christian experiences it is himself that loves God; and he does it with all his heart. It is himself that mourns and repents; and he does it with all his heart. It is not the principle of love, apart from himself, that loves God; the man feels the pleasure of it, and has an interest in every action of spiritual life which quickens his soul. Paul himself *delighted* to serve the law of God after the inward man. (Rom. vii.) The renewed soul itself loves, believes, hopes, repents, prays, praises, according as it is supplied with renewing grace in the heart; and "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" sets it "free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. viii. 2.) All this, and much more, we hold God does "for the soul of such a fallen yet elect creature."

2. The same truths also apply to Mr. A.'s statements concerning faith and sanctification, which, like repentance, he declares can neither "exist, nor be equitable" in the bosom of a new, holy creature. Besides, did not the holy Lamb of God sorrow? Was he not holy and incorruptible? Yet he grieved; and grieved in righteous abhorrence of sin. And if holiness be taken away, godly sorrow has no existence; and in the children of God there would be no repentance; for "godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of." (2 Cor. vii. 10.) Again, whether the suffering Son of God believed or not, let his own words when speaking in the Psalms determine: "He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him." (Ps. xxii. 4-11.) And sanctification, here denied by Mr. A. to exist in the new creature, usually expresses the holy principle itself implanted at regeneration, with its holy actings, by the Spirit; all of which spring from Christ the Head.

3. The great object Mr. Aikman has in view in all this false teaching is to establish the erroneous doctrine of progressive sanctification of the soul, by overthrowing the faith of the new creation as the bulwark of Antinomianism. To do this he first imputes to the new creature a separate existence, independent of the soul; and then proceeds to deduce all manner of base conclusions and charges of Antinomianism from his false argument. But one and all of these are refuted by the true doctrines of the new birth and sanctification of the soul. Except God gives the spirit of grace, whereby the soul is furnished with "all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue" (2 Pet. i. 3), there can no sanctification be produced from man. It is by the Spirit only that the deeds of the body are mortified (Rom. viii. 13); and grace alone "teaches us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world." (Tit. ii. 12.) All the graces of the Spirit have a sanctifying influence; and the gospel coming in power into the heart has a sanctifying effect on the child of God. So says Paul,

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. xii. 1.) We hold that the sanctifying grace of God, enabling his children to walk in the precepts of the gospel, is the real enjoyment of the substance of the spirit, power, and sweetness of real godliness.

We trust that little more need be said on the side of truth to complete the work we have undertaken, to clear up the stumbling-blocks out of the way of our spiritual readers, which Mr. Aikman has laid in their path. One page only seems to require any further notice, where Mr. A. lays down ten conclusions as proceeding from the true doctrine of the new birth. To some few of these we will refer in short. He affirms that the doctrine of the new creation disallows,

1. "The preaching of the gospel call to men as sinners." We answer, there is a natural, living soul in the natural man; and both the law and the gospel can be and are *preached* to the souls of men. We have fully entered upon this subject in a late No. ;* and here we will merely repeat that the soul that is *dead* to God is nothing more than an inert mass to all spiritual action. A new life must be implanted before there can be any spiritual motion; and on this mysterious something called spiritual life, born of the Spirit, being communicated, spiritual motion animates the soul; immediately the gospel is heard, and takes effect; never before.

2. That it disallows "the use of the precepts and of exhortation to obedience,—for it is held that whereas the Christian consists of two impotent creatures, the old man and the new, hence cannot to Christian practice be exhorted; contrariwise, the Holy Ghost, who is all-powerful and can alone move the new creature, is a sovereign, who has determined neither to be exhorted, nor in any way directed; notion, by which the precepts and exhortations of the inspired Word are rendered useless both to God and man."

Who that ever knew, or knows, the old man has found him to be at any time "*impotent?*" We have no such sentiment in the Scripture. Nor have we ever heard of any one, excepting Mr. A., saying or implying that the new man was "*impotent.*" It is evident Mr. A. looks upon man as a self-acting creature; and that he considers man must be a self-acting being to render him a responsible person. And because we deny this, he charges us with maintaining that "the Christian consists of two impotent creatures."

It is true, indeed, no man is self-acting, or, in other words, possessed of a free-will, spiritually or naturally. Although the man seems to move and act freely according to his thoughts and designs, yet saith the prophet, "O Lord, I know that the way

* "G. S." 1882, p. 403.

of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. x. 23.) The very freedom with which man moves in himself renders him guilty before God in all his movements; because every motion is sinful. (Gen. vi. 5.) The prevention of the execution of these continual evil thoughts is of God. There is no man living who would not have committed more evil than he has, if he could have done so, and who has not insulted God to his face, because he prevented him doing so. Thus, all evil is from man, for which he is responsible; and all good is from God, to whom the praise belongs.

It is also true that the new man, though active and powerful, yea, invincible, never acts apart from God; for, like every other creature, it lives, and moves, and has its being in him. Moreover, being born of God, it is especially related to him; it is a "partaker of the divine nature" (2 Pet. i. 4), and lives only upon spiritual things. Hence the preaching of the whole inspired Word, by the Holy Ghost, with its precepts and exhortations, far from being "rendered useless," is as necessary to the renewed soul as food is to the body.

3. That it disallows "the preaching of the sin of Antinomian folding of the hands, and the neglect of prayer,—for it is held that the only genuine and prevailing prayer is that to which the saint is mightily urged at special seasons," &c. But this is not held by the church of Christ, or those who love the doctrine of the new creation. We have shown above that prayer is a grace of the Spirit, who begets a spirit of prayer and supplication in his children; and all prayer that proceeds not from the Spirit is not spiritual, but natural. From the weak, suppressed desire in the heavy heart to the vehement wrestlings of the soul, true prayer alike springs from the Spirit. It is not that only which is felt to be mighty. The real point of dispute here is not, Are the people of God to be exhorted to prayer? but, Who is to give effect to the exhortation, God or man? Let it be replied, Christ is their Life (Col. iii. 4), and they are content it should be so; and "without him they can do nothing." (Jno. xv. 5.)

4. That it disallows "the preaching that the Christian is in any better position to resist sin than the natural man," &c. Here again Mr. A. is advocating creature power, and the same reply must be given as above. "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Mr. A. adds, "hence his *present grace* is of no value, a sovereign and special act of the Godhead alone being able to make an occasional difference."

First, we repeat that the natural man has no capacity for receiving grace; he is void of spiritual understanding; nor can he attain it by any stratagem whatever; it must be born of God. Of what immense value, then, is "present grace," which "cannot be gotten for gold," and whose price is "above rubies!" (Job xxviii. 15-19; Prov. viii.)

Secondly, Mr. A. overlooks the union between the new creature and Christ, its spiritual Head. It is an abiding union,

likened by the Lord to that between the vine and its branches. (Jno. xv.) Christ is not occasionally the Life of his regenerate people, but *always* abides in them and they in him. Hence, the difference between the position of the natural man and that of the Christian, with regard to sin, is this. While there is nothing in man by nature to enable him to resist sin, there is an abiding, living principle in the regenerate soul, which will never fail to oppose all sin, because Christ is its Life. Whether the resistance be feeble or strong, Christ is its Strength. And the soul once quickened is never again wholly destitute of the life and power of Christ.

Thus, we have not taken Mr. Aikman's book in hand to answer it by piecemeal, but rather to show what the truth is in Jesus, and what is held among our Calvinistic churches; and to place it by the side of Mr. A.'s misrepresentations of their faith, and his own false teaching. We desire our spiritual readers to judge rightly between the two; and to remember the apostle's injunction to "mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them;" because they that are such, "by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple." (Rom. xvi. 17, 18.)

Obituary.

JOHN WAKEFIELD.—On June 8th, 1882, aged 65, John Wakefield, deacon of the church at Dauntsey, Wilts.

He attended our chapel from infancy with his father, who was a God-fearing man. But he lived without much concern for his soul until he was nearly 39 years of age. At that time he was brought to see himself a sinner, and laboured under the law about five years. The Lord graciously delivered him by the application of this promise: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." So powerful was the manifest goodness of God that for several hours he could not continue his work. Soon after this he was admitted a member of the church, and was baptized by Mr. Wigmore in July, 1863. He was afterwards chosen deacon; and served that office until his death.

On May 24th, he complained of pain in his head. He had felt very low in his mind while at work; but the words came to him then with power: "Thou art not far from the kingdom of heaven," and seemed to put everything right. Two days after he said to his wife, "I don't think I shall ever do any more work." He lay quietly for 14 days, and said but little, being paralyzed, but knew his friends. I visited him, and he said, "The Lord is merciful. The Lord is bountiful. Let him come when he thinks fit." Thus he passed into his eternal rest, his hope fixed on the Rock, Christ Jesus.


JOHN MILLARD.

INDEX.

	PAGE
A Broken Heart	114, 149, 193
Address to our Spiritual Readers	5
A Happy New Year	30
A Letter of John Careless written to Master Philpot	388
A Letter to John Careless	343
A Man's Own Work, the Work that Most Needs Proving	61
Anticipations of Glory; and Fearful Forebodings for Scotland	489
A Pastoral Address to the Churches of Christ throughout the World	329, 377
A Plea for our Good Old Bible	211
A Short Account of the Lord's Dealings with Henry Parker	433
A Vessel of Mercy. (Life of W. Asker.)	157, 203, 253
Christ is All and in All.....	257
Christ's Righteousness Like the Great Mountains. (Sermon by S. Turner.)	53, 101
Covenant Engagements	28
Divine Chastening	107
Extract from a Letter to the Viscountess of Kenmure	240
Free-Will and Merit Fairly Examined. (Sermon by Toplady)	14, 66
Holy Importunity in Prayer ..	241
INQUIRIES AND ANSWERS.—On a Passage in "Antidote against Armi- nianism," 272; On Song vii. 10, 274; Church Order, 318; 1 Cor. xv. 24-28, 450; Use of Musical Instruments in Public Worship, 454; Marriage with Unbelievers, 502; Of Ministers Preaching who are not Strict Baptists, in Strict Baptist Churches, 499.	
Man's Condition and Position before God. (Sermon by Mr. Hatton.)	285
Memoir of the Early Life of William Cowper.....	476, 521
OBITUARIES.—Eleanor Ann Archard, 419; Amos Bailey, 186; Emily Ball, 466; Jas. Bamford, 467; Ruth Bengier, 325; Sarah Bristow, 419; E. Brown, 326; J. Chandler, 91; Job Chappell, 238; Ebenezer Church, 465; Sarah Clarke, 231; Emma Sarah Cleare, 421; Rich. De Fraine, 414, 460; John Emery, 49; E. Errey, 323; Martha Evans, 145; John Ford, 373; Thos. Hicks, 145; Higgons, 282; H. Hilbers, 191; E. Hills, 324; Ann Iles, 327; W. Instone, 97; Harriet Key, 234; Rich. Marsh, 371; Maria Mather, 143; W. Muskett, 279; Robt. Norfolk, 284; Martha Norman, 515; E. Norton, 319, 365; Noah Paxman, 275; J. Pearson, 236; Mary Ramsbottom, 94; Emma Rowbottom, 422; Hannah Rumsey, 189; Mary Seagrave, 418; W. Sharp, 372; Sarah Tims, 280; W. Turner, 180; John Wakefield, 558; George Weston, 43, 86, 138; Susanna Weston, 227; Wright, 374.	

INDEX.

	PAGE
Of the Person who is Mediator ; and of the Great Discoveries of God which are made to us in and through Christ	22
On Temptation	469
On the State of a Happy, Separate Spirit	349
Prayer Indited, Prayer Answered	109
REVIEWS.—Eight Letters by Pastor D. Allen, 166, 219, 269 ; Five Sermons by F. Covell, 364 ; Infant Baptism, 456 ; Judgment of the Synod of Dort, 358, 403 ; Life and Love, 307 ; Regeneration as at Antagonism with New Creation, 505, 543 ; Remarks on Pre-Existentialism, 39 ; Sermons by Mr. Wilkinson, 133.	
Romanism	444
SERMONS.—By Harris, 241 ; J. Hatton, 285 ; Toplady, 14, 66 ; S. Turner, 53, 101.	
Short Papers on the Ministry of the Spirit	391, 437, 517
SPIRITUAL LETTERS.—By W. and S. Asker, 448 ; Beecher, 81 ; H. Birch, 125 ; B. J., 130 ; Jas. Bourne, 36 ; W. Brown, 306 ; J. Burchell, 538 ; C. E., 211 ; Sam. Chapman, 398 ; W. Collins, 84 ; A. Cook, 396 ; F. Covell, 79, 174 ; Archibald Crawford, 355 ; W. Crouch, 216 ; C. S., 559 ; R. De Fraine, 175 ; J. B. Densham, 78 ; Alfred Dye, 82 ; R. Field, 306 ; D. P. Gladwin, 496 ; Thos. Godwin, 266 ; Maria E. Gregory, 268 ; W. Hatton, 538 ; J. Hewitt, 129 ; J. J., 128 ; E. Morse, 176 ; J. Newton, 84, 395 ; T. Nunn, 401 ; J. C. Philpot, 132, 328 ; J. E. Russell, 446 ; D. Smart, 218 ; Jas. Stevens, 356 ; Jos. Tanner, 34 ; W. Tiptaft, 80 ; F. Tryon, 83 ; J. Warburton, 37.	
The Efficacy of Redemption	425
The Fellowship of His Sufferings	122
The Little Prayer, "Lord, Help Me"	346
The Old Lamp Lit Up Afresh	32, 74, 112, 172, 207, 262, 541
The Properties and Native Consequences of True Believing	299
The Testimonies of the Lord to a Poor, Self-Condemed Sinner. (Life of T. Hobson.)	293, 335, 380

 For Index to the Signatures and the Poetry, see pages iii., iv.

Providence Chapel, Croydon.

A Sermon

PREACHED SUNDAY MORNING, JANUARY 21ST, 1872,

AT CROYDON,

BY MR. COVELL.

“For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him. The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.”
PSALM xii. 5, 6.

How sovereign is the Lord! how He displays His sovereignty in the experience of His children! Cannot I do what I will with mine own? But whatever way God takes with them, or suffers them to walk in, He has one end in view, that is, their good and His glory. It is hard at times to believe what He says, but it is nevertheless true, “I will do them good with my whole heart, and with my whole soul; I will set mine eyes upon them for good;” and why? Because God’s people are a people near and dear unto Him. “You only have I known of all the families of the earth” (Amos iii. 2). God hath spared no expense to do them good; there is nothing that the wisdom, love, and power of God can effect which shall be for their good, but what they shall have; yet we often find them sighing, mourning, and cast down; but God comes and tells them, “What they know not now—there are many things they can never make out—they shall know hereafter.” All God’s ways are right; there is nothing froward in them. See how sovereign is God towards His own children in the way He leads them, as in the case of Abraham, David, Hezekiah, Solomon, and many others. God blessed them with great grace, and gave them abundance of earthly riches besides; but, on the other hand, we see Lazarus, the apostles, and many others, favoured with as great grace; yet how little did they possess of this world! God does what He will with His own, while He will silence us with this: “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” If we look at natural men, how we see the sovereignty of God! We see some *carnal* men, with abundance of wealth, but no grace; while we find others without wealth, and no grace. These things bring us to put our hand upon our mouth before God, and teach us that we are the clay, and He the potter.

No. 4.—[*Copyright.*]

At times our unbelief and pride will have a voice, but God goes on the same for all that. In the words of my text we find a people near and dear to God, upon whom His eye and heart are set; a people for whom He has a heaven above; a crown to put upon their head; upon whom He bestows eternal life, which He promises they shall enjoy; yet they are sighing, mourning, oppressed, and burdened. Who could ever think that these are the people God will do everything for? But it is the end we must look to, therefore it is said, "Ye have seen the *end* of the Lord." What is the end of the Lord? Why, "That he is very pitiful." Whatever you may say, however your heart may rise against it, thinking it cannot be, "all men are liars," how *can* these things be? "Ye have seen the end of the Lord, that he is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." Look at the children of Israel, as I read in the chapter. Hear them saying to Moses (Exodus v. 21): "Ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us." Hear Moses asking God (v. 22), "Wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people? why is it that thou hast sent me?" if thou didst never intend to bring them out. "Ye have seen the end of the Lord." Job said (xvi. 12): "He hath taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark." But the end of a thing, my friends, is better than the beginning. See Lazarus at the gate of the rich man, and the dogs licking his sores! See the end of the Lord! Look at Him now, in Abraham's bosom; and to prove that God is "without partiality," here is Abraham in heaven and Lazarus in His bosom, both folded in the arms of everlasting love, though He made them each walk a very different way to the kingdom; and *you* will find that, whatever may be *your* way to the kingdom, the end of the Lord is, that He is very pitiful and of tender mercy towards *you*; though Satan would have you dispute it, God will make you unsay everything you have said perversely about Him; and make you say as Joshua did (xxiii. 14) "that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof." In my text, God promises some great things, and He not only promises, but the Holy Ghost confirms it, and says, "The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth." There is no deception; there is nothing whatever mixed with God's words; they are pure, and will be found to be so in the experience of those spoken of in my text; they are free from all flattery and guile, like "silver tried in a furnace of earth." What a foundation then for us! If God blesses you with a grain of faith, I know what you will say, as I have said many a time, "Hold out, faith and patience." God hath said it, and will He not do it? "For the oppression of the poor." God makes His people sensibly see and feel what He hath declared of them; that they are miserable, poor, blind, and naked. God brings down all high looks, and makes His people feel that without Him they can

do nothing. God makes poor ; He discovers to the soul its condition, that is, "that in him (that is, in his flesh) dwells no good thing." I will tell you what will oppress these people: their sins. They are a burden that will make the stoutest man to stoop, and the strongest man to bend. It does not need many sins to do it. If God charge one sin upon the conscience, He can charge home thousands ; He can charge as many sins upon thee as there are hairs on thy head for number, in the thoughts, words, and deeds of thy life ; but let Him lay but one sin upon thy conscience in the guilt of it, it will make thy heart sick ; it will bend thy stubborn neck, and make thy knees to bend under the weight, and make thee cry out, "God be merciful to me!" David said, "My sins are gone over mine head : as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me" (Psalm xxxviii. 4). It is said of the blessed Son of God, that "He was oppressed." What oppressed Him ? Our sins : see how they oppressed Him !

"His hands the ponderous globe does prop,
The weight ne'er made Him sweat a drop ;
But when sin's load upon Him lies,
He groans, He faints, He bleeds, He dies."

Oh, sin ! sin ! see how it oppressed Him, brought Him to "sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." See the blessed Son of God as the surety and sin-bearer for His people ; hear Him cry out: "All my bones are out of joint, my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels" (Psalm xxii. 14). "See if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger" (Lam. i. 12). "He was oppressed, yet he opened not his mouth." "It pleased the Lord to bruise him ; he shall make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand" (Isaiah liii. 7, 10). So it is doing, and will come to pass in the salvation of all His elect. When the sons of Zebedee came to the Son of God, and said, Lord, let us sit on Thy right hand, and on Thy left hand, in Thy kingdom—they were just like us ; we have got that spirit ; we are all for the fat and the sweet, the crown and the kingdom. Yea, said the Son of God (Matt. xx. 22, 23), "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with : but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." Now then we shall know something of what this oppression is ; if you never know what oppression is, you will not cry out for deliverance. This made the prophet cry out, "Woe is me, I am undone." If sin does not squeeze you ; if sin does not humble or oppress you, you will not cry out, "Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great." You will not prize the blood

of Christ, which takes the burden from off thy shoulders. But if the filth of sin makes you sick, and you find you have got more than you can manage, it will be, "Help, Lord! make no long tarrying, O, my God!" I will tell you what you fear at times, when this burden is upon you; that it will sink you lower than the grave, that is, into hell. How the poor man wants God to deliver him from the oppression he feels on account of his sins! Some of you, perhaps, know what the burden of a large family is. If a man has but little means, and has a large family, he will find they press heavily upon him; it will be a burden that will worry him by day, and at times by night; but whatever burden he is oppressed with, he will find no burden equal to the weight of sin. If this is the thing that bows you down, you cannot lift up yourself. Oh that I could say, "This God is my God!" I know what I speak. I felt in days past, if God would but tell me He was my salvation, and take the weight of sin from my heart, I could live on the meanest fare; and I have no doubt some of you are now feeling the same. If this is your state and case, God will set you on high, *that He will*. The Word of God declares (Job xxxiii. 27, 28), "He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and it profited me not; he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light." Hearken to what the Son of God saith, "I came to seek and to save them that are lost." "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." It is said of Him that "He came to undo heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free;" and He will say to thee, sooner or later, in the comfort of it, "Son, *thy* sins are all forgiven thee." He may not say just those words, but the substance of them. He will enable you to say, "This is my God; I have waited for him, and now he is become my salvation." He will make you to sing in His ways and rejoice in the Lord your God.

"I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him." Mind this, poor sinner! God does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. The Lord will repent Himself for His servants, when they come here; when their strength is gone, and there is none shut up or left. If God has brought you here, I am as sure deliverance is close at hand, as that his Word is true; if God has brought down your heart with hard labour, you have fallen at His feet, crying "God be merciful to me; save, or I perish!" You are within a step of being lifted up, *that* you are. You may be ready to say, "Oh, sir, I am in an evil case!" I tell you, you are in a blessed case for God to help you; you are just in the very place for God to lift you up. When the children of Israel were set fast: when no straw was to be given them, yet, they must deliver the tale of bricks, they were brought into such a condition that die they must unless God appeared; *then* in came God. We often have the thought and feeling, that we can bear no more. I have no doubt there are some here, before God, that thought, five or ten years ago, "I am a poor miserable sinner; I think none are worse than I

am ;" yet you have been a great deal lower since then. It is when there is none shut up or left God appears. When we are brought to the place the poor thief was, when he cried out, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom" or I am lost! He says, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Do you mean to say—say you—that if I am oppressed on account of the evil, filth, and guilt of my sins, which make me sigh, and cry, being burdened, that they will never be my ruin? As sure as God's Word is true, He will save thee with an everlasting salvation; and the things that now oppress thee will bring out, under the power of the Holy Spirit, such a song of praise to God and His Christ, that you will cry, "Salvation to God and the Lamb!" Out of thy misery He will bring forth a song of praise and deliverance. The first step towards heaven is to feel that we are at hell's door. Therefore, "For the oppression of the poor, now will I arise, and set him in safety:" so these things shall never be thy ruin: you will find this to be true.

"A sinner is a sacred thing;
The Holy Ghost has made him so."

And—

"New life from Him we must receive,
Before for sin we rightly grieve."

So—

"Sinners can say, and none but they,
How precious is the Saviour."

He is going to "fill thy mouth with laughter, and thy tongue with singing." He is going to teach thee how to love, praise, and "Crown him Lord of all." Let the Son of God come and speak peace to thy conscience, gratitude will flow from thy heart, and thy tongue will say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name." "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies." "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord." Yea, you will praise, love, bless, and adore the Christ of God, for letting the oppressed go free, and taking the yoke from thy shoulders. You will find this, too, that none but He can do it. If you turn your mind for a minute into that book of John Bunyan's, "The Pilgrim's Progress," you will see a man going from his house with a burden on his back; see him wringing his hands, crying, as he goes along, "What shall I do to be saved?" "Why do you stand there?" says Evangelist. "Because I do not know which way to go," says Christian. "Do you see yonder wicket-gate?" "No." "Do you see yonder shining light?" "I think I do." "Then keep that light in view, and it will bring you up to the gate." Wife and children cry after him, but on he goes, crying, "Life! life! eternal life!" One meets him and says, "Where are you going to?" "To yonder wicket-gate." "Fool!" he says; "why go *that way*?"

Then he enumerates all the difficulties in the way. "All that you speak of," says Christian, "is nothing to the burden that is on my back." That is it, man! So we find that, notwithstanding all the oppression, the burden, the fears and castings down of the good man, up he came to the cross, off fell his burden, and he gave "three leaps for joy!"

"For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety." God is not asleep, His eye and heart are towards thee. "I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end" (Jer. xxix. 11). The *end* is right; although in your fears you think God does not regard or look, there is no secret tear that falls from your eyes on account of your oppression, but what God catches, regards, and bottles up, and you will find this to be true that, "He has a set time to favour Zion." "I will arise, and have mercy on her, saith the Lord." "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him." Another thing that will oppress them, more or less to the end of their days, is unbelief. This is a yoke in their jaws. While I have been speaking you may, perhaps, have thought, "All that he says is very nice; I dare not say that it is not true; but I cannot *believe* it: it seems too good to be true." If it is not true, sinner, you and I are damned as sure as we are living souls! "Ah," but say you, "I cannot lay hold of it. Oh, if I could but believe what you have said, I should give 'Three leaps for joy,' as Bunyan's Christian did."

"O could I *but* believe,
Then all would easy be."

How the poor thing is oppressed by unbelief! God says, "I will take the yoke from their jaws, and will lay meat before them," and until God the Holy Ghost takes the yoke from our jaws, all the sweet things in God's words are to no purpose. But there is one thing—do you know what unbelief is. "Yes," say you, "I certainly do, for I cannot believe, though I struggle and try." No man knows what unbelief is but that man that has *faith*, and as you have faith to feel your unbelief, you will say sooner or later, "I believe." The poor man in the Gospel, that had the afflicted child, felt something of it; he brought him to the disciples, and they tried to cast the devil out, but could not. I have no doubt but that helped and strengthened the poor man's unbelief; for when he brought the child to the Son of God, He said to him, "All things are possible to them that believe." Then he replied, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief," that is, help it out of the way. God's people believe the truth as they hear it; they believe the Word of God as they read it. "But help my unbelief," they say, "so that I may believe it in my

own case." If you notice, it is said in the days of the Son of God when upon earth, that He went into the synagogue, where was a poor woman, who was bowed down by a spirit of infirmity. The greatest infirmity I know of is unbelief. After David had been saying he did not know how God could do this and that, he said, "But this is my infirmity." Other people find no difficulty in believing. No doubt there are some here that have no difficulty in believing. The parson says it, or the Word of God says it, and they believe it. Then I would say to such, what does your faith do for you? Does it bring you and God together? for that is what faith does: it brings God and the sinner together, and "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Has not the world got most of your heart? Is not heaven under your feet? Faith brings distant things near. The stars appear to be small things on account of their distance from us. Now, if you profess real faith, it will bring heavenly things close to hand; it will show you the world in its true light: that it is less than nothing, vanity and vexation. But I ask, is not heaven at a distance, and the world near at hand to you? I put this question just to show that your faith is worth nothing, it is not even the faith of the devil, for "the devils believe *and tremble*;" your faith never makes you tremble at the Word and truth of God, therefore, such know nothing of unbelief. The man in my text has something that oppresses him, that is, unbelief. What discovers it to him? The faith of God's elect; this discovers to him that he is shut up in unbelief. The poor woman I mentioned just now was bowed down with a spirit of infirmity, and could in no wise lift up herself. Poor creature! in reading about her to-day how my heart ran over to her. I will tell you another thing, how one is willing to give another help, but it is no use; the Son of God must do it; He came to deliver those that were bound. How long she had been in that condition—eighteen years! You can see what her constant practice was. She was in the synagogue, as much as to say, "If God does not heal me, I shall go down to the grave as I am." God hath said, "Mine eye and heart shall be on my house perpetually." So there she is! The Son of God, in His pity and compassion, casts His loving eyes on the poor creature, doubled together, and says, "Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity." What a word! What is said? "She was made straight, and glorified God." How her tongue was loosed! She wanted her heart to be as big as the earth. The Pharisees, they are bitter enemies—the greatest enemies to God's poor people are mere professors—they were filled with envy about it, so they said to the people, "There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed." If they had known what it is to be bowed together, they would have been glad to have been healed at any time. The Son of God said to them, "Ye hypocrites, do not ye loose your ox or your ass on the Sabbath day, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter

of Abraham—a child of faith—be loosed from her bond on the Sabbath day?” He put them all to silence, while she went off, praising God. When God turns the captivity of His people, they are like them that dream. If you know what this infirmity is, you are shut up, and cannot come forth; your feeling is, “Oh that I could see and believe He would save my poor soul!” He will set you on high; He will arise for your help; He will lay all your enemies in the dust, and enable you to triumph in the Lord; and you will prove the truth of my text, “For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him. The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.” We must leave it for the present, and, the Lord willing, take it up again in the evening.

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A Sermon

PREACHED SUNDAY MORNING, MAY 5TH, 1872,
AT CROYDON,

BY MR. COVELL.

“Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none sha'll make him afraid.”—JEREMIAH xxx. 10.

THE Scriptures everywhere speak of God's people as a weak, timid, and fearful folk; hence they are compared to lambs, doves, and lilies, setting forth their helplessness, weakness, and defencelessness; and yet they are well cared for, watched over, protected, and kept from all harm: “More are they that are for them (notwithstanding all their fears and disquietude) than all that can be against them;” and, despite all their weakness and feebleness, they all get to heaven, and sing to the honour and praise of Him that brought them there, and thus find that “The lame take the prey:” it is not by human might or power, but by God's Word they hold out and on, and finally overcome, and swim in that ocean of eternal love, bliss, and blessedness where no sin can ever enter. There will be no fear or doubt *there*; O no, they have all that while *here*; no sooner does the Spirit quicken a man or woman into life than they begin to be beset with fears, doubts, and misgivings that never exercised their minds before; they see what an evil and bitter thing sin is; they see how they are exposed to dangers; the narrowness of the way that leads to eternal life; and the Word of God shows them how few there are that enter the gates of heaven; and this brings about such anxiety and fear, and a questioning in their souls whether God will ever look to, have mercy upon, and save such sinners as they see and feel themselves to be. How many are their sins, and how great! what evil, what devilishness they feel working within them, which make them cry out, “Woe is me, I am undone!” How often does the child of God wish he had never been born! O, if he did not sin as he does! O, if he had not such a bad heart! *But there it is*; and now fears begin to work—but they never begin until God brings him out of that state of death he was in; from that carnal security and power and fang of the devil which held him; from that worldliness which bound him. No fear until God brought him out of those things; then his fears began; and if your fear is whether God will ever look to,

pardon, and save such a sinner as you feel yourself to be; if it brings out some sighs and cries to God at times, "Save me, O God, and I shall be saved!" "Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great!" "What shall I do to be saved?" fear not, sinner; stand still, and you shall see the salvation of God. O yes, as soon as God in His mercy and power brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, from under the tyrannizing hand of Pharaoh, to lead them into the promised land, the poor things cried out as they looked back and saw Pharaoh marching his host after them; now their fears begin to abound, and they think that death and destruction are close at hand; then in comes God, by the mouth of His servant Moses, notwithstanding all their fears, dark forebodings, and sad apprehensions on account of that they saw behind and before, and said, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord;" and so they did, and God brought them through the sea on dry land; and then they sang His praise. O, they never thought God would save them that way! And so you will find deliverance when perhaps you least expect it, and in a way you never looked for it; you will find the Holy Spirit work such faith in your heart as will enable you to do what the Scriptures bid, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, for I am God, and besides me there is none else." Now I have no doubt you have tried other ways, and, proving all your ways to be fruitless, in turning to God you are ready to conclude that He will never have anything to do with you; but—

"Tis perfect poverty alone
That sets the soul at large;
While we can call one mite our own,
We have no full discharge."—(218, GADSBY.)

So, when God brings down your heart with hard labour, and in your feelings you fall down and there is none to help, and you know not what to do, then you will find the Holy Spirit work faith in your heart with power, and you will believe to the joy and rejoicing of your soul. You will find that, "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness." So you will get safe, and find that "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's dear Son, cleanseth from all sin."

"Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord." And what is it these that are called Jacob fear? Why, that God will never answer their prayers, grant them their requests, or fulfil their desires. "Oh," say you, "I have come to that conclusion again and again. Why, sir, you cannot tell the many hundreds of prayers I have sent up; the many tears that have flowed from my eyes; and when I have been upon my knees my heart has been ready to break. How I have supplicated and entreated God for something, and have received nothing! I have looked this way and that, but nothing has come. I am afraid I do not know what '*the spirit of prayer is.*' O, if I could but get God to hear me! How often, in the substance of it, I cry out, 'Bow down thine ear, O Lord;' 'Make haste, O God, make haste!' But it all falls to the ground, nothing comes. And this

has been the case, not only for a week or a month, but for years; yet nothing comes." Ah! "He sees us when we see not him; and always hears our cry." Hear this! it is in God's heart to do you good, and He says "He *waits* to be gracious." O, He is only waiting His own time—and our God has a long memory, my friends, and He answers prayers and petitions that poor sinners have sent up to heaven sometimes *years* afterward^s. And so you will find it, if in simplicity (this is what I want to show you)—if in simplicity and sincerity you have thus come to His feet. Have you cried to the God of heaven, and sought after Him with your whole heart? Have the words of your mouth been truly the feeling of your soul? "O yes," say you, "sometimes I have felt such a softening of heart, and have had some access to God, and some pouring out of soul before Him." O, then, you will find that God will hear you; He is on the road; He is coming; but you say, like Hezekiah, "Mine eyes fail with looking upward." But *God will come*. He said of *his* prayers, "They were like the chattering of the crane or the swallow, while he mourned sore as the dove;" but they reached God's ear, and brought the king to declare that He was a God hearing and answering prayer. "O," he said, "I shall go to the grave in the bitterness of my soul, God does not hear me." But God did hear him, and the dear man found it so. "O, but," say you, "God seemed so quick in answering him. *You look at me*; I have been calling upon God for years and have not had what I want. Look at that poor woman, Hannah; she no sooner cried, than she had an answer of peace. Then she comes and says, 'For this I prayed, and God granted me my request.' Besides, if I look through the Word of God, I see how quickly God answers; and if mine was a real, true, heartfelt prayer, He would surely answer me as quickly as He did them." But, my friends, the prophet's servant had to go and look again, and again, and again in the direction his master told him to look, to see whether God would hear him. O, God was not so quick on that occasion. Here is the prophet, with his face buried in his hands, pulling, as it were, heaven and earth together by his secret cries. "Go and see if there is nothing coming." Will God hear me? But the servant returns. "I see nothing, sir; nothing." "Nothing? Go, man, and look again." But again he returns. "Nothing, sir, nothing." And the reply falls sadly on his master's ear, as he goes and comes. Yet, again, "I see nothing." And it is said he went seven times, until at last he saw a little cloud about the size of a man's hand. It was just like the dove bringing the olive branch to Noah; he knew the waters were assuaged; for, as God said of him—Noah having been shut up for some time in the ark—"God remembered Noah;" so, by the dove with the olive-branch, he believed that the eye and heart of God were upon him, which he soon after proved more fully. Thus, when the servant saw this "little cloud," "the prophet was encouraged, seeing that God had not forgotten to be gracious unto him in hearing his cry." "O," say you, "I tell you where I come sometimes. I will not pray any more." But what

will you gain by that? "O, I will give it all up." But what will you gain by that? My friends, I tell you, if you do, you will have to take to it again. What! have no more of it? You will have to go again and again; for God will have you go, and seek and wait upon Him. Say you, "I have given it up at times, and then have been obliged to go again; but how it stirs up my bad spirit, making me fret against God, and have such hard thoughts of Him!" And what has all this done? Has it not thrown you into the dust and made you see and feel what a wretch you are? By this means God strips us of all our boasting, and makes us see and feel that if ever we get to heaven it will be by free and sovereign grace, "Not of our lives, it is the gift of God." If you have been enabled to call upon God in spirit and in truth, God knows what is the mind of the spirit, for "He makes intercession for the saints," it is said, "according to the will of God." If you look into the Word of God, you will see a good man exercised somewhat like you, concluding that God did not hear him; but he proved that God did hear him—and that is none other than Zacharias, when the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said, "*Fear not, Zacharias, thy prayer is heard, and thy wife, Elizabeth, shall have a son.*" Poor old man! how can this be? "Why, I prayed and looked for it when I might *naturally* have expected it, but now I am old, and my wife is well stricken in years, how can it be? I cannot believe it." Well, then, you shall be dumb and not able to speak until the child is born, because you would not believe my word. And in the course of time young John is born, and then the old man's tongue is loosed. O what years of waiting, until hope seemed to give up the ghost, and faith almost to expire! but in His own time God came and answered his petitions and granted his desire—and, poor thing, He loves all His children alike, so you will find that He will come just in the right time, and in the right place. The Son of God says, "Your time is always ready, my time is not yet;" but you will find that "Verily he is a God that answers prayer." Now, at times, God is pleased to revive His people by giving them tokens for good; little helps and encouragements, smiling and lifting upon them the light of His countenance; it may be in hearing the preached Word, or in reading, or when seeking His face in prayer; and while in this frame of mind they cannot question or doubt for the sweetness and the comfort it brings into the heart. Faith springs up, love and desire go forth, and they cannot question or doubt while it lasts; but as soon as God takes His sweet presence from them ("O," says some poor man or woman, "it is very often before the sermon is ended!") they get into another frame of mind altogether; no sooner do they lose this communion of the Spirit than in comes the world, and there they are; the rest of the sermon is of no consequence to them, the mind is drawn away into the world, the morrow and its business occupy the thoughts for the remainder of the service. "O," say they, "those few moments I had that seemed so sweet, ah, they were not from God;" they put them all aside and sigh out, "O, I wish I had *something real*; what a poor, miserable

creature I am! I never seem to get anything lasting and real. I hear some say what a good hearing time they had; and how I wish I could say so! Sometimes I have a little fresh hope springing up, but I cannot say for a truth I take it to be the work of the Holy Ghost. O that I could be sure that God would work savingly in my heart, that He would smile upon me, lift upon me the light of His countenance! How different, I think, I should! be but I cannot be sure in my heart that I ever had anything savingly from God. Now," say you (and so I have felt), "if God would work something in my heart, it seems to me that it would have such an effect on my soul that I could not help being sure it was from God." Yes, that is it; but the Holy Ghost may work something for us and in our heart, and yet we may fear, and doubt, and question whether it is His work or not, but our doubting, fearing, and questioning will not alter it. No, no; I am sorry to say we have more unbelief than faith; and then, again, we are fearful of being wrong, laying hold of anything that does not come from God, speaking peace to our souls when God has not spoken peace, so that we often put away and fear to take hold of that which really belongs to us. Now, this is how you may know if it is from the Holy Ghost: if He has breathed some warmth in your soul, if there have been some renewings in your heart, giving you to realize that God has a favour toward you, it will draw your soul up to God, it will make you long for Him, "pant after him as the hart panteth after the water brooks;" desiring mercy, it will bring you humbled and crumbled before Him, feeling what a sinner you are, so unworthy and so unprofitable; it will make you take the lowest place; and while this lasts it will so endear God and His Christ to your soul that you will wish you could live and die in such a place. Then fear not, man, you have had a taste of the heavenly kingdom; if the Holy Ghost has breathed upon your heart, conceived some good thing in your heart, you will have to rejoice in the Lord, and sing of His matchless grace and mercy to such a sinner. Fear not, these holy emotions, good desires, humble feelings, are wrought in thy heart by the Holy Ghost; He it is that hath wrought "Christ in your heart, the hope of glory," or you would never have felt such things; no, that you would not; therefore, fear not. O, how tender are all God's poor people, what a timid folk they are! turn where you may in the Word of God, from Genesis to the Revelation, how you find God has written this over and over again: "Fear not;" "Say to them that are of a fearful heart," "Be strong, fear not;" "I am God, and will help them;" "I will save them from afar." And what are these poor people timid and fearful about? Why, whether the Son of God has redeemed them. O, how satisfied they are that redemption is a finished work, that Christ "hath by his one offering for ever put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," that He has "brought in an everlasting righteousness;" how satisfied they are that when the Son of God said, "It is finished, and gave up the Ghost," He really meant it! They do not question about it, that He, as the Son of God, "went to the end of the law for righteousness to

everyone that believeth," that "he has brought in an everlasting righteousness, which is *to all* and *upon all* them that believe." They have no fear or doubt about all that, but there is fear and anxiety in their hearts about this, "Say to my soul, *I am thy* salvation." What would the man give, what would he not pass through, to be assured and confirmed in his soul that this Jesus Christ *is his*; that this God *is his God* for ever and ever, and will be *his* guide even unto death; that he could say, with the Church, "This is *my* beloved, and this is *my* friend;" to have the great question put out of question? He can say with the poet,

"Assure my conscience of its part
In the Redeemer's blood;
And bear thy witness to *my* heart,
That *I* am born of God."

Is this the anxiety of your heart? are these the cries of your soul? and, lest you should die and never come into the sweet enjoyment of it, do you have fears, and sinkings, and disquietude of heart? do you and God often do business together about it? Is it "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth"? "Yes," say you, "I know what all this is that you have been speaking about;" then I tell you, you are in the footsteps of the flock: you want to know where you are; your cry is as the Church in the Song of Solomon (i. 7, 8), "Tell 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?" And He will answer to your comfort: "If thou knowest not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents." Now, poor, timid heart, poor, fearful, anxious soul, if this is what you are after, crying to, and entreating God at times to satisfy thy anxious soul, that you may have something to die with, and be able to say, "This is my God, I have waited for Him, and now He is become my salvation," you are just where the Church of old was; and, if you notice, God comes and speaks to her comfort; and what He said to her He will say to you: "Fear not, I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine." What was her fear? why, that the Son of God had *not* redeemed her; had *not* called her by her name; she thought she was *not* united to, married to Him; so He came with this, "Fear not, I *have* redeemed thee," in order to satisfy her poor heart and make her to hope in Him. And so you will find, that "In your patience you shall possess your soul;" and as God came and satisfied *her* heart, *so He will thine*, and enable thee to rejoice in His salvation; for He says, "They shall *all* know me, from the least unto the greatest, for I will be merciful to their unrighteousnesses, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." O what exceeding great and precious promises hath God given to His poor, fearing, doubting people! the Son of God may well say, "Wherefore dost thou doubt, O thou of little faith?" How He makes us know that our faith stands in His own

power ! and as He works in us it is easy enough to believe, and we wonder how we could so doubt and question ; but faith, you know, is the gift of God ; as the poet says—

“ Faith, 'tis a precious gift
Where'er it is bestowed ;
It boasts of a celestial birth,
And is the gift of God.”

And, notwithstanding all the exceeding great and precious promises God hath given us in His Word, until He says “ Stretch forth thine hand,” we cannot take hold of them. We come just here—

“ O could I but believe, then all would easy be.”

So God makes us prove what the great apostle did, that “ Our faith stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” Not all the parsons in the world can make you believe that you are redeemed ; that Christ loves you ; that He has saved you—they might bring all the Word of God to bear upon you, so to speak, give you all the promises, up to your eyes in promises, yet you sink, notwithstanding all, without the blessed Spirit works faith in your heart ; then you will find that one promise will do it, and you will swim in the sea of His everlasting love, buoyed up by the truth and faithfulness of a three-one God. “ Therefore, fear thou not ;” O no, for although we may be full of doubts, yet there is faith in our heart, though it be but “ as a grain of mustard seed,” and, coming from God, it will bring us into His presence with joy ; for it is something more than the faith of the devil, it is “ precious faith,” “ the faith of God's elect,” that hangs to, clings to, and follows after God ; it springs from His grace, and is the fruit of His Spirit in the heart. Yes, my friends, that is it ; and it is God's speaking to these poor doubting ones that possess faith ; it does not say “ Fear not ” to others, but tells *them* to fear ; it is these that are troubled with doubts and misgivings lest they should not hold on and hold out to the end ; so God runs in to comfort them by helps and consolations with “ Fear not.” How often does the child of God come to this conclusion, seeing and feeling so much carnality, so much worldly-mindedness in going after other things ; getting so dead to the things that make for His everlasting peace, and seems so alive to the things of the world, that he thinks, “ Will God ever have anything to do with me ? ” Whether this has been your case or not, my friends, I know it has mine ; I have feared many times that God would cast me away from Him in disgust : I have, at times, through my foolish, carnal, wretched heart, gone after, and set up other gods in the place of the God of Heaven, the Great Jehovah ; I have done this, to my sorrow, my shame ; and I would blush and be confounded before God on account of it : yet, when God has visited my soul, comforted my heart, and I have walked in the light of His countenance, I have felt that He would make me joyful and glad all the days of my life, and that I should never again do the things that I have done. And when I have been in this spirit I have felt that God should have the cream of my affections ; the top of my thoughts ;

that He should be my "all and in all:" I would have everything under my feet, and could heartily join with Dr. Watts in saying—

"Let worldly minds the world pursue,
It has no charms for me;
Once I admired its trifles too,
But Grace has set me free."

But shall I tell you, sinner I have known what it has been, after all this, notwithstanding this happy frame, to put God behind my back; to have quite forgotten Him; and to have had other lords ruling, reigning, and having the dominion over my eyes, my heart, my thoughts, my affections, until I have come to the conclusion that I must have been deluded in the matter, and altogether deceived myself about my religion: surely if God had been all and in all to me, I never could have set up other things in my heart in His room and place! I have found that I have forsaken the Almighty, therefore God has made me see and feel that my religion was only in the flesh. I fancy I hear some say, "Oh, sir, that is just where I have been; the world seems to get such hold of me; wife, children, business, one thing or another—God, at times, is the last and least in my thoughts, and I seem to be dried up like a stick. Oh, I cannot say that the Lord is all and in all to me, so I fear that He will never bring such an one as me to heaven; I cannot be under the rule and reign of grace, seeing that my heart is so set upon going after other things; and all this does bring such fear and trouble! Oh, when I come to die, where shall I be found? What will become of my never-dying soul?" Well, now, poor child of God, if you notice, the children of Israel came into just the same place. How I do like, when reading God's Word, just to get into some of the spots, to see what sort of folks these people were; so, out of their misery, I get a little mercy; out of their castings down I get a little lifting up. Now, "that seems a bad spirit," you may say; but it is not, for I wish them well, and wish them good with all my heart; but to see how they came into these places, and then how God helped them up out and through, my heart rises in hope; "Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him;" "Who can tell but the Lord may have mercy upon me?" if you notice, all God's people are, at times, in that place I have been speaking of. God had been very good to Israel; He had been loving and kind to them; and by-and-by the children of Ammon and the Philistines come against them, and they say to Samuel "We will have a king:" well, but see what God did for you; how He brought you up out of Egypt into this land that flows with milk and honey; where will you find a better king to fight your battles for you, and appear for your help, as He has done again and again? what more can you want? "Nay, but we will have a king," so Samuel went and told it unto God, "And the Lord said unto Samuel" (1 Sam. viii. 7), "Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them" (verse 9). "Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them," &c. (you can read how it

all turned out). Then Samuel comes and says to them (xii. 17, 18, 19), "I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain. It is wheat harvest, now therefore stand and see this great thing which the Lord will do before your eyes; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking a king. So Samuel called unto the Lord; and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king." Now what is to be done with this wicked people? Well, said Samuel unto the people, "Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the Lord, but serve the Lord with all thy heart; and turn ye not aside: for then should ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain. *For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake; because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people.*" God stands fast; He did not choose you for anything there was in you; there was nothing in you to recommend you to Him; it was solely "Because it pleased the Lord to make you his people." So if this is your fear; if ever you knew what it was for God to drop His grace into your heart to make you feel to love Him; if ever you had a grain of faith in your heart; if ever you received the Word in the truth and love of it, He will never forsake you, because it pleased Him at the first to make you one of His people. He will give you an earnest of it; He will stand fast, although He will show you and me our evil ways and doings, and make us ashamed of ourselves, and blush on account of them, so that we may never open *our* mouth any more in a way of being anything in and of ourselves—O, no; so God endears Himself to us in what He does for us, and brings us to sing, "Salvation to God and the Lamb."

And what else do God's people *fear*? Why, there are so many things to exercise, and try, and perplex them; this is such a wilderness to them that they seldom go through a week without something or other, and they are constantly wanting God to come in for their help, and prop up their heart, and encourage their souls, and to give them to feel that He is on their side. One thing they fear is, as to whether He will feed and clothe them. It is too true that they are more often exercised as to whether God will supply their temporal needs than as to how they shall be found when they come to die. You may say, perhaps, "But how is that?" Well, I will tell you. Temporal things are always close at hand, and their faith has to do with things present; so the present need constitutes the cross, while other things are at a distance; therefore they are often more exercised about the present than the future. But the Son of God said to His disciples, "Take no thought for the morrow; if God so clothe the grass of the field will he not much rather clothe you, O ye of little faith." And again He said, "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of

God and his righteousness, and *all other things* shall be added unto you." But how often they look into the purse or the cash-box and see that they have come to the bottom, and they ask themselves, "How is it going to be replenished?" *They* cannot see how, and so they sink in their spirits, doubt if ever anything more will come, and fear and dread the worst. O, how sad their forebodings! how they entreat God to come and say something to their hearts that will assure them! But then God does not speak. We read of "the trial of faith," the "exercise of faith," the "work of faith," and it has indeed something to do to persuade the poor soul that God will feed and clothe the body. But you may rejoice in this, that if He will save the soul He will clothe the body. Yet if He does not work faith, there will be no comfort brought into the soul; you will be just where the poor woman was when the prophet came to her; just enough for that meal, but she did not know where she should get any more. "Just a little meal and a little oil. I am going to make a cake—the last we shall have—for me and my son, and then we must lie down and die." "Ah," say you, "when I come to the end of what I have it will be worse even than that." But, my friend, when you get to the end, *then* God will come in. He did not come in her case until the last bit of meal and the last drop of oil were used up. So now, said the prophet, "Go and *make me a little cake first*, and as the Lord liveth the meal shall not waste nor the oil fail," &c. O, she must get to the end of it before the prophet is sent to comfort and assure her of God's providential care over her. And thus, when you get to the end, are set fast and "know not what to do," then you will find God come in to your help, and make all your crooked things straight, and the rough places plain. Yea, these things will God do for you and me, and will not forsake us. Therefore say the words of my text, "Fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord," &c. AMEN.

(The Lord willing, we will take it up again in the evening.)

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Providence Chapel, Croydon.

A Sermon

PREACHED SUNDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 15th, 1872,
AT CROYDON.

BY MR. COVELL.

"I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy : for thou hast considered my trouble ; thou hast known my soul in adversities ; and hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy : thou hast set my feet in a large room."—PSALMS xxxi. 7, 8.

IN the morning we took a little notice of the mercy of God ; we found that it had heights, lengths, depths, and breadths which all the sins of His elect could not get beyond. Therefore we found that mercy compassed us about, that, so to speak, we might always be spending and never spend all ; for the Scriptures declare that, God is *rich* in mercy unto all that call upon Him ; and that His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting. We found that there was *pardon*ing mercy, *pity*ing mercy, and *forbear*ing mercy ; God has encompassed us about with mercy. Not only so, but it follows us to the end, for "Goodness and mercy," says the Psalmist, "shall follow me all the days of my life." "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies." Being filled with mercy, they burst forth in heaven singing its high praises which will never end. Then we began to notice the compassion of God ; how He considered our trouble ; that is, it was never heavier than we could bear. Let Him send any trouble, there was something consoling, as a sweetness to the physic, as in the case of Eve. When Cain killed Abel, what trouble did it occasion poor Eve. Then she bare another son, and said, "God hath appointed another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew," and she called his name Seth. Therefore says Paul, "God who comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus." So you will find that God considers our trouble, that it is never too heavy, nor will it last too long, for underneath are the everlasting arms. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him ;" if our back does not call for stripes, He will not send them. God sends trouble upon us that we may have fewer sins in our souls ; it is better to be striped in our flesh than to have guilt on our consciences. If God is pleased to send trouble upon us, it is a proof (if it works right) that He has got a purpose towards us, and if He has, He will put an ingredient in it that will work well. If He sends physic to our souls, it is a sign that He will save us from our sins. How we have found at times, "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong

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cometh forth sweetness." How many b'lessings we have got in trouble, how it has enlightened our eyes in God's Word—how we have found that "there is a vein for the silver, and a place for gold when they find it." How sweet we have found His Word—what a compassionate Lord Jesus—what a sweet spirit to comfort; how we have learned something. While the trouble may have abounded, the consolation has abounded, so that we have said afterwards, we would not have been without it. How we can say with the Psalmist, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I have learned thy word." While God has afflicted our bodies, He has taught our souls something; while the flesh has been suffering, the spirit has been strengthened, our hope has been encouraged, and we have had to bless God for the affliction. If you look at the things God has made you pass through, although God has "Given you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your eyes have seen your teachers;" you would not have been without the troubles for double what they have cost.

"*Thou hast known my soul in adversities.*" What I understand by this is that God brought him out of it. Therefore the Psalmist saith, "Great deliverance giveth he unto his king, and sheweth mercy unto David and his seed for evermore." Therefore saith God, "Call upon me in the time of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shall glorify me." So says the Sou of God, "My sheep hear my voice; I know them" (and know where they are too); "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Now, saith my text, "Thou hast known my soul in adversities." How many times did God help and deliver poor David. When he just began to experience somewhat of God's deliverance, there came a lion and a bear against him, and by God's help he slew them both. So when he went against Goliath, he said to Saul, "God shall deliver me out of the hand of this uncircumcised Philistine." When Saul was hot after him, and there was just a step between him and death, Saul on one side of the mountain, and David on the other, then came the tidings. "The Philistines have invaded the land," and Saul turns his arms another way, to save the invaded land. So it is said, "The Lord preserved David whithersoever he went." Hear him at one time, when adversity is pushing him hard, "There is but a step between me and death," but God came in between, so it was such a step that death could not take. "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul," says the dear man, but he sat on the throne of Israel, and wielded his sceptre over the land. "Thou hast known my soul in adversities." Jacob goes down to Laban; he is a hard master, he changes Jacob's wages again and again, "the heat by day and the frost by night" try the poor man, but with it all, let Laban do what he may, God will stand by his servant. I am a proof that if you stand by God in prosperity, he will stand your Friend in adversity; never fear making a sacrifice for God, whatever it may cost you. Let anything

go if God calls for it, you will never repent it. I will tell you when you will want God, when death is turning your blood into jelly, when eternity with all its tremendous attendants is opening up, when death is gently stealing thy breath, when wife, children, friends, and wealth, are all behind thy back, you will want something to warm your heart, you will want a cordial then. As sure as God liveth, He will receive your soul then. I know when God calls for something from us, we generally want to make some excuse. In the same way as when the Son of God said to one of the people, "Follow me," he said, "Let me go first and bury my father." When Elijah threw the mantle on Elisha, he said, "Let me go home, and bid them farewell at my house." Very often God calls, "Give up this," but we say, "Not just now, wait a little." The Son of God said, "Let the dead bury their dead." Now we find in the case of Jacob, notwithstanding all that Laban did, let him do as he might, God stood by Jacob, He knew him. What did he say to Laban when he came out by God's command? "You changed my wages ten times, but God did not suffer you to hurt me, with this staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands." O to have God on your side, man, to have Him as your Friend, He will know your soul when all others do not. He will not be like Job's deceitful brook, dried up in the summer, that when the man would go to quench his thirst it is dry; God is a fountain of fulness. "When father and mother forsake"—they are the best friends the children have, they will stick closer to them than anybody, when father and mother that have watched over and cared for us in our infant days, and have spared nothing that they might do us good, yet when these forsake, says the Psalmist, "then the Lord will take me up." May God work faith in your soul that you may be able to say, "This God is my God." If you can say that, if you have got a hope in that, if you have got a grain of faith to believe it, you are a blessed man, you need not envy Her Majesty, "the lines have fallen to you in a pleasant place, yea, you have got a goodly heritage," that you have. "Happy is that man," though at times he thinks he is the most miserable of all men, he pouts and rebels just like the people we read of in the chapter, and thinks that God has neither pity, love, nor compassion towards him. After all this, it has not altered anything, "Happy is that man whose God is the Lord, blessed are such." As you notice in the case of poor Job, God knew his soul in his adversity, he was ever before Him. He knew the hard speeches of his friends, He knew the malice of the devil; now hearken, "God blessed the latter end of Job more than the beginning." Therefore "Blessed are they whose trust is in the Lord." "Thou hast known our souls in adversity." Read the "Lives of the Martyrs," as many of you have, and hear the poor things when they came into most trying places singing and rejoicing. Look in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, "Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that in heaven they had a better and an enduring sub-

stance." Paul and Silas are taken by the people and whipped, thrust into the inner prison, and their feet made fast in the stocks. Picture if you can a more pitiable case; with sore backs, and their feet fast in the stocks that they could not turn about, for the jailer thrust them into the worst place. How God knew their souls, for at midnight Paul and Silas sang and praised God. God's kisses will heal all sores, and His smiles will make up all losses and troubles. His comforts and cordials you must taste to know how sweet they are; if ever you have had a taste it will drown all trouble. It is said in Scripture, "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts: let them drink and forget their poverty, and remember their misery no more." Now God's cordials are all that to these souls. If you look you will find that when the three children stood before Nebuchadnezzar, he said to them, "Is it true that you will not fall down and worship the image which I have set up? if so, there is but one decree for you, that you should be cast into the burning fiery furnace." What! God love His people, and yet let them come into such a place as that! I will venture to say if they were alive to speak they would say they never were in such a pleasant place in their lives. They are bound, and cast into the burning fiery furnace; God knew their souls. The king said, "Did not we cast three men into the fire? Lo, I see four men loose; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." What God imparted to their souls, what they enjoyed in that fiery trial was worth going into the fire for. Mind this, this God is the God we adore. Hundreds now living could testify how He has known their souls in adversity. It is said respecting Joseph, "The patriarchs moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt, but God was with him;" you cannot shut God out from the soul. "God was with him, and delivered him out of all his afflictions." Therefore says the Scripture, "The Lord will be with us in trouble, with long life will He satisfy us, and show us His salvation. Because he has set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him." It is also said, "He shall deliver thee in six troubles, and in seven no evil shall come nigh thee." Has God never helped you? Have you not said at times in your spirit, in the troubles with which you have been surrounded, with poor Jacob, "Joseph is not, Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away also; all these things are against me." Hear him on his dying bed, "*The angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads.*" That is the blessed end of it. "Thou hast known my soul in adversities." If God has ever helped you out, it is a token that He means to help you again. "Ah, but," say you, "the things He helped me from before were nothing to what I am in now." It is nothing for God to help; His arm is not shortened. "Ah," say you, "it is my sins." It may be so, I will not dispute that. The children of Israel sinned against God, and He delivered them into the hands of the Philistines and Ammonites eighteen years. And they cried unto the Lord, and said, "We

have sinned, because we have forsaken thee. But God said, "Go and cry unto the gods whom ye have chosen. Then they cried to the Lord, and said, We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day. And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord: and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel." In came God, and helped them, you see. What did Nehemiah say? "Many times didst thou deliver them." Has not God helped you again and again? If one thing after another should be more and more trying, remember this, there is no obstacle with God. "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain." "He will make rough places plain, and crooked things straight" for His people; "these things he will do unto them, and will not forsake them." Harken to what Samuel said, although the people had done so wickedly, "Fear not, the Lord will not forsake you from being His people, because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people." What a mercy to have such a God as this, that knows just where we are, and never comes too late. The king of Assyria said to Hezekiah, "I will give you two thousand horses if you are able to put riders upon them, then how will you turn away the least of my servants?" Hezekiah said to the Lord, "This is a day of rebuke and blasphemy; the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth," we shall never come through this; but he says "Have you heard the blasphemous language wherewith the king of Assyria hath sent to reproach the living God?" God says, "I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake; he shall not shoot an arrow there, nor cast a bank against it." God knew His poor servants when they were surrounded. Who could ever dream how God would do it? He sends forth an angel, and destroys the army in one night. You will find God is a present help in time of trouble. Once more. I want, if God will have it so, to encourage your hearts to trust in God, and I want to speak well for God. I have proved him such a good God that my tongue can never speak forth a thousandth part of His worth and goodness, so that I like when I can to speak well about Him. We find, on account of the sins of the people of Israel, God sent a famine in the land, and hedged them in. There came a poor woman, and cried unto the king, "Help, O king." "Whence can I help thee?" he says, "out of the barn floor or out of the winepress? What aileth thee?" "Well," she replied, "my neighbour said, 'You boil your son to-day, and we will boil mine to-morrow,' so we boiled my son, but she hath hid her son." Here is an extremity, boiling and eating their children, and the enemy all surrounding. So said the king, "This evil is of the Lord, why should I wait for the Lord any longer?" The prophet sat in his house, and said, "To-morrow, about this time, a measure of fine flour shall be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria." "Ah!" cried out an

unbelieving lord, "if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?" "You shall see it with your eyes," said the prophet, "but shall not eat thereof." God caused the Syrians to hear a noise, and they said, "The king of Israel hath hired the Hittites and the Egyptians against us, and so they fled, and left their horses, camels, and all things, for the people to come and take them; so it was sold according to the word of the prophet." So poor, tried man, who art saying, "How can these things be?" thinking that there is no sign of your coming out of your difficulties without God's changing all nature. God has a thousand ways He can work in. Remember this, there is no difficulty that God suffers His people to come into but what He sees the way out; you and I have come into it, but we cannot see the way out. You take a piece of carpet, look at the back of it, it is full of knots, you can make nothing of it; what an ugly thing it looks. Turn it over, then you will see something nice and a pretty pattern. So in the path you are now walking, you are looking at the knots and pieces, but God can see the other side; by-and-bye you will see the other side, then you will say, "This wisdom is too wonderful for me." "Thou hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy." What a mercy that God did not give David over to the will of his natural enemies; but spiritually God has not shut us up into the hands of our enemies. What are the enemies that God delivers His people from? First, He does not shut them up in hardness of heart. The man that lives and dies with a hard heart is damned, for, says Paul, "Not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance, but after thy hardness and unpenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." The Church of England has it in one of the prayers, if I remember right, "From hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word, good Lord, deliver us." Many of these things were written by men that knew the truth, although many of the blind worshippers do not believe what they say; thousands of them die in that hardened state. Has God blessed thee with a teachable spirit, a willing mind? What a mercy if He has. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." In the days of the Son of God upon earth, when the Pharisees came about Him, and asked Him why He forbade a man to put away his wife, while Moses commanded to give her a writing of divorcement, and to put her away, He says, "Moses, because of the hardness of your heart, gave you this precept, but in the beginning it was not so." Do you know what it is for God to touch the mountain of your heart, and make it smoke? to melt at His feet and say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" What a mercy to be delivered from hardness of heart, not to pull away the shoulder. I wish I could believe that all of you before me know what a soft heart is. "Just now," say you, my heart is hard as a rock." Does it make you cry out, "Lord, dissolve this heart of mine," and do you grieve and groan on account of it?

“ But something yet can do the deed,
 And that dear something much I need ;
 Thy Spirit can from dross refine,
 And move and melt this heart of mine.”

“ O,” say you, “ that is just what I want, I would give a pocketful of money to have that.” I am glad to hear you say so. If you had never known what a soft heart is, you would not know what a hard heart is. I will tell you, if ever you have felt it, the Son of God will come and put His hand in the hole of the door, your bowels will move for Him. When you drop on your knees, what is your cry? “ Lord, mould me, and fashion me, here’s my heart, I can do nothing with it.” God says, “ I will take away the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh.” Mind, that heart never becomes a stone again. You may break a stone into a hundred pieces, every one of those pieces will be a stone, but when God takes away the heart of stone, and gives a heart of flesh, that heart He will move upon again and again. Water becomes ice in frosty weather, but when the sun rises it melts, though it may congeal again, yet it will melt again, but a stone is always a stone. Now God has given you a heart of flesh, though it may be an icy one, it is not a stony one, that is the mercy. O that I could feel in all the judgment of charity, and all my good wishes that all here present are not shut up into the hand of the enemy. We find that the Son of God upbraided some of the disciples for hardness of heart because they did not believe—those that had seen Him when risen from the dead.

“ Thou hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy.” Another enemy God does not shut them up in is unbelief. What a damning thing is unbelief! Therefore it is said, “ He that believes and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.” Why could they not enter into the promised land? “ Because of unbelief,” so God swore in His wrath, “ that they should not enter into his rest.” Dost thou believe? What is it to believe? To believe on Him whom God hath sent. Dost thou believe what God says about thee? that thou art a poor, lost, ruined sinner? Yes, that I do. What makes you believe it? Because I feel it. Now many did not believe in Christ when on earth, but God makes them believe it now in hell. Christ says, “ I am the way, the truth, and the life.” “ I believe all that,” say you, “ I can say in my spirit, ‘ None but Jesus ; ’ ‘ May I be found in Him.’ ” What a mercy that God has not shut *you* up into the hand of the enemy. What is said in Scripture? “ The Son of God came unto his own, and his own received him not,” they would not believe Him. “ Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? but this people that know not the law are cursed.” Now the Son of God said to those that believed on Him, “ If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.” Now if you believe on the Christ of God when the truth is preached, your heart opens to receive it; if you cannot draw comfort from it you believe it, and are satisfied that is the only way. When God says, “ This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,” your heart echoes to

it, and says, "I want no other Christ but Him ; "blessèd be God for that. There are two other enemies I will put together ; they are *envy* and *malice*. Paul says, At one time " we were full of malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." When Paul went to preach at one place, a multitude of the Gentiles begged that they might have the same things preached to them on the next Sabbath. But when the Jews saw the multitude of people, they were moved with envy, and raised an uproar, and purposed to kill the Apostle. Envy is the rottenness of the bones. This is an enemy ; it is so envious because the Son of God gets a name, and that sinners are saved by His blood. Carnal men and mere professors will not have it ; they turn round and say, these are *the saints!* what a *bigotted* people these are. So they show to whom they belong, for the Son of God says, " They that are not with us are against us." What a mercy not to be shut up to this ! When you hear poor sinners asking the way to Zion, and wanting to know more of the Son of God, and to speak well of His name, what a mercy if your heart is glad to hear it, and you can say in your spirit, peace be with you. For they shall prosper that love Zion. The great Apostle says, " Others are full of envy and malice." If you look you will find how all the unbelieving ones were full of envy against the Christ of God, and His servants publishing the glad tidings. Do you know what it is to be freed from this, not shut up in it, but blessed with a humble mind, and a teachable spirit, earnestness of heart to kneel before the Lord, with, " Lord, make me wise unto salvation, teach me the way wherein I should go " ? If you know what that is in the spirit of your heart, you will not be shut up with the devil and the damned ; that is, where God will shut up His enemies at last, and bind them in everlasting chains. While His people shall walk at large, crowned with glory, and shall sing, " To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, to him be glory, might, majesty, and dominion." Amen.

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Providence Chapel, Croydon.

A Sermon

PREACHED SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 10th, 1878,
AT CROYDON.

BY MR. COVELL.

ON THE THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS OPENING
THE CHAPEL.

“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.”—ISAIAH i. 18, 19.

O, THE freeness, the fulness, the riches of God's grace towards sinners! What mercy and compassion in His heart! how they sparkle in His eye, and flow out of His heart, from His lips towards sinners who can in no way help themselves! How determined He is to do them good; how He loves to set the world a wondering, as a poor woman once wisely answered a good man who spoke to her of the love of God in the gift of His Son to save sinners, as well as His great love to him, which he felt in his own heart: “Is it not wonderful?” he asked. “Ah,” said she, “it is just like Him!” God loves to do wonderful things; so here, in the words of my text, He makes a wonderful display of the riches of His grace, His eternal and everlasting love towards changing men, and how He will do them good; as He declares, “I will set mine eyes upon you for good; yea, I will do you good with my whole heart, and with my whole soul:” nor are these mere words, mere say-so; they are facts, divine realities, as millions of glorified saints are realizing in heaven, and thousands of saints can testify upon earth; yea, some of you can set to your seal that it is so of a truth.

“Come now,” as though God would say, “Thou stiff-necked one,” “Thou murmuring one,” “Thou hard-hearted one,” come now: just like a tender father, or a loving mother causing the wayward child to confess his faults, and express sorrow for his erring ways; ready even to encourage it with a kiss, a cake or some pretty toy, to please it while the child pouts, sulks and turns away as though it

would neither listen, care for, nor regard the parent's wooings. "Now come" says God, "have you nothing to say for yourself? do you feel in every respect just the opposite to that you ought to feel? Come now, there is no wrath in Me, there is no bitterness in My heart, no sword in My hand; only bowels of love, pity and compassion in Me." The Church had a feeling sense of this when she cried out, "Let us return unto the Lord, for He hath torn and He will heal us, He hath smitten and He will bind us up; after three days we shall live in His sight." Speaking by the prophet Isaiah, God says, "Ye have bought me no sweet cane with money, but have made me to serve with your sins:" you have not sought my face in the week that is past, but vanity and trifles have taken your heart; you have had no love to Me, or desires after me; but have been full of murmuring and self-will, and, Jonah-like, will have nothing to do with me, but get away as far off as you can; yet, "Come now," what more could He say, or with how much more tenderness could He speak? Is it not enough to make us drop our head with shame on account of what we have been? and then to think that we are the offending party! how we have done wickedly against God, insulting Him to His face! Yet He comes and says, "Does Satan suggest to your mind that I will have nothing to do with you? does unbelief say you are too bad? do your sins stare you in the face, and, in your soul's feelings, separate between you and Me? do you feel more as fit fuel for hell than as likely to shine in heaven. 'Come now,' let all these things pass and fade away, remembering that you have to do with Me, who am 'God and not Man:' 'My thoughts are not your thoughts,' if you had to do with man you might indeed say, 'When he comes he will spurn me and cast the things I have done in my teeth,' but, 'My thoughts are not your thoughts, or my ways your ways.'" What sweet words these to draw, to melt, to encourage us! if His love does not conquer us, nothing under the canopy of heaven will. I have known the meaning of these words, and if they have never been brought home with power to your hearts I can assure you, dying men and women, they are true words. I have been ashamed of myself again and again, everything testifying against me; but blessed be His holy name, "and let everything that hath breath praise him for it." He has never cast one word of unkindness into my heart, or twitted me in the least on account of the things I have done, and what has this done? Why, it has so endeared Him to my heart that I have felt many times, "I will speak of His goodness though I might be sent to the bottomless pit"; but while my text

stands true He will not send me there ; O, no. Now whatever you feel daily, whatever you may feel at this moment, however vile and sinful you are, God will not twit you with what you have been : you may well reprove, rebuke and say hard words against yourself, but you will not get God to second it ; confess it you will, repent of it you feel you must ; but while you are condemning yourself and loathing yourself in your own sight, He will be giving you kisses and encouragements, and will so surprise you with His love that you will feel and say, " Can it be true ? " " Lord here's my heart ! " O, nothing beats the man, nothing breaks the heart like the kindness of God to poor sinners.

" Come now, let us *reason together*." " Well, Lord, what can I say ? I have been a sinner all my life." " True," says God, " that I do not deny, but let us reason the matter." " Yes, Lord, but I have never cared at all about Thee ; I should have gone to hell hadst Thou left me to myself." Thus we are brought to reason together, and as we do so how everything seems to go against us. God has been mindful of us again and again, but we have thought nothing of it ; how unthankful have we been for His kindness and goodness towards us ! Oh, when God and we come to reason together everything is against us. We cannot reason in this way : " Lord I have been *so good*, I have done *my best*, have followed after Thy ways, have read Thy Word, have attended Thy house continually, have helped Thy cause as far as my means permitted, and have encouraged poor people to seek Thee." Ah, none of us can reason in this way, we cannot reason as Elijah's servant did before the king, who said, " Come, tell me all the great things thy master hath done," and he rehearsed all the things the prophet had done—nay, we cannot reason with God in this manner.

" Come let us reason together." " Then, Lord, all I can say is, I am a lost ruined sinner, destitute of Thy free grace, I have never done anything as I ought to have done it ; since I have professed to know Thee I have been ashamed of myself a thousand times twice told : I never did anything but it was tainted with sin : I never could say ' well done ; ' all I can say is, ' God be merciful to me a sinner.' I cannot reason with Thee that ever I purposed doing anything and carried it out fully and rightly—something or other was always wanting. If I reason at all with Thee all I can say is, ' I have left undone the things I ought to have done, and have done those things I ought not to have done.' Good God, what can I expect from Thee ? I have nothing to speak of but what is bad ;

what ground have I to expect or hope for any mercy, seeing that I can bring nothing? I cannot say that I have always been ashamed of my ways, or that I have felt sorry for my sins; nay, rather, when Thou hast thwarted me, I have felt 'I do well to be angry;' I have been very peevish at times, and so full of murmuring and discontent that I have been ready to say, 'I will wait upon God no longer.' Lord, if we come to reason the matter, O, I must confess how indifferent I have been sometimes whether I went to heaven or hell, it seemed to matter but little one way or the other. Sin has been no trouble, nor has there been any burning desire in my soul after Thy salvation. That is my only reasoning, Lord." O, this is reasoning; here's the man and God brought close together. What! not to be sorry for your sins? to have no panting for God, and His Christ? so careless and in such a stupid state as to have no concern about how the matter will end. "Why," say you, "do people really get into so bad a condition as that?" Yes, they do, and I know it well; yes, and then turn round and quarrel with God. "If God does not help us what is to be done?" actually want to throw the blame upon God; but "Come now," says God, "let us reason it out." My friends, I felt only this morning, before God, "Lord, I need not say anything, thou knowest it all," and as the tears ran from my eyes, although all I could dare to say was, "Lord, thou knowest thy servant," yet (O, what a mercy!), I felt something dropping into my heart that did me good, I felt somewhat of His love coming into my soul, and love flowed out of my heart in return, and I said, "O, what a good God I have!" and I pray that you may know something of it too. "Come now," and if you come crying to God, you will find it just as the child does who runs crying to its mother in trouble. O what kisses and caresses it gets, and why? because there is something the matter: Coming to God in this way we shall often find Him meeting us with sweet kisses, and fond, soothing, endearing words. Again, while the mother is engaged about the house she gives the child its toys, and, seeing it taken up with the playthings, she says, "Ah, it is all right, it is quite happy, I need not trouble about it." Do we not see in this child a picture of ourselves, my friends? The toys, and baubles, the bubbles and vanities of this world take up all our time and affections; we are happy and pleased, we do not want God; and God says, "O they can get on very well without me; they have no thought about me." So God lets us alone, but the child gets tired of its toys in time, however fine or pretty they may be, and *then* comes the cry after the mother. So

with us. The world and its vanities do for a time, but by-and-bye there comes a twitching of the heart ; we feel that God has left us all alone ; there is a tiring of the world then, nothing in it can please us, and the meaning of these words is felt, "In their affliction they will seek me early." Thus God says, "Come now, and let us reason together," and thus we have to make confession before Him ; and He will tell you a truth ; if at any time He blesses you with a praying heart, you will be sure to find the love and favour of God on your side ; if you are looking after Him, feeling for Him in a time of distress, depend upon it you will have His pitying eye and helping hand toward you. Are there any here before God who cannot find Him so near to them as they would ; He seems to be behind a cloud. If you have a praying spirit, and are crying to God to help you depend upon it, that God, the Holy Ghost has blessed you with that spirit ; you stand well in the favour of God, and will find His love, His pity, and His almighty power to help you out and bring you through ; just as I read of the pilgrim who was journeying toward Jerusalem, as he went along he fell in with people who entertained him, and were very kind, but, said he, "This is not Jerusalem, although you are so kind." So, if God has blessed you with a heart to seek Him, you will not be satisfied with seeking, you must have the *result, that is finding* ; you want to find Jesus Christ for yourself. Do you know what this is ? Yes, say some, "I trust I do ;" then you have a place in God's heart, He and you will never be separated. "Come now, and let us reason together : though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." This made the Psalmist say, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow ; purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean." John saw a glorious company in heaven, and the angel told him who they were : "These are they," although they now shine and sparkle in heaven, "these are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Think, then, what the blood of Christ can buy—invaluable blood ! Nothing else can cleanse the foul leprosy of sin ; nothing else can heal thy sickly soul.

"Till God in human flesh I see,
My thoughts no comfort find ;
The holy, just, and sacred Three
Are terrors to my mind.
But if Immanuel's face appears,
My hope, my joy begins ;
His name forbids my slavish fears,
His grace removes my sins."

Nothing but the blood of God's dear Son *can* wash away the stain of sin. John "saw in the midst of the throne of God, as it were, a Lamb that had been slain"—the eternal Son of the eternal Father. The poet has it thus :—

"Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain,
Can give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away a stain."

But Christ, the heavenly Lamb,
Takes all our guilt away ;
A sacrifice of nobler name,
And richer blood than they.

If it had been the blood of Christ *as man only* it had been only the blood of a creature, and therefore could never have removed or washed away sin, nor could God have said, as in my text, "Though they be as scarlet, they shall be as white as wool; though they be dyed like crimson, they shall be as snow." John tells us that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin;" and "by his one offering he hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified." If it had not been the blood of Christ it could never have reached the thousands that have bled and died for His name, and cause, and truth. All the blood of all the martyrs that ever suffered could never remove one spot of sin from their own hearts or ours. Here then God *can* reason truly. The Psalmist says, "No man can by *any means* redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him;" but the Holy Ghost, speaking of Jesus, says, "He shall be called Emmanuel, God with us." God abstractedly could not bleed; God abstractedly could not save; but God in human nature *did* suffer, *did* bleed, *did* die. Thus the Holy Ghost saith by the Apostle, "Feed the Church of God which he hath purchased *with his own blood.*" One drop of this "precious blood" is worth ten thousand worlds. It is said in the Word of God, "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands." Hence the Son of God said by the prophet, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, then said I, Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God." Thus the eternal Son of the eternal Father, "Having brought in an everlasting righteousness, is for ever set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Now what is your sin, though as a mountain? What is it compared with the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth *from all sin*? "Behold the Lamb of God!" Here is something

above all your sin, filth, and guilt. "Look, then, unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth." Is this just the Christ you need? Is this the salvation upon which your heart is set? Do your sins trouble you? Do you feel cast down and disquieted, and do you cry out, "How shall I stand in that great day?" "Yes," say you, "that is my case indeed, and *what can I do?*" Why, just *nothing*; but hearken to this Word: "I will be merciful to your unrighteousness, and your sins and iniquities will I remember no more." And again, "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious;" "I will get myself a revenue of praise;" "My Son shall be extolled and exalted, and made very high;" while you shall feel what His blood and righteousness *can* do in saving such a wretch as you feel yourself to be, and making you shine more gloriously than the angels of God.

"And lest the shadow of a spot should on my soul be found,
He took the robe the Saviour wrought, and cast it all around."

"Lift up thine eyes, then, to the hills from *whence* cometh thine help." I daresay like me you have tried sometimes to "Wash yourself with nitre and much soap." When sin has been upon your conscience, and you have felt, "O, what a wretch I am." When sin has stared you in the face, so to speak, how you have set about trying to get into a better place, a better temper and disposition, or to work some repentance in your soul; but notwithstanding all your efforts, "your iniquity is, still, marked before God;" you are just where you were at the beginning, guilty before God. Well,

"Come guilty, come filthy, come naked and bare,
You can't come *too* filthy, come just as you are,"

to the "fountain opened for sin and uncleanness," the blood of God's dear Son. When John saw the saints in heaven, he had no idea that they had been such vile, base creatures, full of all kinds of sin and iniquity; but see, as I said before, what the blood of Christ *can* do, "They washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," and are now before the throne of God, and can look at God without fear. God help you to come in His own way: "Take with you words," saith He, "and turn unto me, and say, 'Take away *all* iniquity, receive us *graciously*, and love us freely;" and never attempt to put a finger to it, or if you do, you will find that God will have to undo all *your* handiwork. God has to put *us* on one side altogether in the matter of salvation, and all we may attempt to do only gives Him more work to undo. God says, you throw yourself upon my bounty, my love, and the blood of my Son, and when you are brought to this spot, you will prove that "There is no God like unto our God, pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin; retaining not his anger for ever, *because he delighteth in mercy.*" Amen.

ADDRESS AFTER THE SERMON.

This day, reckoning according to Sabbaths (this being the second Sabbath in March), completes thirty years that I have stood before the people here in this Chapel ; indeed, here and elsewhere in this town I have been trying to speak, according to the ability God has given me, just upon thirty-four years, and what changes I have seen from year to year ; I miss the faces of some that have gone and passed away, and their departure speaks to you and me, saying, " Where we are you soon must be ; " " Prepare to meet thy God." And what an unspeakable mercy it will be, to be prepared to leave the Church Militant and join the Church Triumphant.

" O, how I long to reach the place,
Where He unveils His lovely face ;
Where all His beauties you behold,
And sing His praise to harps of gold."
(18, GADSBY.)

O, what a blessed exchange for any of us ; while each departed one saith, " Behold *He* cometh ! "

When I look at you, my friends, and think how I have stood before you for thirty years, I can but consider what mercy, what forbearance, what patience God has bestowed upon me ; and also what sympathy, what forbearance and what kindness you have shown me : I have a happy persuasion from these and many other intimations of your favour that although I have stood before you for nearly thirty-four years we are not tired of each other ; though old as I am getting I am not too old for you, and you have no desire to exchange me for a younger or better Minister ; but are willing still to bear with me. This you may be sure is very grateful and pleasing to my feelings, for I am not a stone, without feeling.

When I see your constant attendance and great attention how thankful I do feel to you for it, sensible, as I am, of my short-comings and want of ability and talent : there is no place, for all that, as it respects a dissenting place of worship, so well attended even on the week evenings as ours is. How seldom do I see any of you asleep, and that is a great thing to say of a large congregation. When I look at my feeble efforts how I see God makes His grace to shine ; truly " The excellency of the power is of God and not of man." How many changes there have been with respect to churches and chapels in our time, and what has been the predominating cause ? dissension in some, strife in others : and what changes of ministers ! Well, there is nothing here to attract, as in many other places ;

the singing is not so very grand, although the good people do their best, and they can do no more; and the clerk does his best. We have nothing in novelties about the place to attract the eye and attention and cause you to say, "Let us go there and spend half-an-hour that our eyes and ears may be pleased." And, another thing, we have had but two subjects before us from the beginning until now; first, that we are all sinners by nature and by practice and therefore deserving of hell; and, secondly, that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life; and that there is salvation in no other way but in and by Him; yet although these two subjects, and these only, are brought before you from time to time, you neither tire of them, nor do you desire anything fresh; and my desire is, and has been, that as you have listened to these solemn and glorious realities so many years, you may know them for yourselves, convinced on the one hand that you are sinners, and on the other hand rejoicing that you are saints. If not, how solemn it will be that while you have heard the glorious things of salvation, pardoning mercy, rich, free sovereign grace, blood to cleanse, a Saviour to save, a heaven to enjoy, and a crown to wear; that you should come short of these blessings. O, may you find and realize these things for yourselves; they cause me many tears, much searching of heart, and many prayers; and my desire is that, as we have met together these many years to speak and to hear of these things, and I hope have rejoiced and been gladdened together by them, so I may meet you at last in heaven that we may there join in one song, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to Thy name be the honour and the glory."

I have no doubt that before the year 1879 comes round some whose faces I now see, and who are now listening to my voice, may be gone, and perhaps I may be gone; but whenever a fresh voice sounds from this pulpit, God grant that its sound may ever send forth the same blessed and glorious truths, and if it be His will, with much better ability, much more talent, and far more grace.

You will say, "But you have not spoken about the collection." There is not the slightest need to do so; your large and liberal hearts and open hands have anticipated *that*, I have no doubt. As I said before, I am a mortal man, and you who have to do with me know so too; but I believe many of you are much more concerned about the collection than I am; being anxious that it may still keep up to former years. I can honestly say, I am more concerned about your never-dying souls than all the gold and silver you

can give me; although *I am* a mortal man. God and my heart have been together respecting this matter, and He knows it would give me greater pleasure to see the salvation and prosperity of soul of any poor sinner before Him than all the lumps of gold and silver. O, my friends, *I see, I feel, I know* the worth, the greatness of the soul's salvation. But if, through age or sickness, I should be laid aside, it will be no small pleasure and gratification, and cause me no small thanks to my God that He has set me over and placed me amongst so loving, so kind and liberal a people as I have always found you to be; with what gratitude shall I look back at the goodness of my God, for giving me a place in the hearts and affections of a people willing in every way to contribute to my comfort and necessities, so abounding in goodness towards me. May your kindness, liberality, and love ever be had in remembrance before God: that He may not be unmindful to forget your work and labour of love, that ye have showed toward His unworthy servant.

Now, my friends, seeing that our days are but short, and that at most it must be but a few years that I shall see your faces, or that you will hear my voice, may we prove our last days to be our best days, so that we may be able to say when the end *does* come, "Into Thine hands I commit my spirit, for Thou hast redeemed me, Lord God of truth." I commend you then into the hands of God the Father; unto the grace of God the Son, and the sweet communion and fellowship of God the Holy Ghost, and may peace be with you all. Amen.

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Sermons preached by Mr. Covell, the second Sunday in March, 1878, being the 30th anniversary of his opening the Chapel, will (D.V.) be published in May and June, including the addresses after each service.

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Providence Chapel, Croydon.

A Sermon

PREACHED SUNDAY EVENING, MARCH 10th, 1878,
AT CROYDON.

BY MR. COVELL.

ON THE THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS OPENING
THE CHAPEL.

“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.”—ISAIAH i. 18. 19.

In the morning we noticed the encouraging, entreating, and we might say the coaxing words of the Lord towards His poor people in this invitation, “Come now.” Why stand at a distance? why show thy temper and discontent? “Come now,” you will find mercy in My heart, love in My eye; “Come now,” you will find Me far better than you expect, and much more compassionate than your deserts. Come, see what blessings I can impart. How different this reasoning to Samuel’s, when he called the people together. (1 Sam. xii.) “Now, therefore,” said he, “stand still that I may reason with you before the Lord.” “Is it not wheat harvest to-day? I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send *thunder* and *rain*; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great in the sight of the Lord.” “And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not, &c.” They did not like that sort of reasoning. Paul reasoned with Felix of righteousness, temperance, and *judgment to come*, so that Felix trembled and said, “Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee: we can then talk it over,” but he did not intend it; he could not stand before Paul’s *reasoning*. The disciples of Jesus were *reasoning* together at one time which of them should be the greatest; but He took a little child and set him by Him, and showed them that he that was least among them all should be the greatest; thus He soon put down all their *reasoning*. When Paul went to Thessalonica, he

reasoned with them there for three days, and they were glorious truths he reasoned about ; but here we have solemn reasoning in my text : “ Come, let us reason together : ” although we have nothing to say on our behalf ; nothing to plead ; no excuse to make, God brings His people to books : “ ‘ Produce your cause, saith the Lord of Hosts ; bring forth your strong reasonings, saith the King of Jacob, ’ why I should not drive you hither and thither ; scatter you as the dust of the earth, or banish you to that place where hope never comes. ” Ah, Lord, we have nothing to say why judgment should not be pronounced against us : we have been rebels ; have given Thee the back, and not the face : but God says, although you have done all this wickedness ; now I see that you put your mouth in the dust, now you hide your head for shame and confusion of face ; although you *have* nothing to say on your own behalf, and argue against yourself which is all you can do, saying, “ Woe is me on account of my sins ; ” “ Come let us reason together, ” although you *have* “ done that you ought not to have done, and have left undone that you ought to have done ; ” “ Though your sins *be* as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they *be* red like crimson, they shall be as wool. ” “ I am He that blotteth out thy transgressions as a cloud, and thine iniquities as a thick cloud ; and will no more remember thy sins. ” This is just the God that suits me, my friends, anything short of such mercy will never save thee or me from the pit of hell. We must have a salvation that is as free as the air : and God can bring it about, because “ the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from *all* sin. ” This “ precious blood ” can reach, so to speak, to the confines of hell, to deliver from going down into the pit ; while “ They that go down into the pit, the Scripture saith, cannot hope for God’s mercy ! ” It is “ the living, the living, who shall praise him ” of whom it is said, “ By the obedience of *one* shall many be made righteous ; ” such will indeed “ Speak of His goodness and talk of His power. ” There may be some of you, now before God, who feel your sins are against you ; they sting you, at times, and make you feel and fear as to how it will go with you in the day of death. “ Come now, ” saith God, “ put me in remembrance ” of that I have promised ; hold Me fast to My word ; bind Me to My own truth : “ Take with you words, and turn unto me, ” and say take away all iniquity. “ Ah, Lord ! although my sins are like scarlet ; although they be indeed as crimson, yet I would not try to hide them as Adam did : and Thou hast said, ‘ let us plead together ’ so I come to Thee, ‘ Look not upon me, Lord, for I am black, ’ but ‘ Behold, Oh God, our Shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed, ’ have

regard to the obedience and righteousness of Thy dear Son ; Thou hast said, 'Thou art well pleased for his righteousness' sake.' "Thanks, then, be unto God for His unspeakable gift," whereby, 'God can be just and justify the ungodly.' Thou hast said, whatever may be our sins, 'If we confess our sins, thou art faithful and just to forgive us our sins,' and that, 'If we confess our sins, and forsake them, we shall find mercy,' and Thou knowest, Lord, I am both willing to confess and to forsake too : now, Lord, pray, 'fulfil thy Word upon which thou hast caused me to hope.'" How God puts arguments into our mouth, does He not ? "Plead with me," say, "take away all iniquity"—however great it may be—"receive us graciously, and love us freely." O, the riches of God's grace ! the preciousness of atoning blood ! as sure as sin brings death, so sure Jesus Christ gives life ; there is no stain too deep but His precious blood can remove it, and cleanse it entirely away. So God pleads, as though He would say, "Come now," you are made willing to confess and I am willing to forgive. O, Lord, say you,

"And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well :
Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord,
Whose hope still hovering round Thy Word,
Would light on some sweet promise there,
Some sure support against despair."

I have no doubt, my friends, that at times you see such sinfulness in your thoughts, such evil in your flesh ; you have such a hasty tongue : sometimes perhaps a lie has escaped your lips, that these things make you turn aside with shame and confusion, and drop upon your knees before God sighing out, "O this wretched tongue, what will it bring me to ! O, if God should take *me* to heaven it *will* be all of grace ;" and grace can do it, my friends ; the blood of Jesus Christ *is* sufficient :

"Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood shall never lose its power ;
Till all the ransomed church of God are saved to sin no more."

I have no doubt the thousands that are now singing in heaven, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, be glory and honour, might, majesty and dominion for ever and ever," felt the truth of my text when upon the earth.

"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as wool ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as white as snow." What is our sin when compared with the blood of the Son of God ? Why, it sinks at once before that "precious blood :

"Only by faith in Jesus' blood, the sinner gets release,
No other sacrifice for sin, will God accept but this."

Peter says, "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold: but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times *for you*, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." Now God has to draw these people, to attract them, to engage them, to woo them to come unto Him; while, poor creatures, all they can do, as I have said before, is to reason against themselves. Now I know the truth of my text, and I trust many of you do so too. I have known what it is to feel this peace-speaking blood in my conscience; though to my feeling, my sins have been as scarlet, and red like crimson, peace has flowed into my conscience "like a river, and joy like an overflowing stream," while my soul ran into the arms of my God and cried, "Thou, Lord, art the lifter up of mine head, my King, and my glory:" and I felt, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth, it is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen from the dead, who is even at the right hand of the majesty on high," presenting his own blood before the throne of God; and as the Holy Ghost works faith in the heart,

"If you but touch that purple tide, you make your peace with God."

Oh then, to be able to look the law in the face, to look God in the face, to look death in the face and say, "Good God, I am clean:" and to realize the truth of His Word, "I have not beheld iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel." When this is felt and enjoyed in the heart and conscience we come to know a little of what Christ says of His spouse (the Church), "Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely." No hard speeches now; no murmuring, sulky, pouting lips now. Well-formed lips, you know, are much admired naturally, and we look upon them as tending to render the person beautiful. "Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet," because now they talk of nothing but the love and blood of Jesus "the Beloved," how He saves sinners; and the spouse can now say, "He loved *me*, and gave Himself *for me*;" now her "speech is comely," and no wonder, because it is all about Jesus Christ. It is said of the wise woman "that all her household are clothed in scarlet," or as it reads in the margin, "clothed with a double garment."

"And lest the shadow of a spot should on *my* soul be found,
He took the robe the Saviour wrought, and cast it all around."

"He hath clothed *me* with the garments of salvation; He hath

covered *me* with the robe of righteousness." All God's works are perfect. God says, "I have loved you;" "I will be merciful to you;" "Your sins and iniquities will I remember no more;" "I have cast all your sins into the *depth of the sea*, so that when sought for *they shall not be found.*" And there appears to be much meaning in this, because you know the tide only reaches to a certain depth, and a floating substance may be brought to the surface and thrown upon the shore by the tide; but our sins shall be *cast into the depths* of the sea, below the reach of waves or tide to bring them up again. "Come, ye blessed of the Lord, inherit the kingdom *prepared for you* from before the foundation of the world." "These shall go away into everlasting life, but the wicked into everlasting destruction." God grant that this may not be your state or condition, but that you may realize and feel that God has made His dear Son to be, "Wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption" to you. *I know*, says the Preacher (Ecc. iii. 14), "*I know that, whatsoever God doeth it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it that men should fear before him.*" "I am God, and besides me there is no Saviour;" and "By his one offering hath the Lord Jesus *for ever perfected* them that are sanctified." Come then to God, poor sinner; put Him in remembrance. "Lord, Thou hast promised, Thou hast said, 'Though our sins *be as scarlet*, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool;' do Thou now fulfil Thy Word; I am just the one to need it, Lord;" wrestle hard by prayer and supplication; take no denial; "Lord, Thou hast said, 'Take with you words,'" "Declare thou that thou mayest be justified," thus "Give Him no rest until He thoroughly pleads your cause."

"If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." Now, it is God who works in us to will, as we read, "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." I will venture to say this is where we all were before being made to seek after God. "Son, go work to-day in my vineyard," and what did we say by our conduct and ill-manners? "We will not." "We do not mean to part with our lusts and pleasures yet, there's plenty of time to think of religion by-and bye." "What, give up all these pleasant things of the world so suited as they are to our tastes?" And I daresay very few of us ever intended to become Baptists, never intended to join such poor despised people as these; no, never, had God left us to our own will and way. But what has grace done? "Afterwards he repented and went, and did

the will of his father." The Son of God says, "Whosoever shall do the will of my father which is in heaven, the same is my mother, and sister and brother." Oh! to be related to Him, one with Him, and for Him to own and acknowledge us as *His*. God says of David, "I have found a man after mine own heart, he shall fulfil all my will."

"If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land." And what is the good of the land? Why, the covenant of grace, wherein all things are stored; this is a vast treasury for poor sensible needy sinners. The Son of God will open this storehouse to supply his brethren. David said, "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure." "The Lord will give grace, and he will give glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Abraham sent his servant to take a wife for his son Isaac, but the servant said, "If the woman be not willing to follow me, what then?" Harken, this is how it is done; "The Lord God that took me from my father's house and from the land of my nativity and told me that he would multiply my seed, and give me all this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and give thee a wife for my son." So spiritually the Holy Ghost comes (as God promised of His dear Son "He shall see his seed, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand,") thus the Holy Ghost comes testifying of His grace, showing us His suitability and making known to us everything respecting Jesus as the Angel of the Covenant, and He is sure to bring us over to the Son of God, and, if you notice, when the servant put the ear-rings in her ears and the bracelets on her arms, telling them how his master had a son in his old age to whom he had given everything he possessed; and they asked the damsel if she would go with this man, how willingly she replied, "I will go." And are not poor sinners made as willing to be joined to the Son of God as she was to go with the servant to be espoused to Isaac the Son of Abraham? "Ah," say you, "I am willing;" well, then, that is of God, as it is said, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of my power." David said to his son Solomon, "Know thou the God of thy fathers, and serve Him with a willing mind, and a perfect heart." "If there be first a willing mind." Methinks I hear some say, "We are willing to serve Him, and would cleave closer to Him, but alas, the flesh is *so* weak although the spirit *is* willing. We would follow Him through evil report and through good report." Would you? Then it is accepted of Him. Although you cannot do what you would, yet, if there is a willing mind, it is the Father's will that *not one* of those that believe in His dear Son shall perish.

Jesus Christ is so jealous over those poor weak ones that believe in Him that at one time he said (Matt. xviii. 6), "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." On one occasion the disciples tried to persuade Paul not to go up to Jerusalem lest the Jews should kill him; but, said he "What mean ye to weep and break mine heart; I am not only *willing* to be bound, but to die also for the name of the Lord Jesus;" then said they, "The will of the Lord be done." Now mark the contrast. It is said of Pilate that "being minded to content the people he delivered up Jesus to *their will*," thus he was more willing to please the people than to do what was right in the sight of God. If God has your will, my friends, he has the "fort royal" of your heart. When God takes possession of the will, the affections are sure to follow. "Lord, I am Thy servant," "Whose I am, and whom I serve." It is said of the wise woman, that, "She worketh *willingly* with her hands." How you feel at times that you could sit and listen, and say in your heart, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

"Give power and will, and then command, and we will follow Thee."

"Ah," say you, "that is my religion." Is it? Then I am sure God has gained your heart; and I can tell you something else, He has a heaven to give you and a crown to put upon your head. I have no more doubt about that than I doubt the truth of the Scriptures. God has testified to me again and again, that my religion is from Himself; that He has wrought it in my heart by His Spirit, and I believe it is so. O, you may say, this seems too good *for me*; but, "If ye be willing and obedient." What a great blessing it is to have "a willing heart," a "ready hand and foot," and "listening ears." "Christ," it is said, "is the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." Do you know what it is to sit at His feet, and say, "Lord, teach me, I am willing to learn of Thee;" "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" "Abraham, being called of God, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." When the Blessed Spirit first began to move upon our heart, we did not know how the thing would end; and although our friends did not approve of it, the wife or the husband opposed it, and our relations objected and looked shyly upon us, yet, we were obliged to go, for God had called us. Many things, very likely, stared us in the face, but we took up the cross and followed Him; and although nothing might come of it we felt we must "Ask our way now to Zion, with our face turned thitherward." "Look unto

Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you," I called him alone. Do you know something of this? If so, you will "eat the good of the land." God has opened the door to let you in. You have found the "corn that makes the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids;" you shall have Christ for your portion, the blessed Spirit for your teacher and comforter, and he shall lead and guide you into heaven at last. What a mercy it is to be made "willing and obedient." Harken and mark again the contrast. God sent Saul to slay the Amalekites; he was to slay everything; not an hoof was to be left, and after the battle the prophet met him and he said, "I have obeyed the word of the Lord, in all that he told me to do," Then said Samuel; "What means this bleating of sheep, and lowing of cattle, in mine ears?" "O, the people wanted me to spare them that they might offer sacrifice to the Lord." What a cloak this, to cover his covetous desires—but he could not deceive God. "Hath the Lord as great desire in burnt offering as in obeying the voice of the Lord? said Samuel, to obey is better than sacrifice: Thou hast rejected the word of the Lord; He hath rejected thee from being king." I believe the greatest act the sun ever witnessed, or that was done under the canopy of heaven, was the *obedience* of the Son of God, who, "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience; therefore God hath highly exalted him." "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." I believe that when He came to do the will of God and cried, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not my will but thine be done," it was the greatest act that ever the heavens beheld.

"If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land." There is the obedience of faith. It is said, "The Gospel is made known unto all nations for the obedience of faith." "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Now *this* is the obedience of faith, "Give me Christ, or else I die." "That I may be found in him, not having on my own righteousness, which is of the law; but the righteousness which is of God by faith." With such sacrifices God is well pleased. "If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land." You shall have a Saviour that can save you; an advocate to plead for you; a king to reign over and in you, and for you against your enemies. You shall have all that is promised in My Word; you shall have an abiding place in My heart, and at last shall sit down together with My Son who is even now already at My right hand. And all these blessings flowing from the free, rich, sovereign grace of God, "Who will be gracious unto whom he will be gracious,"

and thus get Himself a name and praise in the hearts of His people, that they may love Him with a pure heart fervently. Thus the words of my text, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord : though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." Amen.

ADDRESS AFTER THE SERMON.

I would just say again what most of you present know already, namely, that by the good hand of God I have been spared to stand up in this pulpit now for thirty years. From the formation of the church until the present time we have been a united people ; there have been no bickerings, disputings, falling out by the way, or divisions ; and why? Because none have desired to be masters : all have been willing that I should be master, and thus become the servant of all. I have many times felt to wish that some others were the masters, and I the servant indeed : but God has been good, always remembering me in my weakness ; and you have been willing to bear with me and to sympathize with my failings, and notwithstanding my infirmities, your constant attendance, and great attention are as a voice to tell me that you are not tired of me : may God so anoint me with oil to enrich my soul, and strengthen me in body also, so that we may continue to worship together until we be separated by death. I know it is trying for many who attend, who would take sittings but cannot have them, to be so inconvenienced as they are, but we cannot enlarge the chapel, and it is too small to put up side galleries ; but there is one thing, although our desire would be to seat all who attend, it tries the metal of those who come under such inconvenience, and shows whether they come merely from custom or for the profit of their souls. It is very trying to be put sometimes here and sometimes there, and sometimes to be shifted from one seat to another, and especially when willing to pay for sittings ; it does not suit old nature, and when there is no real desire after the Word of God, the man or woman will soon tire, and take themselves off ; it will not suit their pride to be thus shifted and pushed about ; but those whose faith is of the right sort, will not so much mind being put about for a seat, and while the others go and leave us, may those of you who still come for the things that are for your soul's profit realize those comforts and blessings that both strengthen and encourage you to hope in God ; and while you can get any place, although it be only a seat in the aisle, may God help you still to come and abide by His truth. You are the people most likely to get the blessing you come after. No doubt some of you think I must have a strong nerve to stand before you at this time, considering the pleasure and gratification you caused me in the morning. I can assure you it is as much as I can well stand under ; and when I tell you the sum collected was 450*l.*—in round numbers—you may indeed wonder that I do bear up under such kindness and liberality,

astonished at the large amount so willingly and lovingly bestowed : But this ground is too tender for me to dwell upon, lest I should break down. May God enable us still to live and walk together in love ; to strive together for the faith once delivered to the saints ; and should this be the last year in which you may ever see my face or hear my voice in this pulpit, to speak to you in the name of the Lord on the second Sabbath in March, may the next who shall succeed me be enabled to feed you with knowledge and understanding ; keep you together in the bond of peace, and water your souls so that you may grow in grace. One thing I will say, and you will not accuse me of egotism, and that is, however much he may excel me in gifts and grace, and in all natural and acquired abilities besides, I feel he will never excel me in my earnest, longing, prayerful desire for the salvation, comfort, profit, and eternal welfare of your souls. God, who searches all hearts, and tries the reins, knows that not only in the day, but also during many wakeful hours of the night, until my eyes are closed in sleep, you, my friends, are in my thoughts, in my heart, and in my prayers to God that He may bless *you*. May I also be in your heart, as I believe I am, and may your prayers be to God *for me*, so that our supplications may mingle together, and may they be accepted before God, through the merits of His dear Son Jesus Christ, and thus may mercies and blessings come down upon us as long as we may be spared to meet together here.

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Providence Chapel, Croydon.

A Sermon

PREACHED SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 23rd, 1877,
AT CROYDON.

BY MR. COVELL.

“Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.”—HEBREWS x. 35, 36.

WHAT an unspeakable mercy it is to have anything from God, for what God works in the heart or does for us in any way, stands fast in spite of the devil and unbelief, and the man is enabled at times to look upon it, and to thank God for it. To have something that we cannot lose, and that holds us up and holds us fast; to have something whereby we feel that we *do know*; whereby we feel that “our heart is fixed, our heart is fixed,” something that “we have seen, tasted, handled, and felt.” You may depend upon it that if God has done anything for you, and in you, the devil will try to get it away; he will question and dispute it, and *dare* you to take comfort from it, or to rest upon it, or even to believe it real or true; but you will not like to give it up, because it is your life; and you will say if it is not true, I do not know what is! You will find it as Bunyan’s Pilgrim did, that is, you will have to fight for it. You will struggle to hold it, and the devil will strive to get it away, but, as I said, you will not like to give it up. How many times upon my knees have I said, “Lord, if my religion is not right, let me have what is right;” then I have thought, “If this is not right, what is?” Then, again, when God has shined upon my heart, how I have thanked Him, and taken courage, and I have felt, well, after all, *it is right*.

Here the great Apostle says, “Cast not away your confidence.” Now, there are *some* things the devil cannot persuade us out of, and although we are a poor, timid, fearful folk, we dare not deny them in spite of all he may say, or our unbelief may question. You may depend upon this fact, that if we have anything right he will try to rob us of the comfort of it: hence one of the old divines, Satan came to him, but said the poor man, “It is not my sin which troubles you, Satau,

but the grace the Son of God has given me ; it is that you fight against ; it is not what I was, or what I am still as a sinner, but what grace has done in and for me ; that is what you do not like." So, as I said, there are things the devil cannot dispute us out of ; we may be afraid to lay hold of them, so as to take comfort from them, but there the things are, nevertheless. Now, all they could do, or all they could say to the man that had been blind, he would stand fast to it that now he did see : talk to him as they might, but they could not beat him off this, "One thing *I know*, that whereas I was blind, *now I see* ;" and they were obliged to own that a miracle had been wrought, although they did not like it : "don't let it go any further." Now, my friends, we cannot deny that God has opened our eyes to see and feel that we are sinners ; *that* we are at a point about, whatever may be the result, wherever we may go, however we may end, we are satisfied that our eyes have been opened to see that "in us, that is, in our flesh, dwells no good thing : " we see sin to be such an abominable, filthy thing, such a hateful thing, as we never saw it before, and none can persuade us out of that. I am certain there are some here before God who can and do really "smite upon their breast and say, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'" The first step to heaven is to see ourselves at hell's door ; the first step towards mercy is to see and feel our misery. None can dispute you out of this, and that is, that you now see a beauty in holiness, and that you desire it ; that you now see such sweetness in God's religion, that you covet the things of God : you now see such beauty, preciousness, and desirableness in them that, at times, you could part with everything to call them yours : Now, no one can dispute you out of that, although you yourself may sometimes say, "Shall I ever reach and possess what my heart is set upon, and what I so highly prize ? " Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God : " You can go to God and say, "Lord, I am a sinner indeed ; I feel sin to be a hateful and bitter thing : but I do desire the things Thou hast to bestow, although I am so unworthy and undeserving."

Again, none can dispute you out of this, that Christ is all and in all ; you now see that in Him that once you never knew : He is now "the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely," in your estimation, and you could do anything, or part with anything to obtain this "Pearl of great price" ; to be able to say, "My beloved is mine, and I am His." It was not always so ; at one time you did not want *Him* to come between you and your lusts ; but

now the case is altered ; now you want Him to come and separate between you and your sins : Once upon a time you did not care about any visits from *Him*, but now you want Him to come, and if He would, stay *all day long*. The devil may now say, "O your religion is only fancy," but you say, "fancy or no, I should like to have more of such"; unbelief may say, "you have not begun right," and you may be ready to conclude it may be so, I often fear it is true, but with all that, how happy I should be if I could but have Christ. Now you can see what you did not before ; you now see an excellency in God's people ; you feel, at times, that "they are the excellent of the earth, in whom is all your delight," and your wish is to die with them, and to be with them to all eternity. This speaks for itself, as I say sometimes, a straw will show us which way the wind blows. These are things upon which your heart is set ; that you want to know, realize, and enjoy : but there was a time when you did not : I ask you then, "How were thine eyes opened?" "Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?" How came the scales to be taken from thine eyes? has the devil begun to work these holy desires in thy spirit? has he put these heavenly desires in thy mind? has he become ambassador for Jesus Christ? so as to tell poor sinners what they are, and what a Saviour he is? has he thus become the friend of the God of Heaven? I remember reading about Mr. Gadsby beginning to preach ; there was a deal of talk about it ; some said one thing and some another, and some went so far as to say the devil had sent him to preach, and there was an old man who had gone to hear him, who was sitting in the vestry listening while some of the people were giving their opinion ; some pulling this way, some pulling that, when, suddenly, one turned to the old man, and said, "Well, John, what do you think of him?" "Think," said John, "why the devil and me fell out forty years ago, but if he has begun to send such men as William Gadsby to preach the gospel, I think after all these years we shall become friends again."

"Cast not away your confidence." And may God enable you to "Hold fast that which you have, that no man take your crown." You know, at times, how sweet the words drop into your ear ; how they warm your soul, and how many times you have said feelingly—

"Grace 'tis a charming sound, harmonious to mine ear."

Your ear has been bored to the doors of God's house ; you have been made to hear the truth, you now say, "How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God ;" but there was a time when, if you did happen to find your way into the house of God, the service had no pleasure for you, and you would be looking at the clock a good many times hoping it would soon be over, and glad enough when it was time to leave the place. "I will not go to hear that man again," said you, "he is too personal ; I do not like the things he says ; only a few besides him—

self going to heaven, according to his account ;” but *now* your ear is opened to hear ; now nothing suits you so well as to hear of what the blood of Jesus Christ can do ; how His righteousness justifies the ungodly ; and that you cannot be too bad for Jesus Christ to redeem you. Now you say—

“ My willing soul would stay, in such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away, to everlasting bliss.”

Are you never sorry now when the minister has closed his sermon, almost ready to say, “ No, not yet ; go on a little longer,” as a poor man once said when Mr. Vinall had been preaching, and said the time was up and he must leave off ? Do you know what it is to be upon the listen, on the look out to see if anything will drop upon your path ; and when anything has fallen upon your ear, and has entered your heart through your ear, have you not breathed in spirit thus, “ How sweet are Thy words to my taste, yea, sweeter than honey and the honey comb : ” have you not had such a feeling as not to be above being told how bad you are ? “ O,” say you, “ it does not offend me as it would have done at one time ; I feel worse now than ever they have been able to picture me or set forth.” When the Son of God reproved for covetousness “ many of the Pharisees were offended : ” and, again, when He preached about a living faith in Himself, and that, “ Unless they ate his flesh and drank his blood, they had no life in them,” it is said that “ many were offended : ” this made Him say, “ Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me.” At one time you would have been offended at hearing these things ; but not now ; “ how then, I ask again, were *thine* eyes opened ” to see these things ? you have ears to hear, and eyes to see now, so then you are neither blind nor deaf. Now you have a heart to feel, and often cry out, “ O, my sinful, wretched heart, my base ungrateful heart : there is so little love in my heart,” but you can join with Hezekiah, and say, “ The living, the living shall praise thee, as I do this day.” Now, if the blessed spirit had not quickened your soul, and thus blessed you with eternal life, there would have been none of this feeling ; you had no desires to move after Jesus Christ before ; you would not then have taken any trouble to go to hear His truth preached ; to be found in the house of God ; you would not have taken the trouble to walk, perhaps miles, in the wet or cold : but, *now*, you can say, “ Wisdom’s ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths peace : ” and, as often as your steps are enlarged, you can “ run in the way of his commandments : ” now you have a heart to go after Him, and can say with the Psalmist, “ Draw me, we will run after thee.” At one time your heart would have gone after vanity, worldly pleasures and delights ; now your heart takes you another way ; it is not now, as it was then, “ Who will show me any good,” but “ Lord lift thou upon me the light of thy countenance, and that will put more joy and gladness into my

heart than the wicked know when their corn, their oil and wine increase." What a change! God has made you see and know what His grace can work; you may indeed say, "By the grace of God I am what I am!" see what it has done in you; you come side by side with the mere professor, and ask him about these things; then you may say, "how came this change wrought in me? how came I to possess these things?" Your unbelief and the devil will work to get them away, but you can say before God, "my heart does not condemn me," "I do know what these things are," "My heart is fixed," "these are the things I have experienced, whatever the end may be." Is it so, my friends? then I am persuaded you are "a new creature in Christ Jesus." If these things were not of God you would not find any opposition; these things in your heart make you go against the stream; you find opposition from the devil, the flesh and the world, and this makes you see and feel how few there are that are really going to heaven, notwithstanding the great profession that abounds on every hand. Such folks as we have been describing are the workmanship of God; none can open the eyes of the blind, but He who made the eye; none can open the ears of the deaf, but He that made the ear; none can make the cripple walk, but He that made the feet. Thus said Peter and John, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk," and when the people saw it they gathered around them, wondering; but Peter answered, "Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this, as though by our own power or holiness we have made this man to walk? The God of our fathers hath glorified his Son Jesus, whom ye delivered up, and denied, and killed; even the Prince of life whom God hath raised up. His name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong; yea, hath given this man, whom ye see and know, this perfect soundness, in the presence of you all." The Son of God said to the Pharisees, with all their boasted religion, "I know that ye have not the love of God in you." The thousands upon thousands that are now in heaven all knew what it was to love God when on earth; all knew what it was to prize Jesus Christ in this life; there is not a goat to be found amongst them in heaven, and all those whose minds are at enmity against God, who are no lovers of God, must range along with the devil and his angels. But you can feel, and have felt, like Peter, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." "Ah," say some, "I don't know that;" well then, can you lay your hand upon your heart before God, while His eye searches and looks through you, who knows every thought of the heart, and say, "Lord, there is no desire in my heart to Thee or to Thy Christ?" I have reason to fear that all who now hear me cannot say as much; some of you would not want to say what I have just mentioned. "No," say you, "I cannot say as much, my conscience would fly in my face if I did." But some can say, "Thou knowest, Lord, how, at times, my heart beats for Thee; my soul cries out, 'Shed abroad Thy love in me.'" Ah! you

have felt sometimes such a desire in your heart after Jesus Christ, and His truth and ways, that you find these lines suit you well:—

“ Let worldly minds the world pursue : it hath no charms for me ;
Once I admired its trifles, too ; but Grace hath set me free.”

“ Yes,” you will say, “ my desire is not only to love and serve Him now, but to be with Him at last.” Then, love is of God, my friends, God has wrought it in you. “ He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God, for God is love.”

“ Cast not away, therefore, your confidence ” in the fact, that you are made partakers of His Spirit ; “ for the fruit of the spirit is love, joy and peace.” I ask you plainly, if such characters as those I have just described do not go to heaven, *who will?* and you may answer, “ Well, I believe there will be no people in heaven, if these do not get there;” then, do you believe they will? “ O, yes,” say you. Well then, you dare not say that you are not one of them. You are at a point about these people getting to heaven, and you have had evident witness and testimony in your heart that you are like these people, their character and likeness is yours; then you will go to heaven as well as they. Your heart does not condemn you, and if it does not, then have you “ confidence toward God,” and you are enabled to come before God in simplicity, thus, “ Lord, whether I am saved or lost, Thou knowest I am no hypocrite.” You desire to stand fair and straight in God’s sight; and depend upon it, if this is your religion, you will see His face with joy. I speak with a sweet persuasion, I dare not deny but that I am the subject of these things, God having borne witness to my heart that He will take me to Himself; and He is without partiality; He loves all His children alike, so then, we shall sing together in heaven. The devil and our unbelief—as I said at the beginning,—will try to pull us down, and rob us of our confidence, but although they may do so for awhile, yet the things will spring up again, according to what Jesus Christ has said, “ The water that I will give shall be *in you* a well of water, *springing* up unto everlasting life,” and this will prove the work to be of God. We are sure that “ Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners;” “ Sinners are high in His esteem, and sinners—such as you and me—highly value Him.” He came to seek and to save the lost.” You believe that His blood cleanses the vilest sinners; His righteousness justifies them before God; that it is only such as feel themselves “ ungodly,” guilty, filthy, hell deserving, otherwise lost and ruined ones He will save; you believe all this; then, “ Hold fast that which thou hast received, let no man take thy crown!” This confidence will enable you to go to Him, and say, “ Lord, I believe Thou camest to save sinners, I am a sinner, vile indeed:” “ I believe that Thy precious blood cleanses from all sin, and that just suits me; Lord, I believe Thy righteousness justifies the ungodly, and that righteousness just suits me.” “ Cast not away

your confidence," in the truth "that He is the way, the truth, and the life;" that "He has opened a fountain for sin and uncleanness;" that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son:" let no man take away this, or rob you of this; it will enable you to "come boldly to the throne of Grace." You believe God to be, "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin." You believe that "with the Lord there is mercy, and with him there is plenteous redemption." Have you these things in your mind and heart, that is not only in the doctrine, but in faith, truth, and love? then this will encourage you, notwithstanding all your filth and guilt, to come to God: nothing will draw you like this. It is said in His Word, "The Lord, thy God, is a merciful God," and this will give holy boldness to draw near and come to Him: the devil, I know, will try his best to keep thee at a distance; setting before thee "how angry God is with sinners;" you must not go before such a holy God; anything and everything to terrify thee and keep thee back, and to bring about a feeling of distance between thee and God. How often when I have been thinking or doing anything wrong, a feeling has come into my heart and mind, "You must not go to God now:" but that is putting a mask as it were before God's countenance; it is taking away my confidence, that He receives sinners; it is suggested that I must do a something; must get into a better spirit, temper, and frame of mind, before God will look upon me again smilingly: that is what the devil aims at; but when your confidence is fixed here, "God is merciful, loving, and good;" then you are enabled to throw yourself right upon His mercy, and you find this confidence "hath great recompense of reward." I have known what it has been, more than once, twice, or thrice, in my time, with guilt upon my conscience, the devil accusing me, as well as unbelief, and all trying to hold me back; I have known, I say, even in this plight, what it has been to fall flat upon the mercy of God: "O, Lord be merciful to me, I am vile," and I have found in that confidence a recompense of reward; and on the other hand, through the pride of my heart, I have lost my confidence, and at such times have been obliged to stand at a distance from God.

Again, we believe that God is a prayer-hearing and answering God; that, "In everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, we are to make our requests known unto Him," that His ear is open, as well as His heart and hand, to answer the desires and fulfil the requests of His people: you believe this is true; you have confidence in the truth, now the moment you lose that confidence, what a reward you lose; this feeling may work at times; "Will God hear me?" then down goes your confidence; unbelief will work. Will God help me out and grant me my request?" and all the while these feelings are in your heart you have not confidence; but when it is alive in your heart, and you can believe that God is all this, you

have received in your judgment, how this will enable you to go to Him for whatever you need, whether spiritually or temporally; pleading His own Word by His servant. "My God *shall* supply *all* your needs out of His riches in glory by Christ Jesus the Lord." O, how you will run to Him for Him to open His heart; to appear for you; to grant you your request, and you will find in this "confidence, great recompense of reward." It will encourage you to cast your *every* burden upon Him; you believe He is what the Scriptures say He is, but "the Christian man is never long at ease," as I said, the devil and unbelief will always be fighting against these things; and this made the great Apostle say in the words of my text, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward; for ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." If the Lord will, we will take it up again in the evening.

Sermons preached by Mr Covell, the second Sunday in March, 1878, being the 30th anniversary of his opening the Chapel, were published in May and June, including the addresses after each service.

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Providence Chapel, Croydon.

A Sermon

PREACHED SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 28th, 1875,
AT CROYDON.

BY MR. COVELL.

“Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.”—ISAIAH viii. 13, 14.

THE whole tenor of God's Word declares His goodness, mercy, love, and compassion to poor, ruined, rebellious, and undone sinners: from the beginning to the end it sets forth our ruined state and condition; that we have sinned against God; that we are cursed by His law; and that hell is the place we justly deserve to be sent to: while it also proclaims mercy, love, and forgiveness, and His Almighty power in providing the way and the means, as well as His goodness in keeping and preserving and ultimately bringing His elect to eternal glory, that they may sing, “Unto him be glory, might, majesty, and dominion, for ever and ever.”

The Prophet, in the words of my text, begins by saying, “*Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself:*” that is, let the glory, majesty, greatness, and goodness of God be exalted and made manifest; let these be uppermost and beyond all else, in all your state, circumstances, and condition: set God above all things; that is what I understand by this word, “Sanctify the Lord;” to sanctify is to set apart. Thus the Holy Ghost by the Prophet bids us to set God apart, beyond and above all and everything. First of all *above all our sins*, for the Holy Ghost, by the Word of God, declares, that, “Where sin abounded *grace* did much abound.” Now, as you and I feel at times what sinners we have been, and still continue to be, how many in number and what mountains they seem to be in our feelings, how filthy, and how base and vile; and then against whom they are committed, we sink in our heart and think, surely we cannot be the men or women God will people heaven with: will God indeed look to and have mercy upon such creatures as we, who are continually “doing that we ought not to do”? who although we confess our sins before God with tears and repentance to-day, yet do

the same things again on the morrow? O, how often we come here, "Surely we cannot be partakers of grace," "Will God in very deed dwell with such as we? and as we look at the greatness of our sins, down we sink. Now the words of my text are, "Sanctify the Lord of hosts *himself*." Don't you get measuring arms with God; why, the grace that flows from this Three-One God is *infinite*, but our sins, be they black and as many as they may, are only *finite*; they are committed by you and me as finite creatures, but the grace of God is *infinite*, it flows from the blood of the Son of God, and is made known to the heart by the Holy Ghost. Now we are disposed to think that God is such an one as we ourselves, and that, as we cannot forgive ourselves, so neither can God forgive us, but, "He is able to do exceedingly above and beyond all we can ask or think"; there is more mercy in God to pardon your sins than there is in all their filth and guilt to damn you, so set Him above and beyond your sins: "Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself." Hast thou an arm like God? So when condemned by the law and sin, and tempted by the wicked one as to what you are and what you have been, after all the black catalogue has been written down, you may write above, around, and below all, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." The law was put into the Ark with the cherubim over above it, and God upon the mercy seat, so that when sinners drew near they might look upon the mercy seat, and, "There," said God, "will I meet with you, and there will I commune with you." Whatever may be your fears, or however you may feel your daily shortcomings and misdoings, may the Lord in His infinite mercy work faith in your heart, so that you may "Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself," and throw yourself, just as you are, upon His love and mercy, and, so to speak, gather up all your filth and guilt together, and "Roll your burden upon the Lord," and feel that God is above it all; yea, "The mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting to them that fear him." Whenever the blessed Spirit enables you to do this you will find it "pleases God better than a bullock that hath horns and hoofs." God says, "Them that honour me I will honour:" you may think you will honour God better by making yourself better, but even if you could honour Him thus, you could never make yourself better, so it would be useless your trying; no, you will have to throw yourself entirely upon the Son of God, crying, "Save, Lord, or I perish"; and when He answers your prayer, praise and thanksgiving will flow out of your heart like an overflowing stream. Now just to give you an example or two of faith. The Centurion sends to Him, saying, "My servant

is ill, only speak the word and he shall be healed." See how the Son of God speaks of this man's faith, because it honours Him: "Tell him according to his faith it shall be done;" and then, turning to His disciples, said He, "I have not seen so great faith, no, not in Israel." What, not such faith in all that mighty host? No, not in all Israel. Then again, another comes to Him, "My daughter is at the point of death, come and heal her:" Yea, must come to the house, in this case: could not believe in His being able to do it there and then—but, mind, this unbelief was a sin of infirmity, not the unbelief of the Scribes and Pharisees; and the Son of God knew that this fear and unbelief was a plague and a burden, not wilful in the heart like theirs. So He takes the disciples to the room, and puts all those unbelievers out, as though He would say, *you shall not witness my power*: then calling to the damsel, "I say unto thee, arise!" she arose, and He gave her over to her mother. Now, you are fearing and questioning in your heart whether God will pardon your sins and take you to heaven; you want to get better, to have more faith and love, and be a better man or woman if you can, but I want you to go just as you are, if God will have it so, with all your sins, and thus "sanctify the Lord of hosts," and if God should work faith in your heart you will find that He will honour it. Now you can see wherein Moses came short; "Because you believe me not." You thought something must be done: God said, "Speak to the rock;" this rod of Moses, you know, had done wonders, it was, so to speak, a miraculous rod; it turned into a serpent, and turned again into a rod, besides doing many other things, so Moses thought he would have more faith in the rod than in the Lord; but He had said, "I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God." If God saves thee and me, and takes us to heaven, it will be as sinners saved by rich, free, and sovereign grace, and boundless mercy; we shall never have the credit of putting a finger to it, it shall be to the glory of God and the Lamb, not glory to God and the soldier. Moses smites the rock twice; "Hear, ye rebels, must *we* fetch you water out of the rock!" But Moses had no more power than you or me, and said God, "As you did not sanctify Me, you shall not enter into the land, you were afraid to trust and depend upon Me; you do not set Me above that rod of yours." Now, my friends, I speak that I do know, therefore it is with sincerity and some degree of confidence, and I often think, if any one *can* speak of what a God mine is, I am the man: if any man has reason to speak of the compassion and love of God, I am the man: I have known what it is again and again, under a feeling

sense of my shortcomings and evil ways, either whilst walking the fields, or in private prayer at my own home, to throw myself flat upon the compassion of God, with a feeling sense that there was more mercy and love in God to pardon and blot out and forgive my sins—and I have given Him more honour and glory in doing it for me—than there was power in my sins to cause my ruin. Therefore, “Sanctify the Lord of hosts,” and when I have thus thrown myself into His arms, He has never been displeased with me for doing so; He has never spurned me from His feet; never told me to wash myself clean. This is the way to glorify God; then we come into the truth of this Scripture, “I will make my goodness pass before you, and while I pass before you I will show you my glory:” and how did God proclaim it? why thus, “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin.” Your unbelief will try to keep you back, persuading you that there must be something more done; you will find it hard work to come just as you are, whatever you have been about during the day: God has been good and gracious in the days that are past, but you are still bad and base; to go just as you are to God you will find the hardest thing possible, yet it is what honours God: it is so hard to get above oneself, it is not the manner of men, and we cannot do it. The Apostle Paul said the Gospel he preached was not after men, it was above the manner of men; that which was beyond and outdid all the ways of men: this is the manner of men; if we have done wrong one to another we must go to make acknowledgment, and confession, taking some price in our hand as a peace offering to the offended party: this is not God’s way: what you and I are troubled about is to get above and beyond the manner of men; whatever you have been during the past week, and I have no doubt there have been slips of the tongue, there has been a good deal of ingratitude; God has not been much in your thoughts; or, perhaps some murmuring, finding fault and hard thoughts about God in His ways and dealings: O, what a list of sins, if we come to put them together; but notwithstanding this heavy list, O to be able to throw yourself upon the love, mercy, and compassion of God, crying, Receive me graciously, and love me freely, and I will render to Thee the calves of my lips: I believe that if you are enabled to do this in faith, truth, simplicity, and sincerity, He will honour that faith by giving you joy and peace in your soul. This shows us that God’s religion stands in His own power; and I daresay there are some here who would tell me they do not question it, yet they do not lay hold on it, and why? because they have not

faith enough to do it : you do not question what I say, or think me a liar ; you know the Word of God is on my side to bear me out in my assertions, but your desire is, " O, that I could take hold of it," and this shows that your faith stands in the power of God. There hangs on the cross, by the side of the Christ of God, a vile wretch ; hell open ready to receive him ; the devil waiting permission to carry him thither ; but instantly the beams of the divinity of the Son of God blaze forth before his enlightened mind ; he sees " the man " by his side is none other than the Christ of God, and crying out, " Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," who can describe the feelings that vibrated through his guilty soul at the gracious loving reply, " To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." He believed this Jesus could save him from the burning pit he *justly*—" we indeed justly "—merited and *that faith* honoured God, but all the bowings and cringings before a wooden cross, the throwing of water in the face, the smoke and smell of incense—so called—singing boys and girls, and lots of flowers to decorate the place ; what honour do these things bring to God ? What faith do they produce or evidence in the soul ? What meekness or *real* humility ? I should like to know. Now, whatever may have been your life during the past week, it may be you have got into a careless state about it, and your thought has been, " Well, let me try to forget," but that is not the way, so think no more about it, and hope that God will forget it too, is not God's way ; you will not get God to go your way, although you may think, perhaps, " If I persuade myself, I shall be able to persuade God too ;" but, my friends, God will have it all straight and right, He will have you know both what you are and what He is : " As the heavens are high above the earth, so are my ways above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts : " " Come, let us reason together ; though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as wool ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as white as snow." When God, for the sins of His people, sent them down into Babylon, they cried out about it ; they thought it was not right, they thought more of their worldly goods than of God and heaven, and that He should save them from their sins ; they did not like being brought down there in captivity, so God took the matter up, saying, " I will sanctify my great name, which was polluted, and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God." Now, how was this done ? Why in bringing them up out of their captivity, and placing them again in their own land : then the heathen said, " The Lord hath done great things for them ; " " When he turned our captivity we were like them that

dream ; then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing ; then said *we* among the heathen, the Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." Then the Almighty was sanctified before their eyes, when they saw what a God He was in bringing them out and up ; for the very feeling of the people was this, " There is no hope ;" but what did God say ? " I will bring you up out of your graves, O my people, and ye shall know that I will be sanctified among the heathen, before whom *my name* has been profaned." Now some of you may be tried and exercised with difficulties, and can hardly see any way out ; O, you think, " I shall never get out." Now I want to encourage you to " sanctify the Lord of hosts," by remembering that He is above and beyond all means ; He can work without means. God said to the Prophet, " You go to the brook Kedron," and away he went, not a question in his mind, no, he believed that God would feed and clothe him, and so He did ; but by-and-bye the brook dried up ; still God is all-sufficient, " Have not I commanded a widow woman to sustain thee ?" and what was the consequence ? " The barrel of meal shall not waste, nor the cruse of oil fail ;" thus, God is above all your ways and means, " The gold and the silver are his, so is the cattle upon a thousand hills." I have no doubt you have looked all ways, but you have not looked the right way ; if you look below the heavens you look too low ; you may look amongst your fellow creatures, but that is not looking high enough ; you have been looking to other things, and you say, " Well, but God works by means," yes, so He does, but He must work, He must be first, it is not for you to do it : " I will look *to the hills*, said David, *whence cometh my help ; my help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.*" God wrought for this poor woman, the meal and the oil did not increase of themselves ; I have no doubt in my mind that the poor widow " sanctified the Lord of hosts," and you see how God managed it for her : she hears there is bread again in the land, so she starts to go up ; and I have no doubt she cried to the God of heaven before she went, because I believe she was a good woman : " God grant that I may find favour in the sight of this man ;" " O God, plead the cause of the widow ;" it is said, " A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widow, is God in his holy habitation ;" now, fulfil Thy word, honour Thy truth, and in she goes to the king, and as she is crying, " Help, O King," the prophet's servant is rehearsing before him all the great things his master had done, and how that once upon a time he restored a widow's son to life, and turning himself about, he cried, " Why, my Lord the King, this is

the very woman ! and this is her son !” and you know, without my going through the history of it, how the king bade them restore to her all her possessions. Ah, she “lifted up her eyes to the hills,” and she proved that “her help was from the Lord which made heaven and earth.” “He that keepeth Israel, never slumbers nor sleeps :” therefore, honest man or woman, whose heart God has made honest and upright ; to whom nothing would be a greater grief and pain than not to be able to render to all their due ; may He enable thee to look up to the hills, and thus “Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself” in *your* heart : it cannot be said, if you throw yourself at His feet, entreating His favour, that He will reject you, or despise your cause ; no, it was never so told in Israel : “Tell it not in Gath, declare it not among the heathen,” that God ever forsook His afflicted ; He Himself says in His Word, “I will magnify my name, I will sanctify myself ; it shall be known among the nations that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you :” see how jealous God is of His honour ; only look at the very wording of it ; how He will have us trust in Him, whether it is for our soul’s comfort, for His mercy, the pardon of our sins, or to help us in our temporal difficulties and trials : whatever we may be brought into in this life He can comfort, help, and deliver : “Who art thou,” saith He, “that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, or the son of man that shall be as grass, and forgettest the Lord thy maker ?” We forget that God can take away the breath of the most healthy in a moment, and thus it may be remove the most revengeful oppressor ; a wicked troublesome neighbour, a trying landlord, a hard, grinding, cruel creditor, an Ahitophel, or whatever or whoever he or she may be, all are in His hands : I want to show you, if God will bless the word, that whatever you may be fearing from men, who appear to have the power to crush, to oppress, or to do you any mischief, although you may have sleepless nights and anxious days about it, yet, “No weapon formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that riseth in judgment against thee thou shalt condemn (because) this is *the heritage* of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of *me* saith *their* God :” therefore “Sanctify me in thy heart,” “look up to me,” it is “In me they live, move, and have their being ;” “I hold their life, and all their will and power in *my* hands, so let your eyes be up to *me*.” Say you, it is *so hard* ; O, what a little faith can do ; just as reason goes beyond sense, so faith goes beyond reason ; reason says, how can this or that be ? faith says, “God has said it, and He will do it ;” so, whatever may be your fears, feelings, or exercises, if the blessed Spirit works faith in your heart, it will take the burden off your mind in a minute, and you will “roll it upon the Lord,” and get good sound sleep at night ; yes, you will say, “Why should I trouble or care, and God care too ?” “I will lay me down and sleep and rest in peace, Thou, Lord, makest me dwell in safety,” and in the

morning you will say, "I lay me down in quiet and slept in peace, the Lord preserved me," "When I awake I am still with Thee."

"O, could I but believe,
Then all would easy be ;
I *would*, but *cannot*, Lord, relieve !
My help must come from Thee.

"I would, but cannot rest
In God's most holy will ;
I know what He appoints is best,
Yet murmur at it still.

"By nature prone to ill,
Till Thy appointed hour,
I was as destitute of will,
As now I am of power.

"Wilt Thou not crown at length,
The work Thou hast begun?
And with the will afford me strength,
In all Thy ways to run?"

Yes, I know what it is to believe: I remember once being pressed in my spirit with doubt and anxiety, and as I looked this way and that, unable to see how I could be delivered, dropping upon my knees before God, He wrought a grain of faith in my heart to look to Him, for while I was praying these words came with comfort, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; all other things shall be added unto you:" Why, I got up from my knees and felt, verily, God has taken my care, and I believed He would as surely undertake my cause. Then poor, tried, perplexed, cast down child of God, "To trust Him endeavour, the work is His own; He makes the believer, and gives him his crown." "Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." Amen.

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Providence Chapel, Croydon.

A Sermon

PREACHED SUNDAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 7th, 1879,
AT CROYDON,

BY MR. COVELL.

“And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.”—ST. JOHN vi. 39, 40.

“AND this is the Father's will.” The Holy Ghost tells us that “He doeth as he will among the armies of heaven, and with the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him What doest thou?” And again speaking by the great apostle, “He worketh all things after the council of his own will.” Then “Who is he that saith and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?” Now, although it is an *absolute* will, as He saith, “I lift up my hand, and say, I live for ever,” it is nevertheless governed by *wisdom*, and *ruled in love*; so that while His will is absolute it is for the good of His people, and for the glory of His great name that love directs and wisdom governs. What an unspeakable mercy, then, for you and me to have the comfort of it when our will bows to His; when we can say with the Son of God, “Not my will but thine be done.”

The will of God is to do His people good; “I will do you good with my whole heart and with my whole soul”; and God is faithful in what He hath said; His word is “Yea and amen,” however cross, at times, things may seem to us; (for this is where the cross works, it brings contention between us and God; whether God shall have His will or we ours. The wicked say, “We will not have God to reign over us;” and that is what we often feel—we, who have been brought; at times, to put our hand upon our mouth and entreat the God of heaven for mercy: “Have mercy upon us, O God, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out our transgressions,” even we feel this contention; God's will is right and straight; it is ours that is wrong: “There is nothing froward or perverse in Him.” You will always find it so; I have to my shame for many years, and have had to confess it in sorrow before God; but I have ever found God's way right, however much I may have kicked and rebelled.

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God said to Jonah, "Go preach the preaching that I shall bid thee"; and what brought so much trouble upon him? His will would not bend to God's, but as soon as it did bend then God spake to the fish, and it vomited him up on to the dry land. Then again God's will was to spare the Ninevites, but Jonah was very angry about it. Oh, I feel it a great mercy when God's will and mine lay straight, if only for an hour. Say you, "Why does it not lay so all the week long? It is not always this, "What wilt *thou* have me to do, Lord?" because things happen very often which I do not like; but mind this, God never alters His will to please us; "I the Lord change not." As soon as our will bends to God's, then, of course, we have *His* will; and what a great mercy it is to be able to say, "Choose thou the way and still lead on." "Yes," say you, "I have been enabled to say so for a few minutes sometimes;" then God be praised, for this shows there is something good in your heart toward God. I should verily believe, according to the Scriptures, that *your* end will be right; God has done something in your heart more than he has in thousands of others, and it proves that you are made a partaker of the Spirit of His Son. "Here I am, Lord;" you are resigned to His will, feeling that God cannot do wrong, you do not now want your own way, and that proves that grace is in exercise somewhat in your heart. God says, "My people shall be willing in the day of my power." It requires some grace to bring a man or woman to say, when under the cross, "Choose thou the way" and we have to deny ourselves, when things go so contrary; we pray to God, perhaps, and think how this or that would do us good; or how very nice and pleasing the other would be, if He would but come in this way, but He comes in some way directly opposite; it must, I say, be something more than nature, more than flesh and blood, to make us bow then and say, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth *Him* good.

David had some grace in exercise, you may, perhaps, see something of it in your own heart; David had his failings and infirmities, like you and me, but he had something besides; see it working when everything seemed against him; but a handful of men cleaving to him, Absalom against him, all Israel going over in revolt, Shimei cursing him, and crying, "Come out, thou bloody man," And Abishai said, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head." "Nay," said David, "let him alone, let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day; if I have found favour in his eyes, then will he bring me back to Jerusalem; if not, if he say, I have no pleasure in David, behold here I am." It was something more than flesh and blood, but see how well it wrought. Whenever your will runs into God's will God will be sure to do you good; He

means to do you good ; His eye and heart are set upon you to do you good ; you may depend upon this, that you will see His will work rightly. I dare say some of you will remember my saying how that for a year or two I was begging of God to do a certain thing for me, and the Lord going contrary to it, how I kept on begging Him to change His mind and will, with prayers and entreaties, yea, hundreds of prayers, with many tears, but I could not get Him to change His will, or alter His purpose, and how I now see that God's way was right and best ; I would not now have my own will in the matter under any circumstances. O, how I should have cut my fingers ! And I have many times since blessed and praised Him that He did not let me have my own way, but carried out His own will and purpose ; how I see now that my own will and way would have been the worst thing I could have had : I should have rued it ever after. So it may be with some before God ; you wish God would let you have your own will and way ; but you look only upon present things ; if God was to do as you wish you would be sorry for it in the end. Abraham wanted Ishmael to live in God's favour ; but no, Isaac must be the one. God will mould your will into His, what you see not now, you shall see hereafter, and before you die you will have to say, "If I had had my own way I should have made a mistake. I can now say, 'All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose.'" He worketh all things after the council of His own will, in His love, mercy, and wisdom towards you and me.

"This is the Father's will which hath sent me." So, being the Son of God which hath sent Him, he is co-eternal and co-essential. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." And what did God send Him for but to die for you and me, to save us from the burning pit : He did that which would have broken all our backs, to make an end of sin, and bring in an everlasting righteousness. He went to the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. What did God send Him to do ? To groan, suffer, bleed, agonize, and die ; to do that which made the Son of God cry out, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

"Backward and forward thus he ran
As if he sought some help in man ;
Or wished at least they would condole,
'Twas all they could his tortured soul."

What love there was in God's heart to poor, ruined, undone sinners, yet how often we question His love and doubt His faithfulness, goodness, and mercy, forgetful of His Word, which says, "He that spared not his own son, but freely gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ;" yea, everything

we need for both soul and body on our way to heaven. God, so to speak, will spare nothing, if nothing less will do, to save His children from a burning pit, and bring them to heaven. He will bruise His own Son in the mortar of His wrath and indignation, so that He shall cry out, "All my bones are out joint, my heart is like melting wax, in the midst of my bowels." "I will not spare for His agonizing cries, His bloody sweat, His death; nay, He *must* suffer sooner than My elect, My ransomed, the object of My choice shall be kept from Me or be banished for ever, and drop into the pit of perdition." Was ever love like this? O, the boundless mercy there is in God's heart to save poor sinners! Yet, what fears arise in our minds; will He pardon our sins? Will He indeed bring us to heaven? How He has opened His heart to us in His Word! How He shows us that His thoughts, will, and purpose were all set upon this one object, to save poor sinners who could never in the least help themselves. There was no rest until Jesus cried out, "It is finished," and "gave up the ghost." He died for our offences and rose again for our justification. He went to the end of the law when "he gave himself for our sins;" there is nothing now, poor sinners, for you or me to do as regards our acceptance with God; all is done, finished, and for ever settled. "Salvation is of the Lord;" no working, only believing.

"Faith He gives us to receive it; grateful hearts His love to prize."

Hear the Lord Jesus saying, "A body hast Thou prepared Me, lo, I come to do Thy will, O God; yea, Thy law is within My heart." How He came leaping over the hills, skipping upon the mountains, although there was such work to do, such suffering to go through.

"What He endured no tongue can tell; to save our souls from death and hell.

Such a cry was never heard before, nor will ever be again; not all the wailings of the damned, the gnashing of teeth, or the gnawing of tongues, put them altogether, for thousands of years past, and thousands yet to come, could ever come up to that great cry, which breaks forth from the eternal son of God whilst enduring the wrath and satisfying the justice of God on our behalf: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." None less than God's own Son could have gone through this.

"See in His face what sadness dwells; 'tis sure He feels a thousand hells."

Yea, that hell which would have confined us to all eternity did God's eternal Son drink up. Being the infinite, eternal Son of God He did that by His life and death that would have taken us to all eternity to do. If you and I owed a million of money, and could live long enough to pay a farthing at a time in each thousand, there would not be a termination of the debt for innumerable years; but

the Son of God paid the debt *at once*, like a rich man. Suppose some of you that are poor having run up a score with the shopkeeper ; you try to pay it off by a trifling sum weekly ; but your rich neighbour, who has his money at the bank, writes a cheque and clears it off at once, and by this justice is well satisfied, yea, and better, too, than by having it in driblets ; but the debt was none the less although it was paid all off at once.

“This is the Father’s will which hath sent me,” that I should *thus* suffer, bleed, and die ; hence it is said, “He spared *not* his own Son” ; and what for ? Why, that He *might spare us* ; that he might go to the end of the law, which we could never satisfy. “He learned obedience by the things which he suffered.” Thus you can see how the heart of God is toward poor sinners ; how His desire is toward them, to save their souls and to take them to heaven. He will spare nothing. Is there nothing but His dear Son ? Will nothing less than His suffering do to secure them heaven ! “I *must* have them there with Me, so My Son *must* give Himself a sacrifice on their behalf.” Thus, my friends, although it was a blood-stained way to the Son of God, it becomes thereby a milky way to you and me. What a mercy for you and me to have a grain of faith in Jesus Christ ; to see the Father’s love running toward us. Have you any questioning whether God will save your soul, you have been brought to seek His face, and are willing to be saved in God’s own way. I have no doubt there are some here this morning, thus made willing ; they are anxiously longing to be saved, yet fear, and question, being plagued by unbelief, as to whether God will save them or no. Look, my friends, at the prints in the hands and feet of the Son of God ; see His pierced side, and read there the Father’s heart, behold herein the bowels of His mercy and compassion towards poor sinners in the agony and suffering of His well beloved Son.

“This is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing.” Then how safe and how secure are we *that are His*. God said, “Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession ;” and the Son of God, in that memorable prayer in the xvii. chapter said, “While I was with them in the world I kept them in thy name ; those thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled.”

“To Him the weakest is as dear as the strong.”

No respect of persons with him, not the least, whether the man wears a crown, a coronet, or the parish union dress ; all the same to Him ; “He looketh not as man looketh ; man looks at the outward appearance, but God looketh at the heart.” “His eye seeth every precious thing.” “Those that thou gavest me.” There was a coun-

cil of peace between them both, Father and Son; and the Father says, "I have made a covenant with my chosen; I have sworn unto David my servant; his seed shall endure for ever;" and God says of His people, "I have engraven thee upon the palms of my hands." It does not matter, wherever sin and the devil may drive them; the Son of God will "seek and search them out," and bring them forth. In the days of their unregeneracy, when sin and the devil urged them into the ditch of sin and filth like Magdalen, or with their mouth against the heavens like Manasseh, or wrapped up in pride as in a coat of mail, like the Pharisees or Saul of Tarsus, whatever they are or wherever they may get to, He will seek and search them out. "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, not one of them is lost." Thus He says, "Behold I and the children which the Lord hath given me." What an unspeakable mercy, *He* knows where they are and when to search them out.

" 'This heart I bought with blood,' He cries, 'and now it shall be Mine.' "

They cost Him too much to lose them; His blood was of too great a value to be shed in vain. Hear what is said by the prophet Isaiah, liii. 10, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he *hath* put him to grief: when *thou* shalt make His soul an offering for sin, *he shall see* His seed, *he shall* prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord *shall* prosper in his hand. *He shall* see of the travail of his soul, and *shall* be satisfied." Now, therefore, "I will bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth."

"The castle of the human heart,
 Strong in its native sin,
 Is guarded well in every part
 By him who dwells within.
 For Satan there in arms resides,
 And calls the place his own;
 With care against assault provides,
 And rules as on a throne.
 But Jesus, stronger far than he,
 In His appointed hour;
 Appears to set His people free
 From the usurper's power.
 'This heart I bought with blood,' He says,
 'And now it shall be Mine;'
 His voice the strong one arm'd dismays;
 He knows he must resign.
 In spite of unbelief, and pride,
 And self, and Satan's art,
 The gates of brass fly open wide,
 And Jesus wins the heart."

Now, if the blessed Spirit has put a cry into your soul, a longing desire in your heart for salvation, and made you feel that Christ is the one thing needful, if He has brought you to feel the evil and the

bitterness of sin, you not only pray God to pardon your sins, but you want God to subdue sin, not only that it may not grieve you, but also that you may not thereby offend against God, who is so good ; your earnest desire is to please God in all things. I believe God has sealed a sense of pardoning love and mercy upon my heart again and again, so that I cannot say that I am in any fear or dread of being damned for my sins ; but God knows, and He only, the many frequent and earnest cries of my heart that He may be pleased to subdue my sins ; that he would “ create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me ” ; not only to keep me from sin that it may not *hurt me*, but the thousands of cries and desires to keep me from evil, and grant me grace to walk in those ways that are pleasing in His sight. Now, do you know what this is ? “ Yes,” say some, “ I do ; ” then the Son of God will surely save you, and you will as surely sing His praise. “ That of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing.” Why, there is such a jewel in your soul ; the Holy Ghost is there ; the love of God is in your heart ; Christ is in you, the hope of glory ; there is the Father’s work in your heart, and it is the Father’s will “ that of all which he hath given me,” says Jesus Christ, “ I shall lose nothing.” Then, as such, you will not be lost : say you, “ I have many fears, and I am often cast down about it, and am much discouraged, and again and again the wicked one causes me to fear I *shall* be lost. Ah ! but you know that “ he is a liar from the beginning.” I am often ready to say what fools we are to listen to his lies : but he comes in such a specious manner that very often we neither see his feet or his lying tongue, and we think it is a friend who is warning us of the danger of presumption ; nay, nay, *He* will never warn us of danger. My friend, depend upon it we are never right to please the devil. From the time the Son of God took possession of our heart we have never been right for Satan. Those only are right for him who do his bidding and his dirty work. Oh, what sad work ! To be a scavenger to the devil ! And it will be proved so at last, when the Son of God will send all such, as with a besom of destruction, into the pit of hell. But the Son of God sends His Spirit into the hearts of his own—“ all which the Father hath given Him ” ; and as He says, “ Seek ye my face,” I have no doubt there has been this response in your hearts for many years, “ Thy face, Lord, will I seek ” ; a looking after Him, a crying for, and a longing desire to find Him. Well now, I will come a little closer, Sinner. Has He not given you intimations of His favour ? Has He not encouraged you at times ? Has He not warmed your heart, and shed abroad His love in your soul, constraining you to hope that He has a favour towards you ? Nay, man, woman, I will put it closer still. Can you, before Him as the righteous and holy Lord Jesus, lay your hand upon your heart, and say, “ Thou hast never given me to feel or believe that Thou hadst any desire toward

me, any love toward me." "No," say you, "I should be sorry to say that." You cannot lay your hand on your heart, and say, "Lord Jesus, there is nothing in my heart that beats for Thee; I have no hope in Thy mercy, no faith in Thee, nor any desire after the God of heaven." "Nay," say you, "I dare not." Ah! you will be found right, He will lift you up, poor soul, He will not lose you, oh, no! Amongst all the multitude of saved sinners His eye will still be upon you; He will not lose you, oh, no! He knows what He has wrought in your heart. "He will give a reward to them that seek him; to them that fear him, *both small and great.*" As sure as Jesus is in heaven you will be with Him there; He came to bleed and die for you: the Father's heart is toward you, and the Holy Spirit has brought grace into your heart; has set your soul after Him, to let you know that you are one of those which shall not be lost. "But," say you, "if you knew into what holes I get, at times, how I am "plunged into the ditch, so that my own clothes abhor me"; what a wretch I every day see and feel myself to be; O, how my heart draws me aside!" But, I ask, did he never lift you out of those places? Do you always lie there? Did He never, like the Good Shepherd, as He is, lay you upon His shoulders, bringing you back weeping and with supplications, with blushings and shamefacedness, falling upon your knees, crying, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, behold I am vile; I hate my sins, I loathe and abhor myself," and did He never cast a look upon you, as He did upon Peter? breaking your heart, causing you to go out and weep bitterly? Ah, yes, He has. I have known at times, what it is for the world and my wicked heart to draw me aside in some way or other, but He has said by the power of His Spirit, "Return, ye backsliding daughter, for I am married unto you." And have you never come back with weeping, blushing, repentance, washing His feet with real penitent tears, feeling what pity, mercy, and compassion there is in His heart toward poor sinners? Then, as sure as my text is true you will be raised up at the last day; you will stand as a jewel in His crown, a monument of His grace, a trophy of everlasting love, to show what His precious blood can do in saving a sinner like you; no fear of being lost, coming short, or being damned at last; oh, no! for, says Jesus, "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I *will* raise him up at the last day." Amen.

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A Sermon

PREACHED SUNDAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 23rd, 1879,

AT CROYDON,

BY MR. COVELL.

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"—ISAIAH lii. 7.

How condescending and compassionate is the God of heaven, inasmuch as He hath not sent His Word to the sons of men by the voice of angels; for we find that when the angels appeared at various times, whether to Gideon, Manoah, Daniel, or Zacharias, it filled them with fear, so that the angels had to say to them, "Fear not," before they spake of the great and glorious things they had to communicate; but He has been pleased to make known His will to the sons of men, and to speak to His own people, by the voice of their fellowmen; so while my text is true, which says, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings," it is the voice of a man they hear, yet the truth of God which he speaks does not lose any power, force or authority although uttered by man's lips; they have the treasure, but although this treasure is "in earthen vessels, the excellency of the power is of God." Their appearance, as they stand before you, does not terrify, nor make you draw back, as it were, into a nutshell; you are not obliged to cover your face before *them*, but can look and listen and say, "Speak, Lord (through the man), for thy servant heareth;" and when the Word of God is brought home with sweetness, feeling and power, in the hearts and consciences of God's people, how true it is they can say, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings," proclaiming that there is hope in Israel concerning poor sinners, such as they are; that God has opened up a way whereby "He can be just and justify the ungodly;" that there is "Mercy in God that he may be feared;" that there is a

Christ who is "able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him;" and the good Spirit to convince, lead, teach, confirm and strengthen poor sinners, who feel they cannot in the least help themselves. Oh what good tidings God the Holy Ghost brought when He spake through the preached Word to your heart, bringing pardon and peace, in and by a complete Saviour; to encourage, revive, and assure you that there was "a good thing in your heart toward the Lord God Almighty;" I am quite sure that *you* could say, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." There are no better tidings in the whole Word of God than these, and if the Holy Ghost enables me to speak, and gives you faith to believe them, you will say, "Better tidings than these you never heard;" O, no: better tidings God never could speak forth, nor could poor sinners ever receive or desire better. What good tidings, joyful tidings, would it be to the poor man or woman sentenced to death, if the Home Secretary were to send a reprieve from Her Majesty the Queen; how thankful and glad would such be to be spared the death they were hourly expecting, however much suffering they might look forward to while in prison all their lifetime afterwards: life! life! what will a man not give for his life? how welcome would the messenger be, and how thankful would the poor culprit be to him for bringing it. You may have read or heard of one who was condemned to death, and had ascended the scaffold, when the post came galloping up with the man's pardon in his hand, thus saving him from the justice of the law; for recollect, pardon came through *mercy*, and such feeling filled the poor man's heart to think that he was saved from an ignominious and deserved death, that he fell on his knees and kissed the feet of the horse who had carried the bearer of the good tidings; but what are such tidings as compared with those my text speaks of? to be delivered from eternal death, to be saved from the pit of hell, and saved with an everlasting salvation; to be able to sing, for ever and ever, "Salvation to God and the Lamb." When the angel appeared to the shepherds (Luke ii. 10 and 11), he said, "Fear not; for, behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people: for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Such tidings, that it is said, no sooner had he done speaking than there was with the angel, "A multitude of the heavenly host, praising God," and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on

earth and good will toward men." Such tidings made the angels sing how God could save poor sinners from the pit of hell, and take them to glory to enjoy His smiles and blessings for evermore. The great apostle says, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." I am quite sure that if God the Holy Ghost has made you feel what you deserve; if He has made you see and feel the damning nature of sin and to fear on account of the consequences of it, better tidings never could reach your ear and heart; you cannot be too bad for Jesus Christ, or too far off for Him to save you; you cannot be too vile for Him to cleanse, or too naked for Him to clothe you. There is more virtue in His precious blood to atone than power in all your sins to damn you; there is more merit in His obedience than there is demerit in all your failings, shortcomings or misdeeds. Such is the virtue, merit and completeness of His work that be your sins as vile and as many as they may compared with His merit, blood and obedience, they are but as a drop to the ocean, a spark to the fire or a grain of sand on the seashore. None can ever measure arms with Jesus Christ, make your sins appear in all their blackness and vileness as you may, His Grace, blood, merit and obedience rise above it all;

"There's nothing required but a sense of your woe,
And Jesus has healing beyond what you know."

He will never be outdone, oh no; He was typified by the Jews, the Priests and their rites, ceremonies and ordinances; but when He as the substance appeared these all sank in the shade. David was a type of Christ, and it was said that, "All who were in distress, or in debt or were discontented came unto him, and he became a captain over them:" not one did he send back, or refuse, none were too base or too vile, David received them all. Has God brought you into distress on account of your sins, your unbelief, your hard heart, your carnal, worldly nature; your mis-doings, failings and shortcomings? Are you distressed, I say, about these things? do they plague you? do you desire to be rid of them? Are you in debt, a ten thousand talents debtor, as men say, "over head and ears" in debt? do you feel that the law curses and you must be damned eternally unless some one steps in and pays? that you are a poor bankrupt wretch? you cannot look the law in the face; that you are done? so badly in debt that you cry out, "Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great." Are you discontented with yourself, with the world, and with your former master? with the baubles and things of this life, so that you cry out at times, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity?" Ah, the things of this world fail to please, charm, entertain or satisfy thee now, thou art so distressed: Yes, say you, "God who searches the heart, knows that I am distressed about these things, at times; I can say that nothing in this world

can give me solid peace:" poor thing, "He will receive thee graciously and love thee freely:" Did David receive such? yes, verily he did; then, behold! A greater than David is here: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." These are the words of "*The Truth*;" can He deceive us? does He not mean what He saith? Yea, "He is the faithful and true witness," and the Holy Ghost says, "A faithful witness will not lie." Mr. Hart says,

"'Tis perfect poverty alone,
That sets the soul at large;
While we can call one mite our own,
We have no free discharge."

"Come needy, come guilty,
Come loathsome and bare;
You can't come too filthy,
Come just as you are."

This I will say, to God's honour and glory and the truth of His Word, that if I felt He would turn His back upon thee, or refuse to receive thee or listen to thee, I would close His book and say, "I cannot speak in His name or for Him any longer." Ah, but I know my Master, my Jesus, my God; I know that He speaketh truth itself; and what does He say? "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise—on no condition, under no pretence whatever—I will in no wise cast out." Could anything suit thee better; would'st thou have anything added to it? Oh, no: Ah! these are the things that will show forth His glory. I dare say not one of you here present doubts the reality of it, or questions the truth of it, or would say it is false, not a true report; *but*, say you, "I cannot believe so as to get the comfort of it." Now, how God makes us know that real religion stands in His own power put forth in the heart, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that showeth mercy." "By grace ye are saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." Thus we prove what the Son of God said, "Without *me* ye can do nothing." Mind this; these tidings are true, although you cannot believe, but if the Blessed Spirit was to work faith in your hearts while I am speaking, you would be able to say, "He has received me graciously, and loved me freely." It is said that "Jesus Christ went throughout their cities and villages, showing and preaching the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God:" and what did He tell them? "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." "I am come to seek and save them that are lost." It is said "The common people—who had no goodness to trust in, no righteousness to wrap themselves up in—the common people heard Him gladly." Are these glad tidings to you, my friends? I am persuaded that no tidings suited so well; nothing had such a charm to the poor

convict as *pardon*; so there is nothing so comforting to the spirit of the poor convinced sinner as to know that, "With the Lord there is mercy, and with Him there is plenteous redemption." "Come now, let us reason together—O how condescending of the great God Almighty to come and reason with poor fallen man—Come now; though your sins *be* as scarlet they shall be as wool; though they *be red like crimson*, they shall be as white as snow." Here are tidings for poor sinners, who feel that, "From the Crown of the head to the soles of the feet, they are full of wounds, bruises and putrifying sores:" who have nothing to look back upon but with shame and sorrow, and dare not vow anything for the future; this is the ground upon which He will receive them: "Though their sins *be* as scarlet!" they cannot be too bad—"they shall be as white as snow." "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's dear Son, cleanseth from *all* sin." If, while I am speaking, the Blessed Spirit should impart faith to your heart, although you may feel to be as black as the devil himself, as vile as sin can possibly make you, you will see that such is the virtue of the precious blood which flowed from the hands, feet and heart of the Christ of God as to cleanse you from all, and in a moment you would feel yourself to be "as white as snow," and could say, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth:"—on what ground—"It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again." "Go," said Jesus to the Jews, "go, and learn what that meaneth, "*I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.*" I know that these are good tidings to you, when you can lay hold of the comfort of them, and feel, as one said:

"Sinners are high in *His* esteem, and sinners highly value Him."

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon: for my ways are not your ways, nor my thoughts your thoughts, saith the Lord." Anxious man, longing man, sensible sinner, are you made sick of your own doings, your own righteousness? have you really forsaken your own ways, in spirit and in truth? Is your face Zionward, after the Son of God? Is this your feeling, "To whom else can I go, thou hast the words of eternal life." "I believe and am sure that Thou art the Christ which should come into the world." Yes, say you, "I have felt this in the faith of my mind, the love of my heart, and with all my soul." Well, "Let the unrighteous forsake his thoughts and turn unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will *abundantly* pardon." What tidings these are! How they suit the sensible sinners who can do nothing. The Lord says, "I will bring near *my* righteousness"—if He did not bring it near we should never get it—"and my salvation shall not tarry." Do these tidings suit you? are these the things that gladden your heart? do they encourage your hope, lift

you up and bring you to feel, 'Who knows, peradventure He may save me?' Do they set your heart longing to lay hold of them, to enjoy them as your own? Do you desire and long for them? 'O, yes,' say you, 'that I do.' Well then, "They shall praise the Lord that seek him." "I will satisfy the longing soul, and I will replenish every sorrowful soul; and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord." "I will take the yoke from off their jaws, and will lay meat before them." These are good tidings for seeking souls. "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; ask and ye shall receive." Are you asking, seeking, knocking? Is it, 'Lord, do grant me my request.' 'Ah,' say some, 'that is it, but I have been knocking for some years and have not obtained what I am seeking after: I'm afraid I do not knock loud enough:' perhaps, poor soul, your knocking is louder than you think it is, your asking more earnest than you suppose, and your seeking more ardent than you imagine. Do you remember when Christiana entered by the gate that led to the Celestial City, and Mercy was left outside, how she kept on knocking, until, through fear, the poor creature fainted; but the door was opened and Mercy was led gently in: and what did Christiana say when Mercy was recovered? "O I never heard *such* knocking in all my life, it made the place ring again." "Why," said Mercy, "I did not think I knocked at all." "You did not? Why you knocked as though you would come in by *force*." "O, dear, and what did my Lord say, was he displeased?" "O, bless you, no, *He only smiled*." Say some, "I have not the gift of prayer;" but, my friends, it is not the gift of speech, nor yet the sound of the voice; you may knock very loudly, and your companion sitting by, or lying, it may be, in the same bed with you, may never hear a sound from your voice, or be at all aware of your earnest, incessant knocking; but it will be so loud as to enter heaven, and as the Lord Jesus Christ saith, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." "For the *sighing* of the needy now will I arise, saith the Lord; and for the *groaning* of the prisoner, to deliver them that are appointed unto death." You may perhaps be calling louder than you think for. Mercy knocked you see, until she fainted, but she would have it, poor thing, she very likely uttered very few words; so it was with Hannah. Eli saw her lips move, but her voice was not heard; yet, it was, so to speak, such tremendous knocking that it entered into the ears of the Lord God of Sabaoth, and she had an answer of peace. So you, poor child of God, are knocking louder than you may be aware of. It is said, "They shall seek Him with *their whole heart*;" not with loud voices; if it were so the Pharisees would stand a far better chance than we. "To this man will I look, and with him will I dwell, that is of an humble and contrite heart, and that trembles at my word." Perhaps you have been knocking like the poor woman who sat at the

feet of the Son of God ; she “ washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head.” Poor woman! what force those tears had ; how she knocked in the longing of her soul, although she said nothing. “ I, the Lord, search the heart, and try the reins of the children of men.” Now, I ask again, ‘Are you among these asking, seeking ones?’ ‘Well,’ say you, ‘you verily make me believe that I am ; I cannot dispute it or deny it.’ Then be assured that salvation is on the road ; you will find *Him*, possess Him, enjoy Him ; yea, you will receive, you will have it. Ah, say you, ‘I think I could wait patiently until the day of my death, if I thought I should obtain it at last.’ Hearken, poor soul : “ I never said to the seeking seed of Jacob, “Seek ye me in vain.” They *shall* praise the Lord that seek Him.

When Paul went to Antioch, and entered into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, the rulers invited him and Barnabas, if they had any word of exhortation for the people to say on. (Acts xiii.) And Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand, said, “Men of Israel and ye that fear God, give audience,” we declare unto you glad tidings,” I’ll venture to say their ears were ready to hear—“how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us, their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again ; as it is also written in the Second Psalm, “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee.” God had promised, and He had fulfilled it, and they were witnesses to the fact that God had sent His Son, and raised Him from the dead : that “He died for their sins, and rose again for their justification ;” and that now there was, “No condemnation to them which believed in the Christ of God.” Unto you first, God, having raised up His Son, sent Him to bless you ; in turning away every one of you from your iniquities. Who did they preach this to ? Why, to those to whom the Son of God sent them when He said, “Begin at Jerusalem.” You, first, who crucified the Lord, and cried out, “Away with him, away with him ; his blood be upon us, and on our children.” We neither want, desire or care for it ! Has the blessed Spirit wrought such a yearning in your heart that you can say, “Behold, we come unto Thee?” Can you indeed say, “None but Jesus, none but Jesus?” Yes, say you, ‘I can indeed say so, for I am sure there is none but Jesus Christ can do me any good : nothing but His righteousness can justify my soul ; and I want no other ; O, that I may find Him, possess Him, be with Him, and enjoy His smiles for evermore.’ Is it really, truly so ? Yes, say you, ‘God who searches the heart knows it is.’ Then hearken ! “Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him.” See, man, you are coming to Him, coming in the faith of your heart, the love of your soul ; do you want me to back it up ? Must you have, so to speak, proof upon proof ? Then hearken again, “This is the Father’s will, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth in Him.” You see Him to

be the "One thing needful," "the pearl of great price." "Dost thou believe in Him?" Lord I do believe that "Thou art He that should come into the world to save sinners;" I believe 'Thou art eternally with the Father, co-equal with Him; I believe Thy blood *can* cleanse the vilest; Thy righteousness can justify the most ungodly; none but Thyself can rejoice my heart; O, if I might *possess Thee*. Harken, I say, again, "This is the Father's will, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth in Him, should not perish but have everlasting life." The Lord, by the prophet Isaiah, (xli. 27 v.), said—"I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings." "Behold my servant whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; He shall bring forth judgment *unto the Gentiles*. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street; a *bruised* reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench: He shall bring forth judgment unto truth; He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth; *and the Isles*—our British Isles also—shall *wait for His law*. "Thus saith God, the Lord, I have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of *the Gentiles*; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison houses. Sing unto the Lord a new song and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea and all that is therein: the *isles* and the *inhabitants thereof*. Let the *inhabitants of the rock* sing; let them shout from the tops of the mountains. And I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them and not forsake them." "Ah," say you, "Never man spake like this man." I will venture to say that some of you cry out, "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth;" and you may depend upon it that sooner or later He will say to thee, "Thy sins, though many, are *all* forgiven thee, loose him, and let him go," and He will bid thee, poor anxious longing, seeking, knocking soul, He will bid thee, even thee, to "Go in peace." Then you will indeed be able to say in the words of my text, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings."

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THE HOLY ANOINTING, ITS ABIDING, AND ITS EFFECTS.

A SERMON

PREACHED AT GOWER STREET CHAPEL, LONDON,

BY MR. PHILPOT,

ON LORD'S DAY EVENING, JULY 20, 1856.

"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."—1 John ii. 27.

IN the latter chapters of the book of Exodus God gave Moses very special and minute directions as to the anointing and consecration of Aaron and his sons to the office of the priesthood. Aaron, beyond all doubt, was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great High Priest over the house of God, and his consecration and anointing to the priestly office was a figure of the consecration and anointing of the Lord Jesus Christ to his holy priesthood; but the conjunction of the sons of Aaron with him points further, and seems emblematical of the consecration of the saints of God, who are "a holy priesthood," and as such "offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

Now, amongst the directions which God gave to Moses in the consecration of Aaron and his sons, there were several things note-worthy. 1. He was to *wash* them, which is emblematical of the saints of God being washed in the blood of the Lamb. 2. He was to *clothe* them with garments of glory and beauty, which, as applied to Aaron's sons, is emblematical of the robe of righteousness which is cast round them, and in which they stand without spot before God. 3. He was to *anoint* them with "a holy anointing oil," of which the ingredients are specially mentioned in the directions given, and the manufacture, composition, and use of which are well worthy of our notice; for I need hardly observe that this holy anointing oil was emblematical of the grace, gifts, operations, influences, teaching, and sanctification of the Holy Ghost.

But there were several things said about this holy anointing oil which are very note-worthy. 1. First, it was to be exactly compounded according to certain special directions, which you will find Exodus xxx. 23—25. It would appear from the quantity manufactured—if I may use that expression without lowering the dignity and sacred nature of the subject—that it was to serve as long as the old covenant lasted. This points to the unity of the Spirit, that as successive priests were in all generations anointed by exactly the same holy anointing oil, so all the saints of God are anointed by one and the same Spirit, who is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son. 2. The next thing note-worthy is, that it was not "*to be poured upon man's flesh*," which may imply either that it was not to be used for common purposes, or that the carnal mind is not sanctified by the grace of God. 3. An especial prohibition is given that "*whosoever compounded any like it was to be cut off from his people*." God set his face against any imitation of this holy anointing oil. Oh what a sentence against any imitation of the graces and

gifts of the Holy Ghost! for if a man presumed to counterfeit this holy anointing oil, he was to be cut off, by a judicial sentence of death, from the congregation of Israel. 4. And the fourth and last thing we shall notice of it is, that "whosoever put any of it upon a stranger was to be cut off from the people," implying that it was reserved for the priests of God, and was not to be put upon any one who was a stranger to the covenant of promise, not redeemed by the blood of Christ, nor justified by his righteousness.

Having dropped these few observations upon the holy anointing oil, I now pass on to consider, with God's blessing, the words of the text, in which we find mention of the anointing, or unction of the Holy Ghost: "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

With God's blessing, in attempting to open up the meaning of the Holy Ghost in these words, I shall direct your attention to five particulars.

I. First, the *necessity* and the *nature* of this holy anointing.

II. Secondly, that this anointing *teacheth of all things, and is truth, and is no lie.*

III. Thirdly, how this anointing, where once bestowed, *abideth* in the soul an incorruptible seed.

IV. Fourthly, that this divine anointing supersedes, to a certain extent—I shall show by and by why I limit the words—all other teaching, for he who is favored with it *needs not that any man should teach him.*

V. Fifthly and lastly, the blessed effect of this anointing abiding in the soul, that *as it hath taught us, so we shall abide in Christ.*

I. A right knowledge and living experience of the Person, graces, and operations of the Holy Ghost upon the soul, is a very essential thing. Man is so deeply sunk, so utterly fallen, so unable to bring himself back, that he needs this holy Teacher to lead him into a saving, experimental knowledge of the truth of God; for we know nothing but by his teaching, have nothing but by his giving, and are nothing but by his making. The more clearly, then, that we are led to see, and the more deeply we are taught to feel what we are as fallen sons and daughters of Adam, the more shall we feel our need of, and the more shall we value when realized, his blessed operations upon the heart and conscience. Now, in the case of Aaron, (viewed not only as a type of Christ, but as personally ministering at the altar of the tabernacle, and thus consecrated to the office of high priesthood,) it was not sufficient that he was washed, nor that he was clothed; he must be also anointed by the holy anointing oil, before he could stand in the sanctuary of God. So it is with a son of the Most High, one of "the kings and priests" that form "the royal priesthood;" it is not sufficient for him to be washed in the blood of the Lamb, and clothed in his justifying righteousness; he must be consecrated to God's service by the holy anointing; in other words, be sanctified, regenerated, and renewed in the spirit of his mind, that, by being made a partaker of the divine nature, (2 Pet. i. 4,) he may enter into a spiritual experience of the truth of God here, and enjoy the eternal pleasures which are at God's right hand hereafter. From the very nature of the fall, it is impossible for a dead soul to believe in God, know God, or love God; it must be quickened into spiritual life, before it can savingly know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. And thus there lies at the very threshold, in the very heart and core of the case, the absolute necessity of the regenerating operations of God the Holy Ghost upon the soul. The very completeness and depth of the fall render the regenerating work of the Holy Ghost as necessary, as indispensable, as the redeeming work of the Son of God. The Apostle therefore puts them together. "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." If, therefore, the soul is to enter into eternal glory, it must be prepared for glory by being made a partaker of grace. It must, in this present life, this time state, be made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light, be capacitated whilst here below for the eternal fruition of the Triune God, by receiving a new and heavenly nature begotten of the Holy Ghost, which as a pure spirit, (for "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit,") is capable

of seeing, enjoying, and eternally delighting in the open vision of the Deity as manifested in the glorious Person of the God-man.

Having, thus far, seen a little of the *necessity*, that lies at the very root of the case, of the regenerating, sanctifying operations of the blessed Spirit, let us now look at the *nature* of this holy anointing of which the beloved disciple speaks.

The ancients delighted much in having the head, hands, feet, and sometimes the whole body anointed with fragrant ointments. The drying nature of that hot climate made the hair and skin hard and rough, the joints and muscles rigid, and the fine sand and dust chafed and chapped the flesh, producing sores and cutaneous diseases unless the body were frequently anointed, oiled we might almost call it. And as the heat also made the bath and constant ablutions indispensable, and as this dried up the natural moisture of the skin, anointing became necessary to preserve it soft and flexible. These thoughts may help us to understand the reasons why the blessed Spirit has chosen the emblem of oil and anointing therewith as a type of his gracious operations. The Holy Spirit, then, in selecting this emblem, seems to have had special reference to the effects of divine grace upon the heart and conscience.

Let us examine the figure thus. 1. How *penetrating* is oil! Water is soon evaporated. The rain we had this day soon dried off the pavement; but let fall one drop of oil upon a sheet of paper, or upon a new board, how it penetrates into the inmost pores and very substance of the material. So it is with this divine unction, this holy anointing; there is something penetrating in it. It does not float upon the surface as mere natural religion does; but it sinks into the inmost heart, and penetrates into every hidden corner, nook, and cranny of the sinner's conscience. The work of grace in the soul, in its very beginnings, penetrates deeply into its inmost substance. It wounds and lays open the conscience to the eye of infinite Purity and Holiness. "The entrance of thy words (that is, the very first entrance) giveth light." "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." All conviction to be true conviction must be thorough. The field must be ploughed, broken up, and furrowed, before the seed can find a tilth, a seed-bed for the seed to fall in so as to germinate and grow. There is much to be done in a sinner's heart before Christ can dwell in him by faith, or be formed in him the hope of glory. The heart is naturally very hard; thorns, thistles, and briars overspread its surface; the rank weeds of pride and lust have taken deep root; much grubbing up of these bosom sins, as well as of our inbred self-righteousness and fleshly holiness, creature strength and sufficiency, is needed to prepare us to receive a free grace salvation, separate us from the world and false professors, embitter to us the loved things of time and sense, and lay us suing for mercy at the foot of the cross. The first work, therefore, of conviction must be deep, or at least thorough, in order to make room for Christ and his salvation. And so it is with any manifestation or discovery of the Lord Jesus Christ, any application of his blood, any visitation of his presence, or shedding abroad of his love; these divine realities do not float upon the surface, but sink deep, and penetrate into his heart of hearts, into a man's inmost and deepest soul. How soon is all lost and forgotten, but what the blessed Spirit writes himself in the heart! People say, "How well we have heard!" but all is lost and dropped before they get home from the house of prayer. They read a chapter, close the Bible, and with it all they have read is closed too. Many have passing pangs of conviction, and passing desires, who give little proof of living under the Spirit's anointings. That divine Spirit does not let the saints of God off so easily. He holds them fast and firm to the work of conviction till he has slain them outright; and when he blesses he heals as deep as he wounds, and reveals the gospel as powerfully as he applies the law.

2. But oil *softens, supples, and mellow*s that to which it is applied. A hard tumour, a stiff joint, a contracted muscle, a sprained anele,—how ointment rubbed into them softens and supples them. So it is with the holy anointing of the blessed Spirit; it softens the hardest, supples the most stubborn,

mellows the most obstinate heart. This softness and tenderness of heart were eminent in King Josiah: "Because thine heart was tender." (2 Chron. xxxiv. 27.) How the mountain melts at his presence! how the stony heart flows down at a touch of his finger or smile of his face! The whole heart is softened, melted, dissolved into humility and praise. This tenderness of conscience, this melting of heart, is a sweet evidence of the unction of the Holy Ghost resting in and upon the soul. All true contrition of heart, brokenness of spirit, humility of mind, godly sorrow, penitence and compunction, weeping over a sinful heart and a suffering Jesus; all looking to him whom we have pierced, and mourning for him; all self-loathing and self-abhorrence; all bitterness of soul and deep grief for continual backslidings in heart and affection; all holy indignation against self, and groaning desires to be kept from evil, and to walk before God in daily, hourly, filial fear; all these precious marks of the grace of God proceed from the anointing of the blessed Spirit.

3. Again. Oil *spreads itself*; it is diffusive in its very nature. Water gets less and less; sun and wind soon dry up the heaviest shower. So natural convictions are soon exhaled by the burning sun of temptation, or dried up by the sirocco wind of pride and lust. They have not time, so to speak, to spread, but die as soon as born. But the unction of the Holy Ghost abides, diffuses itself, enters into every feeling of the heart, spreads through every affection of the soul. It draws forth faith, inspires hope, communicates love, gives patience, confers humility, spreads through the whole new man of grace, reaching every member, and diffuses itself in proportion to the depth to which it penetrates.

4. But the anointing oil was *fragrant*. The choicest spices, the most odiferous flowers and fruits of the sweetest shrubs were used in its composition; myrrh, cinnamon, calamus, and cassia, all of them the most fragrant spices of the East, lent to the anointing oil their separate odours. It was not common oil, but "an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compounded after the art of the perfumer." (Margin.) So the anointing of the Holy Spirit gives forth a divine fragrance up into the very courts of heaven. As the house was filled with the odour of the ointment when Mary anointed the feet of Jesus, so, when the great High Priest entered the courts of heaven, he filled them with the fragrance of that holy human nature which was begotten of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and which the same blessed Spirit had also anointed with every divine gift and grace. And as the oil was poured upon the head of Aaron, and ran down upon his beard, and went down to the skirts of his garments, (Psalm cxxxiii. 2,) so the members of the mystical body of Christ are anointed with the same Spirit as their glorious Head, and thus give forth a fragrance acceptable to God. It is the same fragrance that makes them acceptable to the saints, for it was Asher's dipping his foot in oil, the holy anointing oil, that made him acceptable to his brethren. (Deut. xxxiii. 24.) O, to be favored with this holy anointing! with a few drops of this sacred oil! There is more vital godliness, more real religion, and more felt blessedness, in one drop of God's holy anointing, dropped into the soul from the fulness of Jesus, than there is in seas of creature religion, in oceans of what is called piety and goodness, in the widest lakes or broadest rivers of human wisdom, strength, and holiness; for "better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right." This every child of God who has felt, though but in small measure, the blessed effects of this holy anointing, can certainly and safely testify.

II. But I pass on to show, with God's help, *what this holy anointing teaches*. The Holy Ghost, speaking of it by the pen of John, has laid out a very wide field of what this teaching embraces; for he says, "The same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie." Of course, by the words "all things," he means all divine things, the heavenly realities, the blessed truths of God, which are made known to the soul, for it is to them that the Holy Spirit confines himself. He does not make us mathematicians, philosophers, or linguists. His operations, like himself, are spiritual, holy and divine, and "all things" that he teaches, are connected with the glory of God and the good of the soul.

i. Now, if he is to teach us "all things," we may safely lay down these two

points. 1. That really and truly we know nothing but by his teaching. 2. That just in proportion as we are favored with his teachings, are we made wise unto salvation. Let us look at a few things that he teaches us.

1. He teaches us *the nature and evil of sin* as committed against the holy, just, and righteous law of God. He thus gives us spiritual and abiding views of the majesty, greatness, power, purity, and justice of the great God with whom we have to do. We cannot feel the spirituality of God's holy law, nor sensibly know the length, breadth, and awful depth of sin in the carnal mind, without this holy anointing. Men may have natural convictions of sin, but they cannot know and feel it as a violation of the purity and holiness of God; they cannot sensibly enter into the dreadful evil of sin as beyond all description hateful to his terrible majesty, and deserving his eternal wrath and fiery displeasure. They rather palliate it, because the anointing has not touched the conscience. By this anointing oil also the depths of iniquity in the heart are broken up. The very nature of oil, as I showed before, is to *penetrate*. So where this anointing penetrates it acts with power; it sinks into the conscience; it breaks it up; diffuses upon it the light of God's majesty; and thus sinking into the depths of the regenerated soul, discovers the filth and folly, the hideous wickedness and foul criminality of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God. And not only so, but it *brings sorrow and grief*, with mental trouble upon the heart, for the sin which it discovers; lays guilt upon the conscience; causes distress, anxiety, remorse, and works a living repentance of, and hatred to all the transgression and iniquity that it lays open and brings to light. Bear this in mind, that such is the darkness and hardness of the heart by nature, that we have no real sight or sense of sin, no groaning under it, no feeling of its dreadful power, no hating ourselves on account of it, except as this holy anointing drops into the soul and makes it sensible of the existence and working of sin, and fights against it; for "the spirit lusts against the flesh as well as the flesh against the spirit."

2. The same "anointing" teaches us also *how to pray and what to pray for*, intercedes for us and within us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Thus this holy anointing does not come merely to convince of sin, to bring the soul down, to lay it low, and then leave it there; but it comes as a Spirit of grace and supplication, with a whole flood of earnest breathings and longing desires to the God of all mercy, for mercy to be shewn. As the publican prayed in the temple, so does the convinced sinner cry, groan, and pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

3. But, as the same anointing "teacheth of all things, and is truth and no lie," it teaches us in God's own time and way to *know and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ*; for the special work of this holy Comforter is to take of the things of Christ, and reveal them to the soul. The special office—the office he sustains in the eternal covenant—is to glorify Christ; not to speak of himself, but to testify of Jesus; to reveal Him; to bring his blood and obedience near; to shed abroad his love; to raise up faith in his person and work; and to knit the believer into a vital union with the Son of God. We know nothing savingly of Christ; we have no vital, active, influential faith in him, nor well grounded hope in his blood, until the anointing raises it up and draws it forth.

ii. But this anointing not only teacheth of all things, but "*is truth, and is no lie*." As then the Holy Ghost leads *into all truth*, so he leads *away from all error*. Those who are destitute of this holy anointing fall easily and greedily into error. Not so with the child of God. John says in the verse preceding our text, "These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you." There were those, even in those days, who went about—we might almost call them incarnate fiends—to seduce the simple into error. And how were any preserved from this erroneous spirit, and these doctrines of devils? By the holy anointing, that gave love to truth, and hatred to error. So now we are preserved from error only by that anointing, which leads the children of God into all truth; opens their eyes to see error; makes their hearts abhor it; guides their feet away from it; and makes them shun and flee not only erroneous doctrines but erroneous men, because they dread being left to fall into error, and hold a lie in their right hand. I

believe, for my part, there is more error and heresy in the churches professing truth, such as the strict Baptist churches, than we are well aware of. Crafty, deceitful men, whom Satan has secretly drawn into error, and drugged with his poisonous doctrines, often cover up their delusions and heresies under a show of experience; and thus deceiving the simple, creep into churches and pulpits of truth, where they soon begin to work, and try to drag the children of God into the same pit into which they have fallen themselves. But take this as a most certain truth, that though there may be sound doctrine where there is not sound experience, there is no sound experience where there is not sound doctrine—in the heart at least, if not in the head. When, then, these erroneous men are pointed out by the servants of God, and their errors shown by the word of truth, then, like servants coiled up in their holes, they begin to spit and hiss, and thus manifest themselves in their true colours, showing that they are serpents, and not sheep. The Holy Ghost, then, by his divine teaching, leads the soul away from all error, because he leads into all truth; and as truth must ever be the exact contrary to error, in proportion as we are led into every truth we are led away from every error. No man whatsoever, however sound his creed, is safe a single moment from falling into the most delusive errors, except as he is favoured with the “anointing.” But if he be a partaker of this holy unction, it leads him so sweetly, draws him so blessedly into the truth of God, that he never can embrace any doctrine on which the power, grace, dew, and unction of God do not more or less sensibly rest. If, then, you are afraid of falling into any error that seems to wear an air of truth, that your reasoning mind appears to favour, that some friend or minister may bring forward, and back up with texts and arguments, beseech the Lord that he would favour you with the anointing “which teacheth of all things, and is truth, and is no lie;” and receive no doctrine without it. But specially beware of error or heresy directed against any one of the Three Persons of the Godhead; any error directed against the Father, or against his Eternal Son, or against the Holy Ghost. Any approach to any erroneous view upon any one Person of the Trinity, or any work or office maintained by them, is to be shunned and abhorred by every one who desires to fear God and live to his glory. Satan introduces no trifling errors into the church; they may appear trifling at first, but they always involve perilous consequences. It may seem of little consequence whether the human soul of Christ pre-existed in eternity, or was created in time; but the former doctrine is the high road to Arianism. It may seem of little moment whether Christ be the Son of God by nature or by office; but the latter doctrine is a blow at each Person of the Trinity. The longer I live the more I love truth, and the more I abhor error and heresy, in whatever shape they may present themselves to my eyes. Therefore for yourselves, your ministers, and the saints of God, beseech the Lord more and more to favour you and them with the holy anointing of which John speaks; it will be your and their safeguard against error; and will sweetly lead you and them into the truth as it is in Jesus. The promise is still valid, “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” And if we realise the sweetness of this promise, then are we “disciples indeed.”

III. But I pass on to our third point, which is, the *abiding of this anointing in the soul*. Now, all the powers of earth and hell are combined against this holy anointing, wherewith the children of God are so highly favored. Sin, in all its movements, desires, and actions, aims its deadly shafts against this holy anointing; the world, with its charms, amusements, lusts, pleasures, and even occupations, is all against this holy anointing; Satan is infuriated with a most bitter hostility against not only the anointing, but against all who are partakers of it; our carnal mind, with all the dreadful evils that lurk therein, with everything that is sinful, devilish, and vile; all, all are combined against this holy anointing. But if God has locked up in the bosom of a saint one drop of this divine unction, that one drop is proof against all the assaults of sin, all the attacks of Satan, all the enmity of self, and all the charms, pleasures, and amusements of the world. Waves and billows of affliction may roll over the soul; but they cannot wash away this holy drop of anointing oil. Satan may shoot a thou-

sand fiery darts to inflame all the combustible material of our carnal mind; but all his fiery darts cannot burn up that one drop of oil which God has laid up in the depths of a broken spirit. The world, with all its charms and pleasures, and its deadly opposition to the truth of God, may stir up waves of ungodliness against this holy anointing; but all the powers of earth combined, can never extinguish that one drop which God has himself lodged in the depths of a believer's heart. Jonah had it locked up in the depths of his soul when he was in the whale's belly; but all the waves and billows that went over his head, no, nor the very depths of hell itself, in whose belly he felt he was, did not wash away that drop of anointing oil which God had lodged in his soul. David sank deep into sin and remorse; but all his sin and misery never drank up that drop of anointing oil that God the Spirit had dropped into his heart. The prodigal son goes into a far country; but he never loses that drop of anointing oil, though he wastes his substance in riotous living. Heman complains out of the depths of his affliction; but all his troubles never drank up that holy anointing oil that God had put into his soul. Hezekiah on his apparent death-bed, when he turned his face to the wall, was sorely tried, and almost in despair; yet all his affliction and despondency never drained the holy drop of anointing oil. And so it has been with thousands and tens of thousands of the dear saints of God. Not all their sorrows—I may say more—not all their sins, backslidings, slips, falls, miseries, and wretchedness, have ever, all combined, drunk up the anointing that God has bestowed upon them. If sin could have done it, we should have sinned ourselves into hell long ago; and if the world or Satan could have destroyed it or us, they would long ago have destroyed both. If our carnal mind could have done it, it would have swept us away into floods of destruction. But the anointing abideth sure, and cannot be destroyed; and where once lodged in the soul, it is secure against all the assaults of earth, sin, and hell. The saints of God feel that it abides; for it springs up at times in prayer and desires after the living God; and it breaks forth into faith, hope, and love. Thus it not only abides as a divine reality, but as a living principle, springing up into eternal life. Were it not so, there would be no revivals, no fresh communications, no renewed testimonies, no breakings forth, no tender meltings, no breathings out of desire for the Lord's presence, no mourning over his absence. The minister would be dead in the pulpit, and the people dead in the pew. Barrenness and death would overspread the church of God as a deep and dark cloud; mildew and canker would eat up all the wheat in the field, and weevils and dust all the corn in the granary. But the anointing abideth, and this preserves the soul from death, and keeps it alive in famine.

IV. I pass on to our fourth point, which is, that this anointing, to a certain extent, *supersedes all other teaching*. I say to a certain extent, for there are ordinances and institutions in the church of God which it certainly does not supersede. For instance, it does not supersede the *ministry of the Gospel*, because, in fact, the anointing is often communicated through the ministry of the word. Nor does it supersede the *ordinances* of God's house, because they are themselves appointed of God. Nor does it supersede *mutual intercourse* with each other; for if it did, we might bid farewell to all converse with the saints; we might shut ourselves up, and never speak to a dear child of God again. But it supersedes everything which does not in some measure savor of it, and is not connected with it. The ministry of the gospel, for instance, is connected with it; for through the preached gospel the anointing often comes. The ordinances of God's house are connected with it; for the Lord often blesses the ordinances of his house. So with prayer, social, private, and public; so with the converse of saints; the Lord often blesses these means, and through them the anointing is communicated. Therefore it does not supersede the ordinances, nor the preaching of God's word, nor the mutual help the children may be to each other; but it supersedes everything foreign to it. We want no carnal wisdom in the church of God; no bright intellects, no learned philosophers, no great men of science, no poet, orator, or metaphysician, to teach us the truth of God, or make us recipients of this anointing oil. The poor and the uneducated receive this anointing, as well as those who, speaking after

the manner of men, may have been more favoured with talents and education. All the family of God are, in this respect, put upon the same level. It reduces all to this single point—what we know we know only by divine teaching. One may be educated, another not, it matters not; as the one or the other is anointed, he is made wise unto salvation, is made a believer, knows and feels the power of God's truth, and is led into the sweetness and blessedness of the gospel. In this way this holy anointing supersedes everything which is foreign to it, and not of the same nature.

V. But we now come to our last point, that this anointing, when received into the conscience of a child of God, maintains him in *an abiding union with the Son of God*. Without union with Christ there can be neither life nor love. To abide in him is the source of all fruitfulness, of all happiness, and all holiness. His own words are, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." (John xv. 4.) But without this anointing we can neither believe on him nor abide in him; but this anointing produces both faith and communion. Whenever this holy anointing comes, it produces a vital union with the Lord Jesus Christ; and it maintains that union which it has once given; for the Holy Ghost keeps taking of the things of Christ, and revealing them to the saints, to whom he first communicated them. The promise was that the Comforter whom Christ was to send should "abide with the disciples for ever." He was to dwell with them and to be in them; and therefore, as he ever abides, his anointing ever abides likewise; and as this anointing abides, it keeps up an abiding also in Christ. Others may leave and forsake him; be weary of his ways, truth, and people; but the anointing keeps the true saints of God in living union with the Son of his love. Profession may fail, false faith decay and perish, vain hope expire, feigned love turn to coldness or enmity, knowledge cease, zeal wax cold, the truth be abandoned, the company of the saints forsaken, the servants of God despised; thousands may fall on the right hand and the left; but the anointing abideth still in the hearts of the family of God. This makes them abide in Christ. The Holy Ghost will never abandon his own work. He will maintain the faith he has bestowed, the hope which he has given, and the love which he has shed abroad. This abiding union with Christ is the blessed fruit and result of having received this holy anointing oil. Those who are not favored with it, seem to believe for a time; but not being favored partakers of this holy anointing, they soon fall into the ways of sin or error; and being thus manifested as unfruitful branches, are taken away and cast into the fire. How highly favored, then, is that soul which has received but even one drop of this holy anointing, and by virtue of it obtains as well as maintains an union with Christ! He lives in Christ, for Christ is his life; and dies happy in the sweet confidence of being made a partaker of his glory. Thus it comes to this narrow point, to speak individually—is my soul, is your soul favored with this holy anointing, or not? If they be not, how do we stand before God? Dead in sin, without any living faith; without any testimony that we are interested in the blood and obedience of God's dear Son. But, on the other hand, if we have ever been favored with this holy anointing to soften our hearts, humble our souls, give us faith in Christ, and break us down into godly sorrow for sin—if thus favored with this holy anointing, it will keep us from all error, maintain that union with Christ which it first gave, and eventually land us safely in the realms of eternal bliss.