



THE SOWER.

"Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters."—ISAIAH xxxii. 20.

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."—ECCLES. xi. 6.

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THE SOWER.

OUR ANNUAL ADDRESS.

DEAR FRIENDS,—The tide of time rolls rapidly on, and with it we are all wending our way to that solemn goal—the end of our days. Eternity day by day comes nearer to us all, and with it we hope, to many of us, our final salvation. As 1880 recedes from us, and 1881 dawns upon us, while we greet our readers with the well-known salutation, “A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU,” we pray that we may be enabled profitably to glance at the past, and hopefully to welcome this new period of our time.

Since we penned our last New Year's Address, many changes have taken place around us, both in the Church and in the world; and doubtless most of us have been affected by some of these things, either in a way of comfort or of disquietude. Death has been doing its work among our friends, and many no doubt who read these lines have had to mourn the loss of some dear to them, whose memory they cherish with the fondest affection. They are no more with us, and while we sing, “Change and decay in all around I see,” what a mercy, reader, if we can look up to the God of salvation and say, “My times are in Thy hand;” for, to all who love Him, and who are “the called according to His purpose,” “*all things work together for good.*” This oftentimes is hard to be understood, even by those whose judgment is established in the truth of it; for, if we take a general view of things, how perplexing they often appear to us! Only of late, what convulsions we have heard of among surrounding nations, what troubles connected with our foreign possessions, what sad tumults in poor Papal-cheated Ireland; and, while those vile emissaries of Rome, the Jesuits, are being expelled from France, what inroads Popery is making in our own beloved land, where, by specious conduct and flattering promises on the part of Rome's devotees, many of our young are being enticed into her schools, to learn and imbibe her fatal errors. We are glad, however, to find a widespread feeling among real lovers of truth as to the growing importance and necessity of every possible effort being made to instruct our youth in the Word and doctrines of the Gospel, both in the Sunday-school, and by periodicals and other books of a sound Scriptural character being liberally disseminated among them. These are the means which are within our reach, and which it becomes us, as those who believe the Word of God to be the only seed worth scattering abroad, to use with all diligence and prayer, knowing that He who has made the truth so effectual in former days can do so now; and He has thus instructed us in this

matter: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good" (Eccles. xi. 6). But one thing He has declared concerning His Word which may well encourage all who are engaged in this noble work of spreading His truth, whether as preachers, Sunday-school teachers, writers, or circulators of good books, namely, "It shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah lv. 11); therefore, let all who desire the prosperity of the cause of truth and the kingdom of Christ still go forward in the midst of "evil report and good report," waiting upon the Lord, and hoping for the promised success. There is much in the professing Church of Christ which is very painful for us to behold, and we feel sure it is grieving the Holy Spirit of God, such as worldliness of spirit, covetousness, self-seeking, pride, fleshly indulgence, spiritual sloth, carelessness in walk and conversation, and a hard Antinomian indifference respecting the use of Scriptural means. But, notwithstanding all that is to be thus deplored, we believe there are among us many, yea, a goodly army, of earnest, praying, working souls, who seek the things "which are Jesus Christ's," and who do not consider it a hardship to deny themselves for His sake, nor grumble because attention to the interests of His cause affects their own personal convenience.

Dear friends, we earnestly pray that the Lord may grant unto all of us who have been called to the fellowship of His Son, more of the blessed experience couched in those words, "We love Him because He first loved us;" then, under the influence of this sweet constraining grace, we shall esteem it a pleasure and honour to do and to suffer in the cause of Him "who gave Himself for us."

And now, if we look closely into personal matters of experience, what account can we give of the result of the various exercises we have been the subjects of during the passing over us of the days, weeks, and months of 1880? Have those exercises yielded any of "the peaceable fruits of righteousness"? or have they been, as it were, lost upon us? If our troubles rightly exercise us, they will give us constant errands to the throne of mercy, keep us lively in prayer, and make us eager for the public means of grace. The soul needs these exercises to keep up therein a healthy hungering after Jesus Christ and His Word, for it is the needy ones who will be earnest in their search for Him, and who will highly prize what they receive from Him, as also any smiles, visits, or communion He may favour them with.

Reader, can you testify of any times of sweet visitation, re-

freshing, and reviving in your own soul during the past year? Have you drawn from Jesus' fulness, and been enriched with His blessing and satisfied with His favour? If so, surely these times are worth being remembered, and that with a thankful heart. Or, if under the burden of sin, corruption, and unbelief, you have again and again had a glimpse of Jesus as the hope set before you, and have fallen before Him as one looking to Him for His mercy, help, and deliverance, and have felt some measure of His sympathy and loving-kindness to sinners flow into your heart, causing you to hope in His word of promise, are not these helps by the way worthy of your acknowledgment and thankfulness? And, if you have been delivered from troubles, from the hand of the enemy, from the darkness and hardness caused by unbelief and the carnal mind, and have been brought to enjoy the light of the Sun of Righteousness, and to walk at large in the liberty of Christ's Gospel, is this blessed experience of the sin-subduing, heart-humbling, and Christ-endearing effect of superabounding grace to—

“ Lie buried in unthankfulness,
And without praises die ” ?

Surely not! May you not rather say, “ I love the Lord because He hath heard my voice and my supplications,” for “ I was brought low, and He helped me ” ?

And, in trying to speak a word to those who are seeking for Jesus, and who, we trust, have found some encouragement and help in answer to their prayers, we would assure them from His Word, and by our own experience, that He is both an able and a willing Saviour, a skilful and a kind Physician, a faithful and true Friend to all who desire and wait upon Him. And to you who are troubled and grieved about sin, and who long for pardon and cleansing, we would say, Jesus is the Friend for you. He is the “ Brother born for adversity,” and only by faith in Him as the bleeding Lamb can you ever hope to find healing and peace.

To those who may read this, who are still in nature's darkness, in the thrall of sin, spiritually ignorant, and destitute of true repentance toward God and of a right concern about their immortal souls, we would in all affection say, sinner, you are in danger of eternal wrath, for it is plainly declared, “ Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.” There is no safety out of Christ, and there can be no true faith in Him without repentance. May the Holy Spirit, whose work it is to convince of sin, make you feel what a solemn thing it is to live and die without hope and without God.

And now, dear friends, as we begin another year, may all of us who fear God be found looking up to Him for that blessing which maketh rich, and that grace which He has said "is sufficient for thee," that in all our warfare and toil we may find His strength to be made perfect in our weakness; and thus, deriving all our life, support, and fruitfulness from Him who is "the Head of His body the Church," may we during the year 1881 be kept lively in the things of God, jealous for His honour, and constant in His fear, seeking the good of souls and the peace and prosperity of Zion.

We hope still, in conducting the SOWER, to pursue our steady and Scriptural course of proclaiming the good old Gospel of the grace of God, and holding forth the same truths which are taught in the divine Word as the rule of faith; while we shall also continue to sound an alarm against Rome and her confederates by recalling her former deeds to mind, in order that the young may see this so-called "unalterable Church"—this system of iniquity—in its true colours. And, as we seek to do the same thing in the LITTLE GLEANER, we hope all friends of the young and lovers of truth will try and disseminate what we thus send forth in our Magazines as widely as possible. The teachers of Romanism, Rationalism, and Infidelity are energetically at work, and should not the lovers of "the truth as it is in Jesus" more than ever bestir themselves to scatter abroad, in opposition to these fatal influences, that seed which is the precious gift of God, and which only can "make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus"?

Friends, think of what God has thus committed unto us in calling us to, and blessing us with, the knowledge of the Word of His Gospel. Oh, that we may ever seek to use this talent aright; and may He who bestowed it make His own Word fruitful in the conversion, instructing, building up, and establishing of His chosen seed!

Brethren, we once more solicit an interest in your prayers and kind sympathies, which have been, and will we trust still prove, a great source of encouragement to us in our labours; and may you, with ourselves, find the year upon which we have entered to be one replete with tokens of the mercy and goodness of the Lord, and one marked as a period memorable for "growth in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Reader, "the Lord make His face to shine upon thee." So
prays
THE EDITOR.

"WHERE pride and self are overthrown,
There Jesus raises up His throne."

NOTES OF A SERMON

PREACHED BY MR. D. FENNER, JUNE 7TH, 1868.

"Christ died for our sins."—1 COR. xv. 3.

AS we are to commemorate Christ's death, it may not be improper to speak a little of it. When it is said, "Christ died for our sins," it means He died for the people of God, as it is written, "I lay down My life for the sheep" (John x. 15); and it is said in Isaiah liii 8, "For the transgression of My people was He stricken"—for the sins of His people—that is, the people of God. Thus it was spoken of Him, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. i. 21). The sins of God's people were as bad as others', and as offensive unto God, and hateful to Him. He cannot endure iniquity to come into His presence, and, therefore, none can come there but such as are brought nigh by the blood of Christ. They are brought nigh unto God through the sacrifice of the blessed Son of God, and in no other way can any appear before Him who is "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity." What do the Scriptures say? "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10), and "he that offends in one point is guilty of all." Justice stands against the sinner, and will by no means set him free, but through the satisfaction received by the death of Christ on his behalf. Persons say, "God is love." That is true; and, as He is love, it emanates from Him and flows towards those who are the objects of it, and this love is the moving cause of their redemption and salvation. As God is love, so God is holy; and as He is infinite in love, so He is in holiness. All the attributes of God are His nature; therefore, holiness is as much His nature as love; justice the same, truth the same, faithfulness the same.

Now, all these attributes must receive satisfaction at the hands of the Mediator, so that reconciliation, peace, and harmony might take place—that there should be no let or hindrance in the way—and it must be such as to clear a way for those attributes which in themselves, abstractly considered, stand against the people of God while sinners. The attributes of God are God Himself, therefore they must be infinite in all their tendencies; and, as God is infinite in holiness, what is sinful must be rejected and cast from Him; therefore, every person as sinful must be rejected and cast forth from Him.

Now, as Christ stood as Surety in the place of His people, it is said, "Thou hast cast off and abhorred, Thou hast been wrath with Thine Anointed." This does not mean that He was individually cast off by God, for He was loved by the

Father on account of what He suffered, as He says, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life that I might take it again." In all He suffered, though He had all the sins of His people upon Him, for which He suffered and died, yet He did not die individually considered, but vicariously—that is, in His people's law place, room, and stead. Hence it is said, "He died the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." If it were not for this, we could not come near to God as sinners; He would cast us off with abhorrence.

Now, observe, Christ engaged to suffer and die for His people in that covenant engagement made by Father, Son, and Holy Ghost from eternity, and included all His people in the human nature which He took upon Him when He became the Second Adam and covenant Head of His Church; for, as the first Adam was the federal head of the whole world, so the Second Adam—the Lord from heaven—became the covenant Head of His people. Hence it is said, "As in Adam all die"—all died that were in him—so, in the Second Adam, they are raised from death unto life: "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." He assumed their nature, represented them, and engaged to do all that was requisite to remove sin from them, and to give satisfaction unto all the attributes of God; and so the sins of His people were transferred to Him in God's account, and reckoned His by imputation. Hence it is said, "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. liii. 6); or, as some render it, "The Lord *has made to meet* on Him the iniquity of us all." As Hart says—

"When all the dreadful debt of guilt
Was on the dying Saviour laid."

So He bore all their sins on the cross, as it is said, "Who His own Self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." "All we like sheep have gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." And He has so removed the sins and filth of His people from God's sight and memory, that He "does not behold iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel;" and He says, "Their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." But He remembers His dear Son—the righteousness He wrought, the sacrifice He completed, called His active and passive obedience. Thus His people are virtually free.

But their sins are also removed from them in the court of conscience, when it is the pleasure of the Lord to apply the atonement Christ has made. As the Apostle says, "We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement," or reconciliation (Rom. v. 11). Some try to make

a difference between atonement and reconciliation, but I know of no distinction. Who was the offended party? God. Who was the offender? Man. Who has atoned for sin, man or God? Not man, but God; and Paul says, "And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, that He might present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in His sight" (Col. i. 20—22). Atonement and reconciliation mean the same thing, for, when the atonement comes to the heart, it is the pardon of all sin past, present, and to come; and when this is experienced, what brings it? Why, the pardoning love of God, that removes sin and guilt from the person, and gives the sinner freedom through the atonement—

**"The Mediator made the peace,
And signed it with His blood."**

And Hezekiah says, "Thou hast in love to my soul delivered me from the pit of corruption, for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back;" and He will never turn round to look upon them. Here is "quietness and assurance for ever," and justice views the sinner with perfect satisfaction.

Now, as touching the characters Christ died for. He calls them sheep: "I lay down My life for My sheep;" whilst the ungodly are called goats, swine, dogs, wolves, &c. These have not the nature of the sheep to abhor filth, and yet the sheep of Christ know and feel themselves to be ungodly indeed—just such characters as the Word of God declares Christ died for.

First, then, Christ died for the ungodly. Godliness is a likeness to God; ungodliness is the right opposite. Well, does not the sensible sinner feel ungodly in thought, lip, and life? When does he find anything of godliness so that he can appeal to a just God and say, "Here is something that is godly"? No, he cannot do that.

Again, He died for those who feel guilty before God, for He died to procure pardon, and pardon comes to the guilty. He died for those that are shut up in a spiritual prison, and cannot come forth, for He came to "preach deliverance to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound"—bound down in the prison of sin and guilt, for such these captives feel themselves to be. He died also for the burdened soul, for He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest to your souls."

That is by the atonement applied, and then they can say, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

Well, here I might mention many things, but I must come to another subject. We are called upon to administer the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and I pray God we may be directed by Him into that which is according to His good will and pleasure. Now, there are some things and matters which I consider the children of God should be concerned to know for themselves. The Apostle Paul had this feeling, for he says, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup; for whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." "For this cause," he says, "many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." Does he let the matter drop here? Oh, no; therefore, in the second Epistle, he says, "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?" If the former character, you are welcome to the Lord's table; but if the latter, your case is awful indeed. "Well," some may say, "how am I to prove the matter?" Why, as Mr. Hart says—

"Let each into his soul descend
And find his Saviour there."

"Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

Now I could mention a variety of proofs of Christ being within you. First, then: if Christ be within you, "the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness." Do you know what this is, "the body is dead because of sin"? "The body [of the flesh] is dead because of sin, but the spirit," he says, "is life [he means the soul] because of righteousness." It is by reason of sin that the body is dead, for he calls this body "the body of sin and death," and in another place, "the body of the sins of the flesh," and in another place, "the body of this death, the old man that works in the members" unto this, and that, and the other. Is there any one that can say, "I never find this in myself"? Paul says, "Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The allusion appears to be to a practice amongst the Romans of tying a corpse to a person under sentence for some crime he had committed, and compelling him to carry it about; and so the Apostle cries out, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And does not the child of God feel the body is dead in the sense I mean? He does. Paul says, "When I would do good, evil is present with me; and the good that I would I do not, but the

evil which I would not, that I do." Yes, and the child of God often feels that "to will is present with him, but how to perform that which is good he finds not." And why? Because he is quickened in the spirit of his mind, which gives him a feeling sense of the evil within. This is part of the proof that Christ is within us as our life, in giving us this feeling of what we are in and of ourselves.

"The body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness." Elihu says, "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." It means, in his spiritual feelings, as he is born of God. Herein is life; and why? "The spirit is life because of righteousness." What righteousness? The righteousness Christ has wrought, which is our living unto God, and our living before God. "In the way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof there is no death."

Now, where there are these double feelings, there is a change of heart. I would do good, but cannot. Mentally he would do good. "With the mind I serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." These are the feelings of a child of God, and they that have them have Christ as their life, by which life Christ is evidenced as being in them. Well, this is one proof. "Prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

In all places where it is said God dwells with His people, it means He has taken up His dwelling-place in them by His blessed Spirit. Are you destitute, and desolate in your souls? God says, "I dwell with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit;" though, while feeling his destitute and desolate state, he does not find Him, but it is a truth, "I dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." True contrition has godly sincerity in it; so, as the person feels himself thus sinful before God, he turns round upon himself with abhorrence: "Vile wretch that I am! base wretch that I am!" Thus he abhors himself. Now, though he is so opposed to himself, the Lord is not opposed to him, for He says, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My Word." The Word of God cuts at his sin, and makes him tremble; and so one says, "My flesh trembleth for fear of Thee, and I am afraid of Thy judgments." Now, if the Lord dwells in such characters, they are welcome to His table.

Again, the Scripture says He dwelleth with the lowly—not the high-minded, not the lifted up, but with the humble; "the proud He knoweth afar off." Again, He loves such as love the children of God; and what do these see in the children of God

to love? Why, His image. What is Christ's image? Meekness and lowliness of heart. Christ says, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls." There may be some of the real children of God associating together, but if one or more is lifted up with pride and selfishness, can they unite? Oh, no. But, when they are little in their own eyes, yet desiring and longing for evidence of interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, then brotherly love will flow out; and "he that loveth his brother abideth in the light;" and true brotherly love is where there is an esteeming each other better than ourselves. He feels that others are not worse than he is, but rather that he is worse than they are.

Oh, how many more evidences I might mention, but there is not the time. Christ says, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me." Therefore, "prove your own selves. Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" Search it out for yourselves, and do not be satisfied without the evidence of Christ being in you. If you cannot find the higher evidences, come down and seek for the others, for such shall not look in vain. "Prove your own selves." Don't take satisfaction from any minister or person, but take the Word. Seek to the Lord, and to the Lord alone; and when He appears for you, you will be glad in heart, and find encouragement to come to His table. May He lead us aright, and bless us while we meet around His board, and I add no more.

A PRAYER.

LORD, incline my wandering heart
 To revere Thy holy name :
 Thou art good, the same Thou art,
 Through eternal years the same :
 Plant Thy fear within my breast,
 Soothe my trembling soul to rest.!

Where I go and where I dwell,
 Deign to be my Guard and Guide ;
 All my inward foes repel,
 Bid my painful doubts subside :
 Plant Thy fear within my breast,
 Soothe my trembling soul to rest.

Could I such a treasure prove,
 Earth would sink, with all its store ;
 To enjoy Thy fear and love
 Nothing I could covet more :
 Plant Thy fear within my breast,
 Soothe my trembling soul to rest.

BEDDOME

OUR MARTYRED FOREFATHERS.

XVI.—NICHOLAS RIDLEY.

THIS eminent divine, scholar, and martyr of the English Reformation was born in the county of Northumberland; and in the town of Newcastle he was taught the rudiments of education. From Newcastle he removed to Cambridge, where his learning and progress soon gained for him some of the highest honours that seat of learning had then to confer. He was made Doctor in Divinity, and he was also placed at the head of Pembroke Hall. At the conclusion of his university career, he made a tour on the Continent; and, when he returned to his country, emoluments were again offered him. He was appointed one of the chaplains to Henry VIII., and was afterwards elevated to the episcopal bench as Bishop of Rochester. Soon after the accession of Edward VI. to the throne, Ridley was translated to the see of London.

We have commenced with this brief and rapid summary of Ridley's early life, because it is not our intention to narrate every detail and circumstance of his career, as they have been handed down to us by credible historians. Not that we fear a close and thorough investigation of his life would tend to lower the worthy man in our estimation; for, on the other hand, we are fully satisfied that his character will bear examination and will stand the test of the strictest scrutiny. But, in dealing with a life like that of Nicholas Ridley, so replete with interesting incidents and noble actions, we are compelled to omit much that we should necessarily insert if we were writing a biography. We must therefore do our best to make such selections as will set forth his character, and thus endeavour to portray the man exactly as he was.

Ridley appears to have been a fine, handsome man, comely and well proportioned. Possessing a very kind, cheerful, and forgiving disposition, he permitted no anger to lurk in his bosom, nor did he bear malice towards any person. His kindness to friends and foes was alike exemplary. To his relations he was most generous, but especially towards those who were of the "household of faith" would he extend the hand of pity and help. A striking instance of his benevolence is worthy of narration. When he was residing at Fulham, Mrs. Bonner, mother of the execrable Bonner, afterwards Bishop of London, and her daughter, both of whom lived in an adjacent house, were among his daily guests. Mrs. Bonner was always placed at the head of the dinner-table, and on no account would the good bishop have her removed from that position. On some occasions, distinguished visitors, such as bishops, members of the Privy Council, and others, would be present, when the place of honour was invariably occupied by this lady, whom Ridley

would defend by saying, "By your lordships' favour, this place of right and custom is for my mother Bonner." Ridley could not have manifested more consideration and kindness to his own mother, and yet how, in after years, her son rewarded him! Bonner's reward was a stake, and a glorious reward it was too, although this enemy of God's truth did not intend it as such.

As a bishop, too, Ridley was a pattern. He was one of the "John Hooper" type—faithful, sincere, and zealous. Preaching the Word was his favourite, his chief occupation, and in that work he never wearied. It was his greatest delight to declare the truths of the Gospel, and no opportunity did he lose of speaking to his countrymen upon this all-important subject. Hundreds and thousands flocked to hear his sermons, so general and intense was the desire to hear the "glad tidings." This was indeed a revival—a genuine revival of religion. Truth had been buried for ages; but, at the time of the Reformation, it arose from the grave to which ignorance and superstition had consigned it, to speak with a voice and act with a power that dashed monarchs from their honours and hurled nations from their pinnacles of greatness.

But we must not omit to speak of the scholarly abilities of Nicholas Ridley, for to these more than to anything else he owed his preferments at the university and his royal chaplaincy. We consider Ridley to have been the greatest scholar of the English Reformation. His varied and extensive reading, his earnest studiousness, and his retentive memory—such a rich cluster of qualities so essential to a man of learning—enabled Ridley to outstrip his rivals and become one of the luminaries of his day. But something higher and nobler than worldly learning has surrounded the name of Ridley with a halo of glory which time can never darken nor obliterate. However, we must not be understood to depreciate the value of a good education. There are men, and we have heard such, who denounce in a sort of wholesale style all human learning as productive of no good results. Such teachers make a great mistake. It is true that mere worldly learning has caused men to tread upon dangerous ground and propound dangerous doctrines. This, however, is the abuse, not the use of education. When a man whom God has been pleased to endow with brilliant abilities and moral qualities utilizes his learning, he is a useful member of society, and one certain to benefit the circle in which he moves. But when, as in the case of Ridley and Tyndale, human learning and natural talents are accompanied with the grace of God in the heart, then men are sure to become not only a moral, but a spiritual benefit to mankind. This good, be it remembered, they are enabled to effect by the divine favour of the Almighty.

But Ridley was not only a generous man—not only a brilliant

scholar—he was also a Christian hero. It was the perusal of a little work on the Lord's Supper, written by a monk named Bertram, that caused the existence of doubts in the mind of Ridley concerning the veracity of Rome's teaching. This book was written in the ninth century, and was a clear and decisive protest against the dogma of transubstantiation. Step by step Ridley was led further from Rome and nearer to the Bible, until he finally renounced the faith of his fathers to ally himself with those whose highest ambition was to humbly serve Christ and His truth in their day and generation. In the days of King Edward he was one of the most active and indefatigable supporters of the Reformation; and during that short reign he worked with an untiring energy to establish the Gospel in the land. But his work was cut short by the death of the young monarch, and the elevation of Popery to power under a princess of the Romish faith.

Ridley was soon thrown into the Tower as one too busy and dangerous to be at liberty; and from thence he was transferred, in company with Latimer, to the Bocardo prison at Oxford; and here he continued until within eight months of his martyrdom, when he was confined in the private house of a man named Irish.

During their confinement in the Bocardo, Latimer and Ridley often spent sweet and pleasant hours together in prayer, meditation, and conversation. How gloomy indeed was their cell, but often how cheerful their hearts! The prison was at times a very Bethel to them, when they were visited by Him whom no iron bars nor massive doors can prevent from coming to the aid of those who truly need divine help and strength.

There were periods when they were not able to converse with each other, and then these two Christian heroes committed their thoughts to paper, thus encouraging and assisting one another as they journeyed onward through the wilderness. Thus Ridley desires his fellow-prisoner, because that he was "an old soldier and an expert warrior," to help him "to buckle his harness;" and to this we find Latimer replying that Ridley had indeed "ministered armour unto him, whereas," to use his own words, "I was unarmed before and unprovided, saving that I give myself to prayer for my refuge."

These prison communications are intensely interesting, and they give a deep insight into the character of these two illustrious men. Honesty and sincerity shine in every line, and each sentence is an evidence of their genuine belief in the grand, experimental truths of the Gospel. Prison life was, after all, not such a dismal affair to them, for their souls were filled with peace and joy—such a peace and joy of which the world at large is ignorant.

During the long period of imprisonment which Ridley had to pass through, he wrote many beautiful letters to various parties,

principally to those who, like himself, were suffering for the truth's sake. One of these letters we will briefly notice. It is one that he addressed generally to all true lovers of and sufferers for the Gospel throughout the country. He commences by expressing his joy at the constancy and firmness of those who had been enabled to adhere to the cause of the Gospel, notwithstanding the crafty and potent efforts of their enemies to wean them from the same. He then, after referring to the various means used to carry out this object, breaks out in the following grateful language:—

“ Yet blessed be the God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which hath given unto you a manly courage, and hath so strengthened you in the inward man by the power of His Spirit that you can contemn so well all the allurements of the world, esteeming them as vanities, mere trifles, and things of nought; who hath also wrought, planted, and surely established in your hearts so steadfast a faith and love of the Lord Jesus Christ, joined with such constancy that, by no engines of Antichrist, be they ever so terrible or plausible, you will suffer any other Jesus, or any other Christ, to be forced upon you besides Him whom the prophets have spoken of before, the apostles have preached, the holy martyrs of God have confessed and testified with the effusion of their blood.”

“ In this faith stand you fast,” continues the noble writer; “ stand you fast, my brethren, and suffer not yourselves to be brought under the yoke of bondage and superstition any more; for you know, brethren, how our Saviour warned us beforehand that such should come as would point unto the world another Christ, and would set him out with so many false miracles and with such deceivable and subtle practices that even the very elect, if it were possible, should thereby be deceived. Such strong delusion to come did our Saviour give warning of before. But continue you faithful and constant, and be of good comfort, and remember that our great Captain hath overcome the world; for He that is in us is stronger than he that is in the world, and the Lord promiseth us that, for the elect's sake, the days of wickedness shall be shortened. In the mean season abide you, and endure with patience as you have begun. ‘Endure,’ I say, and ‘reserve yourselves unto better times,’ as one of the heathen poets said. Cease not to show yourselves valiant soldiers of the Lord, and help to maintain the travailing faith of the Gospel.”

After telling them that they have need of patience to do the will of God, Ridley concludes this epistle with the following spirited sentences:—

“ Let us be hearty and of good courage, therefore, and thoroughly comfort ourselves in the Lord. Be in no wise afraid of your adversaries, for that which is to them an occasion of per-

dition is to you a sure token of salvation, and that of God : ' For unto you it is given, not only that you should believe on Him, but suffer for His sake ; ' and, when you are railed upon for the name of Christ, remember that by the voice of Peter—yea, and of Christ our Saviour also—ye are counted with the prophets, with the apostles, with the holy martyrs of Christ, happy and blessed for ever, for the glory and Spirit of God resteth upon you. On their part our Saviour Christ is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified ; for what can they else do unto you by persecuting you, and working all cruelty and villainy against you, but make your crowns more glorious—yea, beautify and multiply the same, and heap upon themselves the horrible plagues and heavy wrath of God ? And, therefore, good brethren, though they rage ever so fiercely against us, yet let us not wish evil unto them again, knowing that while for Christ's cause they vex and persecute us, they are like madmen, most outrageous and cruel against themselves, heaping hot burning coals upon their own heads ; but rather wish well unto them, knowing that we are thereunto called in Christ Jesus, that we should be heirs of the blessing. Let us pray, therefore, unto God that He would drive out of their hearts this darkness of errors, and make the light of His truth to shine unto them, that they, acknowledging their blindness, may with all humble repentance be converted unto the Lord, and with us confess Him to be the only true God, which is the Father of light, and His only Son Jesus Christ, worshipping Him in spirit and truth. The Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ comfort your hearts in the love of God and patience of Christ. Amen.

" Your brother in the Lord, whose name this bearer shall signify unto you, ready always by the grace of God to live and die with you."

Before closing our sketch of this eminent servant of Christ, we will just briefly allude to his many examinations before the bishops. Ridley was too important a " heretic " to be dealt with too summarily, and therefore his episcopal judges manifested a semblance of leniency by giving him many opportunities of renouncing his principles and returning to the " Mother Church," if he so felt inclined. But the longer they delayed the consummation of their cruel policy, the firmer did Ridley become in the truth of the Gospel. His answers to the interrogations of the bishops reveal Ridley to us in a two-fold character—as a man of learning and a man of truth. He was the possessor of natural talents and of spiritual graces. Any person who has been so industrious as to read and study attentively these examinations, has undoubtedly felt repaid for the trouble. The questions and harangues of the bishops, their enunciation and defence of Rome's dogmas and practices, and their fine and plausible appeal to Ridley to abandon his principles and

return to their creed, on the one side ; and the heroic martyr's clear and outspoken statements, the comparative ease with which he overthrows the pretensions of the Papacy by the Word of God, and his grand determination to go to the fire rather than betray his Master, on the other side—these are features that occupy an important place in the history of English martyrology.

On the first day of October, 1555, Ridley heard his sentence of condemnation read by the Bishop of Lincoln. After the reading of the document the noble man was handed over to the Mayor of Oxford, by name Mr. Irish, in whose house he had already been confined for several months. Exactly a fortnight elapsed before Ridley was visited by the Bishop of Gloucester, who offered him, on certain conditions, the Queen's pardon. The nature of these conditions will be readily guessed, and we need hardly add that they were not accepted by the martyr. Ridley's answer was characteristic of the man. "My lord," replied the hero, "you know my mind fully herein ; and, as for the doctrine which I have taught, my conscience assureth me that it was sound, and according to God's Word (to His glory be it spoken); the which doctrine, the Lord God being my Helper, I will maintain as long as my tongue shall wag, and health is within my body, and, in confirmation thereof, seal the same with my blood." The farce of degradation, as Ridley proved incorrigible, was then proceeded with, the good man protesting against the folly of the performance. When they had finished, he desired to reason with them, but they refused to listen to him. Ridley was then placed in the custody of the bailiffs, who were ordered to have their prisoner ready for the stake on the morrow at the appointed hour. Hearing the command, Ridley joyously exclaimed, "God, I thank Thee, and to Thy praise let it be spoken, there is none of you all [referring to his enemies] able to lay to my charge any open or notorious crime ; for, if you could, it should surely be laid in my lap, I see very well." The bishop told him he was a proud Pharisee. "No, no, no," said Ridley ; "as I have said before, to God's glory be it spoken. I confess myself to be a miserable, wretched sinner, and have great need of God's help and mercy, and do daily call and cry for the same ; therefore, I pray you, have no such opinion of me."

On the morrow he was to suffer, but the anticipation of the event only filled his soul with an unspeakable joy that astonished both his enemies and friends. At supper he was very cheerful, inviting his friends to his marriage, "for," said he, "to-morrow I must be married." He expressly desired his brother and sister to be present, and witness his last moments. Mrs. Irish, the mayor's wife, was melted into tears at his calmness and cheerfulness. Ridley, trying to comfort her, said, "Oh, Mrs. Irish, you love

me not, I see well enough ; for in that you weep, it doth appear you will not be at my marriage, neither are content therewith. Indeed, you are not so much my friend as I thought you had been. But quiet yourself ; though my breakfast shall be somewhat sharp and painful, yet I am sure my supper will be more pleasant and sweet." Animated with a joy and possessing a peace unknown to the world at large, Ridley could look death in the face, however cruel and tragic the form it might assume, knowing full well that it was but the door that admitted him into the realms of eternal bliss.

On the morrow, October 16th, 1555, two of England's noblest sons, Nicholas Ridley and Hugh Latimer, were burnt at the stake for their love of Christ and adherence to His truth. It is not our intention to describe this grand scene in this place, as we have yet to trace the career of Latimer. Suffice it to say, then, that Ridley remained cheerful to the last, and flinched not from the fiery ordeal that his enemies prepared for him. J. C.

REST FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."

—HEBREWS iv. 9.

THEY rest from all trouble and anxiety that attend them in their pilgrimage, either in doing or suffering for God. They enter into rest, and cease from their work. God wipes away all tears from their eyes. There is no more watching, no more wrestling, no more fighting, no more blood, no more sorrow. "The ransomed of the Lord do return with everlasting joy on their heads, and sorrow and sighing flee away." There tyrants pretend no more title to their kingdom ; rebels lie not in wait for their blood ; they are no more awakened by the sound of the trumpet, nor the noise of the instruments of death ; they fear not their relations ; they weep not for their friends. The Lamb is their temple, and God is All in all unto them. Yet this will not complete their rest. Something further is required thereto, even something to satisfy, everlastingly content and fill them in the state and condition wherein they are. Free them in your thoughts from what you please—without this they are not at rest. This, then, you have, in the second place—God is the rest of their souls. "Return to thy rest, O my soul." Dismissed saints rest in the bosom of God, because in the fruits on and enjoyment of Him they are everlastingly satisfied, as having attained the utmost end whereto they were created—all the blessedness whereof they are capable. I could almost beg for liberty to expatiate in this meditation of the sweet, gracious, glorious, satisfied condition of a dismissed saint, but the time is

spent, and, therefore, without holding out one drop of water to quench the feigned fire of purgatory, or drawing forth anything to discover the vanity of their assertion who affirm the soul to sleep, or to be nothing until the resurrection, or theirs who, assigning to them a state of subsistence and perception, do yet exclude them from the fruition of God, without which there is no rest, until the end of all.—*Dr. Owen.*

THE NEW YEAR.

THANK God that towards eternity
 Another step is won ;
 Oh, longing turns my heart to Thee,
 As time flows slowly on :
 Thou Fountain whence my life is born,
 Whence those rich streams of grace are drawn
 That through my being run.

I count the hours, the days, the years,
 That stretch in tedious line,
 Until, a life, that hour appears
 When, at Thy touch divine,
 Whate'er is mortal now in me
 Shall be consumed for aye in Thee,
 And deathless life be mine.

So glows Thy love within this frame
 That, touched with keenest fire,
 My whole soul kindles in the flame
 Of one intense desire
 To be in Thee, and Thou in me,
 And e'en while yet on earth to be
 Still pressing closer, nigher !

Oh, that I soon might Thee behold !
 I count the moment's o'er ;
 Oh, come, e'er yet my heart grows cold,
 And cannot call Thee more !
 Come in Thy glory, for Thy bride
 Hath girt her for the holy tide,
 And waiteth at the door.

And, since Thy Spirit sheds abroad
 The oil of grace in me,
 And Thou art inly near me, Lord,
 And I am lost in Thee,
 So shines in me the Living Light,
 And steadfast burns my lamp and bright,
 To greet Thee joyously.

“Come !” is the voice, then, of Thy bride ;
 She loudly prays Thee come ;
 With faithful heart she long hath cried,
 “Come quickly, Jesus, come !
 Come, O my Bridegroom, Lamb of God
 Thou knowest I am Thine, dear Lord ;
 Come down and take me home.”

Yet be the hour—that none can tell—
 Left wholly to Thy choice ;
 Although I know Thou lov’st it well
 That I with heart and voice
 Should bid Thee come, and from this day
 Care but to meet Thee on Thy way,
 And at Thy sight rejoice.

I joy that from Thy love divine
 No power can part me now ;
 That I may dare to call Thee mine,
 My Friend, my Lord, avow :
 That I, O Prince of Life, shall be
 Made wholly one in heaven with Thee ;
 My portion, Lord, art Thou.

And therefore do my thanks o’erflow
 That one more year is gone,
 And of this time, so poor, so slow,
 Another step is won ;
 And with a heart that may not wait,
 Toward yonder distant golden gate
 I journey gladly on.

And when the wearied hands grow weak,
 And wearied knees give way,
 To sinking faith, oh, quickly speak,
 And make Thine arm my stay ;
 That so my heart drink in new strength,
 And I speed on, nor feel the length
 Nor steepness of the way.

Then on, my soul, with fearless faith ;
 Let naught thy terror move ;
 Nor aught that earthly pleasure saith
 E’er tempt thy steps to rove :
 If slow thy course seem o’er the waste,
 Mount upwards with the eagle’s haste,
 On wings of tireless love.

Oh, Jesus, all my soul has flown
 Already up to Thee,
 For Thou, in whom is love alone,
 Hast wholly conquered me :
 Farewell, ye phantoms, day and year,
 Eternity is round me here,
 Since, Lord, I live in Thee.

A LETTER BY THE LATE WILLIAM SHARP.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—No doubt you wonder at not receiving a few lines from me ere this, but, before Mrs. S—— returned home, I had received intelligence of the death of my brother, whom I have been to town to bury. I hope my friends are well, and looking well to their ways. “Ponder the paths of thy feet,” Solomon says, “and all thy ways shall be established.” None can do so aright but such as acknowledge God’s Word in everything. “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word” Much prayer is needed in this work, and close searching the Word for such instruction as will afford real peace, which is sure to find opposition from the flesh, so that I cannot do these things as I would. Much humbleness of heart is found where God’s Word enters, in which is found much light, and a good understanding of God’s truth in its reality to guide our feet. Satan may try to make God’s Word of no effect by speaking of our darkness and ignorance, as an excuse that it might, in a measure, be set at nought. Yet, he might suggest, not altogether, in order to hide his cloven foot, and so secretly, yet as powerfully, draw the mind into a snare. “They have despised My counsel, and set at nought all My words.” Indeed, how needful is a lamp where the oil is found in the vessel; and God says, His Word is “a lamp to the feet and a light to the path;” and in another place it says that “it shines brighter and brighter unto perfect day.” This light enters much deeper than the outside of things. “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me,” which I might be establishing myself in. Such as fear God, it is said, shall come forth from them all. Blessed truth, and blessed he who is in the freedom of it! Such an one only can walk in God’s ways who has a perfect heart—such a heart who has had its dreadful condition made plain in God’s light, and by being at length enabled by the divine Spirit of all truth (to His Church, as well as in Himself) to come, and that willingly, into the light, that his deeds might be made manifest that they are wrought in God. “O Lord, Thou hast wrought all our works in us. Other lords beside Thee have had dominion over us, but by Thee only will we make mention of Thy name.” This name only, to a convinced sinner, is found sufficient in such an important thing as considering God’s work to be in the soul. How rare a thing indeed is it to find, in this awful day of profession, any who, in the spirit of the mind, walk in the ways of God! “But shall not God avenge His own elect” in this as well as every other evil or trial, “who cry day and night unto Him?” Well, does not the Lord Himself answer this

question before He puts another by saying, "He will avenge them speedily" ? and then adding, "But when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth ?" May God constantly lead us to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith, and prove it by God's Word dwelling richly in us, &c.

I intend, God willing, to visit you on Tuesday, the 30th of this month (October), and I must leave you to let Mr. Haynes and the Ide Hill people know, and tell them not to neglect in time seeing Mr. Knight, of Westerham, and settle with him what night I might be there. Mrs. Sharp got home the same night she left you, and very comfortably. She is tolerably well, and desires very kindly her love to you. The rest of us are tolerable in health, while I subscribe myself,

Brighton, October 9th, 1835.

Your servant in the Lord,

W. SHARP, Senr.

"HAPPY DICK."

"HAPPY DICK" was an old blind negro, who walked with God. He was another man's chattel, but his master happened to be a kind one, and kept Dick in his old age for the good he had done, allowing a free hut and maintenance for himself and his wife. Dick's cheerfulness and invariable contentment procured him, by universal consent, the name he bore. His little cabin stood under a great magnolia-tree, and there his song might be heard from morning to night, as he sat in the door, weaving osier baskets or whittling tiny playthings for the picaninnies of the plantation.

A Christian lady once asked him if he never felt uncomfortable when he thought that he was a slave; and if he never longed for the independence of other men, so that he might know what it was to lay up his earnings, and have something to call his own.

"Oh, missus, don't ask me dat," said the grey-headed negro. "Dem days is all gone by, and I's longed for freedom mightily. But I long for heaben too, and dat's a great deal better. I nebber allows myself to 'flect on de bad tings dat happen to me, nor on de good tings dat I nebber had; and, when I tink about somefin to call my own, it seems as if I had a big treasure right here, dat I don't owe any man for."

"How is that, Dick?"

"When all de rest of de world, missus, are saying, 'Dis is *my* house,' 'Dat is *my* sugar-mill,' 'Dere is *my* great cotton-patch,' I say, 'Dere is *my* hope, and dere is *my* Saviour;' and, when I own de Lord Jesus, it seems as if I owned all de rest; for 'de earth is de Lord's, and de fulness dereof.' De air is

mine, and I can breathe it; de sunshine is mine, and I can sit in it; de earth is mine, and I can lie down in it to sleep."

"But wouldn't it be nice to own a great farm, like Job, and have cattle, and horses, and things to give away?"

"Ah! old Dick couldn't take care on't. Tell ye, missus—what a man has beyond enough to take care on, and look out for his own soul too, de same time, is stealin' de Lord's. But I believe eberyting is ordered for de best; and I s'pose de good Lord made some folks to hab de first pick, and some to take de leabins, and some to get both; and massa Job was one of dat kind; and I s'pose de Lord make me take de leabins. Den why shouldn't I be tankful? I get de leabins of de tables, I get de leabins of de time, I get de leabins of de money, de leabins of my strength, de leabins of young massa's learnin', de leabins of de camp-meetin', and de leabins of heaben; and why shouldn't old blind Dick be happy?" and de tears ran down his black face.

"But, if de Saviour is yours, Happy Dick, and He owns everything, you ought to have de first pick if you want it."

"Dear missus, I do git de first pick in de way I mean, but not in de way de world understands. I lib like de good old Paul, 'as habin' noting, and yet possessin' all tings.' De more world I want, de less Christ Jesus I get; and de more Christ Jesus I get, den I come nearer to habin' all tings; for all tings are His, and I hab de first pick because I hab Him."

"You mean, then, my good old friend, dat your interest in de world's people and property is a spiritual one, not a *money* one?"

"I s'pose you'd call it one. You see, men hab a conscience, and dat gits de humble good man a power ober dem in spite of demselves. Massa Hammond, oberseer on de plantation, is berry proud and wicked, and laughs at my religion; but I know, if de day of judgment should come now, he'd ask me to pray for him fust."

"Do you think dat dis Scripture will literally come true, 'The meek shall inherit de earth'?"

"I s'pose so, missus. Dere is a deep-down-in-de-heart respect *now* in de world for de good and meek man; and, by-and-bye, when de Lord shall bring forth dat man's righteousness as de light, and his judgment as de noon-day, dey won't be ashamed of dere respect; and so de meek man will git de big offices, and den pretty soon after de millennium will come."

"Happy Dick" has long since gone to his rest, and sleeps under de shadow of a pine dat has numbered far more years than his. He inherits his spot of earth, and, botter than all his hopes, he now reposes in a free country, where dere is no more hard work, and friends never part.—*Gospel Magazine*.

NIGHT THOUGHTS BY A WATCHMAN.

"THE BEGINNING OF HIS WAYS."

"Let us the sacred theme begin
Where God began with us."

JEHOVAH did not begin creation immediately with man, but with matter. He first provided a habitation for him, and filled it with every needful thing for his use; and then made man in His own image, and placed him in the prepared paradise. In calling into being the world, the end in view was a dwelling-place for man; and all things were wisely and beautifully arranged, both to supply man's need and to show forth God's glory, wisdom, and power. So in all God's works and ways there is a special and ultimate design, which must be accomplished, by which He will be glorified and His people be for ever blest.

When God placed Adam in Eden, surrounded with everything delightful, and provided with every needful good, he possessed a mind capable of understanding and being charmed with the wonderful works of his Creator. His soul was suited to, and doubtless desirous of, close communion with Jehovah. When God gave him possession of this paradise He said, "Of all the trees of the garden thou mayest freely eat." Man had his needs even in Eden, which God alone could supply, and did supply freely. There never was, and never can be, a creature independent of the Creator, however it may strive to cast off the restraint and break the connecting link. There may be persons of whom it is truly said, "God is not in all their thoughts;" but God's eyes are upon all their ways, notwithstanding. If, then, the Lord freely and bountifully, from His rich store-house, supplied Adam's needs, it was quite consistent with justice and goodness in the Creator to fix upon and make known some condition by the observance of which His creatures should continue to enjoy those excellent gifts and fellowship with Himself. He therefore published a prohibitory law, saying, "But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." By regarding this law, Adam would acknowledge God's authority and obey His will. But before long both Adam and Eve, through the power and subtilty of the tempter, had eaten of the forbidden fruit. Thus was the first covenant with man broken, and the favours connected therewith for ever lost; not only to Adam and Eve, but also to all their offspring. Man everywhere, since the fall in the garden, has ever been a needy, helpless, ruined, and guilty creature. His whole nature is estranged from God and goodness.

Whatever civilization and education may do for man—and they

do much—he cannot be restored to purity, nor can religious culture and vows and ceremonies alter his condition in the least. These cannot change his heart, which is “deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.” In this state Adam and Eve were driven out of Eden; but yet not without hope. Truly they were *driven* out, but not left in despair. God said to the tempter, in their hearing, “The woman’s seed shall bruise thy head.” This declaration was their star of hope in the dark night of their self-ruin. From these words we learn that, while Eve was the immediate cause of her husband’s ruin, she was the remote cause of his only hope. If they were inclined to self-pity, conscience would cry, “Thou hast destroyed thyself.” If they were tempted to despair, the voice of God would sound again in their ears, “Her seed shall bruise his head.” Here we find—what is still to be found—wretched beings with a bright hope. As God provided for man before He created him, so He prepared a Saviour for his soul before He made it. There are no after-thoughts with God. Christ was “verily foreordained before the foundation of the world” (1 Pet. i. 20) to redeem His Church with His blood; the persons also were “chosen in Him before the foundation of the world” (Eph. i. 4). God all-sufficient is equal to man’s need, though fallen and depraved. He foresaw the ruin, and appointed a Restorer. Here, then, is God’s beginning with us, though not with us immediately, but with our ordained Mediator, Christ the Lord, with whom He made a covenant, of which Jesus spake when He said, “This is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

This covenant is not called *new* because it was then newly made, but because it was then more fully revealed by His teaching, and sealed by His blood—His death. The nature of this covenant is two-fold. First, regarded as a covenant between God the Father and Christ the Mediator, it is strictly a contract; but, when considered as it relates to Christ and His Church, it has the nature of a will or testament. Christ, the Mediator of this covenant, agreed to do and to suffer the will of His Father, in order that His people—the persons given to Him by the Father—might receive the promised blessings which He, as their Mediator and Surety, stipulated for on their account. That such a covenant was made before the world was created is more or less clearly revealed throughout the sacred Book. Of old it was made known by types and figures; but, passing these, we notice those divine testimonies where it is plainly stated. In Psalm lxxxix. 3, it is written, “I have made a covenant with My chosen.” That this Psalm refers to Christ and His people is too clear to be doubted, and that these words relate to Him cannot be denied. Here, then, the Father declares a precious fact, namely, that He has made a

covenant with Christ, His beloved Son. He is called God's chosen Servant: "Behold My Servant, whom I uphold; Mine Elect, in whom My soul delighteth" (Isa. xlii. 1); and Christ ever delighted to be the Father's Servant and His people's Surety—to do His will and suffer for their sins. He said, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me: I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart" (Psalm xl. 7, 8). It was written of Him, "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand" (Isa. liii. 10). The salvation of the Church was committed to His hand; the whole was given Him to accomplish. The people were given to Him (John xvii. 6), chosen in Him, (Eph. i. 4), preserved in Him (Jude 1), and blessed with all spiritual blessings in Him (Eph. i. 3). Their "life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. iii. 3). For the self-destroyed, help was laid upon this Mighty One, who was and is fully able and ever willing to save to the uttermost. When a child, Jesus said, "I must be about My Father's business." After a life of labour and sorrow, He cried, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do;" and at the moment of an ignominious death He exclaimed, "It is finished!" For the joy that was set before Him, how cheerfully He endured the cross! Oh, what love to God and His people is indicated by these burning words, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work" (John iv. 34).

"How willing was Jesus to die,
That we who are sinners might live!
The life they could not take away,
How ready was Jesus to give!

"'Twas justice that burst in a blaze
Of vengeance on Jesus, our Head;
Divinity's indwelling rays
Sustained Him till nature was dead.

"No nearer we venture than this,
To gaze on a deep so profound,
But tread, while we taste of the bliss,
With reverence the hallowed ground."

W. B.

TAKE heed of resting in duties. Christ's active obedience would not have saved you if He had not also been made a curse; and, therefore, do you think your dunghill performances, as Paul calls it, will save you? You thereby dishonour Christ as much as the Jews that crucified Him. You bid Him come off the cross; He need not hang there for you. You can pray it out, and you can fast sin out yourselves.—*Dr. Thos. Goodwin.*

MEMOIR OF THE LATE JOHN CLARK, OF
FIVEASHDOWN.

PERHAPS nothing which meets the eye of our readers affords matter of more general interest than that which is written in the form of a biography. This may arise chiefly from two reasons. First, its *originality*. The wisdom of God is seen in the infinite variety of the human countenance, in the endless diversity of voice, and in the multiform style of handwriting. So, in the character of most men, there is that which is like an identifying stamp upon them; and, as a well-executed photograph brings out the expression of the face, so a faithfully-written memoir should exhibit that which was characteristic of the person of whom it treats. Second, its *simplicity*. The narration of simple circumstances in a man's life usually commands the attention of many who, for want of time or lack of contemplative capacity, cannot wade through deeper and more laboured productions, such, for instance, as long extracts from the Puritan divines.

JOHN CLARK, the subject of this memoir, was for a great many years a preacher of the Gospel, principally in causes among the Huntingtonian connexion. His honesty of character was apparent to all. He would flatter no man; rather than do this he would appear rude—not that he was of a quarrelsome disposition; he loved peace, and where he could find the sons of peace he liked to visit. He enjoyed the company of savoury Christians; and, although he would rarely hold a long conversation upon a given subject, yet he would scatter remarks relating to his own experience and observation, which, though combined with a vein of natural wit and humour, manifested that divine things were to him matters of weight and reality.

When he was considerably advanced in age he made some jottings of his early years. To this source we are indebted for the present narrative, which we shall give as much as possible in his own words. He says: "I was born at Lower Tooting, Surrey, April 12th, 1798; and at first, as my mother told me, I was as fine and hearty as any of her children; but soon affliction seized me, which weakened my constitution for the rest of my days, and this I have often found a blessing in two ways. First, it has kept me from running into excesses which my natural spirit would have led me to; and, secondly, it has brought me more to a throne of grace, where I have often found the Physician who never sent me in any bill but a debt of gratitude. The disease which first struck me was measles, which is common to children, but left an abscess in my side, which the doctors could not cure. My grandmother at Pangbourne, in Berks, being

a woman skilled in the use of herbs, wished to see me ; but, when my mother took me down, she was asked if she had brought me to be buried in Pangbourne churchyard. But here the Lord blessed the means to my recovery."

After this he was taken home and put to school, when he attended the church. But, as in those days education was much neglected, especially among the lower classes, he was early put to work. His first occupation was minding sheep. He was then only nine years of age. This he found to be very solitary employment ; but, having a book of prayers, he took it out with him, believing, as he then thought, he was safe if he looked to God for protection. Here he remained, more or less, for two years, wherein he obtained some knowledge of the various diseases that sheep are subject to, which he said had been of some use to him in the ministry, as he discovered some similarity between them and the various things which befell the sheep of Christ.

Before he was eleven years of age he had a narrow escape from being severely injured. He had been playing with the fire, when his mother chastised him, and, as a further punishment, put him into a cupboard, not noticing that his clothes were actually on fire. Mercifully he was released, and the burning clothes were extinguished before he had sustained injury.

At another time he was fiercely quarrelling with a playfellow, and, while standing in his own defence in the middle of the road, a horse dashed along, knocked him down, and went over him. Had the horse's hoofs struck his head or body, death might have been the result.

Before he was thirteen years old his father placed him at a shoemaker's in London, where he seems soon to have taken to the trade, and to have made progress in it; but he was thrown into the very jaws of temptation that, but for the mercy of God, might have proved his ruin. His master, too, was very unkind, and would sometimes severely beat him for the smallest offence ; and when on a Sunday evening the house was ringing with ungodly songs, he would retire to his bed-room, lie upon his bed, and sing the evening hymn—and sang, as he says, with all his heart—

"Teach me to live that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed ;
Teach me to die that so I may
With joy behold the judgment day."

He stayed with this master for about three years. In looking back upon this part of his life, he would often gratefully acknowledge the watchful eye and hand of God in keeping him in the midst of the most abandoned society, and would quote R. Richmond's words—

“ When all Thy mercies, O my God,
 My rising soul surveys,
 Transported with the view, I'm lost
 In wonder, love, and praise.”

He hoped, too, that those whose children might be cast upon the world would from his experience take this comfort—that God was able to preserve them in the midst of many temptations.

While he was in London he occasionally saw an uncle of his master's, whom he had reason to hope was a gracious man. He was a hearer of Mr. Huntington's, at Titchfield Street Chapel. Speaking of him, he says: “ His manner being so sedate, and he being so careful in his words, made a great impression on me, especially as my master used to speak of his uncle as having been once such a jovial fellow, and who did not mind swearing; ‘ but now,’ he said, ‘ that cursed religion has made such a dull, stupid fellow of him, and he goes to hear that fellow Huntington, who, they say, kicks against stones and finds money under them.’ Upon hearing this I went and kicked against stones to see if I could find money. Little did I think that the writings of that man would have been so blest to me; and how many times have I wished that I had heard him when I was a boy! I have thought, if I had heard the Gospel from such a man, what I might have been saved from; but the time was not come. God saw from eternity when He intended to stop me, and the way and manner in which it was to be brought about, and how every promise was to be made good in me.”

After this, he was bound to a shoemaker at Croydon, where at first he was treated kindly, but soon his master dealt severely and cruelly with him. Being ill fed and meanly clothed, he was tempted to work on Sundays on his own account, making cricket balls for sale that he might earn a little money. Here he was a poor, yet vain youth, indifferent to his eternal state, fully bent upon following the course of this world like his fellow-workmen. But a restraint was laid upon him. He could not sin as many young men of that age did, which he said brought several of them to the grave. Nor did he altogether lose sight of the fact that there was a God in heaven who could deliver, therefore to Him he prayed that he might be loosed from his rigorous employer. Being of an obstinate turn of mind, his master and he could not agree, and eventually he bade him depart from his house, which set him free from a cruel taskmaster. After being tossed about, God, who chooses the lot of His people, directed him to a shop at Balham, where he had for a fellow-workman a gracious man, who had been brought to a knowledge of the truth under Mr. Huntington, of whom also his master had been a hearer.

But the time was drawing on when the Lord was to manifest

His grace and power in calling John Clark to know himself as a poor lost sinner, and in a manner which is perhaps rare. God, who works sovereignly, chooses His own time and way, so that, where sin has abounded, grace may much more abound. It fell out that, as he was going home from his work, he called upon a friend, who asked him to help him finish a job of work, to which he replied, "No; I have made up my mind to go home;" when his friend answered, "Don't be ill-natured." This won him over, and he sat down to help him; but, before he had finished a man came in with some smuggled "Hollands." This he and his companions drank freely of, and soon he became intoxicated. Being unfit to go home, those that were about him laid him down to sleep in the shop, and there left him. When he awoke, he was in great horror of mind, and said he thought the flames of hell were burning around him, and he cried out, "Oh, Lord, do not destroy me! Oh, preserve me till the morning light! Oh, do, Lord!" In the morning he went to his lodgings, and, to use his own words, he says, "When I got there I found a great softness, and wept much; and I do believe it was a touch of the ever-blessed Spirit, for I had never known such feelings before, and it had a wonderful effect upon me, making me very tender; and, as I was exceedingly ignorant, I thought walking in God's ways was to walk morally, and to leave my old companions; for, though I worked with the good man before referred to, who at that time heard Mr. Robins, at Conway Street Chapel, yet he would never talk about religion."

In thus abruptly closing this chapter, we would remark, let none stumble at what may appear an unusual manner of a sinner being called by grace. God's ways are inscrutable. He that humbled a cruel Manasseh, He that stopped Saul of Tarsus when mad with enmity and rage, and made both cry for mercy, could as easily make a drunken man sober and sensible of his lost condition. On the other hand, let none presume from this to go on in a course of drunkenness. He that gave John Clark repentance unto life may leave others to "the sorrow of the world that worketh death." "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

(To be continued.)

I HAVE no stone to cast at the vilest of the vile. It is all of grace that I am made to differ.—*Tiptaft*.

It is a great work to make people fit for the cemetery. If you are to go to heaven, you must be made fit for heaven. There are prepared mansions for a prepared people.—*Tiptaft*.

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.

THE sure Word of prophecy has indeed unfolded many a desolation which has come upon the earth ; but, while it thus reveals the operation, in some of its bearings, of the "mystery of iniquity," it forms itself a part of the "mystery of godliness;" and it is no less the testimony of Jesus because it shows, as far as earthly ruins can reveal, the progress and the issue of the dominion of "other lords" over the hearts of the children of men. . The sins of men have caused, and the cruelty of men has effected, the dire desolations which the Word of God foretold. Signs and tokens of His judgments there indeed have been, but they are never to be found but where iniquity first prevailed. . . . And may not the desolations which God has wrought upon the earth, and that accredit His Word, wherein life and immortality are brought to light, teach the man whose god is the world to cease to account it worthy of his worship and of his love, and to abjure the "covetousness which is idolatry," till the idol of mammon in the temple within shall fall, as fell the image of Dagon before the ark of the Lord, in which "the testimony" was kept?

What Church could rightfully claim or ever seek a higher title than that which is given in Scripture to the seven Churches in Asia, the angels of which were the seven stars in the right hand of Him who is "the First and the Last," of "Him that liveth, and was dead, and is alive for evermore, and that hath the keys of hell and of death," and which themselves were the seven golden candlesticks in the midst of which He walked? And who that hath an ear to hear may not humbly hear and greatly profit by what the Spirit said unto them?

The Church of Ephesus, after a commendation of the first works, to which they were commanded to return, were accused of having left their "first love," and threatened with the removal of their candlestick out of its place, except they should repent. Ephesus is situated nearly fifty miles north of Smyrna. It was the metropolis of Ionia, and a great and opulent city, and, according to Strabo, the greatest emporium of Asia Minor. It was chiefly famous for the Temple of Diana, "whom all Asia worshipped," which was adorned with one hundred and twenty-seven columns of Parian marble, each of a single shaft, and sixty feet high, and which formed one of the seven wonders of the world. The remains of this magnificent theatre, in which it is said that twenty thousand people could easily have been seated, are yet to be seen; but "a few heaps of stones, and some miserable mud cottages, occasionally tenanted by Turks, without one Christian residing there, are all the remains of ancient Ephesus." It is, as

described by different travellers, a solemn and most forlorn spot. The Epistle to the Ephesians is read throughout the world, but there is none in Ephesus to read it now. They left their "first love;" they returned not to their first works. Their candlestick has been removed out of its place, and the great city of Ephesus is no more.

The Church of Smyrna was approved of as "rich," and no judgment was denounced against it. They were warned of a tribulation of ten days—the ten years' persecution by Diocletian—and were enjoined to be faithful unto death, and they would receive a crown of life; and, unlike to the fate of the more famous city of Ephesus, Smyrna is still a large city, containing nearly one hundred thousand inhabitants, with several Greek churches; and an English and other Christian ministers have resided in it. The light has indeed become dim, but the candlestick has not been wholly removed out of its place.

(To be continued.)

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. IX.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—I have been thinking of writing to you for the last month, and now I sit down endeavouring to accomplish it. I hope this will find you in good health. I am rather poorly myself, suffering much at times from a severe pain in my back and chest, which often serve to remind me that I am mortal, and must sooner or later die.

I have of late felt greatly the emptiness and vanity of *all* this world calls good or great, knowing, as the Word of God declares, that "we have *no* abiding city here." Oh, how fast time does appear to be flying! I have been at Milton twelve years this summer, and really it seems, as it were, but a moment, a dream, a tale that is told; and, when I sit down to compare time with eternity, what an overwhelming thought it is! Oh, how solemn to think that every day brings me so much the nearer to the end of time and the beginning of a never-ending eternity—an everlasting eternity of bliss and happiness, or an everlasting eternity of misery and woe! Oh, my young friend, what must the thought of eternity be to those that fear not God, and know Him not as their Friend and Deliverer? for "*all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," and there never can be any means of escape from eternal death and destruction but by being brought to Jesus Christ; for the inspired Apostle declares that "*there is no other name given under heaven amongst men whereby we must be saved, only by the name of Jesus Christ;*" so there is only this *one* way of

salvation, and what *must* be the consequence if *we* miss this *only* way? It *must* be eternal misery, despair, and woe; as it is written, "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever."

Oh, my dear young friend, I well remember before I was as old as you are feeling sin to be a burden to my mind; and, as I thought upon death and eternal misery, which are the wages of sin, that Scripture in the third chapter of John used powerfully to come into my mind, "Ye *must* be born again;" and, "Except a man be born again, he *cannot* see the kingdom of heaven;" and, again, "Except a man be converted, and become as a little child, he shall in *no case* enter the kingdom of God." Oh, how my soul did cry to God that I might know what it was to be converted, and be born again, knowing that, if I did not enter the kingdom of heaven, I must enter hell, and be in torments for ever and ever; and it made me forsake *all* sinful company, and retire into some secret spot to pray to God for mercy; and many times has my soul cried aloud unto God under hedges, in dreary lanes, in stone pits, in old hovels, and many other lonely places, that my soul might find mercy; and I have a blessed hope that my soul has found the mercy I sought, and that Jesus has appeared to me as my Saviour and Redeemer. Oh, what an unspeakable mercy this is! May the God of *all* mercy, goodness, and truth bless *you* in like manner, if it be His holy will.

I am truly pleased to know you are so comfortably situated in the things of providence, and it would rejoice me much to find you a poor sinner at the feet of Jesus, seeking for mercy, for *He* hath said, "He that seeks *shall* find;" and to *find* mercy in Jesus will make you rich indeed to all intents and purposes.

Your father and mother are both well. I now subscribe myself,

Your sincere friend and well-wisher,

Milton, August 6th, 1864.

JAMES GARDNER.

WHAT an awful thing to see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, and you yourselves thrust out! Oh, to be among the "thrust out"! What can be more awful? "And they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage supper; and the door was shut."—*Tiptaft*.

GOD has a sovereign right to do with us as He pleases; and, if we consider what we are, surely we shall confess we have no reason to complain; and to those who seek Him, His sovereignty is exercised in a way of grace. All shall work together for good. Everything is needful that He sends; nothing can be needful that He withholds.—*Newton*.

THE SOWER.

SERMON PREACHED BY MR. HULL,

ON GOOD FRIDAY, MARCH 26TH, 1880.

"The sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

—1 PETER i. 11.

SOME of the Lord's children are continually proving the truth of that word, more or less, "The end of a matter is better than the beginning." And why is it so? Because we do not always apprehend at the first the good hand and favour of the Lord in it; therefore the beginning of a matter, at times, so seriously affects the mind, weighs so heavily upon the spirit, and so overcomes the measure of faith within, that thoughts of the end not only fill us with fear, but we may ask, in fact, with dread and alarm, what the end of these things will be. Yes, and this even after we have been instructed, time after time, to know that God's Word, despite our unbelief and fears, stands and prevails according to that declaration, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Because it is not every time trouble comes that we can read our title clearly; it is not every time we are plunged into the fiery trial that we can say we are the sons of God; it is not always we can feelingly say, "My Lord and my God!" Yet we may have received the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and some of us have, I trust, so blessedly realized His pardoning blood and love, that our judgment is established in these things by the blessed experience of them; but then sometimes we lose the sweet feeling sense of them; yea, even the oldest Christians will do this; and thus, although our judgment is settled, we alternate in our experience and enjoyment of these things. And, however strong we may be in faith, or however settled in our judgment, there is a tender feeling in one that is born of God that makes the effects of these changes manifest. That tender grace is "the fear of the Lord," and I would not be void of that feature of grace for all the world. A blessed measure of that makes those who are the subjects of it manifest, as living epistles of Christ; but to lack that is to lack spiritual sensibility, and entirely to lack that, is to lack the life of God. A man may have all knowledge, he may have faith, and he may have gifts to a wonderful degree, and yet that one word of the Lord Jesus Christ's to the rich young man may lay his religion in the dust: "One thing thou lackest." "And," says Paul, "though I have the gift of prophecy,

and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge"—yea, in a word, as though he had said, I may possess all that a man can boast of—yet, lacking charity, "I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." The sounding brass and tinkling cymbal may make a noise, and charm the ear, but, though giving sound, they are without life.

Then it is a mercy for us to have a feeling religion, and, if we have, that feeling will influence us in a very great degree. In our early days especially, we were much guided by our feelings. Sometimes they lifted us up wonderfully, and at other times they cast us down as sorely. Sometimes we believed we were the children of God, and sometimes we doubted whether we had ever obtained mercy of the Lord. And why? Because when we did not feel it, we feared we did not possess it; thus young Christians are often tossed up and down between hope and fear; if they do not feel that grace in exercise which they at one time hoped they had received, they doubt it altogether. These are the little ones of the Lord's flock, and it does not do to overdrive them, for they are very tender; they scarcely know how to set their feet to the ground, so as to walk the living way; they need some one to guide and help them along. They are like the poor man at the pool; he needed help, he knew that the healing waters were there, but when the Lord asked him, "Wilt thou be made whole?" the impotent man answered Him, "I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." Others were healed, but he was left behind. So it is with these weaklings in faith. Mark, their faith is not weak, but the measure of it is small, and because the measure of it is small, they are weaklings in faith. No, their faith is not weak. You try to move them from the object of it, and you could no more do it than you could move a mighty rock, for it is founded on the Rock of Ages. God has engrafted His Word in their hearts. They have the truth within them, and as far as the Lord unfolds His Word, they embrace it. But their faith is a feeling faith; it looks for and wants what is revealed in the Word of God,—the knowledge of Christ. There are many people who are very ready with their faith; they can read the Word, and set their minds upon it, and are satisfied with the bare letter of it. But these weaklings in faith want to find in the Word the unction of redeeming grace and dying love; there is the cluster of grapes, it is true, and the new wine is found therein. But who is to press it out? Ah! when the Lord the Spirit opens up the Word of the Gospel to these weaklings, they receive it, they eat and drink it, and it is nourishment to their souls. Yea, it is the Word of Life to them; as Jeremiah says, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and Thy

word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." Now, these poor weaklings can very rarely go forward in the Divine life comfortably. It is a great thing with them when they can read the Word of God comfortably, or when they can go to the Throne of Grace comfortably. They cannot be content with merely reading the Word, or going on their knees! No, they are feeling after life, after power, after substance. And I hope there are a goodly number of us here this morning that know this sensitiveness of feeling—a feeling after Christ. We want to receive Him, we want by faith to eat His flesh and drink His blood. Now with such as these the future will appear very dark at times, especially if they are in a low state of soul. How very frequently you will find them concerned as to whether they truly know the Lord, and if so, whether they shall endure to the end; whether they shall be found among the wise, or among the foolish virgins, when the Bridegroom's voice shall be heard. How anxious their heart is as to the future; and they can only be satisfied as to it, when they enjoy a present blessing, for the question with them is, "Am I His, or am I not?" And, even if the Lord favours them at times with some sweet token of His love, and they for a time hope they are of the number of His children, still their anxious fears will return, and they will say with the poet—

"Assure my conscience of her part
 In the Redeemer's blood;
 And bear Thy witness with my heart,
 That I am born of God."

"Oh," says some poor exercised soul, "if I could only be assured of that! If the blessed Spirit would but set His seal upon my heart, and give me this blessed testimony, then I could say, with good old Simeon, 'Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.'" I hope that all such anxious ones who are present may find something in our subject this morning to encourage them.

In the first place, let us notice that in these words we have set before us, as an encouragement to us in the time of suffering, the fact that our Lord and Master went before, in the same path that we now tread. Yea, He went through a baptism of suffering. He hid not His face from shame and spitting. He endured the cross, while at the same time He despised the shame. And what was the secret of it all? Why, the glory that was to follow! And, since it was the condition of the covenant, and according to the Father's will, that He should go through suffering to receive the glory at the end (for the consummation of His suffering must be

glory), therefore He despised the shame that was put upon Him, for His people's sake; and, though the garden agony reduced Him very low, and wrung that memorable cry from Him, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me," yet He said, "Not My will, but Thine be done."

The sufferings of Christ were testified of by the Holy Ghost from the beginning; for the redemption by Christ was preached in the garden of Eden. No sooner had the malady of sin entered into the world than the remedy was made known; mercy, peace, and salvation were proclaimed in the garden of Eden. There the transgression was committed; there the Gospel was unfolded; there, where the work of Satan had blighted God's creation, God's great scheme of salvation was revealed; there, where man was ruined Christ was set up, and where the serpent gave the wound, the blood of healing was applied. And so it has been from that day to this in the Gospel of the grace of God—the sufferings of the Lord of life and glory have been set over against transgression, sin, and the curse. And while we trace, on the one hand, the sufferings of the Lamb of God, on the other His glory is revealed in the accomplishment of the work of redemption and the bringing in of love, joy, peace, and salvation. And now the Gospel is proclaimed through the length and breadth of the land, "Peace on earth, goodwill towards man;" and the result is that glory redounds unto God in the salvation of the vessels of mercy. What a sweet chapter (Isaiah liii.) that was I read at the commencement of the service! How the Holy Spirit went before in testifying of Jesus! how blessedly He lifted Him up upon the Gospel pole, and revealed Him in all ages as the Anointed One—the Lamb of God! There is very little recorded of what was said in the garden of Eden either concerning the dreadful malady or of the wonderful remedy. It was said that the serpent would bruise the heel of the promised seed, but that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. This was a very blessed promise concerning the conquest of Christ; and the Gospel record shows that, though the serpent did bruise His heel, yet He, as foretold, did tread with fatal power upon the head of the serpent. And I have often been glad of that other blessed promise made to the saints, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under *your* feet shortly." Thus victory is sure to all the saints, for as Christ suffered for the whole, and entered into glory, so shall all His people enter there too. And as He triumphed over hell and the grave, and ascended upon high, so they shall triumph too, but in Him. It is sweet at times to trace how, from that first opening up of the Gospel in the garden of Eden, that living stream has gone forth far and wide in all directions.

“ Far and wide the cleansing flood
 O'er the sin-cursed garden ran,
 Preaching peace by Jesus' blood,
 Blissful sound to rebel man.”

And from that day to this the same doctrine has been carried and preached wherever the Word of the Lord is known. Men have changed, but the Gospel has not changed. Times and seasons have changed, but the Gospel remains unaltered. All things around us change, but the Word of God remains the same. It is immutable—like unto Himself, and His name is “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.” We have many new theories started, many (so-called) Gospels preached, and many new views are set forth as doctrines. These will endure but for a time and then pass away, but the Word of God lives and abides for ever; the Gospel of His grace remains immovable, and the doctrines of Christ continue unshaken. The devil may cast the waters of error out of his mouth as a flood after the woman, to cause her to be carried away thereby. But no; for while many of the enemies of Christ are given up to error, the mystery of redeeming grace and dying love is still the theme of the Gospel. And this Gospel still goes forth by the power of the Holy Ghost. Still it reaches one here and another there, and still poor sinners are made glad as they find it is by the smart of Christ they are healed, by the sufferings of Christ they are delivered, by His death they live, and by His being reduced to poverty, shame, and death, they are clothed with honour and raised to the high position of kings and priests unto God.

Now, when the blessed Spirit testified beforehand of these things in His Word and in the midst of the Church, it was, as I have before hinted, for the good of God's elect; and wherever that Gospel has been preached, there have been those who have not only heard the glad sound, but have received the Word in their heart, and they have been savingly benefited by it. For as it was in the days of the disciples, so it is now. “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” The Word of God went forth, and fell with power into the hearts of God's elect; and so now, wherever the vessels of mercy are scattered abroad, the Word of God not only comes with power upon them, but abides in them and brings forth fruit unto God. Thus the Apostle says, “The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” It appears unto all men, while it teaches only God's elect. “Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave

Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." All may see the Gospel and hear it; but as it was in the days of the Lord Jesus Christ, so it is now. There were many who looked upon Him, many who saw His works, many that were professedly waiting for the kingdom of the Messiah; but they received Him not; they had no place for Him in their hearts. As Mr. Hart says, speaking of the inn at Bethlehem—

" The crowded inn, like sinners' hearts,
 (O ignorance extreme !)
 For other guests of various sorts
 Had room; but none for Him."

And, as John says, "He came unto His own" (the Jewish nation), "and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power," or privilege, "to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

In the second place, let us notice that, as glory followed the sufferings of Christ, so a saving knowledge of Him follows trouble in the soul of one that is convinced of sin. The testifying of the sufferings of Christ is a theme that is sweet to sin-sick souls, and to them only; and if you have never been made sick of sin, you have never been in love with the Lord Jesus Christ; if you have never known the malady of sin, you have never known the suitability and blessedness of the remedy that is in Christ. But where the malady is felt, there sooner or later the remedy is made known; where iniquity is felt, there the blood of Christ becomes a purifying stream. And why? Because when God convinces a sinner of sin, he feels he is unholy, and that he has to do with that God who is holy as well as just, who will by no means clear the guilty without a surety; and he feels the law holds out no mercy, for it says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Thus, as the Holy Spirit convinces of sin, the sinner is brought to stand before Mount Sinai, and, as he hears the thunderings of God's law, he finds that 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 discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight, but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

And this begets the heartfelt cry, "What must I do to be

saved?" To such as these the Gospel theme becomes a Gospel theme indeed, for it is the glad tidings of salvation to all such. As the angel said unto the shepherds, "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."

I hope there are some who are looking for the mercy of Christ, because nothing short of that will suffice them, and they are saying, "Oh, if I did but know that He shed His blood on Calvary's tree to atone for my sin and bring me near to God; but alas! alas! while I can believe that He died to save sinners, I fear there is no mercy for such a wretch as I." What can I say to such as these, save point them to the Gospel? But then I have no power to preach it home to their hearts. I often wish I could. I may speak of the mercy of God in Christ, and how I have experienced it; and I may tell the poor sinner that He is all-sufficient for their case, as I have found Him to be in mine; but I cannot give them the experience of it, for I cannot bring the Word of God home to either my own soul or theirs. But we speak of these things in faith, believing that God the Holy Ghost can apply them in a moment, for ours is not a Gospel void of the Holy Ghost. We both believe in and speak of His ability, as the Comforter, to bind up and heal a broken heart. Does He not know our hearts? does He not know our troubles? and is He not able to bring a word to suit our every case? Yes, I have found, and so will all poor, needy, burdened sinners find, that He can apply the remedy to the malady, for—

"The Holy Ghost must give the wound
And make the wounded whole."

We preach these things in faith, and sometimes the Holy Ghost so brings the Word of truth home to the heart—yea, in a moment—that we are ready to say, What a blessed portion of the Word of God that is! how it testifies of Christ! Ah! but we could not have seen so much in it but by the enlightenings of the Holy Ghost. Of old it was said, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," and so it is now; and, as it was then the work of the Blessed Spirit to make the Lord Jesus Christ known to poor afflicted sinners, so it is now. The Gospel is not changed. Whoever may turn away from it, or seek to substitute some thing else for it, that does not alter the way of God, nor hinder the work of God. His dealings with sinners are still the same; and, when the Gospel is made known to them, and they by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ receive the pardon of sin, they can say, with Hart—

" Faith in the bleeding Lamb,
 Oh, what a gift is this !
 Hope of salvation in His name,
 How comfortable 'tis ! "

Some one here this morning may say, "Oh, that I had that faith ! If I could but believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, I could then feel satisfied as to the result." Well, if you have faith to hang upon Him, you have that faith there spoken of. Then says the poor soul, "I fear I have none at all." But here is the point. You may not be able with the eye of your faith to see Christ in a comfortable way, or as clearly as you desire ; yet that does not prove that you have no faith. God takes His own time and ways for you to stand on Mount Sinai and hear the thunderings of God's holy law, and He will make you to endure this schooling ; for Paul says, "The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all ; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father." Well, while your eyes are fixed on these things you do not see Christ as your Friend. Sinai's thunderings do not speak of Christ ; they only show God to be a consuming fire. Therefore, while you are at Mount Sinai, Mount Zion is veiled from your view ; but by-and-by the Holy Spirit comes, and says to the poor, distracted sinner, "Ye have compassed this Mount long enough." "Well," says the poor soul, "where is the next step to be—to the flames of hell ?" Oh, no. "Then where to ?" Oh, there is Mount Zion and the cleft Rock, and the Holy Spirit will lead thee, and bring thee to Calvary, and there is quite another sight for thee to behold ; and oh, what a sight is that ! The bleeding, suffering Son of God. And what does that sight do ? Why, the moment you see Him, your burden falls off—your guilt is gone—your trouble subsides ; and, as the joy of God's salvation flows into your soul, and you realize by faith the sweet truth contained in that chapter I read at the commencement of the service (Isaiah liii. 3, 5, 6) : "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all," &c. These sufferings of Christ were vicarious sufferings ; they were not sufferings due to Him ; they were due to us—

" Yes, the Redeemer left His throne,
 His radiant throne on high—
 Surprising mercy, love unknown—
 To suffer, bleed, and die.

" He took the dying traitor's place,
 And suffered in our stead ;
 For man—oh, miracle of grace !—
 For man the Saviour bled."

There we see Him as the Paschal Lamb, roasted in the flame of

God's just wrath ; there we see the Daysman, by whom we may approach unto God, standing in the breach ; there we see Him as our peace : "This Man shall be the peace ;" and there is no peace to be found elsewhere. Now, when we are enabled to trace the substance of this Gospel in our experience, how the heart melts, how sin and self are abhorred, and how heartily we sing, with the poet—

" Why me, why me, O blessed God ?
 Why such a wretch as me,
 Who must for ever lie in hell,
 Was not salvation free ? "

What ! the Son of God come from heaven to seek and save *me* ? The Lamb of God slain for me ? The Holy Christ of God made a curse for me ? What ! God punish His Son for me ? Yes, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace was upon Him ; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray ; we have turned every one to his own way ; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Oh, if it were not for the end of these things, the glorious result of them, the very thought of them would be intolerable ! As it is, a view by faith of the sufferings of Christ while a Man of Sorrows here below, and of His cruel death on the cross, does at times sink us so low that we need, like John, to have strength put into us, to be "strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man," in order to be able to bear it.

Let us notice, in the third place, that sufferings go before establishment in the faith ; and I feel sure that there is not one of the Lord's exercised children here this morning but would say, "I could welcome the trials and sufferings I meet with by the way, if I was certain they would end in the promised blessing." But when the suffering comes, the question is, Is it right ? and sometimes the clouds so cover everything of a promising nature, that we feel persuaded it is anything but right. Unbelief says it is not right, and that the things we are tried by are not to be found in the Word of God, and therefore have no relation to His promise ; and the adversary puts such a colouring upon the Word, and casts such a cloud upon the mind, that the exercised soul fears its case is as opposite to the Word of God as possible, and that he has no part or lot in the promised blessing.

Now, when the soul is thus laid low in the dust, the devil is very busy, and he makes sad work in the heart of a poor, cast-down sinner ; and why ? Because all sensible enjoyment in the Word of God and in the ways of God is perished, and now the enemy comes, and tries to persuade the poor sinner that he is

deceived ; that he is not one that is born of the Spirit, and that the end of these trials will prove him to be nothing more than an empty professor or a hypocrite ; and he says, " You know that the end of all such will be an awful end." Ah ! friends, I am not a stranger to these things. I have been tried like this for years together ; yea, sorely tried. Well, some may say, " Are you not tried now ? " Yes, I am, but the Lord has by these means taught me a little which is of great service to me ; and I will tell you one thing that I have found, which is this : Satan never comes to try me with these things except when the Lord has hidden His face from me. When the Lord lets me enjoy a little of His love, and when His mercy flows sweetly into my heart, Satan skulks away ; but when the Lord withdraws the light of His countenance, it is with me as with my Master when He said, " This is your hour and the power of darkness." Sometimes the enemy has tried me much by setting before me the reality of true religion. Ah ! he will preach that up wonderfully at times ; and why ? Because he knows it will fill me with shame, confusion, and fear, on account of the difference there is between my feelings and what I see in that. And then again, when the Lord blesses me, he tries afterwards to make me believe that it is only a delusive fancy of the mind, and thus stirs up my unbelief and infidelity respecting that which he before set that as such a reality. The Apostle says, " We are not ignorant of his devices." Still, this is most trying, I grant ; but I am something like Rutherford. He says, when speaking of the tactics of the enemy, " I am come to like a rumbling and a raging devil best, because I know his working then ; but when he comes with a plausible subject, he often ensnares me." What a mercy, therefore, if we are so instructed as not to be ignorant of his devices ; and even the disciples of the Lord, who have grown old in His ways, are not free from these changes. They are not left to settle on their lees. Oh, no ; not but that, by continual exercises and deliverances, they become more established in the faith, for they thereby " grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ; " so that it is with them as Peter says, " But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."

Now, the latter part of that text is what every child of God desires—to have the heart established with grace ; to be established not only in faith, but in experience. He desires to be blessedly established in the things of God, and to be able to say, with the Apostle, " I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." " Oh, that is what I have been

looking for for years!" say some of my aged friends who are here this morning. "I have been hoping and looking for that day, but it has not come yet." Well, perhaps you are hoping *now*, although you have been waiting so long, that the day will come when you shall be blessedly established in Christ. Then, I would say, "In patience possess ye your souls," for the time of love will come. But, after all, how difficult it is at times to feel satisfied that the way we are walking in is the right way to the right end!

Well, one thing is certain, and that is in our favour. The Lord does thus bring many of His people through suffering to the establishment they desire; and was not this, as we have noticed, the path of the Son of God? Did He not pass through suffering to glory? Was not that glory set before Him? As it is said, "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame." He looked forward to the consummation of the glorious purposes of God—the perfecting of the salvation of the Church; and, while that awful baptism of suffering was before Him, He said, "I have a baptism to be baptised with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" He was, so to speak, pent up in Himself until He had waded through that awful baptism of suffering for the accomplishment of the end—the finishing of the work which the Father gave Him to do; and if we are His we must follow in His steps. We are to tread the way our Lord and Master trod, for all the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ are to walk in His footprints, and to follow in His ways; and this is a very sweet trait of discipleship, to look upon our Master; and covet to follow Him, to be like Him—yea, to be conformed to the image of Christ Jesus, God's dear and well-beloved Son. Mark how the Apostle prays: "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death;" and cannot many of us breathe as our desire what says Mr. Hart in hymn called "The Wish"—

"If dust and ashes might presume,
Great God, to talk with Thee;
If in Thy presence can be room
For crawling worms like me;
I humbly would my wish present,
For *wishes* I have none;
All my desires are now content
To be comprised in one."

"The single boon I would entreat
Is, to be led by Thee
To gaze upon Thy bloody sweat
In sad Gethsemane;

To view (as I could bear at least)
 Thy tender broken heart,
 Like a rich olive, bruised and prest
 With agonizing smart.

“ To see Thee bowed beneath my guilt—
 Intolerable load !
 To see Thy blood for sinners spilt,
 My groaning, gasping God !
 With sympathizing grief to mourn
 The sorrows of Thy soul,
 The pangs and tortures by Thee borne
 In some degree condole.

“ There, musing on Thy mighty love,
 I always would remain ;
 Or but to Golgotha remove,
 And thence return again.
 In each dear place the same rich scene
 Should ever be renewed ;
 No object else should intervene,
 But all be love and blood.”

Oh, if we could hear those sighs and groans, and were favoured to see, by faith, the suffering Lamb of God more frequently, how this would deaden us to sin, to self, and to the world ! We should be more spiritually-minded and free, and our affections and conversation would be in heaven, “ From whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

And now let us briefly observe that as the Scriptures testify, so you, in all your experience, will find that the way to glory is through suffering ; so Peter says, “ Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind.” So we are to look out for the suffering. If we would have fellowship, with Him. Do not think that because Christ endured the cross you are never to know the bitterness of sin and the curse, for if you are His disciples you must drink of His cup and be baptized with His baptism, in your measure ; not in a way of merit, but of fellowship. But as we experience this fellowship with Him in His sufferings, so the time comes when we realize what John says in the third chapter of his first epistle, “ Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God ;” and when, as we are raised to this blessed experience, we realize not only that we are Christ's, but that the time is coming when we shall be with Him, and shall be like unto Him—yea, when we shall be glorified together with Him. So John says, “ Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like

Him ; for we shall see Him as He is." So when we have passed through the sufferings we shall come to the glory ; for as we have a part with Him in His death now, so also we shall have a part with Him in His resurrection, for He said, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father ; and to my God, and your God ;" and as we have a part with Him in His sufferings now, so also we shall have a part with Him in His glory, for He who is now set down at the right hand of the Father, before He left this world said, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am ; that they may behold My glory."

Oh, that in all our afflictions and troubles by the way we may ever "consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds." For how light are our afflictions compared with His, and what is our cross compared with that He bore for us ? And then we have His own word for every time of need, "My grace is sufficient for thee ;" and He has not only said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," but He has also declared, "Where I am, there also shall My servant be." Thus through all our warfare we have His example, conquest, and promise set before us for our encouragement and assurance respecting the glorious issue of the struggle. May the God of all grace make these truths rich blessings to our souls, and He shall bear the glory.

COMPLETE IN HIM.

"HAPPY are the people that are in such a case : yea, blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God." Oh, let us look to Jesus Christ, and to Him alone, continually, for every blessing we stand in need of. Jesus is our one object. Let our wants be what they may, Jesus Christ is consecrated and appointed by His Father to help, relieve, and supply us. All fulness dwells in Him. All the fulness of righteousness, holiness, grace, pardon, comfort, and consolation dwell in the great Head of the Church ; and this is our Lord's command : "Look unto Me, and be ye saved." May you be kept continually looking out of yourselves to Jesus alone ! Oh, remember what you are in Him ! In Him God the Father chose you from eternity, and, as members of Jesus, He loves you with the same love wherewith He loves Christ Himself. He views you in Him, clothed in His righteousness, and cleansed by His blood ; and in Jesus, in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily, ye are complete.—*Extract from Eyles Pierce's Letters.*

MEMOIR OF THE LATE JOHN CLARK, OF
FIVEASHDOWN.

(Continued from page 29.)

OUR January paper closed with the relation of our friend's singular call by grace. That this was God's own time and way subsequent circumstances and exercises fully proved. But it is generally found, especially at first, with many of the Lord's people that righteous self will thrust itself in the place of sinful self before both are abased to make way for the coronation of Christ in the soul's affection. So here, John Clark felt great self-complacency that he had given up the low habit of swearing, and that he could speak without lying; he also began regularly to attend a place of worship on a Sunday, either church or chapel, giving preference to the latter because, as he then thought, he saw greater consistency of life among Dissenters; but after finding much hypocrisy in many of them, he learned that no form of worship is acceptable unto the Lord but that which is spiritual, wherein the heart is engaged. He soon found that he had no power to withstand temptation; for falling in one day with one or two of his old companions, they held him fast and declared they would not release him unless he sang them a song. This he consented to, and then took his leave of them. When he was alone he bitterly reflected upon his folly, and felt that his religion was gone, and that all his doings were undone. However, he still tried to patch up a legal righteousness by repenting for his sin; and having found some new associates at a chapel, he was there soon invited to become a Sunday-school teacher, which he felt irksome. Here he said they made him keeper of the vineyards, but his own vineyard he had not kept, and although very ignorant of divine things, he felt to loathe what he continually heard from pastor and people—the glory of God eclipsed by the praise of man.

When walking to his lodgings one day, thinking over the high-flown language he had been hearing from the pulpit, it was as if some one said to him, "Son of man, look at the thirty-third chapter of Isaiah," "Which (says he) when I got home I did, and the first words that caught my eye were the following: 'Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a stammering tongue, that thou canst not understand.' Oh, how I was struck that this was not to be the people I was finally to dwell with, for my understanding began to be opened a little to see what grace was in its sovereignty and freeness; the Lord was about to instruct me with a high hand, not to say, A confederacy, to all to whom this

people should say, A confederacy ; nor to fear their fear, nor be afraid ; but to sanctify the Lord of Hosts Himself, to let Him be my fear and my dread (Isa. viii. 12, 13)."

While among these heady, light-hearted professors he was specially warned of some whom they called "Antinomians," who held, as they said, "high Calvinism ;" but for all this the power of divine truth forced itself upon him, and by it he was finally rescued from "this congregation of the dead."

The good man with whom he worked (referred to on p. 28) would now and then drop a word upon religion, and the doctrine of election was spoken of, at which our friend remarked, "Oh, election ! election ! What is that ?" Thereupon he began to search his Bible, and soon found it to be a solemn truth. He says :—"I saw that 'the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded' (Rom. xi. 7) ; that the rest were blinded in the past to show that they were under the curse. 'The people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever' (Mal. i. 4). 'The miry places and the marishes that shall not be healed' (Ezek. xlvi. 11). I saw God called Abraham alone (Isa. li. 2) ; and therefore the call was particular. That the Saviour called to him whom He would (Mark iii. 13) ; and when speaking of the troubles that were to come upon Jerusalem, He said that the days of trouble were to be shortened for the elect's sake (Matt. xxiv. 22), and that the angels were to be sent 'to gather together His elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven' (Mark xiii. 27) ; that He heard the prayers of His elect (Luke xviii. 7). 'Oh,' thought I, 'here are the doctrines of election and reprobation. Oh, what shall I do ? What is all my reformation and all my religion ? For if I was not chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world I must be for ever lost. How am I to know my election of God ? Well,' I thought, 'the only way to come at this is to pray God to show me ;' upon which I uttered the following prayer, 'O Lord, will it please Thee to show me whether I am elected or reprobated ?'

"Well, the next day, when we were at work, the good man and I were talking together, and he was telling me of two hearers of Mr. Huntington's, who, in going to vote for a member of Parliament for the sake of money, gave their votes to another : these men, he said, died in horrors.

"As he uttered the words, a sin I had been guilty of when a boy flashed into my mind, and I thought at that time that the only way to keep myself from that sin was to make oath that I would never commit it any more, which I did, and used the following words, 'I will never commit this sin any more, so help me God.' 'Now,' says conscience, 'you have committed it again and again, and as these men died in horrors, so will you. And now

you have asked God to show you whether you are elect or reprobate, and He has shown you.' Oh, the horror that filled my mind! despair seized me; the wrath of God took hold of me; the blast of His breath blew upon me; the poison of His arrows drank up my spirit; my bowels were troubled; a fearful looking for judgment and of fiery indignation to devour me as an adversary. I was shaken to pieces, and there was nothing but blackness and darkness before me. I arose from my seat, and the good man saw I was in a sad state, for I nearly fell down. He cried out, 'John, what is the matter with you?' but I could not tell him. I have wished since that I had; but I wanted to tell no man, for my groanings could not be uttered. My countenance was the picture of despair—that which recently had been so lively with humour. The bloom of my countenance gave way, as it is said, 'When Thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, Thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth' (Ps. xxxix. 11). Judgment now was set to my line of conduct, and the plummet of righteousness to my uprightness. I withered like the grass and the flower of the field, for the Spirit had blown upon me. Now the book of Job, and the mournful parts of the Psalms suited me, such as, 'On my eyelids sits the shadow of death;' 'My heart is smitten and withered like grass, so that I forget to eat my bread;' 'The sorrows of death encompass me;' 'I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing;' 'While I suffer Thy terrors, I am distracted;' 'Thine arrows stick fast in me, and Thine hand presseth me sore.' Now the book of Job became my companion. Like him, my soul chose death and strangling rather than life. I seemed a companion to dragons and a brother to owls. I wished myself anything but a man. I looked at dogs and horses and wished I was one of them. These words followed me respecting Esau, 'For ye know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears' (Heb. xii. 17). And when I tried to hope, so as to take the least encouragement, the words sounded with such power: 'For ye know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected,' which drove me, as it were, from all anchorage."

(*To be continued.*)

WE cry to God to humble us, and then such crosses and troubles come upon us that, instead of a crop of gratitude, there is a crop of rebellion and peevishness.—*Tiptaft.*

"If Jesus have a place at all
Within thy heart, He claims it all."

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

“They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened, and heard it.”—MALACHI iii. 16.

It happened on a solemn eventide,
 Soon after He that was our Surety died,
 Two bosom friends, each pensively inclined,
 The scene of all those sorrows left behind,
 Sought their own village, busied, as they went,
 In musings worthy of the great event.
 They spake of Him they loved, of Him whose life,
 Though blameless, had incurred perpetual strife,
 Whose deeds had left, in spite of hostile arts,
 A deep memorial graven on their hearts.
 The recollection, like a vein of ore,
 The farther traced, enriched them still more ;
 They thought Him, and they justly thought Him, one
 Sent to do more than He appeared to have done ;
 To exalt a people, and to place them high
 Above all else—and wondered He should die.
 Ere yet they brought their journey to an end
 A stranger joined them, courteous as a friend,
 And asked them, with a kind, engaging air,
 What their affliction was, and begged a share.
 Informed, He gathered up the broken thread,
 And, truth and wisdom gracing all He said,
 Explained, illustrated, and searched so well
 The tender theme on which they chose to dwell,
 That, reaching home, “The night,” they said, “is near ;
 We must not now be parted ; sojourn here.”
 The new acquaintance soon became a guest,
 And, made so welcome at their simple feast,
 He bless'd the bread, but vanished at the word,
 And left them both exclaiming, “’Twas the Lord !
 Did not our hearts feel all He deigned to say ?
 Did they not burn within us by the way ?”
 Now, theirs was converse such as it behoves
 Man to maintain, and such as God approves :
 Their views indeed were indistinct and dim,
 But yet successful, being aimed at Him :
 Christ and His character their only scope,
 Their object, and their subject, and their hope ;
 They felt what it became them much to feel,
 And, wanting Him to loose the sacred seal,
 Found Him as prompt as their desire was true,
 To spread the new-born glories in their view.

FROM CONVERSATION, BY COWPER.

IF Christ's righteousness will not do to die by, creature righteousness will not.—*Tiptaft.*

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.

(Concluded from page 31.)

THE Church of Pergamos is commended for holding fast the name of the Lord, and not denying His faith, during a time of persecution, and in the midst of a wicked city; but there were some in it who held doctrines, and did deeds, which the Lord hated. Against these He was to fight with the sword of His mouth, and all were called to repent; but it is not said, as of Ephesus, that their candlestick would be removed out of its place. Pergamos is situated to the north of Smyrna, at a distance of nearly sixty-four miles, and was formerly the metropolis of Hellespontic Mysia. It still contains about fifteen thousand inhabitants, of whom fifteen hundred are Greeks, and two hundred Armenians, each of whom has a church.

In the Church of Thyatira, like that of Pergamos, some tares were soon mingled with the wheat. He who hath eyes like unto a flame of fire discerned both. Yet, happily for the souls of the people more than for the safety of the city, the general character of that Church, as it then existed, is thus described: "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first." But against those—for such there were among them—who had committed fornication, and eaten things sacrificed unto idols, to whom the Lord gave space to repent of their fornication, and they repented not, great tribulation was denounced; and to every one of them was to be given according to their works. These, thus warned while on earth in vain, have long since passed, whither all are daily hastening, to the place where no repentance can be found, and no work be done; "But unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not known the depths of Satan, I will put upon you, saith the Lord, none other burden." There were those in Thyatira who could save a city. It still exists, while greater cities have fallen. The Greeks are said to occupy about three hundred houses, and the Armenians about thirty. Each of them has a church.

The Church of Sardis differed from the Church of Pergamos and Thyatira. They had not denied the faith, but the Lord had a few things against them, for there were some evil-doers among them, and on those, if they repented not, judgment was to rest; but in Sardis, great though the city was, and founded though the Church had been by an Apostle, there were only a few names which had not defiled their garments; and to that Church the Spirit said, "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." But the Lord is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance;

and the Church of Sardis was thus warned : " Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die : for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." The state of Sardis now is a token that the warning was given in vain, and shows that the threatenings of the Lord, when disregarded, become certain judgments. Sardis, the capital of Lydia, was a great and renowned city, where the wealth of Cræsus, its king, was accumulated, and became ever a proverb ; but now a few wretched mud huts, " scattered among the ruins," are the only dwellings in Sardis, and form the lowly home of Turkish herdsmen, who are its only inhabitants. As the seat of a Christian Church, it has lost all it had to lose—the name. No Christians reside on the spot.

" And to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia write : These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth ; and shutteth, and no man openeth ; I know thy works : behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it : for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My Word, and hast not denied My name. Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world." The promises of the Lord are as sure as His threatenings. Philadelphia alone long withstood the power of the Turks, and, in the words of Gibbon, " at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans. Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia," he adds, " Philadelphia is still erect ; a column in a scene of ruins." There is still a numerous Christian population, occupying nearly three hundred houses. Nor is it less interesting, in these eventful times, and notwithstanding the general degeneracy of the Greek Church, to learn that the Bishop of Philadelphia accounts the Bible the only foundation of all religious belief, and admits that abuses have entered into the Church, which former ages might endure, but the present must put them down. The circumstance that Philadelphia is now called Allah-Shehr, the City of God, when viewed in connection with the promises made to that Church, and especially with that of writing the name of the City of God upon its faithful members, is, to say the least, a singular concurrence. From the prevailing iniquities of men many a sign has been given ; and how terrible are the judgments of God ! But from the fidelity of the Church in Philadelphia of old in keeping His Word, a name and memorial of His faithfulness has been left on earth, while the higher glories, promised to those that overcame, shall be ratified

in heaven; and towards them, but not them only, shall the glorified Redeemer confirm the truth of His blessed words, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God," even as assuredly as Philadelphia, when all else fell around it, "stood erect," our enemies themselves being judges, "a column in a scene of ruins."

"And unto the angel of the Church of the Laodiceans write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." All the other Churches were found worthy of some commendation, and there was some blessing in them all. The Church of Ephesus had laboured and had not fainted, though she had forsaken her first love; and the threatened punishment, except she repented, was the removal of her candlestick out of its place. A faithless and wicked few polluted the Churches of Pergamos and Thyatira by their doctrines or by their lives; but the body was sound, and the Churches had a portion in Christ. Even in Sardis, though it was dead, there was life in a few, who had not defiled their garments; "And they shall walk with Me in white," said the Lord, "for they are worthy."

But in what the Spirit said to the Church in Laodicea, there was not one word of approval: it was lukewarm, without exception, and therefore it was wholly loathed. The religion of Jesus had become to them as an ordinary matter. They would attend to it just as they did to other things, which they loved as well. The sacrifice of the Son of God upon the cross was nothing thought of more than a common gift by man. They were not constrained by the love of Christ more than by other feelings. There was no Dorcas among them, who, out of pure Christian love, made clothes for the poor. There was no Philemon to whom it could said, "The church in thy house," and who could look on a Christian servant as a "brother beloved." There was nothing done, as everything should be, heartily, as to the Lord and not unto men.

They neither felt nor lived as if they knew that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Their lukewarmness was worse, for it rendered their state more hopeless than if they had been cold. For sooner

would a man in Sardis have felt that the chill of death was upon him, and have cried out for life, and called to the physician, than would a man of Laodicea, who could calmly count his even pulse, and think his life secure, while death was preying on his vitals. The character of lukewarm Christians—a self-contradicting name—is the same in every age. Such was the Church of the Laodiceans. But what is that city now, or how is it changed from what it was? Jenour observes that “Laodicea is now entirely abandoned, its only inhabitants being wolves, foxes, and jackals. So fearfully has the denunciation been fulfilled, ‘*I will spue thee out of My mouth.*’”—*Keith’s Evidence of Prophecy.*

DAILY THOUGHTS BY AN ANXIOUS ONE.

AM I a child of God? This is an important question to each and all of us—both to those who have professedly put on the Lord Jesus, and those who have not. There is no middle position. We cannot “serve God and mammon.” God’s Word speaks of two classes of persons, and *only* two—the godly and the ungodly. The godly hold intercourse with God; the ungodly do not. Where am I? To which class do *I* belong? Have *I* a good hope through grace? Have *I* been led to see *my* lost state as a sinner before a holy God, and to mourn on account of it? Have *I* felt the curse of a broken law, and then the love of Christ extended to such a transgressor? Yes. But still *I* am not satisfied. The question often arises within, “Am I a child of God?” True, to pray at times *I* have found joyous beyond description, but then at others it seems a task. At the prayer-meeting *I* have passed some of the happiest moments of my life, but sometimes *I* go trembling, for fear of being asked to pray, and *I* try to creep in unseen, and yet *I* feel *I* must go. But can it be thus with the true children of God?

“You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it thus with you?”

Dear reader, how comes this important question to thee? Art *thou* a child of God? Does thy soul yearn for the living water—that inward spring? Dost thou feel the need of a free salvation? If so, our desire is that the Lord would bless us indeed, and that His Holy Spirit may witness with our spirits that we are His children indeed and of a truth.

“Since 'tis Thy work alone,
And that divinely free,
Lord, send the Spirit of Thy Son
To write Thy love in me.”

OUR MARTYRED FOREFATHERS.

XVII.—HUGH LATIMER.

LEICESTERSHIRE has reason to be proud of its connection with the history of our country's Reformation. Two of the most prominent leaders of this movement—Hugh Latimer and John Wycliffe—spent a portion of their valuable lives in this county; the former his childhood, and the latter his closing years. In the small, quiet town of Lutterworth did Wycliffe industriously labour as rector; it was here that he preached the truths of the Gospel with a characteristic fervour and simplicity; it was here that he penned a large number of those outspoken tractates that so powerfully influenced the minds of his countrymen; it was here that he rendered verse after verse, chapter after chapter, book after book, into his mother tongue, until there lay before him the first English Bible; and it was here also that he died a peaceful death. A century passed away, and then the same county gave birth to another champion of the Reformation. This was Hugh Latimer.

In the village of Thurcaston, a few miles from the ancient town of Leicester, did Latimer first see the light. The date of his birth is somewhat uncertain, but it was about the year 1485. From Latimer's own lips we learn "that upon a farm of four pounds a year at the utmost, his father tilled as much ground as kept half-a-dozen men; that he had it stocked with a hundred sheep and thirty cows; and that he found the king a man and horse, himself remembering to have buckled on his father's harness when he went to Blackheath; that he gave his daughters five pounds a-piece at marriage; that he lived hospitably among his neighbours, and was not backward in his alms to the poor." It was in this manner that the preacher, in one of his sermons before the court of King Edward, introduced his audience to the scenes of his boyhood. Young Latimer was sent to a neighbouring school, where, at an early age, he gave such evidence of good abilities, and so distinguished himself, that he left his native county and entered the University of Cambridge. Here he made rapid progress in the learning of that age.

At that time the Leicestershire student was a rigid Papist. He had already become master of arts in priest's orders, which honour his learning had gained him: and his religious zeal was so marked and intense that it procured for him the office of cross-bearer in all public processions. He intensely hated the Reformers and their teaching, and on one occasion he delivered a vehement oration against Melancthon. Being severely exact in his observance of Rome's ceremonies, Latimer fiercely condemned

the laxity and indifference of his religionists. Any person holding opinions that were adverse to the claims and dogmas of "the Church" was sure to encounter his violent denunciation and scathing exposure. In a word, Latimer was as loyal and zealous a Papist as it was possible to conceive; as faithful and as willing a servant as any the Pope had in his service.

But Latimer's eloquence and zeal were about to be diverted into another and a very different channel. Among those who had listened to Latimer's vituperative statements about the Reformers and their theology was Thomas Bilney. Admiring his zeal, Bilney could not help but pity his deplorable ignorance of the Truth, and he began to search out means whereby he might win him to the cause of Christ. At length Bilney visited him, and, under the pretext of a confession, rehearsed the simple truths of the Gospel in Latimer's ears. This interview was attended with the most important results. From that day Latimer was a champion of the Gospel. By the instrumentality of Bilney, his eyes were opened, and he was enabled to see the error of his ways. His burning zeal, his brilliant talents, and his fervid eloquence, were now transferred to the cause of the Reformation; and Latimer now laboured more diligently, if such a thing were possible, on behalf of the Truth, than he had done previously in the interests of error. Activity in a good cause no sane man can help but admire, and this feature is a most conspicuous one in Latimer's life. He threw his very heart and soul into the service of the Gospel. Unless the Lord had mercifully arrested him, we have every reason to believe that Latimer would have been as zealous a bigot and as cruel a persecutor as Bonner or Gardiner, for he possessed those characteristics that only needed circumstances and development to permit them to launch out into malicious and disreputable deeds. Whether Papist or Protestant, Latimer could not be lukewarm; he was so constituted that he must be zealous. Therefore, thanks be unto God, his zeal was not permitted to cause him to raise his hands against the saints of the Most High. No, his activity was now employed in supporting and propagating the verities of the Bible; and, by preaching in public, exhorting in private, and everywhere insisting upon leading a holy and consistent life, he sought to bring souls to Christ, both in the town and University.

Such a line of action was sure to bring down upon him the wrath of the enemies of the Gospel. It was soon whispered that Latimer was disseminating "heterodox" opinions, disparaging to the practices and doctrines of the Papacy. His zeal for the "old" doctrines had cooled, and his sympathy for the "new" ones was not difficult to discover. At last the storm which had been brewing for some time burst. During the Christmas

holidays of 1529 Latimer preached a course of sermons in Cambridge, in which he took occasion to dilate upon the impiety of indulgences, the uncertainty of tradition, and the vanity of works of supererogation ; he stoutly inveighed against the multiplicity of ceremonies with which true religion was encumbered ; and the pride and usurpation of the Romish hierarchy he did not hesitate to denounce and expose. He did not stop here, however, but went so far as to advocate a remedy for the improvement of this state of things. Latimer, in these sermons, most firmly insisted upon the right of the laity to the Bible, and he severely censured those who dared to deprive the people of this privilege by keeping the Scriptures locked up in unknown tongues. "A free and open Bible for all," was Latimer's demand. Great was the outcry against these discourses, which invests them with a certain degree of importance. One of these sermons was preached from the words, "Who art thou?" (John i. 22); and from this discourse we subjoin a few extracts.

After explaining the circumstances that caused the framing of the short question, "Who art thou?" Latimer then expresses himself on the natural state of man. He says:—

"Now then, according to the preacher, let every man and woman, of a good and simple mind, contrary to the Pharisees' intent, ask this question—Who art thou? This question must be moved to themselves, what they be of themselves, on this fashion—What art thou of thy only and natural generation between father and mother, when thou camest into the world? What substance, what virtue, what goodness art thou of thyself? Which question, if thou rehearse oftentimes to thyself, thou shalt well perceive and understand how thou shalt answer it, which must be made in this wise: I am of myself, and by myself, coming from my natural father and mother, the child of the anger and indignation of God, the true inheritor of hell, a lump of sin, and working nothing of myself, but all towards hell, except I have better help of another than I have of myself. Now, we may see in what state we enter into this world; that we be of ourselves the true and just inheritors of hell, the children of the ire and indignation of Christ, working all towards hell, whereby we deserve of ourselves perpetual damnation, by the right judgment of God and the true claim of ourselves; which unthrifty state that we be born into is come unto us for our own deserts."

Farther on in the same sermon, the earnest preacher treats of the Incarnation of Christ as follows:—

"And now, the world standing in this damnable state, cometh in the occasion of the Incarnation of Christ; the Father in heaven perceiving the frail nature of man, that he by himself and of himself could do nothing for himself, by His prudent wisdom sent

down the Second Person in the Trinity, His Son Jesus Christ, to declare unto man His pleasure and commandment ; and so, at the Father's will, Christ took on Him human nature, being willing to deliver man out of this miserable way, and was content to suffer cruel passion in shedding His blood for fallen mankind, and so left behind, for our safeguard, laws and ordinances to keep us always in the right path unto everlasting life, as the Gospels, the Sacraments, the Commandments ; which, if we do keep and observe according to our profession, we shall answer better unto this question, ' Who art thou ? '

This is a short specimen of the preaching that attracted such general attention, and brought into play such a formidable array of hostile criticism. In these sermons there is not that clear, Scriptural ring that is to be found in Latimer's later discourses ; but there was quite sufficient " heresy " to arouse the opposition of the upholders of Rome's tenets. There was one point in particular that his enemies keenly opposed, and that was the advocacy of a free and open Bible. One of the first to enter the lists against the preacher was Dr. Buckenham, a prior of the Black Friars. The proposal that the Scriptures should be in the possession of the laity was most nauseous to the theological palate of the prior, who immediately set to work to prove the danger of such a measure. " To give the Word of God to the people," said the prior, " would inevitably lead to the most serious consequences. The man at the plough would leave his labour when he heard the words, ' No man that layeth his hand on the plough, and looketh back, is meet for the kingdom of God ; ' the baker would cease to make leavened bread, when he heard that ' a little leaven corrupteth the whole lump of dough ; ' and the simple man, likewise, would deprive himself of his sight, because the Gospel says, ' If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee ; ' and thus the world would be full of beggars." These were the arguments put forward by Dr. Buckenham to establish the desirability of keeping the Scriptures from the people. Such foolish statements were easily overthrown by Latimer, who, in his reply to the Black Friar, indulging in a vein of human sarcasm, exposed the puerility of his opponent's arguments, and insisted more strongly than ever upon the necessity of the circulation of the Bible in the English tongue.

Swarms of doctors and friars, monks and priests, now raised their voices against him ; and, eventually, the Bishop of Ely issued an ultimatum, commanding Latimer to desist from preaching in his diocese. His enemies were now elated ; for, preaching being forbidden him, what harm could he do ? It was his persuasive eloquence that caused them to quake, and now that silence was imposed upon him, what had they to fear ? But, at this

junction, his enemies were completely out-manceuvred by Dr. Barnes, prior of the Augustine Friars, whose church, being exempt from the jurisdiction of the bishop, was placed at the disposal of Latimer. Here he continued preaching for more than three years, fearlessly displaying the Gospel banner in the sight of all.

Besides preaching, Latimer devoted a large portion of his time to deeds of benevolence. He and his friend Bilney were companions in this delightful work. In the cell of the prisoner, in the garret of the pauper, and at the bedside of the sick, they were alike welcome as the certain harbingers of comfort and consolation. Thus Latimer laboured with a burning zeal for the good of souls. He was ever "about his Master's business." Many there were who tried to hinder him in his noble work, and among the number was Dr. Redman, a man of a mild disposition, but his mind was wholly enrapt in the superstition of that age. He was a man of great influence in the University of Cambridge at that time, and one who greatly disliked Latimer's boldness and honesty in preaching the truths of the Gospel. Consequently he thought it his duty to indite a letter to Latimer, asking him to alter his style of speaking in the pulpit. To this the Gospel champion returned the following laconic answer:—

"Reverend Mr. Redman,—It is even enough for me that Christ's sheep hear no man's voice but Christ's; and as for you, you have no voice of Christ against me; whereas, for my part, I have a heart that is ready to hearken to any voice of Christ that you can bring me. Thus, fare you well, and trouble me no more from talking with the Lord my God."

During this period, which Latimer had turned to such good account, the Papists had been busily plotting for his removal from Cambridge. Complaint after complaint of the alarming proportions "heresy" was beginning to assume in the town and University of Cambridge were continually reaching the ears of the King and his courtiers, and Bilney and Latimer were specially mentioned as the two men who were directly responsible for the progress of the odious movement. Cardinal Wolsey was then at the head of affairs; and Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Tonsal, Bishop of London, were his chief advisers.

For some considerable time this trio of ecclesiastics treated the news from Cambridge with cool indifference. Wolsey, in fact, who was no persecutor, looked upon the matter as a jest, as a mere cry of jealousy on the part of a lazy and indolent set of priests. At length, however, action was taken, and a court was erected, with the Bishop of London as president, for the trial of the ringleaders of the "heretical" movement. Latimer, amongst others, was summoned to London. There the earnest Reformer

appeared, and, after acquitting himself with satisfaction before his judges, he again returned to Cambridge. Latimer, in nowise daunted, still continued his exertions for the propagation of the Gospel, and his words and deeds clearly proved that the tactics of his foes had neither cooled his ardour nor intimidated his courage. He was "at it again," to use the words of a modern writer hostile to the Reformation. About this time a proclamation was issued by the King, forbidding the use of the Bible in the English vernacular. This royal mandate incited the pen of Latimer to indite a letter to the monarch, expostulating with him upon the folly and unreasonableness of such a policy that would deprive his subjects of the only Book that would give stability to his throne and enjoin loyalty upon its readers. Henry VIII., with all his faults, could admire the genuine honesty of Latimer, whose letter he received in no unfavourable spirit.

Shortly after the publication of this appeal to the King, Latimer was appointed to the living of West Kingston, in Wiltshire. Here he was as diligent as ever, preaching and benevolence being his chief delights. In this part of the country, however, he was not free from enemies, who manifested their malice towards him by the constant circulation of reports that were not at all calculated to give him rest and peace. Letters were sent to the Archbishop of Canterbury complaining of the vicar of West Kingston and his preaching; and some neighbouring priests there were who, from their pulpits, loudly denounced Latimer as an enemy of "Mother Church" and an obnoxious "heretic." On January 29th, 1531, the noble man was ordered to appear before Warham, the Primate, to answer for his questionable assertions. Latimer appeared; and, in one of his sermons preached at Stamford in the year 1550, he has given a description of one of his examinations. "I was once in examination before five or six bishops," says the preacher, "where I had much trouble: thrice every week I came to examinations, and many snares and traps were laid to get something. Now, God knoweth I was ignorant of the law, but that God gave me wisdom what I should speak; it was God indeed, or else I had never escaped them. At last I was brought forth to be examined into a chamber hung with arras, where I was wont to be examined; but now at this time the chamber was somewhat altered. For whereas before there was wont always to be a fire in the chimney, now the fire was taken away, and an arras hung over the chimney, and the table stood near the fire-place. There was amongst the bishops who examined me, one with whom I had been very familiar, and took him for my great friend, an aged man, and he sat next to the table's end. Then, amongst other questions, he put forth a very subtle and crafty one, and such an one indeed as

I would not think so great danger in. And when I should make answer, one said, 'I pray you, Mr. Latimer, speak out, I am very thick of hearing, and here may be many that sit far off.' I marvelled at this that I was bid to speak out, and begun to suspect, and give an ear to the chimney; and there I heard a pen writing in the chimney behind the cloth. They had appointed one there to write all mine answers, for they made sure that I should not start from them: there was no starting from them. God was my Lord, and gave me answer; I could never else have escaped it." Thus, as he himself tells us, he was permitted to escape out of their hands, and there is every reason to believe that the bishops were restrained from carrying out their cruel designs by the influence of the King.

Anne Boleyn was now the King's consort, and Thomas Cromwell was at the helm of affairs. These two important personages, having a strong desire to promote the progress of the Reformation, induced their royal master to elevate Latimer to the episcopal bench as Bishop of Worcester. This promotion did not at all interfere with his honesty and zeal, for Bishop Latimer was the same sincere and indefatigable worker for Christ as he had been when merely spiritual overseer of a small rural parish. The oversight of the clergy he considered the chief branch of his duty, and all historians of that time pronounce him to have been remarkably zealous in inciting his subordinates to their duty as ministers of Christ. During the important Parliamentary session of 1536 the good bishop was summoned to London, when he opened the convocation of the clergy with an admirable sermon, in which he made a vigorous attack upon the errors and abuses of the day. During this session several important bills were passed that tended to the curtailment of Popish power and influence in this country; and a few months afterwards a royal proclamation was issued, permitting the people of England to read the Bible in their own language. How this event must have rejoiced the heart of Latimer, who for many years past had been striving, on behalf of the people, for this very privilege!

(To be continued.)

OBITUARY OF ASHER BEVIS.

ON January 4th, 1877, Asher Bevis, of Swanwick, a member of the little church near Bursledon Bridge, entered into rest at the age of fifty-eight. He had been a hearer at the above chapel for thirty years, and, it appeared, for many years past his life evidenced that he was a partaker of grace. He was very regular in his attendance at the chapel and circumspect in his conduct.

Five years before his death he was afflicted with heart disease, and it was feared he would not be long in this world. He was very much tried respecting his state, because he could not clearly see his interest in the dear Redeemer. He feared he had been too worldly-minded, and his concern respecting his state was so great that at times he sunk very low in mind, and death appeared to him very terrific, so that he was plunged into great distress of soul. But the Lord was pleased partly to restore him to health again, and the affliction was greatly blessed to his soul. He became much more spiritually-minded, and the Gospel was brought home with unctuous power to his heart, whereby he was made willing to be baptized and join the Church, of which he became a very useful member.

But in September, 1876, he was taken ill again, when dropsy set in, and the doctor gave but little hope of his recovery. I visited him very frequently, and am happy to say that the Lord was very good to him all through his affliction. He was favoured at times with blissful views of the dear Redeemer, so that his fears and doubts respecting his state were removed, and his heart was filled with thanksgiving and praise for spiritual and temporal favours; so that at times it was found to be a pleasure to visit him. He underwent an operation five weeks before his death, but not a murmur escaped his lips. He was much favoured with a steadfast reliance on the Person, work, and merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, and felt that the sting of death was taken away. He was down stairs the same day he died until past four o'clock, when he was helped up into his room, and his wife and large family gathered round his dying bed. He was perfectly sensible; and his wife, who is a partaker of grace, asked him about a quarter of an hour before his death how he felt in his soul, and his answer was, "*Happy in the Lord,*" which were the last words he spoke; and at a few minutes past eight p.m. his happy soul took its flight into the realms of eternal day, where his "sun will no more go down, and the days of mourning are ended."

He left behind a widow, two sons, and six daughters to mourn the loss of a good husband and father. And we, as a Church, very much miss him as a useful member, and also as a teacher in the Sabbath-school; yet there is the consoling thought that our loss is his gain.

GEORGE HARDING.

I USED to try to reconcile the friendship of the world and God's favour, but I found it would not do: "He that will not forsake all is not worthy of Me."—*Tiptaft*.

"WHEN thou hast not a mite to pay,
Thy debt is cancelled, go thy way."

A NOTE OF WARNING.

THE NEW ROMAN CATHOLIC DIRECTORY.

SOME interesting facts respecting the hierarchy and priesthood of the Roman Catholic Church in these kingdoms are contained in the "Catholic Directory" for the new year, published by Messrs. Burns and Oates, under the auspices of Cardinal Manning and the rest of his episcopate. It appears from it that there are now six cardinal bishops, fifty cardinal priests, and fourteen cardinal deacons in the Sacred College at Rome, only one living member of which—the Archbishop of Prague—owes his scarlet cap to Pope Gregory XVI. ; fifty still live who were raised to the cardinalate by his successor, Pius IX. ; and thirteen more have been created and proclaimed by Leo XIII. The name of John Henry Newman figures last but two among the cardinal deacons. Although there are only thirteen Roman Catholic Sees in England and Wales, and six more in Scotland, there are no less than twenty-eight bishops in Great Britain, those unaccounted for being mostly coadjutor and auxiliary bishops. The number of places in Great Britain which have churches or mission chapels and are served by resident clergy are about a thousand in all ; and the clergy, secular and regular, amount to nearly 2,300 ; thus showing that the ministry of the Roman Catholic Church in this country has doubled itself in little more than a quarter of a century. The Roman Catholic members of the peerage in the three kingdoms are thirty-eight ; the list runs as follows :—The Duke of Norfolk, the Marquises of Bute and Ripon ; the Earls of Denbigh, Newburgh, Ashburnham, Westmeath, Fingall, Granard, Kenmare, Orford, and Gainsborough ; Viscounts Gormanston, Netterville, Taaffe, and Southwell ; and Barons Mowbray and Stourton, Camoys, Beaumont, Vaux of Harrowden, Bray, Petre, Arundell of Wardour, Dormer, Stafford, Clifford of Chudleigh, Ashford, Herries, Lovat, Louth, Ffrench, Bellew, De Freyne, Howard of Glossop, Acton, O'Hagan, Emly, and Gerard. No less than forty-seven baronetcies of the three kingdoms also are held by Roman Catholics, the youthful Sir Henry Tichborne standing at their head, and the last being Sir Maurice J. O'Connell. There are also seven Roman Catholic members of Her Majesty's Privy Council—Lords Ripon, Kenmare, Robert Montagu, Bury, Howard of Glossop, Emly, and O'Hagan. Throughout the world there are, it would appear, 173 archiepiscopal sees and 710 sees of bishops in communion with the see of Rome and acknowledging the Holy See as the mother and mistress of all Churches. But the total number of patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, apostolic delegates, and bishops *in*

partibus infidelium, including those who have retired from active duties, is given in the Directory as 1,146.—*Times*.

[The above extract shows the rapid strides Popery is making in our beloved land, where the blood of our forefathers, and noble Reformers and martyrs, was formerly so freely shed in the successful effort to cast off the yoke of this "Mother of Harlots." May God defeat her attempts to again enslave Britain, and may the Protestant blood of all true lovers of liberty warm to the struggle to drive back the usurper of truth and freedom, that we be not over-reached by her crafty designs. Christians! strive mightily with God in prayer; spread abroad His truth, and look well to the interests of the young.]

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. X.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,—After reading what your dear mother has written, I can say that my heart responds thereto, and I hope, in the Lord's own time, your hearts may do the same; for it is a fearful thing to be found with a foolish lamp of religious profession while lacking the oil of God's grace. Neither is a mere knowledge of the doctrines of grace sufficient to salvation; a person may know and believe (after a manner) all this and yet perish everlastingly; no doubt there have been thousands that have believed in the doctrine of election, and yet have died in their sins. Knowledge alone only puffeth up; a man must see and feel himself entirely lost before he can know what it is to be saved, for it is such as are lost that Christ came to seek and save. True faith in Him is wrought in the heart by His divine Spirit, as it is written concerning the Comforter, "He will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; of sin, because they believe not on Me," saith Christ. This is the condemning sin.

So we find that the children of Israel could not enter the promised land because of unbelief. To believe with the heart unto righteousness is the gift of God, "not of works, lest any man should boast;" and when the work is performed, it is by the power of His Divine Spirit, "by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

A person never believes to the saving of the soul until born again. Before this good work begins "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned: but he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." When the Holy Ghost convinces the soul of sin, and plants in the heart the incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth for ever, the sinner finds that all his comeliness is

turned into corruption, as it is written, "When Thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, Thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth;" and Christ is only precious to such, for "he that is whole needs not a physician, but those that are sick." When the Lord thus sets apart them that are godly for Himself, He weans their affections from all the beggarly elements of this ungodly world, so that they cannot follow the multitude to do evil; as it is written of the man that fears God, "The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide." I know these truths experimentally, and I pray that my dear children may each have a "like precious faith," which worketh by love, and purifieth the heart. Remember our Lord's words, "Except ye forsake all for My sake, ye cannot be My disciples:" here is no mincing the matter. Again, it is also written, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

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

These things I have written unto you in love and in truth, having myself tasted that the Lord is gracious. And now, having known Him for nearly fifty years, I am waiting for my summons to depart out of this vain life, knowing that my body shall return to the dust, and my spirit to God, who gave it: this I must shortly expect at my time of life, being eighty-one years of age this present month; therefore, I can have no other motive in writing this unto you but a desire for your everlasting welfare.

You will understand, this is written to you all three, and may the dear Lord bless the contents to each of your never-dying souls. I therefore beseech you to seek Him with your whole heart, that He may be found of you, for such is His promise, and He is faithful to His word—the Lord Jesus Christ says, "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things [the mysteries of Thy kingdom] from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight." I pray that you may know them for yourselves, experimentally, then you will be all right through time and to all eternity.

I hope you will be able to read this scrawl of bad writing: my fingers are grown so stiff that I have some difficulty in writing at all. May the Lord bless you all, in providence and in grace, is the desire of
Your affectionate father,

Wolverhampton, January 1st, 1872.

BENJAMIN GREGORY.

[This was the last letter written by this godly man to his children. He entered his eternal rest a little more than a month after he wrote it, dying as it were in the arms of Christ.]

THE SOWER.

SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON

PREACHED AT DEVONSHIRE ROAD CHAPEL, GREENWICH, ON SUNDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 24TH, 1880, BY MR. WREN, OF BEDFORD.

“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.”—
2 PETER i. 10.

THESE words are not the hasty conclusions of a novice, but the experience of one that was sober and temperate in all things. It is quite possible to fight against the Word of God; but if we are upright in our hearts we shall not do so, for—

“If aught there dark appear,
Bewail thy want of sight;
No imperfection can be there,
For all God’s words are right.”

This conduct is much better than fighting against it. The people of God in their right mind dare not do so; they dare not trifle with God’s Word; they dare not flatter themselves; they fear to handle the Word of God deceitfully, or walk in craftiness; for God trieth their hearts, and weigheth their spirits, and declareth the result unto them. And such as are taught of God will desire to have truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part will desire to know wisdom. God desires this, and they desire it also, and wish to walk in this path of truth.

We have, in the words of our text, an exercise in which spiritual life labours, and evidences itself to be real. If we possess life there will be corresponding evidences. This is how we judge of things in nature; we know that there is life by its evidences.

In the words of our text we have, first, calling and election; secondly, the exhortation to give diligence to make our calling and election sure; thirdly, reasons for giving diligence; fourthly, the end and design of giving diligence: “If ye do these things ye shall never fall.”

I feel sure that whatever provision God has made for His people, all of it is quite necessary. The doctrine of election is a very solemn truth, and none but those who are taught of God can know its use. I dare not make of it what some people do, but I hope to make that use of it that God has made of it to my soul. If we are taught of God, one part of His teaching will be our sinnership; and this lesson will not be learned to perfection in one day, or week, or month, or year; but by degrees the pupil learns

“how low he is lost.” In my youth I knew but little of this ; I saw the streams and was troubled, but I now see the fountain, and am troubled because I am a sinner ; and every lesson in substance is down, down, down—lower, lower, lower. Now, this makes room for election. Whilst we can manage for ourselves we do not want God’s provision. Blessed be His name for taking away that which we seemed to have ; for it is then the doctrine of election becomes a savoury truth, a truth much to be desired. One has said, “Thou hast showed Thy people hard things ;” and this is a hard thing, and very difficult to learn, and it brings us to self-loathing before the Lord. Not long ago I felt a portion of the Word of God searching my inmost soul. The truth of God is personal, and His teaching is individual. Persons may acquire many notions about truth, and receive it in theory ; and when it is received in theory only, such can afford to be easy and cheerful, even while the most solemn truths are before their eyes, in their ears, and in their memory. That which characterises the teaching of God is, that a feeling is produced corresponding with the lesson He is teaching ; and this will make the Spirit-taught soul to tremble.

The Word that so deeply searched me was the twentieth verse of the forty-fourth chapter of Isaiah : “He feedeth on ashes : a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand ?” Many persons that are connected with religious systems are quite pleased with them, and pleased with themselves, and feed upon themselves instead of Christ. It is quite possible for men to feed upon the outside form, upon the consistency and harmony of the system they espouse—yea, upon the doctrines of grace, and yet be destitute of the grace of the doctrines. This is indeed to feed upon ashes, and the cause of this is a deceived heart. Such are fast bound by the bands of presumptuous confidence ; such cannot deliver their soul, nor even suspect their condition. Oh, dreadful delusion, dreadful life, and dreadful end !

But in the order of our text the Apostle places calling first ; and I feel inclined to keep close to it, and not try to climb the tree from the top. Calling is one great proof of our election. Calling is set before us in the Word of God in a variety of forms ; but there are two things I want more especially to bring before you relative to calling. The first is the case of Noah. Noah was warned of God. All the warnings in the world are of no avail till God takes up the matter. His warnings are attended with a fulness of truth, with particulars, and with power ; and the soul, like Noah, is moved with fear. The Word of God enters our soul, revealing to us our foolishness, and that our lives have been sin. Then the soul is moved from pride to humility ; from stoutness of

heart to trembling ; from vain boasting to sighing and confession. Some speak of warnings from God years ago, who have not known any since ; but it has not been so with me. God has continued to warn me in many ways. Now, the effect of God's warning will be separation. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing." We, while in a carnal state, are not competent judges about clean and unclean things. We think many things harmless which, under the warnings of God, become great sins, and God gives a feeling of hatred to them. This feeling is called "the fear of the Lord."

Oh, what a mercy to have the fear of the Lord ! There may be great hindrances and oppositions offered to this, but God's warnings will eventually break all of them down. Social bars are strong ones ; relative bars, too, are very strong ; but religious ones are perhaps stronger than any ; but the fear of the Lord will break all of them. What an example of this was Moses ! How miserable he was in the court ! He looked upon the people of God, he saw their afflictions ; but he chose to suffer afflictions with God's people in preference to the pleasures of sin ; for his eye was on the end—he saw the reward. So he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king : but what mysterious circumstances were employed to break those bars of brass which held him !

The second thing I wish to notice is, that the call of God has a bright side to it ; it is not all darkness. The Apostle, when writing to the Thessalonians, said, "Knowing, brethren, beloved, your election of God : for our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." Whenever God calls a poor sinner, that sinner will call after God in cries something like this, "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people : O visit me with Thy salvation." And I feel the same inquiry in my soul after Christ now as in days past. Christ is indeed the life of the soul. There is no silencing sin and Satan without Christ ; no overcoming without Christ ; no spiritual devotion without Christ. We must be in a low place to seek Christ ; we must be pinched by our poverty to look unto Him. We can do without Christ if we do not feel the evil of sin ; but this brings distress and poverty of soul, and results in contrition of spirit. Now, we want Christ, we have a use for Christ ; and out of our distress we call upon the Lord. Oh, what a mercy to know the use of Christ—to feel our dependence upon Him for pasture, for every word of promise, for right thoughts of ourselves and of Him ! Oh, how the provision which He brings commends itself ! It is the very Word we need, and no other word would have done so

well. How very difficult it is for me to find a word that describes the state of mind I am in at times ! but suddenly a word is brought by the Holy Spirit which exactly describes it. " Thy words were found, and I did eat them." This makes the Word of God precious. Oh, how good is the Lord to give, by His Spirit, a sense of need, and then to supply the need ; to make room in the heart for Christ, and then to place Him there—"the Hope of glory," our Friend, our Companion ; for we are " called unto the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord " ! Fellowship with Him in His sufferings—how overcoming the sight ! fellowship with Him as now risen and exalted at His Father's right hand, appearing as a Lamb that has been slain, in the presence of God, for us !

Now, if we have fellowship with Christ there will be corresponding fruits. " Love and grief my heart dividing ;" " Grieving with a joyous grief, and joying with a grievous joy." Oh, how I have rejoiced and wept when the Holy Spirit has drawn aside the veil, and shown me a little of the incomprehensible depths Christ descended into, and the unutterable heights He is exalted unto ! My soul has sung, " Thou art worthy."

If we have the fear of God in our hearts, and in exercise, we shall not be able to go on carelessly. Sin cannot be covered over : " He that covereth his sins shall not prosper." Some persons cover them by silence, and others by denying them, and some by justifying themselves in them ; but I feel I dare not do so. Confession forms a great part of the prayers of the godly ; and how sweet is confession when you can lay the hand of faith on the head of Christ ! Sin is forgiven as fast as you can confess, and the aggravated circumstances under which it was committed—all, all is forgiven. This is how I have learned Christ ; and if you are thus led unto Him, this will cause you to bless God for Jesus Christ. In trials of divers sorts, in temptations too terrible to name, oh, how my soul has clung to Him ! and, according to the nature of the trial, so Christ, in one of His offices suited to the trial, has in due time been revealed ; for in them all He is found to be a Friend ready to help the helpless in every time of need. This will cause the soul to cleave close to Christ, to settle on Him as God's, and its, Foundation. These things are not learned all at once, but they are imparted " line upon line ; here a little and there a little."

II.—Let us look at our second point, " Give diligence." The Apostle speaks of making additions to our faith : " Add to your faith virtue ; and to virtue knowledge ; and to knowledge temperance ; and to temperance patience ; and to patience godliness ; and to godliness brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness charity." Now, this shows that if we are alive to God

there will be spiritual growth ; as saith the same Apostle, " But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." I feel in my own soul that I am not in experience where I was last year. But some one here will perhaps say, " If I grow at all, it is downwards." Well, how necessary this is ; for in this experience there is a greater sense of sin, a deeper discovery of need and of creature helplessness. It is blessed to have a gracious sense of our poverty, and to prove how the Lord takes advantage of this to make known His grace. How sweetly has the Holy Ghost, at some such times, shown me the Father's love in giving His Son ! Oh, what a gift ! " In this was manifested the love of God ;" and how Jesus manifested His love in dying for our sins ! I have mourned and wept over Him as I have thought of His dying for me. Oh, how humbling this is to those who truly believe ! Some persons grow in argument, in strife, and disputings ; but this is not the wisdom which is from above ; this is " earthly, sensual, and devilish ;" this is not growing in grace, nor in the knowledge of Christ ; for " the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." Then let us take heed how we grow. True spiritual growth will make us hang our heads and feel very small, and we shall often tremble at the Word of God. This will make us diligent in prayer—closet prayer ; there will be matters to speak of that no ear must hear but the Lord's ; and there will be a watching unto prayer, and diligence in the means of grace ; a word from the Lord will be sought to help us in some case of need—to feed our souls—to give instruction—to show us our way—to encourage us to hope—to call, to knock, and wait at mercy's door—for a token for good. It is not a partial diligence we are exhorted unto, but all diligence, to have these things always in remembrance, and to shun such things as would be likely to injure our minds by encouraging carnality. If the Lord has wrought these things in our souls, there will be a mighty opposition to them. Satan will oppose by every possible means ; he will rage, he will fawn, he will change his appearance from black to white ; he will argue and reason, and we shall have to prove that we are not fighting against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers—against the rulers of the darkness of this world. Satan wounds us in the fight, and we often wound ourselves ; but in due time the Lord heals us, and bruises Satan under our feet. What a mercy to have the work of God carried on in our souls, even although it be by painful things, so that we are able in some small measure to draw evidences of life from present exercises, and not entirely from past ones !

III.—Let us notice the reasons why we should give diligence to make our calling and election sure :—

(1.) Your call by grace troubles your mind because it is not so clear as your neighbour's, or some person's that you have read of ; or it is so very different to theirs. In this matter diligence is needed. I have often asked myself this question : " Was it a good beginning ? When and how did it begin ? " Have you not wrestled with the Lord, waited upon Him, importuned Him, and waited for Him, to make this matter plain to your soul ? This is spiritual labour. I have found some that object to this, supposing that in labour there must be merit ; and I have been called legal for speaking thus. " But what saith the Scripture ? " We find there that the wise builder digged deep for the rock, and the man that found the pearl searched for it : " If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures ; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God." Our Lord obtained His help by " strong crying and tears ; " and would you wish to obtain yours in a different way to Him ? Oh, my hearers, if you have a wrestling spirit, bless the Lord for it. It is God's rich gift to you, and it is given in love to your soul.

(2.) All past evidences do not give present satisfaction ; and diligence is necessary to obtain clearer and confirming evidence of our calling and election. The Apostle says, " Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended : but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, I press toward the *mark* for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." However many evidences a person may have had, more will be wanted, for days of famine will eat up the days of plenty ; and if anyone is satisfied and wants no more, it argues that they have had none at all. The great Apostle was not satisfied ; but he followed after, and gave all diligence to know Christ.

(3.) Clear manifestations are often followed by days of darkness, and gracious and enlivening testimonies by much drought and deadness. If Jesus Christ speaks loudly, in His absence Satan will talk loudly too. And amidst these contrary things you will sometimes fear that you never knew anything aright. I have oftentimes of late had to come to the Lord like one having no experience at all, and compelled to cling to the " whosoever's " of the Word, saying, " If nothing has been done in my soul, Lord, begin now."

(4.) Some have made a profession of religion, espousing the same doctrines, and have given a clear account of their calling—perhaps clearer than your own ; but how suddenly have they been overthrown ! what a little thing has upset them ! what dreadful things they have fallen into ! and what a dreadful end some have

come to! And, as the solemn end of Ananias and Sapphira, brought great fear on all the Church, so will such cases bring great fear upon our souls, lest we also fall and end like them. Thus the Lord preserves His people from presumption.

(5.) Satan is a clever preacher; he can use the Word to answer his own ends, and thereby distress the soul. He knows that he can get the ear of a child of God better by the Word of God, and do more mischief by such means than by any other. This is Satan's masterpiece. He chose this plan in the first temptation, and also with Christ, and there is scarcely any error in existence in Christendom, but what, by wresting the Word, it is made to appear to support it. How he can distress the mind with such a Scripture as "Many are called, but few are chosen"! And when you are thus tried by the Word of God, what can you do? Why, nothing but cry unto *Him*, and wait for *Him*, who is able to help you in such a painful case. Sometimes the preached Word searches you, and makes you tremble. The man of God is led to speak of some things that you have not experienced, and you begin to fear that all is wrong. That is a profitable time in hearing when we leave the house of God begging and entreating Him to give us those things which we feel to come so short in, and to complete in our souls all the parts of salvation. How very much better this is than to be unfeeling—at ease, and like one asleep! I dread no state of mind that I have ever experienced so much as I do a sleepy one. The most cutting strokes are much to be preferred rather than a state of ease.

(6.) The evidences of calling and election do so easily slip from us. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." What slippery things they seem to be that God gives to us, so that we have great need "to hold fast that which we have received." What a subtle foe is Satan, and what a contrary face he can put upon our choicest things! What powerful arguments he can use, and darken all that which has been done in our souls, by suggesting, "How do you know that this or that Scripture came from the Lord? You have known that from childhood; it was only from memory." And thus we often let them slip. Again, after a gracious visit we may be light and trifling; again, we may have a boasting spirit, and become intoxicated with our experience; again, we may be led to compare them with some other person's evidences, and conclude they are too small to be of the Lord, and so despise them, and let them slip. The Lord says that "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee." And when the Lord gives us another renewing, this throws a light upon all the past, and all seems as real as ever. Thus, in God's light we see light, and we are

satisfied that all is right ; but in Satan's light and our own, all seems to be wrong :—

“ So poor, and blind, and lame I am,
My all is bound up in the Lamb ;
I cannot see without His light ;
I cannot walk without His might.”

(7.) These evidences are for our present comfort. They do not make our salvation surer in God's account, but they determine the measure of our comfort. What confirmation to the soul a word from the Lord gives, and what disappointment to our adversary ! That token for good which the Lord has shown is seen by them which hate us, and they are ashamed. I have seen the enemy of my soul skulk away, as a liar and as a thief only can. The Apostle had in his mind the contrast of these additions to faith where he speaks of some who lacked these things, and solemnly declares that such are blind, and have forgotten that they were purged from their old sins. “ Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make *your* calling and election sure, for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.”

IV.—The end and design of giving diligence : “ Ye shall never fall.”

What fall the Apostle may mean here I cannot say. It may be into error. It is by leaving off to be diligent and anxious about these things that men fall into the error of the wicked one. It may be into wicked practices, into open sin. Satan is ever setting traps for God's people ; and when a child of God gets into a bad state of soul, into loose and careless walking, Satan will, for the time being, make the least of his sins. What a sad case is ours when we do not fall under the “ reproofs of instruction [which] are the way of life ” ! If you speak of the sin which such are indulging in, how soon they are offended ! They do not hear the rod nor fall under reproof. Only God can humble us ; and what a mercy to be humbled by the rebukes of His Word ! Perhaps some of you have never known what it is to be humbled by the reproofs of the Word of God. Such must “ dwell in a dry land,” for “ God knoweth the proud afar off,” and “ He that hateth reproof shall die.” It is quite possible to see our neighbour's pride and not our own. I often have to cry, “ That which I know not, teach Thou me ;” for “ Who can understand his errors ?” “ Cleanse Thou me from secret faults,” and “ Show me wherein I have offended.” How possible it is to accept in theory what we deny in practice ! Again, there is falling from one's own steadfastness and watchfulness over one's own spirit and ways. Our Lord says, “ What I say unto you, I say unto all : Watch !” How needful to watch over our spirits, to know

what spirit we are of! The Lord saith, "Take heed to thy spirit." The Apostle speaks of loving only in word. How cheap loving words are! "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth: and hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him." But, if we have bitter envying and strife in our hearts, there is no cause for us to boast nor glory; for while we profess to be of the truth, we are found lying against it; and when our hearts condemn us, we lose our confidence, and fall into confusion. "But if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." Sometimes darkness overtakes us for the trial of our faith, and we can find no particular reason why God contends with us. Job says, "Show me wherefore Thou contendest with me." And at other times we know it is because of our sins. The very best thing, then, is to turn petitioner, and cry, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" I am thankful for this Scripture, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

May the Lord bless these few remarks to your profit and His glory. Amen.

GRACIOUS IMPORTUNITY.

JESUS, the sinner's Friend,
 To Thee again I come;
 Oh, keep me to the end,
 And bring me safely home.
 Oh, Thou who, though not seen, I love,
 Draw up my heart to Thee above!

I long to know Thee more,
 And more Thy love to feel;
 Thou know'st my grief and sore,
 And only Thou canst heal:
 Thy precious blood's the sovereign cure,
 Its virtue is both safe and sure.

I want to hear Thy voice
 Within this heart of mine;
 This would my heart rejoice
 More than much corn and wine:
 Speak by Thy Spirit and Thy Word,
 My all-sufficient, gracious Lord.

To whom else can I go
 For life and power divine?
 Thou hast it to bestow,
 Good gifts are only Thine:
 Saviour, I cannot give Thee rest
 Until my soul again is blest.

November 14th, 1879.

A. H.

G

OUR MARTYRED FOREFATHERS.

XVII.—HUGH LATIMER—(*conclusion*).

IN the year 1539 Latimer was again summoned to the metropolis to answer to some charges of seditious preaching that had been preferred against him. The good bishop replied to his accusers in such a manly and straightforward manner, that completely overhauled the scurrilous assertions of his enemies, and gave the king such complete satisfaction that he was dismissed from the royal presence with a gracious smile. But the Romish party was now in the ascendancy in the king's councils, and they succeeded in passing the obnoxious "Six Articles," by which the bishops and clergy were compelled to teach transubstantiation, to live celibate lives, and to practice auricular confession. Honest Hugh Latimer was too fond of his Bible—possessed too intense an affection for the pure and simple Gospel of Jesus Christ—to sign these articles; and so he resigned his bishopric, and retired into the country. Soon after his retirement, however, an accident befell him, through the fall of a tree, that caused him to pay another visit to London to seek medical advice. Latimer's arrival in the metropolis was simultaneous with the fall of Cromwell, and the consequent rise of Gardiner and the Papal faction to power. Quickly did they manifest their determination to crush the Reformation, by seizing its most popular and powerful preacher, and throwing him into prison, where he remained until the death of the king.

On the accession of Edward, Latimer was immediately set at liberty, and requested to resume his duties as Bishop of Worcester. This request was renewed again and again, but to no purpose. On no account would he consent to be bishop again, for he would rather proclaim the Gospel up and down the kingdom than be confined to any particular diocese. Whilst Cranmer, Ridley, and others were busy making the necessary legislative changes for the establishment of the Reformation in the land, Latimer was zealously teaching the people the nature and the benefits of its glorious principles. It is as a preacher that we find Latimer chiefly occupied during this short reign. Undoubtedly, he was the most zealous, outspoken, and powerful preacher of the day. Crowds always thronged to hear him preach, and his audiences embraced all classes, the rich as well as the poor, the king as well as the peasant. To the poor he was a great friend, and to the oppressed he was a noble benefactor. For a time, Latimer resided with Cranmer, at Lambeth, and there, as he tells us in one of those auto-biographical sketches with which his sermons happily abound, he would go into the garden intending to read,

when he was sure to be interrupted by the calling of persons who had been cruelly treated by the judges, seeking to enlist his generous aid and advice. These matters Latimer would ventilate in his sermons with a fervour and a power that left no question who were the cruel oppressors. His Lent sermons before King Edward and his court were plain, honest, and outspoken. Perhaps no monarch in modern times was ever told the truth so plainly and so forcibly as Latimer told it to the "young Josiah" of England in these sermons. A spade was a spade with Latimer, whether he stood before king or peasant, nobleman or mechanic. Wherever he found evil he exposed and denounced it. Although the young king set his court an excellent example, it was little heeded. The state of society was terrible indeed; bribery and corruption abounded on every hand, justice was unfairly and improperly administered, and the poor were oppressed to an almost incredible degree. There were many amongst the nobility who professed an attachment for the Reformation—not because they had any love to its principles, but because it had enlarged their territories and replenished their coffers. Latimer knew all this, and his honest soul was horrified at the sad state of the kingdom. When, therefore, this eloquent preacher came to stand before Edward and his court—when he was face to face with those covetous nobles, those corrupt judges, and those avaricious courtiers—he spared them not. He hit hard, and he spoke to the point. To all alike he spoke out clearly and forcibly; he stoutly inveighed against the hypocrisy of those who professed an adherence to the Gospel because of the "loaves and fishes;" he denounced in earnest language the maladministration of justice that was so prevalent; he eloquently pleaded on behalf of the poor who were so generally neglected and cruelly oppressed; and he appealed to the king, to his councillors, his nobles, his judges—in short, to all—to amend their lives, and to use their influence to remedy this lamentable state of things. But, wishing Latimer to speak for himself, we now give an extract from the last sermon he delivered before the young king and his court, on March 10th, 1550:—

"'Take heed, and beware of covetousness' [this was his text]; 'Take heed, and beware of covetousness;' 'Take heed, and beware of covetousness.' And what and if I should say nothing else these three or four hours (for I know it will be so long, in case I be not commanded to the contrary) but these words, 'Take heed, and beware of covetousness'? It would be thought a strange sermon before a king to say nothing else but 'Beware of covetousness.' And yet, as strange as it is, it would be like the sermon of Jonah, that he preached to the Ninevites, as touching the shortness, and as touching the paucity or

fewness of the words ; for his sermon was, 'There are yet forty days to come, and Nineveh shall be destroyed.' Thus he walked from street to street, and from place to place, round about the city, and said nothing else but, 'There are yet forty days,' quoth he, 'and Nineveh shall be destroyed.' There is no great odds nor difference, at the leastwise in the number of words—no, nor yet in the sense or meaning—between these two sermons, 'There are yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed,' and these words I have taken to speak of this day, 'Take heed, and beware of covetousness.' For Nineveh should be destroyed for sin ; and of their sins covetousness was one, and one of the greatest ; so that it is all one in effect. And as they be like concerning the shortness, the paucity of words, the brevity of words, and also the meaning and purpose ; so I would they might be like in fruit and profit. For what came of Jonah's sermon ? What was the fruit of it ? 'At the preaching of Jonah they believed God.' Here was a great fruit, a great effect wrought. What is the same ? 'They believed God : ' they believed God's preacher, God's officer, God's minister, Jonah, and were converted from their sin. They believed that, as the preacher said, if they did not repent and amend their life, the city should be destroyed within forty days. This was a great fruit, for Jonah was but one man, and he preached but one sermon, and it was but a short sermon neither, as touching the number of words ; and yet he turned all the whole city, great and small, rich and poor, king and all.

"We be many preachers here in England, and we preach many long sermons ; yet the people will not repent nor convert. This was the fruit, the effect, and the good that his sermon did, that all the whole city at his preaching converted and amended their living, and did penance in sackcloth. And yet here, in this sermon of Jonah, is no great curiousness, no great clerkliness, no great affectation of words, nor of painted eloquence ; it was none other but, 'Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed ;' it was no more. This was no great curious sermon, but it was a nipping sermon, a pinching sermon, a biting sermon ; it had a full bite, and thus it was indeed a nipping sermon, a rough sermon, and a sharp, biting sermon. Do you not here marvel that these Ninevites cast not Jonah into prison ? that they did not revile him and rebuke him ? They did not revile him nor rebuke him ; but God gave them grace to hear him, and to convert and amend at his preaching. A strange matter—so noble a city to give place to one man's sermon ! Now, England cannot abide this ; they cannot be content to hear God's minister, and his threatening for their sin, though the sermon be never so good, though it be never so true. It is 'a

naughty fellow, a seditious fellow ; he maketh trouble and rebellion in the realm ; he lacketh discretion.' But the Ninevites rebuked not Jonah that he lacked discretion, or that he spake out of time, that his sermon was out of season made ; but in England, if God's preacher, God's minister, be anything quick, or do speak sharply, then he is a foolish fellow ; he is rash ; he lacketh discretion. Nowadays, if they cannot reprove the doctrine that is preached, then they will reprove the preacher that he lacketh due consideration of the times ; and that he is of learning sufficient, but he wanteth discretion. 'What a time is this' (they say) 'picked out to preach such things ! He should have a respect and a regard to the time, and to the state of things, and of the commonweal.' It rejoiceth me sometimes when my friend cometh and telleth me that they find fault with my discretion ; for by likelihood, think I, the doctrine is true ; for if they could find fault with the doctrine, they would not charge me with the lack of discretion or with the inconveniency of the time. I will now ask you a question. I pray you, when should Jonah have preached against the covetousness of Nineveh, if the covetous men should have appointed him his time ? I know that preachers ought to have a discretion in their preaching, and that they ought to have a consideration and respect to the place and the time that they preached in ; as I myself will say here what I would not say in the country for no good. But what then ? Sin must be rebuked ; sin must be plainly spoken against. And when should Jonah have preached against Nineveh, if he should have forborne for the respect of the time, or the place, or the state of things there ? For what was Nineveh ? A noble, a rich, and a wealthy city. What is London to Nineveh ? Like a village, as Islington, or such another, in comparison of London. Such a city was Nineveh ; it was three days' journey to go through every street of it, and to go but from street to street. There were noblemen, rich men, wealthy men ; there were vicious men, and covetous men, and men that gave themselves to all voluptuous living, and to the worldliness of getting riches. Was this a time well chosen and discreetly taken of Jonah to come and reprove them of their sin, to declare unto them the threatenings of God, and to tell them of their covetousness, and to say plainly unto them, that except they repented and amended their living, they and their city should be destroyed of God's hand, within forty days ? And yet they heard Jonah and gave place to his preaching. They heard the threatenings of God, and feared His stroke and vengeance, and believed God : that is, they believed God's preacher and minister ; they believed that God would be true to His Word that He spake by the mouth of His prophet, and thereupon did penance to turn away the wrath of

God from them. Well, what shall we say? I will say this, and not spare: Christ saith, Nineveh shall rise against the Jews at the last day, and bear witness against them; because that they, hearing God's threatening for sin, did penance at the preaching of Jonah in ashes and sackcloth; and I say Nineveh shall rise against England—thou England! Nineveh shall rise against England, because it will not believe God, nor hear His preachers that cry daily unto them, nor amend their lives, and especially their covetousness. Covetousness is as great a sin now as it was then; and it is the same sin now it was then; and He will as sure strike for sin now as He did then."

The foregoing extract is a sample of the plain, clear, and forcible style of Latimer's preaching. But it must not be inferred from what we have stated that these sermons before the young king and his nobles were merely moral lectures; for any person who is at all conversant with them will readily admit that they contain some of the plainest and simplest expositions of Gospel truth to be found anywhere. Hugh Latimer was one who knew too well the glories and benefits of the Gospel to be silent about them; he was thoroughly aware that it was the only effectual remedy for the evils which he so sincerely deplored. In his sermons, therefore, he never hesitated to unfurl the banner of the Gospel, and to proclaim its grand, discriminating truths, which were the very life and sustenance of his own soul.

As soon, however, as Edward had gone to his grave, and Mary was firmly seated on the throne, Latimer, who had retired into the country, was summoned to London. The Popish council dispatched a courier with a command to that effect. Before the arrival of the messenger, however, Latimer had received information of his coming, and he at once prepared for his journey. The pursuivant, when he delivered the note, was astonished at the honest man's readiness, to whom Latimer said: "My friend, you are a welcome messenger to me. And be it known unto you and to all the world, that I go as willingly to London at this present, being called by my prince to render a reckoning of my doctrine, as ever I was at any place in the world. I doubt not but that God, as He hath made me worthy to preach His word before two excellent princes, so will He enable me to witness the same unto the third, either to her comfort or discomfort eternally." To London, therefore, Latimer repaired; and, after his appearance before the council, he was thrown into the tower, where he remained until he was sent with Cranmer and Ridley to Oxford, to take part in those remarkable debates with the champions of Rome upon religion generally, but more especially upon the Lord's Supper. In this city he was kept until his death, which occurred on the 16th of October, 1555.

It was a cold, grey October morning, when Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley were led by the mayor and bailiffs of Oxford to the stake, which was pitched on the north side of the town, over against Balliol College. As these two valiant heroes were known to have many sympathisers amongst the people, it was deemed advisable, in case of emergency, to have a strong body of halberdiers present. A large concourse of spectators assembled to witness the scene, and in the centre of the throng a sort of pulpit was erected, from which a sermon was about to be preached. Ridley was attired in his episcopal robes, that reminded the onlookers of his former position and dignity; but Latimer simply wore a Bristol frieze gown, under which was a shroud, hanging over his hose, down to his feet. Ridley came first, and on looking back he espied his companion, to whom he said, "Oh, be ye there?" "Yea," said Latimer, "as fast as I can follow." Upon their arrival at the stake, Ridley cheered his brother in tribulation's path with these words: "Be ye of good heart, brother, for God will either assuage the fury of the flame, or else strengthen us to abide it." Then they both joined in earnest prayer, after which Dr. Smith ascended the pulpit, to deliver a bitter harangue against the two martyrs and their doctrines, taking for his text the words, "If I yield my body to the flames to be burned, and have not charity, I shall gain nothing thereby." From the text, it is not difficult to guess the nature of the sermon, which scarcely lasted a quarter of an hour. Both of them now prepared for the fire. When they were ready, Ridley, standing stripped to his shirt, joyfully exclaimed, "O Heavenly Father, I give unto Thee most hearty thanks, for that Thou hast called me to be a professor of Thee, even unto death. I beseech Thee, Lord God, take mercy upon this realm of England, and deliver the same from all her enemies." Being chained to the stake, a lighted faggot was laid at Ridley's feet, when Latimer uttered those memorable words—words which, like the last words of a dying parent, have been treasured in the memory of the sons and daughters of England, and have come down to us as fresh as on the day they were uttered—"Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England as I trust shall never be put out." The flames then commenced their cruel work, and after exclaiming, "O Father of heaven, receive my soul!" Latimer speedily succumbed to their fury. Ridley's sufferings, however, were considerably prolonged; but at length he followed his martyred companion to the regions of eternal glory. This was indeed a grand scene in our history, and it has been fittingly memorialised by one of the most gifted of our poets in the following lines:—

“ How fast the Marian death-list is unrolled !
 See Latimer and Ridley, in the might
 Of Faith, stand coupled for a common fight !
 One, like the prophets whom God sent of old
 Transfigured, from this kindling hath foretold
 A torch of inextinguishable light ;
 The other gains a confidence as bold ;
 And thus they foil their enemy’s despoite.
 The penal instruments, the shows of crime,
 Are glorified, while this once-mitred pair
 Of saintly friends, the murtherous chain partake,
 Corded, and burning at the social stake.
 Earth never witnessed object more sublime
 In constancy, in fellowship more fair.”

J. C.

OBITUARY OF ANN PRATT.

ON November 1, 1880, Ann Pratt, aged forty-four, a member at Bethel Chapel, Hitchin, fell asleep in Jesus. The following is a brief outline of what our departed friend related to me a short time before her death :—

In my early days I could not do as many other children did—not from want of mind, but of strength, for I was weak when young ; besides, a godly aunt, who lived with my parents, had an influence over me. At the age of fourteen years I was taken very ill, but had no more knowledge of salvation than if I had never heard of a God. It appeared to me that God was holy, and I was a sinner ; yet I had no desire to go to heaven, neither had I any fear.

At the age of seventeen years I left home. My motive was that I might go into the world—do as I liked, and get from under my aunt’s influence. So I went to live with a relative in London, where I anticipated no religious restraint. My relation kept a coffee-house which was open on Sundays, as other days ; but here I could not do as I liked, for I was requested to attend either church or chapel. Amongst other ministers I heard Mr. Gunner preach, and could not help noticing some things he said. After staying in London about eighteen months, I was taken with a bad pain in my head, and directly it came my mind was impressed that it was a judgment upon me because of my sins. This was in the autumn of the year ; and after Christmas my mother fetched me home—the impression still remaining that it was a judgment upon me ; so I intended to do better.

A few months after I had recovered from this illness, the fear that I had committed the unpardonable sin came strongly upon

my mind. This distressed me day and night for two or three months. I was now trying all I could to merit heaven, but felt to get further off. The more I did, the more miserable I was; and this sin against the Holy Ghost was most terrible. Feeling that hell would be my portion, I thought, Had I not better go on in sin, and do as other worldly people do? but was preserved from this by the thought that the sin I never committed I should never be punished for; therefore I would still strive to be good. All this time I could not tell the way in which a sinner could be saved.

Being now very anxious to hear preaching, I commenced going to Hitchin to hear, attending sometimes the Bethel Chapel, and sometimes another that was more general. But after a time I felt that the preaching at the former suited me best. On one occasion I went to witness a baptising at Hitchin, when Mr. Godwin and Mr. Kershaw were present, and I was very much affected. The hymn was sung containing the words, "Ashamed of Jesus," &c. I felt, No; never! if I could but tell that I was safe. This was September, 1857. I kept on going to chapel, listening if there was anything for me; but there was only "Who can tell?" till about April, 1858, when the case of Queen Esther going in before the king came very pressingly upon me. "If I perish, I perish" (Esther iv. 16); and I thought, Well, if I venture I can only be lost. But one night, while seeking the Lord, the words came, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love" (Jer. xxxi. 3). It seemed as if I had a foresight and a backsight into everlasting love, whilst I seemed to be in a new world, and felt as if I should never sin against the Lord again. I did not speak to anyone about my exercises; and as this bright state did not continue long, I was glad I had not done so, for afterwards I feared that I had been deceived. During the summer of 1858 I went at times to Clifton to hear Mr. Sears, and was once very much encouraged in hearing him preach from the Song of Solomon.

After this there was a decline in spiritual exercise in my soul for a little while; but the work was again revived, and I was much encouraged by a meditation upon the Three Persons in the Holy Trinity, and how They were engaged in the salvation of sinners, and especially upon the love of Christ in shedding His blood.

In February, 1859, I was again taken ill, but felt very comfortable in my mind, being persuaded that the things I had passed through were a reality; and now I felt sorry that I had not told anyone. My motive was that I might glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. I was led to think of the numerous beasts on Jewish altars slain, and how much all those beasts must have cost, but of how much greater value was the blood of Christ: it appeared

to be of unspeakable value, and I wanted to speak of it to others. I got better of my illness, and in the autumn I went to Bethel Chapel, Hitchin, and heard a sermon from the text, "And Peter followed Him afar off" (Mark xiv. 54). My desire being to honour the Lord for what He had done for me, I wished some one would speak to me about it; but they did not, so I felt I must mention it myself. In order to do so I went on Monday morning to call upon the minister to talk with him about my state. After a short time I was proposed to the church, and was baptized in January, 1861. From my first connection with the church till now I have found a growing affection towards it, and never wished to go elsewhere.

The effect of the preaching which I have heard for the last few years has been to reprove, comfort, and establish my soul, and to lead me more deeply into the knowledge of spiritual things. The Lord's goodness towards me in providence during the last ten years has been remarkable. I can say, "The Lord has been good, and He has done all things well."

Our departed friend had been weak for many years, but increasingly so for the last twelve months of her life. She was very anxious to get out as long as she could to hear the Gospel preached, but for several months before her end she was entirely prevented doing so. During this period I visited her at different times, and her conversations were much the same as when she was well; such as to evince that she was taught of the Lord, and was blest with a hope built upon Christ, by which she was graciously supported. The Lord also kindly favoured her with a good measure of patience and thankfulness. On October 20 she said, "I have been thinking of Psalm xxv. 7, and some of my sins in early life appeared more sinful than ever they had done before."

Some people speak in a common way of death as an end to all trials and sufferings which attend life, but they have no special feeling of the state beyond it. I should like to be conscious, if the Lord will, when death is approaching, so as to anticipate the glorious change before entering upon the eternal felicity of being "for ever with the Lord."

I have not felt rebellious or discontented, but am afraid lest I may. I see more than ever the depravity of the human heart, and how the natural mind is opposed to God.

For about a week before her death she could say but very little to be understood; but Jesus, "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end" (John xiii. 1); and such was the case, I feel sure, with our departed friend. The Lord be praised for His mercy!

Hitchin.

WM. F. MORRIS.

NIGHT THOUGHTS BY A WATCHMAN.

GOD SATISFIED.

"The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness' sake."—ISA. xlii. 21.

"Hail, faultless Surety, sinless Guide,
In whom no blame was seen ;
Able Thou wert, and none beside,
To ransom guilty men."

GOD, being perfect, cannot rejoice in that which is most imperfect ; much less could He rejoice in that which is vile. He who requires all in His presence to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white—the wedding garment—will not admit any thereto who are clothed in filthy rags ; and such are the best productions of our own hands. But God does delight in that which is according to His own mind ; He cheerfully accepts that service which is rendered according to His will, and is equal to the full demands of His holy law. Yea, but how can he who is already a sinner, and still a daily transgressor, merit the favour of God ? No, such an one cannot make God his debtor, unless, forsooth, God accounts sin for holiness, which can never be.

No man, since the fall of Adam, ever possessed in his own right and person either the holiness of nature or the righteousness of life needed in order to entitle him to God's favour and blessing ; yet both of these he must have, or he will never see God's face with joy, nor dwell in His house above in peace, for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Whence, then, cometh this meetness ? It is to be found alone in, and received from, Him of whom it is written, "By His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many ; for He shall bear their iniquities" (Isa. liii. 11) ; and all the spiritual Israelites shall know Him as their Justifier, and say, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength ; even to Him shall men come." So "in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory." This righteous Servant and His perfect work have both been accepted by God, who called Him to the service for all His covenant people, and the Elder Brother has served for all the family. By the righteous obedience of this *One*, many are justified ; and nothing more is required in order to justification than what Christ has done. He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. He obeyed the precept, suffered the penalty, and took possession of the promise of the law (Rom. x. 5). Heaven is His by right, and, if we are true believers in Him, His righteousness is ours, because His obedience is ours ; thus we are "joint heirs with Christ." Oh, what cause for humility, gratitude, and praise this gives wherever it is realized !

Blessed is the man who has been taught to renounce all confidence and hope in all things and all names save Christ and His righteousness, for with these God is well pleased.

And now I would say to every anxious, seeking soul, Be not dismayed, for, though the schooling and stripping, in order to bring you to Him naked for dress, and helpless for grace, may be long and painful, yet it is most profitable. Do not fear, if you are made empty and needy, that He will cast you away. You are safe, and shall, through faith in Jesus, be made happy in the possession of Gospel peace; the painful jealousy and anxious doubt, which may now abound in your heart, shall give place to sweet realization and blest assurance; and the winter's dearth shall be forgotten in the fruitful spring, when you shall joyfully sing—

“ Oh! I am my Beloved's,
 And my Beloved's mine!
 He brings a poor vile sinner
 Into His house of wine.
 I stand upon His merit—
 I know no other stand,
 Not e'en where glory dwelleth,
 In our Immanuel's land.”

W. B.

CHRIST JESUS A WILLING SAVIOUR.

As Christ is “able to save to the uttermost all them that come unto God by Him” (Heb. vii. 25), so He is as willing as He is able. The infinite willingness of His heart is as large as the almighty power of His arm. The high priest's breastplate and ephod under the law were to be fastened together by a lace of blue, to show that the heart and arm, the grace and power, of Christ are inseparably joined in a sinner's salvation. What encouragement, then, hast thou to come to Christ, who has promised to give thee rest—to cast thyself into His arms, and stay upon His grace, power, and faithfulness, who has declared that He will in no wise cast out any poor sinner that comes unto Him, the great Saviour! He has given thee His own word that He is willing to save thee. Canst thou believe it? or darest thou, through unbelief, give Him the lie? Ah! poor soul! Christ has been beforehand with thee in willingness. If He had not been first willing to save thee, thou hadst never been made willing to be saved by Him. His love has been a love preventing thee: He did not stay for thy willingness, but began thy salvation in giving thee a new nature before thou didst even breathe after it; that so thou mightest desire life, and come to Him for it. How welcome, then, shalt thou be to

His gracious heart and open arms! If thou art enabled to come to Him just as thou art—a miserable, helpless, undone sinner—for all the mercy, grace, and salvation thou wantest, He will not send thee away empty.

He has said, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it" (Ps. lxxxix. 10). Thou canst not ask more grace than He has to bestow, and is willing to give. He delights to fill such needy, empty souls as thou art. This was the great end of His death: His heart was so willing to save thee, that He died for thee that He might accomplish it. Yea, so intense was His desire to save thee, that thy salvation was part of the joy set before Him, for which He endured the cross. He took pleasure in the thoughts of it so long since; and the joy of it, fore-viewed, carried Him through the agonies of death. And now the bitter work is over, and He is advanced to the right hand of God, having all power in heaven and earth given Him, that He might give eternal life to sinners. Dost thou think His heart is changed? No; as He died for thee on the cross, so He lives for thee on the throne. He is "Jesus Christ, the same" in His boundless love, grace, and mercy, "yesterday, to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8).

A. DUTTON.

"I DID MOURN AS A DOVE."

(ISAIAH xxxviii. 14.)

My soul is in a mourning state,
Like a poor dove without its mate;
My Saviour hides His blessed face,
Which keeps me in a saddened case.

I upward look with longing eye,
But fail His person to espy;
I wait till He Himself reveal,
And cause my heart His love to feel.

"How long, how long," I inward say,
"Will my Beloved from me stay?
When wilt Thou, Lord, return to me,
And from my sorrow set me free?"

"When Thou art absent, then I fast,
And muse how long this state will last:
Oh, come and let me have a feast
For a few moments, Lord, at least!"

Although I thus am kept in pain,
Hope says, "He will return again:"
My soul, I charge thee still to wait,
Till Jesus change thy mourning state.

April 18th, 1880.

ALFRED.

MEMOIR OF THE LATE JOHN CLARK, OF
FIVEASHDOWN.

(Continued from page 48.)

It will have been observed by our spiritual readers that the conclusion of our last chapter bore testimony to the deep exercise of a sinner suffering under the chastening hand of God. And, indeed, it was the hope that the Lord was thus dealing with our friend that encouraged him still to hold on; for he felt a little helped by the words, "Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of Thy law; that Thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked" (Psa. xciv. 12, 13). But such was his pain and anguish that it seemed to affect him physically, so that he could feelingly enter into the expression of "stripes" in "the inward parts of the belly" (Prov. xx. 30). He needed no one to tell him that there was a hell, where God's wrath was fully known; for he felt it was already kindled in his own conscience. While walking out one evening he met with a man with whom he got into conversation, and the subject of sin was spoken of; whereupon the man told him that the blood of Jesus Christ was sufficient for the sins of all men, and urged him to believe it; but this he felt he could not do. He then parted with his companion and walked on with his heavy burden, until, arriving at Balham Hill, he felt so weak in body, wounded in spirit, and sore in conscience, that he leaned against the railings by the wayside, fearing every breath would be his last, wishing he had never been born, and wondering why he should have been born to have been damned; when, lo! something sounded in his soul, "Did ever you murder children?" to which he replied, "No, Lord;" and the answer came, "Manasseh did, and he obtained mercy;" to which he again replied, "He did, oh, he did; and who knows but what I may?" This gave him such relief that he stepped onward towards Clapham, when these words flowed into his mind, "It is good for a man that he both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth" (Lam. iii. 26, 27). He was then about twenty-one years of age. From the distress that continually filled his mind, he seemed unfitted for his daily occupation, and his master began to find fault with his work; so he thought he would leave and go to London; but while he debated the matter in his mind, feeling a dread of mingling with ungodly companions, and of being exposed to the temptations incidental to a young man's residency in London, it was as if some one said to him, "Did not God give Bezaleel wisdom in all

manner of cunning workmanship?" to which he answered, "He did, and He can me." He then cried out, "Oh, Lord, do teach me how to work; for, Lord, if Thou canst not save me, yet Thou canst do me good temporally; for Thou, Lord, art able to do everything." Soon after this his master looked more favourably upon him, and gave him the best work of the "men's line" in the shop. This led him forth in gratitude to God for His kindness to him, though he had still many doubts and fears respecting his eternal state, which at times took fast hold of him, that he felt, with Job, as if the Lord were running upon him like a giant, and breaking him with breach upon breach; and, with the Psalmist, he could say, "I am tossed up and down like a locust." But during these close and sharp exercises his conscience was kept very tender, and he was much in secret prayer. Upon one occasion, after dinner, he retired to his bedroom, where he entreated the Lord to have mercy upon him; he then opened his Bible upon these words, "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee," &c. (Isaiah xliii. 1—4). Such a peculiar halo of glory rested upon the book, and was felt in his soul, from these words, that he found where sin had abounded grace did much more abound, and he could sing with the poet—

"It rises high, it drowns the hills,
Has neither shore nor bound;
Now, if we search to find our sins,
Our sins cannot be found."

Here he felt the river of God's pleasure rose high, for the Lord had "extended peace to him like a river," and "His righteousness as the waves of the sea."

We will now let the good man speak for himself. "The unspeakable happiness I now found was so great, I could not work. I went on Clapham Common, and blessed and praised His dear name. I called on things animate and inanimate to praise with me. My language was, 'Praise Him, ye trees; praise Him, ye waters; praise Him, ye birds; praise Him, ye beasts; yea, let everything that hath breath praise Him.' As I had sunk so low, I rose high. The words, 'Thou art mine,' sounded in my soul. I was His property, bought with His blood; therefore not my own. Now I could eat my bread with joy, and drink my wine with a merry heart, for I was now accepted of Him (Eccl. ix. 7.) At this time the Song of Solomon was exceeding sweet. What glorious raptures I had in reading that

book! The purity of Christ's love was in every page, and the love of the Church to Him. How sweet was that part, where 'My Beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, My love, My fair one, and come away. For, lo! the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land'! Little did I think at this time what changes would come on; but as the poet sings, so I found it:—

“ ‘He sees no fear, he feels no foes;
No conflict yet his faith employs;
Nor does he know to whom he owes
The strength and peace his soul enjoys.’

“These things I enjoyed for a short time; and as I have often since heard Mr. William Gadsby say, ‘The soul thus delivered sings a funeral dirge over his corruptions.’ So it was with me; and Satan soon found where he could work. I was but young; therefore he suited his baits accordingly. Thus he gained strength upon me; my joys began to decline, and my corruptions strove for the mastery, and the ministry I sat under was not calculated to interpret the path I was in. The good man I worked with at length began to talk with me, and said, ‘John, why don’t you come with me to hear the preachers I hear?’ At that time he used to hear Mr. Robins, who preached at Conway Street Chapel, Fitzroy Square, before Gower Street Chapel was built. I gladly went; but when I went, Mr. Robins was ill and could not preach, and there was a man preaching whose preaching did not particularly strike me. Still I kept going, when at last Mr. Henry Fowler, of Birmingham, came to preach, and he took this text, ‘Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy name’ (Ps. cxlii. 7). Oh, how the man did enter into my path—explaining every path I had travelled in—what prisons he got into!—and, said he, ‘I know the prison walls, its bolts and chains; and we cannot push the bolts back, nor can we get the chains off: it must be the mighty Deliverer, Jesus, that must do this.’ Oh, how my soul was blessed! what glorious light! Here was ‘an interpreter, one among a thousand’ that could show unto me my uprightness; and the voice of mercy sounded, ‘Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom’ (Job xxxiii. 23, 24).

“I now found who the people were that the Lord had told me I was to be united with. ‘Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a stammering tongue, that thou canst not understand.’ This was the first time I had ever heard a spiritual ministry. I began now to know a little of the difference between a letter ministry

and a spiritual one. This man spoke as one having authority, and, like his Master, he feared not the face of man; and this I can say from the first to the last time of my hearing him, that he was not a pleaser of men—he was severe in reproof. I have never known his equal in this respect: the nearest I know is Mr. Tiptaft, who is a dear faithful minister of the Lord Jesus; and, though there may be a difference in ability, yet I am persuaded there is the same glorious unction. And (blessed be God!) His dear children shall in His time know this divine unction, and they will prove that they have no need that any man teach them, but as this divine unction teacheth them, which is truth and no lie. I felt now that all was going on right; and when they sang, after the sermon—

“ ‘Ye pilgrims of Zion, and chosen of God,
Whose spirits are filled with dismay;
Since ye have eternal redemption through blood,
Ye cannot but hold on your way’—

it seemed a new world; and, indeed, so it was, according to the Word, ‘Behold, I make all things new.’ Soon after this my employer lent me the ‘Life of Mr. Huntington.’ When I read it I wept and laughed for joy. How I loved the man and his dear Lord! What heavenly raptures filled my mind! There was such similarity in the path we had trodden. I saw there was as much difference between those sent of God and those who ran unsest, as there is between light and darkness.”

(*To be continued.*)

A CAUSE OF SPIRITUAL DECAY.

A WRITER on the subject of prayer and prayer meetings, after naming some of the various ways in which many attempt to account for the dearth in their own souls and the lack of spiritual prosperity in the Church of Christ, thus somewhat trenchantly replies to those who profess to find the sole cause of the evil in a deficient ministry:—

Without at all undervaluing the vast importance of a living and efficient ministry, it were only an act of cruelty, both to pastors and people, to permit a continuance of the delusion that the cause of want of prosperity is mainly, and in all cases, to be looked for here. To another quarter we turn for the solution of the supposed mystery, and find it in the ominous expression so often heard on the lips of professing Christians—“*It’s only a prayer meeting;*” we find it in the poor, meagre, scattered remnant that constitutes, and the cold heartless formality that characterizes, the assembly for social prayer.

Every Christian acknowledges the importance of public and private prayer. Its efficacy cannot be doubted, for the promises of God are many and sure. We are commanded "always to pray, and not to faint;" to "come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." We are exhorted to prove God herewith, and see if He will not give us a blessing. We know that we cannot advance in holy things, or in spiritual knowledge, unless we possess and encourage a spirit of prayer. God's blessing on His people, on His ministers, on His Word, on the unconverted around us, is essential to real success. But He has told us that He will be "inquired of by the house of Israel, to do these things for them." He has assured us that the way whereby we may approach Him is prayer; that, if we ask aright, nothing doubting, our supplications will be heard, our requests granted. Every true disciple of Christ will readily confess that if this privilege were taken away, there would be nothing to depend upon but a broken reed. How is it, then, that the prayer meeting is the most thinly attended of all the services of the Church? How is it that so few are there found lifting up their hearts to God? How is it that the least trifle is considered a sufficient excuse for absence from the place where prayer is wont to be made? It is painful to listen to the manifold excuses made for non-attendance on this means of grace. Pleas of absence are put in that would not be allowed in case of a mere visit of ceremony; how then must they appear at the judgment-seat of God?

"Brother A., are you going to the meeting to-night?" "No, I believe not," is the reply; "it has the appearance of rain, and I don't feel very well. Besides, you know, *it's only a prayer meeting.*"

"Brother B., are you going to the prayer meeting to-night? I fear there will not be many present; the church seems in a cold state." "I know it," is the answer; "but I have some friends from the country visiting me, and I must pay them that attention which they deserve. I should like to go; but no matter, *it's only a prayer meeting.*"

"Come, Brother C., it is time we were going. I never like to be late at meeting, for it disturbs those who are already there, and is a bad example to those who are at all inclined to be dilatory." "I don't think of going this evening, brother; I have been hard at work all day, and had thought to stay at home this evening and rest a little. I hope you will have a good time; I believe, however, *it's only a prayer meeting.*"

Brother D. cannot go, for he is behind-hand in writing up his books, and is consequently pressed for time. He spent an idle hour in the morning in the — gallery of paintings. It is impossible for Brother E. to attend, for he has a previous engagement. Brother F. is to make one of a select party at the house of Sister G.; and

thus it runs on. This one cannot go, and the other will not go; and what is the result? The prayer meeting is thin; the church languishes; vital religion is not cherished; and the hearts of the members become cold. The pastor finds himself comparatively alone; labours and strives to do his duty; but there are few to hold up his hands. *It's only a prayer meeting.*

God is not called upon for His blessing, and no wonder that His Spirit is not shed abroad in the hearts of the people. How, then, should there be success?

Reader, if you have neglected to associate yourself with the assembled brethren and sisters at the hour of prayer, do so no more. From the prayer meeting goes forth a power that rests not upon earth, but, ascending, calleth down high and holy influences from heaven. In the abounding of prayer is prosperity.

Remember that the love of the world, a covetous money-getting spirit, and fleshly indulgence, will not only promote sloth of soul, but also breed and foster a disrelish for other services than a prayer meeting; as the scant attendance, too often to be seen, at the week evening preaching sadly testifies.

A LETTER BY J. HARMAN.

WRITTEN A FEW DAYS PREVIOUS TO HIS DEATH.

MY DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER AND SISTER,—In the faith of the everlasting love of God, in Christ Jesus manifest in the flesh, having an intense desire that you should know what great things the Lord hath vouchsafed to His poor, sinful, backsliding prodigal, I would here give you just an outline, as I cannot attempt to tell you one-thousandth part of what I have seen and felt, for my weakness is so great. We read that there was “a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it” (Gen. xxviii. 12). In fact, my dear Redeemer condescended to come down into my soul, and so overshadowed it with His light, love, power, and glory, as to shake my poor body almost to pieces. I was alone at the time, and I thought surely I should have fainted away. I cried out, “Lord, it is enough! it is enough! Lord, stay Thine hand: I cannot bear it; it is too great.” I then looked about the room in order to evade the light, power, and glory that overshadowed me. I cried out, “My bottle runneth over; it will hold no more;” and, indeed, I believe if it had continued long I must have died under it; but Susan soon came in, and consequently the oil stayed, but the revelation of it made me bodily ill all day. My dear brother, you know right well what I am saying, or otherwise I would not have named it; for I know it

is enough to make some of Joseph's brethren jealous to see young Benjamin have a mess five times bigger than theirs; but this is our Joseph's prerogative, and it is marvellous in my eyes. Now, my dear brother, I must tell you my prayer was turned into praise; and as to the Bible, I had got Christ in my heart; and He is the essential Word, and I beheld His glory; and as to the interpreters, the Holy Ghost was my Interpreter, Revealer, and Remembrancer. But I soon required prayer, for God withdrew His presence, and then He kindly answered His poor worm by letting him gently down into the valley, and then the Good Shepherd led His hungry sheep into the green pastures, to feed sweetly beside the still waters: and this is in perfect agreement with the Shepherd's voice, they "shall go in and out, and find pasture." My dear brother, you must excuse the brevity of this letter, as I am so ill; it is with the greatest difficulty that I write a word; but for your confirmation and consolation, and God's glory, I endeavour to persevere; and I am sure you will be glad to know this, for "the humble shall hear thereof and be glad;" and I have no doubt there are some in Cranbrook yet alive that would be glad to hear of God's love and faithfulness to His unworthy son. The Lord has greatly blessed dear Byatt's letter to me. I can say in deed and in truth, that I never received a letter from any mortal in this world with so much power as I did from him. Don't be jealous, my dear brother, for "Paul may plant, and Apollos water," but my God giveth the increase (bless His dear name for that!), and He shall have all the glory. But to turn round a little, no poor child craved for the breast more ardently than I did, or than I have done since the Lord has favoured me with so many of His love visits. Henry came in a week ago last Friday night, and I preached to him the everlasting Gospel for two hours, as fast as I could give utterance, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. I felt the Spirit bearing witness with my spirit that I was Christ's, and Christ was God's. It is easy to believe this when you hear the voice of the Spirit say, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." We believe according to God's Almighty power, nor can I believe as I would at any other time. And now I can adopt some of my favourite portions. "I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my Love, till He please;" and, "My Beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, My love, My fair one, and come away: for the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." In fact, I seem as if I can adopt the whole of the songs,

for Christ is mine, and I am His. And, bless His dear name, He has condescended to come down into His garden and feed among the lilies, within this last month, or otherwise my brother would not have had this. Oh, my brother, had I strength, I would send you a whole volume; but this little must suffice, as I am nearly gone. I feel sure I shall never see any of your faces again in the flesh; but there is one thing I am certain of, that is, I shall meet you at the right hand of God.

The following letter gives some account of the death of the writer of the above letter:—

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER,—You have had ere this a letter from our brother James, which I have no doubt you received joyfully, as he therein made you acquainted with the Lord's wonderful condescension and gracious dealings with his soul, which to us was truly marvellous. The grace was so great, so free, that he had to entreat the Almighty to stay His hand. Often did he desire some one to speak to who could rightly understand him. You perceive by the little that he was enabled to write to you that he was led into the deep things of God. Christ to him was most precious. He told me that all his sins, past, present, and to come, were all blotted out, and pronounced so by God the Father, Son, and Eternal Spirit; so that he would say, "I am clean, just God; I am clean." Also he said to me, "I have been a backslider for over twenty years, and a most fearful sinner; sometimes I have almost despaired of recovery; but God, who is rich in mercy, has at last looked upon me, and in such a way as to overwhelm me with astonishment. I looked for hell; He brought me heaven, and has caused His goodness to pass before me. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgiveth all my iniquities, and healeth all my diseases.'" I think for two or three weeks the oil flowed in day and night; he said the whole Bible was his. Truly he was tuned to be an Evangelist. He said, "I only want a pulpit and strength, and then I could preach for six hours upon God's free and everlasting love—as free—oh, *freer* than the air I breathe, ten thousand times." These blessed things never left him, and the enemy was not allowed to disturb him, so as to cause him for one moment to doubt or question this most blessed and heavenly visitation. I asked him at times since whether all was well. "Yes," he said, "my hope is firm and faith unwavering. I have not so much of the joy of hope, but all is well." Thus did Almighty God vouchsafe to show how great was His mercy, how rich and free even to such a backslider. Oh, the depth, the length, breadth, and height of the everlasting love of God! Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His wonderful works to the children of men, and, as good John Flavel says at the end of page 40 of his sermons, "Bless

God for Jesus Christ"! You might infer from what Brother James was enabled to write that he was a dying man. I have given you a little of his experience prior to his death, which took place on December 20th. God continued to be gracious—very gracious to him, even unto death. I inquired of the doctor about the sick man, and he said he cannot last many days. I told James the doctor's conclusion, but he was no way moved about it. The fight was fought, and God's time was his time. From that time he was not left. About a day and a half prior to his death he was peaceful and calm—quite sensible; and, after expressing the sweetness and comfort he felt in the dear Redeemer, and the preciousness of the promises, he said once, "This is very easy dying; it will soon be over; I shall soon be with the spirits of just men made perfect." He spoke until he could do so no more, and then tried to sing "Hallelujah." Thus, after about two hours, he waned away like a little child without a sigh or a struggle, as it were falling asleep. Thus died James Harman, in full and certain hope of a joyful resurrection. Amen.

Finally, may it please God to bless and do you good, as He doth to the upright in heart.

Yours in love,

Toronto, Dec. 29th, 1865.

HENRY BOOTH.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XI.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—On looking at the date of your last letter I see it is two months since I received it. I cannot remember whether I answered it or not; but it is not marked as answered, so I must conclude that you are one of my neglected correspondents. Well, my dear girl, I must beg pardon, and I hope you will forgive me, for indeed I have had no heart for either writing or anything else. But I am thankful to say I am better now, and you see I have taken a large sheet of paper to try to write a letter to you.

And now what shall I write about? I know you will say, Write about Him who is the "Chief among ten thousand," and the "altogether lovely." Well, what can I say about Him that you do not know? You have known Him for eight years, and you have proved Him to be a Father to the fatherless; you have known Him as your Saviour, your Redeemer, your Friend at all times, and your Brother born for adversity, your Counsellor to plead your cause, your Advocate, Intercessor, and Mediator, and as your Daysman to lay His hand upon both; for, as God, He could say He was equal with the Father—the Fellow of the Lord of Hosts; and, as man, He could lay His hand upon thee and say, as Adam did to his wife, "Bone of My bone, and flesh of My

flesh!" "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same." "Fear not: I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine."

Ah! my dear child, when you have known Him eight hundred years, instead of eight years, you will see a great deal more beauty in Him than you do now, and you will desire to know still more of Him, like the holy angels who desire to look into these things, though they have been looking into them for thousands of years. There is such a fulness in an Infinite Christ that finite beings—yea, both angels and men—may gaze to all eternity, and yet never fully comprehend all its heights and depths; for in Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Oh, my dear friend, we do not half know Him; we do not half love Him; we do not half worship Him. Our poor cold, barren hearts are so taken up with the things of this poor fleeting, shadowy state, that the great realities of the other world are not duly seen by us; we catch at shadows and run after bubbles, while the crown of glory is unheeded in a great measure by us. Oh, how I hate myself at times for my careless, worldly, thoughtless spirit! Dear Paul knew a great deal more of the Lord of Life and Glory than we do, and yet he said, "That I may know Him;" "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind . . . I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Oh, that there was more of this spirit among us! then there would be less strife, division, and discord; but, alas! instead of this, we are too much like the wicked servant who said in his heart, "My Lord delayeth His coming," and began to beat his fellow servants, &c. How sad it is to witness such things in the Church! But the Lord will surely come at an hour when He is not expected, and many will be ashamed before Him at His coming. I often fear I shall be one; at any rate, I am often ashamed before Him *now*, and mourn over these things. Oh, how little love and union is there among the people of God! The Church of God at the present day reminds me of a flock of sheep all running one against the other and trying to knock each other down with their heads, like as I have often seen sheep do; but presently the dog runs in among them, and then they seem to forget their quarrels, and all run together to the end of the field. So it would most likely be now if a time of persecution were to come; the sheep would flock together, and the goats would run away, go back, turn to the enemy, and do anything rather than stand fast in the evil day.

I had no thought of writing in this strain when I began; but one thought followed another, and I have scribbled on so far.

And now, my dear friend, I want to know where you are ; I know you are somewhere in the pilgrim's path, from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City. But I want to know what position you are in—are you lying down, or sitting, or walking, or running, or flying ? Either of these is a good state to be in. If you can say with David, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures" (Psa. xxiii.), that is a sweet and profitable place to be in ; or if you are like Mary, sitting at the feet of Jesus to hear His words, that is a good place to be in. The poor man who had the legion of devils found it a good place, when he was sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind ; it was so good that he besought Him that he might continue there ; but the Lord had a work for him to do, so he must go home to his friends and tell them about Jesus. The Church in the Song found this a good place, when she said, "I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste." But perhaps you are walking, for it is said, "They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance ;" or my dear friend may be running, for David said, "I will run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou shalt enlarge my heart." Again, it is said, "They shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint ;" and again, "Run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus," &c. (Heb. xii.). But my dear friend may be higher yet ; she may have so renewed her strength by waiting on the Lord, as to be enabled to mount up on wings of faith and love and soar above all earthly things so high as to get a glimpse of that beautiful land, which too often seems afar off.

But I must stop my scribble, for it is nearly ten o'clock ; so good night. May the Lord, that made heaven and earth, bless thee out of Zion,

Lutterworth.

Is the sincere desire of

C. SPIRE.

THE work of faith is to perform present duty, and then leave the issue with God, who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. We have no power over the varied events of life. Circumstances arise which cannot be foreseen, nor prevented if foreseen. Prudence can lay his plans, but He who ruleth on high can thwart them all. "There are many devices in a man's heart, nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand."

BETTER to be in a Union poor-house with a grain of grace, than to live in a palace without it, for what would the palace avail you in a thousand years ?—*Tiptaft.*

THE more you press at mercy's door,
The louder will the lion roar."

THE SOWER.

SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON

PREACHED AT HASTINGS, APRIL 16TH, 1872, BY MR. HULL.

“ God setteth the solitary in families: He bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.”—PSALM lxxviii. 6.

WHAT a blessed thing for poor conscience-stricken sinners that God has to do with solitary ones, with isolated and desolate ones! and with such how very different are God's workings and dealings from the conjectures of the creature! God and man have ever proved, since the fall, to be quite opposite in their designs. “ For there are many devices in a man's heart,” “ but the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.” We are apt, in judging of the ways of the Lord, to form an idea of our own, and build upon that; but it is only like building a castle in the air, which the Lord throws down, and that for a very wise purpose, viz., to teach us “ that the way of man is not in himself,” and that the wisdom of man, as compared with the counsel of God, is only folly. In His works and ways among the children of men, how different is the course God is pleased to take, from anything we could possibly conceive! And as He thus shows forth His infinite wisdom, His works and ways, all with loud voice, speak forth His glorious praise.

The first thing we have to notice in our text is the solitary ones. God truly “ doeth wondrous things,” as the Psalmist says, in separating His people from among the children of men; and, as he in another place declares, “ His work is honourable and glorious,” as evidenced in their salvation and call. Yet how different oftentimes are His operations from what we conceive concerning them; for instance, how silently the Lord often performs His work, especially in the souls of poor sinners; and frequently it is carried on in great obscurity, far from mortal sight; yet it is still the sure work of God. And in what different places God often chooses to work from what we should fix upon if we used our wisdom and choice! Yet in all these things He ever proves His sovereignty, His wisdom, and His goodness. And there is one important thing the Lord will have His people know and be assured of, which is, that true religion is a personal thing. Some of us have learned that lesson, and we must all know it before we go to heaven. O sinner, think of what I say; true religion is a personal matter. God brings all His people into a solitary spot, sooner or later; they must come there to have to

do with Him alone; and, as He teaches them out of His law, they will feel, like poor Job, that they want "a Daysman" to come betwixt Him and them.

When the sinner stands, like the poor woman, *alone* before the Lord, and feels that the eye of a heart-searching and rein-trying God looks him through and through, he is then singled out from all the world as a sinner whom God is searching and making manifest by bringing hidden things to light, as He did with the woman of Samaria. The call of God, as in the case of Abraham, separates the poor sinner from home, friends, companions, former associations and pursuits, and brings him into a solitary place. "He found him in a desert land, in the waste howling wilderness." Now, if there is such a solitary one here, may the Lord the Spirit be pleased to shine upon thy heart, and give thee some good word of encouragement to-night. In thus setting thee in a solitary place, God works in mercy to thee and for thy good. I have lived to prove that when He separated me, He did so in mercy. I then looked upon it as destruction, because the Lord turned all my works upside-down time after time, till, at last, I got into such a place that I felt I was neither fit for professor nor profane, for the general religionists of the day, nor for the people of God. I dwelt alone in a solitary place, but the breach which was thus made opened the way for something else, and I ultimately found that to be a profitable time, when I was thus isolated in my feelings from all around me; for in this way the Lord teaches to profit, and the truths of God are so burned into the soul, and confirmed by God the Holy Spirit in the heart, that neither the world, sin, nor Satan can pluck them out. They may at times be hidden from our view, but these lessons are learned for ever, and those who thus buy the truth will never sell it.

Sometimes these poor souls wander up and down, and do not know what or where they are, or whither they are wending their way; they feel to have no light, wisdom, or understanding, nor to be fit for any company. They are like unto those of whom the Psalmist says, "They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in." They find that people do not in general understand their case. And why? Because God's work in the heart is divine, and the wisdom of man can neither see nor comprehend it. This soon separates such an one from mere professors; he may try to walk with such, but "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" They may try to do so for a little while, but when God brings things to a point, there will come a time of separation; for when the Lord the Spirit works with divine power in the heart of one poor sinner the effects will be seen by others, and that which is discernible of grace in the one will be hated by many; and if they begin to

talk to legal professors about what they experience, they will treat it as a piece of nonsense, because they think such a religion is made up of antiquated notions, and is not wanted in our day. If you tell them you want the Lord to speak to your heart, as he did to Mary, and say "Thy sins are forgiven thee," they will say, "What do you want more than there is in God's Word?" Well, we do not want anything more than that; but the poor sinner does want what there is in God's Word brought home by the blessed and Eternal Spirit to his heart. He may read all the promises suited to his case in the Bible, and believe them to be true; but, without the power of God the Holy Spirit, he cannot lay hold of them so as to feel their virtue. But I have found, and some of you have found, that we come into these solitary places in order that that blessed promise may be fulfilled in us where the Lord says, "I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her; and I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall sing there as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt" (Hosea ii. 14, 15). The Lord does not bring these into a solitary place to leave them there. Oh, no; for as sure as He brings them *into* the wilderness, He will bring them *through* and out of it; and if He puts them into a solitary place, He also sets them in His family.

Let us then notice, in the next place, that God setteth these solitary ones in families. You who are exercised in the way we have just noticed believe that God has a family, that He has a family on earth, and that they are a highly favoured family; that they are all special partakers of special grace, and that they are thus specially blessed by a Triune Jehovah. Well, the family of God is scattered up and down on the face of the earth among all people, nations, and tongues; yet they "dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations," because they are a people that "shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." They are not of the world, nor are they one with the carnal professors of religion; they may be among these, but they are not of them; for though they are in the world, yet they are isolated characters. They dwell like "a sparrow alone," or "like an owl of the desert." They find that the world is no meet company for them, neither are the multitudes of professors companions suited to their spirit. Oh, poor exercised child of God, the Lord who redeemed thee thus makes thee to feel in thy very heart that His people are the only companions that will do for thee; and whoever He thus separates from the world, He gives them a sweet union with the Church of Christ, and a place among His children. Thus, "He setteth the solitary in families." What a

blessed word this has been to me when I have been favoured to experience how God takes notice of poor solitary, good-for-nothing sinners, brings them to His house, and sets them in families! The Church is the household of the living God, and that Church is composed of solitary ones, all of whom have had to weep apart before God, and to become separate from the world. They all find, as I before said, that true religion is a personal thing betwixt God and the soul. Yet, while no third party can intrude into these secret things, as the Lord brings these poor solitary ones together, they get to know each other, being taught by the same Spirit. Thus, God not only allures them into the wilderness, but brings them up therefrom, and they come forth leaning on their Beloved; and when they get into His house, among those that fear the Lord and that think on His name, they begin to speak to each other about the things which deeply concern them. Perhaps they cannot say much; they may feel their religion to be but small; they have been stripped of all their fancied righteousness, and feel to be very poor; but they get among a company of people that have been brought under the same discipline, and who can, therefore, understand their language. Have not some of you felt encouraged at times, when other of the Lord's people have related how He began to work in them?—when they have spoken of some of their exercises, their convictions, their sorrow for sin, their weeping and supplications, their desires after God and Jesus Christ—how their poor hearts wanted to know the cleansing efficacy of His blood, and to apprehend his righteousness as theirs—how they longed for that manifestation of God's favour in their soul that would impart peace—how they wanted the sealing of the Spirit to assure them of their sonship? When you have heard these things, how you have felt your heart respond to such confessions, and have thought, "If this is the way the Lord works in His people, if this is the way He leads them, who can tell, but, after all, I may be found among them?" Now, if we were all to stand up and tell what the Lord has done for us, there would be great variety of experience. His mode of working would vary somewhat in every case. For the Lord does not give His people a stereotyped experience; they cannot from one person's experience set up a standard for another; they all have to dwell alone; each has to deal with God alone. Thus, if we who know the Lord were all to tell how He has performed His good work in us, you would find every one would stand apart in some of the details. Yet it would be one harmonious whole in spirit. For there is but "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." Therefore in every case "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." There may be diversity of operations, but

all worked by the self-same Spirit. For "The same Lord over all is [alike] rich unto all that call upon Him." Thus, these poor sinners, though alone, solitary, separate, yet possessing a union to the living Head, they feel the same in their measure to the members. He brings them to know and enjoy this as evidence of life and sonship (1 John iii. 14).

How comfortable it is, when you have been dwelling alone, to get into good company, to find desirable associates, to be with some you feel a union to, who can unite with you in conversation and you with them! How pleasant it is, when you have been alone, "like an owl of the desert," or "a pelican of the wilderness," to get into company with one or two kindred souls! You then feel there is a sweet refreshing savour in their conversation; for, as "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." And I am sure the Lord convinces His people that there is no society on earth to be compared with, or to be desired like unto, that of the saints; for all spiritual good you may hope for in this wilderness, apart from direct communion with God, is alone found among His people. His name is set in Zion, yea, He dwells there; and there "God setteth the solitary in families." *He setteth them.* The Lord puts them in their right place, giving every member its position in the body. This is our mercy, for if we were left to ourselves there would be terrible confusion; for when a proud, self-sufficient, and ambitious spirit is prevalent among the disciples of Christ, we are all out of joint. But what a good thing it is when the Spirit bends to God's Word and way—when His grace humbles us in the dust, lays us low, and works humility in the heart! for when His Word works aright in us, and we each take a low place as the chief of sinners, how blessedly heart comes to heart, and how the Lord's solitary ones thus evidence that they are the right company for each other! They can speak of the same things, for they are all of one spirit, and are journeying the same way, "unto the place of which the Lord hath said, I will give it you." Thus "He setteth the solitary in families," and He gives them a mark to show that they belong to Him; for He causes them to pass under the rod, and says to them, "I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine."

Then, in the next place, we are told that "He bringeth out those that are bound with chains." Here he shows us another character, those that are bound. It is not those who always walk in liberty and at large that God here speaks of, but those who are bound with chains—chains of sin, slavish fears, unbelief, temptation, &c. He takes notice of the poor and needy, the afflicted and distressed—those that really need His helping hand. Thus "He filleth the *hungry* with good things;" and He Him-

self said, "The whole need not a physician, but *they* that are sick;" so it is not those that are free who want deliverance from chains, but they who are bound. Do you know what it is for God to bring you out from the iron bondage of sin? That bondage is cruel; and you who are bound with chains, as the servants of sin, will find it to be hard labour, and the wages thereof to be death, if you live and die in sin. And *legal* bondage is hard bondage; to be struggling under the law, striving to patch up a righteousness of your own, and so to make your peace with God, is very hard and fruitless work indeed. Many of you *have* known what it is, and perhaps some of you are there now. If you are, you will never find all you do to be sufficient to make peace betwixt God and your soul. All your working will leave you very far from God and from true peace.

When the Holy Spirit leads a poor sinner to Jesus Christ, he sees his own doings are nothing worth, and that Jesus Christ has done everything needful for salvation. All meetness for heaven is in Jesus Christ; and all we can know of peace with God is through faith in His precious blood alone. "He is our Peace," yea, He is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life;" and however you may seek elsewhere for rest, you will only be disappointed, for by His blood and obedience only can sinners be freed from condemnation and reconciled to God. Has the Lord the Spirit given you to see in Jesus just the Saviour that will suit you—the Physician that knows and can reach your case? and is it your desire that He may enter and dwell in your heart—the Hope of glory? Then, although your soul is now bound with sin and unbelief, there is liberty in store for you. The blessed Jesus who "led captivity captive" will ere long say to thee, as He did to Lazarus of old, "Come forth;" and His word is with power. "He bringeth out those that are bound with chains." He does not merely leave them free to come out if they will, but He *brings* them out. When the angel was sent to liberate Peter, He went to him in the prison and brought him out. Peter could not understand it at first; the deliverance was so wonderful that he thought it was a dream, until he got to the outer gate, then he found himself free. And thus Jesus, "When He putteth forth His own sheep He goeth before them." He breaks the bonds; and then does not leave the poor sinner to seek the way for himself, but leads him in the way in which he is to follow the Captain of his salvation, from the prison and chains, to a city of habitation. Then I once more ask, "Do you know anything of the Lord Jesus Christ breaking your chains, opening the prison, and delivering you out of bondage? or are you longing to hear His voice, and see His delivering hand? If so, remember that "He bringeth out those that are bound with chains."

But the Word also declares that "The rebellious dwell in a dry land." It is a great mercy if God has had to do with us in a way of grace. If you can say that He has taught you to know yourselves; has humbled your proud heart, your self-sufficient spirit, and brought into subjection your will; so that you know what it is to feel a willingness in your heart for Him to take His own way in performing that which concerns you, instead of wishing to dictate to Him as to the method of grace and way of salvation—if, I say, the Lord has blessed you with this childlike spirit, and your one desire is to be the Lord's and to follow Him, how much better is your case than that of a rebellious one! For "The rebellious dwell in a dry land." Who are the rebellious? Some may say, "Oh, they are the ungodly." Then the dry land is no trouble to them, since they never thirst for the water of life or the favour of God. The blessings of God's free grace are nothing to them; they do not feel their need of Jesus Christ; therefore a dry land is no trouble to them. But let one of God's redeemed people get into a dry place, and they will be certain to find it out, for they will soon get a dry soul; and when they feel their parched condition they will begin to cry out, "My leanness! my leanness!" Yet, although they complain how destitute they are of good and lively feelings and of warm desires toward the Lord, very often, in such a case, the language of Psalm xlii. just suits them, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." And no water can be found beneath the skies to quench the thirst or refresh the soul of such an one. God alone can satisfy thee, sinner, if thou art in this case; Christ alone can meet thy need; but in Him is all fulness found, in Him all the treasures of grace are stored, for needy thirsty souls. Well, who are the rebellious that dwell in a dry land? Perhaps if we begin to point out some of these characters there may be a degree of surprise felt by some, that there should be those among the Lord's people who manifest at times a very obstinate and rebellious spirit. It is very sad, I must confess, that any of the Lord's family should manifest that spirit; and if the Lord leaves them to be filled with their own ways they will find it to be a very dry place indeed. Where there is an obstinate spirit there is pride at the bottom of it; and pride, we know, is not compatible with humility; also it is what God Himself abhors. But if we have the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, we have an *humble mind*; and, as pride and humility cannot both reign in one heart, therefore pride must be brought low, for the Lord declares that "*Grace shall reign.*" And when the Lord makes us as little children, of lowly mind, feelingly poor and needy, and brings us, as humble, contrite sinners, to His dear feet

to learn of Him, we then find that Paul's seat as the "chief of sinners" suits us well.

" To be the meanest they are content ;
 So Jesus but their souls present
 With pardoning grace and heavenly love,
 To fit them for the joys above "

I am sure, poor sinner, the lower we are kept the better it will be for our peace and spiritual enjoyment, for "The Lord hath respect unto the lowly ;" but He will always keep the proud at a distance. What a mercy, then, if you cannot be at ease when you are affected with a proud spirit, until the Lord subdues the evils of your heart, and favours you to again draw near unto Him with a conscience void of offence ! But where an obstinate spirit is indulged, such people will dwell in a dry land ; and how sad it is when this spirit moves people to rebel against the Word of the Lord ! Sometimes, when He reproves them under the ministry, or in reading His Word, by causing it to reach down into secret places, and hidden things are thereby set forth in God's light, they fall out with it instead of falling under it, and so they make their case worse. It is a good thing to receive the reproving Word with meekness, to fall before the Lord and let His Word have free course in the conscience, instead of rebelling against it. If you are enabled thus to be as clay in the hands of the potter, you will find it to be your mercy. It may go sorely against your fleshly nature and proud spirit, but you will always find it best to let the Word of God have full play, even when it comes with sharp reproofs ; and they are in a wrong state who cannot bear the light of that Word. These rebellious ones will dwell in a dry land. Then there are some who rebel against things which they find in the Bible, such as the ordinances of the Lord's house, for instance ; and although they cannot overthrow them, yet because they cannot, as they say, *see* them, they rebel against them. Now, the Lord Jesus Christ, who appointed those ordinances, did not institute them in vain ; and He says, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." He also told His disciples to teach others to observe them ; and when we receive the love of the truth it produces meekness of spirit, and then it becomes our meat and drink to *do* the will of God. Thus, as the Word of God reaches the heart with power, and is received in faith, it will do good. "But the rebellious dwell in a dry land ;" and when this spirit of rebellion prevents any considering that admonition not to forsake assembling ourselves together in a church form, such persons will surely be the losers ; for it is good to be where brethren dwell together in unity.

Oh, friends, if God has loved us and put us among the children, He has bestowed upon us no small favour. I remember,

when I lived in the neglect of this communion, and I found it to be a dry place indeed, the Lord seemed to hold me at a distance, both in the private and public means of grace; but when by His reproofs I was made to know my sin, and was enabled to go forth in the way of His commandments, He met me, as I went to His table, with these blessed words, "Even unto them will I give in Mine house and within My walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name which shall not be cut off;" and since then I have many times blessed the Lord that ever He gave me a place among His people and in His Church below. Ah! it is a great mercy to have a good hope in Christ and to follow Him in a scriptural way. But "the rebellious dwell in a dry land." Do you rebel against God's dealings in providence when He crosses you and tries your spirit? Are you sometimes like Joseph, when the Lord crosses His hands in answering your prayers? Do you say, "Not so, my Father"? Do you, like Ephraim, rebel against the chastening rod when the Lord corrects you for your follies? (Jer. xxxi. 18; Isa. lvii. 17.) If so, you have need to pray, "Lord, teach me to humble myself under Thy mighty hand." For "the rebellious dwell in a dry land;" but blessed are they who have the Spirit of Christ, and can say, "Thy will, not mine, be done." May the Lord add His blessing, and He shall bear the glory.

NO ATHEIST IN HELL.

AN EXTRACT FROM A POEM ON DIVES AND LAZARUS.

BEHOLD sin's martyr and hell's sacrifice!
 He yells and howls, and vents unpitied cries;
 He finds no friendly ear or tender eye;
 He feels a thousand deaths, but cannot die;
 Like burning brass he's fired in every part;
 A vulture lives upon his living heart.
 God's gone! He's gone! And what a hell is this,
 To be deprived of everlasting bliss!
 Oh, this eternal banishment is worse
 Than all the remnant of the doomsday curse!
 This hell of hell may thus be understood—
 No torments are so bad as God is good;
 Besides, an appetite in man doth lie
 Which nothing but a God can satisfy;
 And, though his appetite be here deluded
 By various objects in God's room obtruded,
 Yet when at death all these are laid aside,
 Then cries the soul for God, but is denied.
 This thirst unquenched is such an inward flame,
 A hell in hell is its deserved name.
In hell there cannot be an atheist:
 'Tis hell in hell that God is dearly missed.—MASON.

THE TWO BROTHERS.

IN one of the thickly-peopled streets of a parish in which a clergyman ministered, lived a man who was ill and apparently not long for this world. He had been for many years a brewer's labourer, and much given to the sin of drunkenness. His constitution was worn out, and he was slowly, but surely, sinking into the grave. "My first visit," says the clergyman, "has not left a very distinct impression on my memory, but his general state of mind I remember well. His past life caused him bitter sorrow: a sense of sin pressed heavily upon his conscience. He was looking about for a refuge from the wrath to come, and earnestly inquiring whether there could be hope for him. I set before him the method of salvation revealed in the Gospel, spoke of the nature and evidences of repentance, and pointed him to 'the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world' as able to give both repentance and forgiveness (John i. 29; Acts v. 31). His illness continued for several months; he was still anxious; he was also very thankful for my visits; would listen attentively, and weep much; but was ever questioning whether pardon could be granted to him. His wife told me that his waking hours were spent in constant prayers and tears, and that whole nights were sometimes passed in that manner.

"An absence of some weeks had interrupted my visits. The first evening after my return, ministerial duties called me into a street near that in which the sick man lived. It was quite dark. On leaving the house I had visited, some person addressed me, 'Is that Mr. L——?' I at once knew the voice of the wife of my poor sick friend. 'Oh, sir, I am so glad you are come back; my husband is so changed. I thought he could not have lived till your return; I expect every day to be his last; but, sir, he is quite happy. He wants much to see you; his sins, he says, are forgiven him, and he is no longer afraid to die.' I went with her to the house. The sick man was down stairs, dressed, and sitting in an arm-chair. It was plain that in a short time all would be over. His breath was greatly oppressed, and it was with difficulty he could speak to me. He roused himself to do so: his words were few. I questioned him on the ground of his hope. From all that I could gather, he had fled for refuge in Christ Jesus, and trusted wholly in Him. His burden was gone, for he was quietly resting on the promises of free mercy through the Saviour. Faith had brought peace, and he could speak of death with calmness. I could not but hope that this was the work of the Blessed Comforter, and that all was really

well ; my heart rejoiced in the consolation afforded. In the same night he died.

“Some months passed away. I was one day sent for to the opposite quarter of the parish to that in which the above circumstance happened, with an earnest request that I would visit one of those unhappy ones who live by the wages of sin. Taking a friend with me, I went to the house where the miserable woman lived. The door opened into a room in which were the mother and her sick babe, with one of her companions in sin, and beside these, if I mistake not, the woman who kept the house. A wretched-looking man, seemingly very ill, sat by the side of the fire. After a few words of solemn warning to the woman and her companion, I turned to the man at the fire-side. He was wretchedly ill, as he told me, and had every mark of settled consumption ; but, on my asking him what were his prospects for eternity, ‘Oh,’ said he, with singular unconcern, ‘my brother found mercy, and why should not I?’ These words were pronounced with an air of such surprising carelessness as almost to startle me. I inquired who his brother was. ‘Why,’ replied the man, ‘do not you remember visiting such a one?’ (mentioning the name and place of abode of the person). ‘You thought all was well enough with him—he died in peace, and why should not I?’ Alas for his soul!—‘hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.’ It was plain that whatever hope there might have been for his brother, there was no ground of hope that all was well with him. I pointed out to him the nature of his brother’s case : told him of the earnest cries for mercy, the long-continued waiting upon God in prayer, the deep mourning for sin, which, as I trusted, showed the sincerity of his brother’s repentance, and then spoke of the difference of his own case—living as he was in the love and constant practice of sin, living in the midst of it, and living by it too. After seriously warning him against presuming on the mercy of God, declaring the fearful threatenings of the Divine Word against the impenitent sinner, and urging him to pray that the Lord would open his eyes to see his awful condition, I left him. How many, alas ! living in the same utter neglect of God, have no better hope for eternity than ‘My brother found mercy, and why should not I?’

“The character of the place where the sick man lived made me feel backward to visit him again, and I might have neglected him entirely had not his case been again brought under my notice. One day the widow of the deceased brother called upon me. She felt anxious, she said, about the soul of her unhappy brother-in-law, and as he was fast sinking, would I go and see him ?

“It was not very long before, accompanied by another friend, I

once more found my way to the abode of sin. The wretched man was in the same state of careless unconcern. We read to him, reasoned with him, prayed by him. The terrors of the law, and the love of Christ Jesus were set forth, but failed alike to move him. Several times after we visited him, but do not remember ever seeing one tear of repentance, or hearing one expression of sorrow fall from his lips. His want of feeling was so extreme that I sometimes thought he could not have the full possession of his senses. The words spoken seemed as an idle tale; they floated through his ear, and that was all. With all this, he would sometimes talk of the mercy of God, for he 'had no bands in his death.' Oh, how exactly did our Lord's lamentation over Jerusalem suit his case—'If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes' (Luke xix. 42). He died; they carried his body to the grave—but his soul!—what shall we say? We have no wish, as we have no right, to forestall the judgment of the great day. But we know who has said, 'Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;' and 'He that believeth not the Son of God shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.'"

Reader, are you one of those who are living in sin, with the vain intention of repenting on your death-bed? Do you forget that repentance is not in your own power? Does not the Saviour say, "Without Me ye can do nothing"? (John xv. 5). And will you trifle with His grace, and presume on His long-suffering? "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to evil" (Jer. xiii. 23). Let me earnestly entreat you to ponder over the case of this unhappy man. May it lead you to pray for mercy with persevering earnestness to Him who can change your heart, lest you be given over to endless ruin.

A slave to his lusts, and a pand'rer to sin,
 Long harden'd in vice, and blinded within,
 When warn'd of God's judgments, was heard to reply,
 "My brother found mercy, and why should not I?"

Thy brother *repented*, his sorrow was deep;
 Throughout the night watches for sin he would weep;
 His heart, it was melted and bursting with grief,
 And with prayers deep and fervent he sought for relief.

Thy brother *believed*; for refuge he fled
 To Jesus, who died, and rose from the dead:
 His seal to the work did God's Spirit impart,
 In the love, joy, and peace shed abroad in his heart.

But where is thy grief and conviction of sin ?
 What proofs of repentance and change wrought within ?
 What workings of faith, and what fruits of the Spirit,
 Show meetness the kingdom of God to inherit ?

O God, from presumption deliver my heart,
 That with such "filthy dreamers" I may not have part,
 But, by union with Christ, make me pure, meek, and lowly,
 Make me penitent, contrite, believing, and holy.

A HOLY TEMPLE IN THE LORD.

THE building of the Church is so great and glorious a work, as that it could not be effected by any but by Him who was God. It requires God to be the builder of it, for the wisdom of its contrivance.

When God appointed Bezaleel to the work of the building the tabernacle, He says that He had "filled him with the Spirit of God" in wisdom, and knowledge, and understanding; and none were to be employed in the work with him but such as were "wise-hearted, and into whom God had put wisdom." And yet this was but for the building of an earthly tabernacle, and that, not to contrive it, but only to make and erect it according to a pattern which God Himself did frame. This they could not do till they were "filled with the Spirit of God in wisdom." What then must needs be required to the contrivance of this glorious, mysterious, spiritual, heavenly house of God? Nothing could effect it but infinite wisdom! Yea, the manifold wisdom of God was in it—all the treasures of His wisdom and knowledge. In this eternal wisdom of God was the mysterious contrivance of this building hid from the foundation of the world, and its breaking forth from thence, in the revelation of it made in the Gospel, was accompanied with so much glory that the angels of heaven did earnestly desire to bow down and look into it.

We have a dark view of this building; and where it is mystically represented to us, as in Isaiah lx., Ezekiel xliii.—xlv., we may rather admire than comprehend its excellency. But when we shall come to see how the foundation of it was laid, at which "all the sons of God shouted for joy;" how, by the strange and wonderful working of the Spirit of Grace, all the stones designed from eternity for the building of this house were quickened and made living in all ages and generations, and how they are, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, fitly framed together to be a temple to the Lord, and what is the glory of God's inhabitation therein, we shall be satisfied that divine wisdom was required therein.

DR. OWEN.

OUR MARTYRED FOREFATHERS.

XVIII.—THOMAS CRANMER.

THE archiepiscopal see of Canterbury can boast of a long list of names, representing some of the most eminent divines and scholars our country has produced ; yet few of its illustrious occupants have so worthily and so honourably discharged their important functions as Thomas Cranmer did in the days of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. Holding that responsible post at a very critical period in our history, when England was in a state of religious transition, Cranmer nobly and wisely used his influence to forward the progress of those principles that have their foundation in the Word of God ; and, although perseverance in such a cause was sure to be rewarded with contempt and opprobrium, yet the heroic archbishop defended and maintained the principles of the Reformation with a zeal and courage that excites our highest admiration. In the drama of the English Reformation Cranmer played a conspicuous and important part. Under Henry VIII. his position was both difficult and dangerous. His royal master possessed a fickle and ungovernable temper, that often found expression in stakes and scaffolds. Papists and Protestants were alike to Henry if they crossed his projects and thwarted his designs. Cranmer had some narrow escapes from sharing the fate of More and Cromwell ; but the King seems to have had a feeling of affection towards his archbishop that never permitted the Papal party to execute its malicious designs against the good man ; so that his valuable life was spared in order that our country might have the benefit of his learning and ability during the days of Edward VI., when the Reformation made considerable progress in these realms.

In the quiet village of Aslackton, in Nottinghamshire, Cranmer was born. At a very early age he was sent to school, and subsequently he entered Cambridge University, where he soon distinguished himself as a student of no mean ability ; and, after a time, he was chosen fellow of Jesus College. Cranmer's arrival at this seat of learning was simultaneous with the famous revival of letters that immediately preceded the Reformation. Imbued with the spirit of the age, the student from the Midlands drank eagerly at the fountains of antiquity. At length, however, Luther appeared ; and Cranmer, who was a close observer of events, watched the movements of the redoubtable monk with intense interest. About this time he married, and consequently had to forfeit his fellowship ; but, on the death of his wife, who lived but a short time, the masters of Jesus College reinstated him. Being regarded as one of the first scholars of the University,

Cranmer received the post of examiner to those who were desirous of taking degrees. In this office he acted with firmness, and allowed no one to become doctor in divinity who was not thoroughly acquainted with his Bible. This principle, which Cranmer so rigidly enforced, aroused much opposition, especially amongst those friars and monks whose ignorance of the Scriptures was so general. Here the eminent man remained, holding examinations, delivering lectures on theology, and watching with no ordinary interest the current of passing events; and yet maintaining a reserve and shyness that carefully avoided public fame and shunned popular applause; when the plague broke out with raging fury that caused Cranmer, with many others, to flee. It was through this unforeseen occurrence that the future archbishop came into prominence.

It was under the roof of a relation that resided at Waltham Abbey that Cranmer found shelter after his flight from Cambridge. Here he was hospitably entertained by Mr. Cressy and his family. During the period he sojourned here the King and his court visited Waltham, and two of Henry's chief advisers, Fox and Gardiner, were guests of Cranmer's host. This occurred when the notorious "divorce question" was agitating the nation and absorbing the attention of the lawyers, statesmen, and canonists of the day. This subject, consequently, was the theme of conversation at Mr. Cressy's supper table, and at length Cranmer was asked to give his opinion of the case. At first he spoke very reluctantly about it, saying that he had not studied the question. Believing, however, that the constant delays of the Papal court were quite unnecessary, Cranmer suggested a more speedy solution of the problem. Let the question be debated by the divines and universities, who must be guided in their decision by the Word of God. This was the sum and substance of Cranmer's proposal, which was related to the King on the following day. The idea pleased Henry, who sent for Cranmer, approved and adopted his scheme, received him into favour, and, on the death of Warham in 1530, elevated him to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury. Such a high post under a monarch like Henry was accompanied with many perils. This king had had many servants who had been subservient to his wishes to the disadvantage of the nation, and whose blind obedience to their monarch had involved England in many troubles. No matter, however, how faithfully they had served him, or how many years they had been his secret accomplices in the many wrong deeds he had committed; yet, one after the other, as their master tired of their persons, they were removed by a sudden stroke, to give place to other men. But Cranmer, although he accepted this high office, was no mere courtier who fawned upon the King and implicitly obeyed

his behests. He was no Wolsey. Conscientiously desiring to discharge his many duties as in the sight of God, this eminent archbishop sometimes incurred the wrath of Henry, and on several occasions, narrowly escaped with his life.

During the brief reign of Edward, Cranmer was the most conspicuous among those worthies who assisted in the work of establishing the Gospel in our land. His ability and energy, his learning and piety, were unreservedly employed in the cause of the Reformation, and his zealous efforts were crowned with such success that very sanguine hopes were entertained that permanent victory was near at hand. How suddenly, however, were these hopes blasted! In the year 1553 Romanism again returned to power with a vigorous determination to uproot and extirpate those principles for which Cranmer, Ridley, and their associates so industriously toiled. The archbishop was speedily thrown into the Tower, where he remained until the Queen and privy council decided to remove him to Oxford to dispute with the Romish doctors and divines of that seat of learning. Much time was spent in these discussions, but it is very questionable whether any solid advantages accrued to either party.

At length on the 12th of September, 1555, a court of special commissioners, under the presidency of Dr. Brooks, Bishop of Gloucester, was held in St. Mary's Church to try the case of Thomas Cranmer. After the noble prisoner had protested against the authority of the Pope in the realm of England, the Bishop of Gloucester delivered a very eloquent and studious oration. Dr. Martin followed the president. At the conclusion of the speech of the latter, who was one of the Crown commissioners, Cranmer said, "My lord, I do not acknowledge this session of yours, nor yet you, my mislawful judge; neither would I have appeared this day before you, but that I was brought hither as a prisoner. And therefore I openly here renounce you as my judge, protesting that my meaning is not to make any answer, as in a lawful judgment (for then I would be silent), for only that I am bound in conscience to answer every man of that hope which I have in Jesus Christ, by the counsel of St. Peter; and lest by my silence many of those who are weak, here present, might be offended." When these examinations were brought to a close, Cranmer was cited to appear in Rome within eighty days; and this command he was willing to obey if the Queen would only send him. But, instead of a journey to Italy, he was kept in close confinement until the expiration of the term, when he was declared a contumacious and incorrigible "heretic."

On February 14th, 1556, in the choir of Christ Church, Oxford, another court was held, with Thirleby, Bishop of Ely, and Bonner, Bishop of London, as presidents. Being entrusted with the power

of depriving and degrading Cranmer, these judges speedily proceeded to execute their orders, and then delivered him over to the secular power.

During the archbishop's long incarceration, which lasted nearly three years, the Romish doctors and divines of the university did not cease to vex and harass him with their entreaties and arguments. Summoning to their aid every artifice they could employ, they left no stone unturned to cause Cranmer to deny the Gospel. For a considerable length of time their zeal and perseverance had no apparent effect; Cranmer was immovable. Still, however, they argued and discussed; sometimes they offered money and a restoration of the high offices he had previously held; in short, all that craft and ingenuity could devise did they use against the heroic prisoner. At length, too, the day came when Cranmer yielded, and appended his name to a paper in which he asserted his recantation of the truths of the Gospel. As an inducement to sign this paper his enemies had offered life and liberation; but, when he had complied with their wishes, he was still kept a prisoner, and arrangements were made for his execution. Although the news of Cranmer's recantation was highly gratifying to the Queen and her councillors, yet they were determined on his death. Instructions were accordingly given to Lord Williams of Thame, Lord Chandos, Sir Thomas Bridges, and Sir John Brown to be present at Oxford on the 21st March, 1556, to superintend the arrangements for the burning of the venerable archbishop; and Dr. Cole was also commanded to prepare a sermon for the occasion. On the appointed day, Cranmer, escorted by the mayor and aldermen of the city and their officials, was conducted out of prison to St. Mary's Church, there to make a public confession of his recantation. Can we not imagine how the doctors and priests chuckled in anticipation of hearing the most conspicuous leader of English Reformation publicly declare his abjuration of its glorious principles? Can we not, also, believe that this spectacle would fill with tears the eyes of those who had had opportunities of hearing the heroic martyr forcibly enunciate the truths of the Gospel and fearlessly expose the errors of Rome? Doubtless many an earnest and silent prayer was offered up on behalf of Cranmer, that he might be enabled on this occasion to contend stoutly for the Truth.

The church was crowded. On a platform, erected in front of the pulpit, Cranmer, attired in a bare and ragged gown with a square cap on his head, stood, and there awaited the arrival of Dr. Cole. At length the preacher arrived and delivered his sermon, severely reproving Cranmer for his folly and obstinacy in departing from the Church of Rome. Referring to his recantation, Dr. Cole concluded his discourse with these words:—

“Brethren, lest any man should doubt of this man’s earnest conversion and repentance, you shall hear him speak before you ; and therefore I pray you, Mr. Cranmer, to perform that now which you promised not long ago ; namely, that you would openly express the true and undoubted profession of your faith, that you may take away all suspicion from men, and that all men may understand that you are a Catholic indeed.”

All eyes were now turned upon Cranmer, who, with tears in his eyes, now commenced to address the large assembly. To Dr. Cole’s invitation to declare his belief in the Catholic faith, Cranmer at once responded in these words :—“I will do it, and that with a good will. Good people, my dearly beloved brethren in Christ, I beseech you most heartily to pray for me to Almighty God, that He will forgive me all my sins and offences, which are without number, and above great measure. But yet one thing grieveth my conscience more than all the rest, whereof, God willing, I intend to speak more hereafter. But how great and how many soever my sins be, I beseech you to pray to God of His mercy to pardon and forgive them all.”

He then knelt down and said the following prayer :—

“O Father of heaven, O Son of God, Redeemer of the world, O Holy Ghost, Three Persons and One God, have mercy upon me, most wretched caitiff and miserable sinner. I have offended both against heaven and earth, more than my tongue can express. Whither then may I go, or whither shall I flee ? To heaven I may be ashamed to lift up mine eyes, and on earth I find no place of refuge or succour. To Thee, therefore, O Lord, do I run ; to Thee do I humble myself. O Lord my God, my sins be great, but yet have mercy upon me for Thy great mercy. The great mystery that God became man was not wrought for little or few offences. Thou didst not give Thy Son, O Heavenly Father, unto death for small sins only, but for all the greatest sins of the world, so that the sinner return to Thee with his whole heart, as I do at this present. Wherefore have mercy on me, O God, whose property is always to have mercy ; have mercy upon me, O Lord, for Thy great mercy. I crave nothing for mine own merits, but for Thy name’s sake, that it may be hallowed thereby, and for Thy dear Son Jesus Christ’s sake.” He then concluded with the Lord’s Prayer.

Rising from his knees, Cranmer then addressed the large concourse of people. “Every man,” said the veteran Reformer, “good people, desireth at the time of his death to give some good exhortation, that others may remember the same before their death, and be the better thereby ; so I beseech God grant me grace that I may speak something at this my departing, whereby God may be glorified and you edified. It is a heavy cause to see that so many folk dote upon the love of this false world, and be so careful for

it, that of the love of God, or the world to come, they seem to care very little or nothing. Therefore this shall be my first exhortation, that you set not your minds overmuch upon this deceitful world, but upon God, and upon the world to come, and to learn to know what this lesson meaneth which St. John teacheth, that the love of this world is hatred against God."

After having desired the people to loyally serve their King and Queen, and with a few pointed words of advice to the rich, Cranmer closed his address with these words:—

"And now I come to the great thing which so much troubleth my conscience, more than anything that ever I did or said in my whole life, and that is the setting abroad of a writing contrary to the truth; which now I here renounce and refuse, as things written with my hand contrary to the truth which I thought in my heart, and written for fear of death, and to save my life if it might be; and that is, all such bills and papers which I have written and signed with my hand since my degradation, wherein I have written many things untrue. And forasmuch as my hand hath offended, contrary to my heart, therefore my hand shall first be punished; for when I come to the fire it shall be first burned. As for the Pope, I refuse him as Christ's enemy and Antichrist, with all his false doctrine. As for the sacrament, I believe as I have taught in my book against the Bishop of Winchester, which my book teacheth so true a doctrine of the sacrament, that it shall stand at the last day before the judgment of God, where the Papistical doctrine contrary thereto shall be ashamed to show her face."

Cranmer's auditors were thunderstruck. The sting of his speech was in its tail, and his enemies fumed and stormed in blind rage. Instead of an expected renunciation of the Gospel, the heroic martyr had dared to avow his determination to stand by its hated doctrines. Proceeding to speak more largely upon his detestation of the Papacy, a tremendous uproar ensued, and Dr. Cole's voice was heard above the noise, exclaiming, "Stop the heretic's mouth and take him away." Tearing him from the platform, the enraged friars and priests led him to the spot where Latimer and Ridley had bravely suffered a few months previously. His enemies plied him with questions and entreaties to induce him to recant, but to no purpose. Being bound to the stake by an iron chain, the fires were then kindled, when the martyr thrust his right hand into the furious flames, crying out, "This unworthy right hand!" "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," were words that were often on his lips. In the fire he appeared to remain motionless until life was extinct and Cranmer was no more.

PASSING UNDER THE ROD.

“And I will cause you to pass under the rod.”—EZEKIEL XX. 37.

How trying the process by which we are brought
 To bow to the will of our God !
 What care He bestows—yea, what wisdom and love
 Are seen in His dealings while making us prove
 That 'tis well to “pass under the rod” !

He knows that when all things go smoothly along
 We recline on this wilderness sod,
 And therefore He chooses by crosses and woes,
 Bereavements, temptations, afflictions, and foes,
 To make us “pass under the rod.”

O discipline painful, yet needful, that we
 May constantly wait on our God !
 If necessity drive not, we seldom should go,
 And less of His Spirit and presence should know,
 If we did not “pass under the rod.”

How often we look at the worldlings around,
 Each making some bauble their God !
 And in moments of darkness the soul seems to say,
 As we watch their rejoicings, “'Tis well to be they,
 For they never ‘pass under the rod.’”

But the blessed one smiles, and the murmur is hushed
 When we meet at the throne of our God ;
 And we breathe, as we're bending, “If Thou wilt be near
 In all Thy chastisements, to comfort and cheer,
 I would rather ‘pass under the rod.’”

Ah ! then, we've no wish for a trial withheld,
 Or a less thorny path to be trod ;
 For we feel that to rest on the bosom of love,
 In His likeness below, or His glory above,
 We must surely “pass under the rod.”

Great Head of the household, since Thou hast ordained
 That the heirs of the kingdom of God
 Should obtain it through much tribulation below,
 Oh, teach us sweet kindness and pity to show
 When our kindred “pass under the rod” !

Then let us take courage, since all our concerns
 Are obeying Thy governing nod ;
 For we soon shall have done with the sigh and the tear,
 No more have life's conflicts to face and to fear,
 And no more to “pass under the rod.”

MEMOIR OF THE LATE JOHN CLARK, OF
FIVEASHDOWN.*(Continued from page 89.)*

It will have been seen that Mr. Henry Fowler was made the honoured instrument, in the Lord's hand, of leading our friend in his lonesome path, and of preaching to him the glad tidings of a finished salvation. Shortly after this the friends meeting at Conway Street removed to Gower Street Chapel, which was opened by Mr. W. Gadsby, when he preached from Psalm xxvii. 4. From that time our friend became a constant hearer there; and when Mr. Henry Fowler was asked to become the stated minister, he with others who had been seat-holders for twelve months, voted in his favour. His appetite was then so keen for spiritual food that he commonly walked from his lodgings to London and back—a distance of eighteen miles—every Lord's day, hearing Mr. Fowler morning and evening, and Mr. Watts Wilkinson in the afternoon. He went in and out of chapel in an unobtrusive manner; but he felt his path to be a lonely one, for no one took him by the hand. While walking one day beside Clapham Common these words came with power to his heart, "Though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not, doubtless Thou art Father" (Isa. lxiii. 16). He was now so favoured with the spirit of adoption, and felt such rapturous joy, that he was sure he was united to Christ, and could enter into the rich experience contained in the Song of Solomon, now He had given him "the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." The Holy Comforter was with him teaching him to profit, filling his soul with peace, and so refreshing his spirit that to the latter part of his life this was ever a season to be remembered as being marked by the Lord's manifest presence. But the great adversary of souls, whose continual aim it is to distress the Lord's chosen seed, soon assaulted him with temptation to blaspheme the God he loved, which produced such trembling and distraction that he feared he should lose his reason; by this temptation he was hunted night and day, was afraid to close his eyes at night, and wished he had never been born.

About this time he went to hear the late John Warburton, of Trowbridge, preach, who in the midst of his discourse said, "Why, poor soul, Satan may tempt thee to blaspheme God." This remark greatly relieved him, for he had not hitherto discovered that it was Satan's work; for, like Bunyan's pilgrim, when in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, he feared all these blasphemies were from within; but here, as the enemy had come in like a flood, the Lord's servant, through the power of His Spirit, was enabled to lift up

a standard against him. This was confirmed to him in reading a treatise by Mr. Barry, wherein he found this passage: "Now, the difference between Satan's temptations and the temptations of the flesh are these: where the flesh tempts, there is that which is pleasing in it to our nature; but when Satan tempts to blaspheme, this is repugnant to our very nature, which shows it to be the work of Satan." This broke the snare, made him happy, and caused the tempter to flee from him.

After this he was exposed to another temptation of a different kind, wherein the flesh struggled hard for the mastery. His natural affections were entangled by a young person whom he had no reason to believe was a partaker of grace. One or two worldly friends were pleased with the prospect that seemed opening before him; but he, poor young man, had a sore conscience from the rebukes of the Most High, besides which a good man was both kind and faithful to admonish him of the consequences of the step he was premeditating. Notwithstanding he tried to justify himself by the slips of good men recorded in the Old Testament, and rebellion set his feet fast in the stocks. At this time Mr. Fowler preached from Proverbs xix. 3: "The foolishness of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord;" and although he had never named the subject to Mr. Fowler, he was led to point out to him his very condition. But with daring impetuosity he still went on, and God met him with these words, "Touch not; taste not; handle not; all shall perish with the using" (Col. ii. 21); and "He that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Prov. xxix. 1). At length he was led to cry to the Lord for deliverance, and when his mind was set free these words came to him, "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake, and the Gospel's, but shall receive now a hundredfold in this time, and in the world to come eternal life" (Mark x. 29, 30). Therefore he found he must cut off right arms, and pluck out right eyes, as Hart says, which verse came forcibly to his mind—

"What enchants thee—pelf or pleasure?

Pluck right eyes; with right hands part:

Ask thy conscience, Where's thy treasure?

For be certain there's thine heart."

It was only natural that as Mr. Fowler's ministry had been so blest to him, he would keenly feel any slight cast upon the Lord's servant. This trial he had to endure from one or two he had looked up to, who spake such harsh things, making it, according to their judgment, appear that dear Mr. Fowler was destitute of grace. But in watching the end of these men, he felt that their judgment was not worthy of respect.

He still had a desire, if it were the Lord's will, that he might obtain a wife—one who feared God, loved the same truths as he did, and who could hear the same ministers. So, after making his case known to the Lord for many months, he was directed to a young widow who had passed through a sore trial at the loss of her first husband, who came to an untimely end. After twelve months' acquaintance he was married to this good woman. But he soon found the Apostle's words true, "They that are married shall have trouble in the flesh;" for business expenses and domestic wants soon set in upon them, so that at the end of the first year of his married life he found himself £40 in debt. This unprecedented trial was very distressing to him. Living as he then was at a distance from London, a few friends suggested that they should meet together on the Lord's day to get preachers to come and speak to them when they could, and they asked him to give out the hymns for them; but, not feeling that power attend the Word as had been the case with him while hearing Mr. Fowler, his affections began to grow cold towards the Lord. However, he was stirred up to earnest cries to the Lord in providential things; for his old master, whom he had worked for until within four years before, tried all he could to prejudice the minds of people against Mr. Clark, to prevent him getting a business together. This matter he took to the Lord, that he might be delivered from his cruel persecution; and shortly afterwards the poor man not feeling well, resorted to the old practice of bleeding, the result of which was that his arm mortified and he died in a few days.

After this his faith from various causes was sorely tried, and doubts and fears respecting his interest in Christ gathered in upon him thick and fast; besides which a most unnatural and somewhat unusual temptation assaulted him, to murder his darling child. This so sorely beset him that, from shedding so many tears and from the power of the temptation, he seemed almost unfitted for work.

One Sunday he walked from his home at Lower Tooting to hear Mr. Fowler at Gower Street. As he entered the chapel the clerk gave out the hymn—

"Encompassed with clouds of distress,
And ready all hope to resign,
I pant for the light of Thy face,
That I in Thy beauty may shine."

This, with the entire service, was so blessed to his soul that he returned home blessing God for His goodness to him. Being in deep poverty, his debts pressing upon him, the world and professors watching for his downfall, he had much ballast, which we believe

he felt to need ; for, being of a free and open manner, and of a buoyant spirit, he often spoke things which caused him grief afterwards, and made him cry to God to keep the door of his lips. But while under these adverse providences he felt like a wild bull in the net, often kicking against the Lord's dispensations, although at times a peculiar softness of spirit would come over him ; and once in particular, relative to this trial, the Lord gave him these words, "Thou shalt pursue, thou shalt overtake, and without fail recover all." So great a help as this lifted him up with the hope of seeing better days, and he lived to see the fulfilment of the promise, so that no one could say that he owed him anything. Thus God gets His people a name and fame, in those places where they have been put to shame (Zeph. iii. 19).

(To be continued.)

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST.

"WITHOUT shedding of blood there is no remission." May the Holy Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ so dwell in my heart at this time, that the heart may guide the hand that holds this pen, whilst attempting to say a little upon this glorious subject—the blood of Jesus !

It is a wonderful thought, that the very same Spirit that dwells in the Father, and in the Son, dwells also in the believer ; as Jesus says Himself, "I in them, and Thou in Me."

The Israelites of old looked forward to the Saviour's coming. We, as Christians, look back, for we believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, *has* come in the flesh. They had the Gospel but dimly revealed to them, for all their sacrifices, laws, and ceremonies pointed to the Saviour ; but they were only the shadow or figure of good things to come ; there was no real efficacy in the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin, for, if there had been, then they would have ceased to be offered. But this was so far from being the case that they had to be offered year by year, continually, without ever making the comers thereunto perfect ; and God had no pleasure in them only as they pointed to Jesus. How very precious, then, in God's sight, must have been the faith of the patriarchs of old, who, through the sign, saw the Saviour—who, though continually offering the blood of beasts, yet put no confidence or value in it, only as reminding them that Jesus' blood would be shed for sinners ! Therefore Abraham's faith was counted to him for righteousness. We, as Christians, have not nearly the difficulties, nor such strong test for our faith. Oh, that we might be thankful, and prize our high privileges !

We read in Leviticus xvi. 14, that they were to sprinkle the

blood *upon* and *before* the mercy seat ; and it has been remarked that it was sprinkled *upon*, for God's eye, that it might speak to God for us ; and *before*, for the sinner's eye, saying, "Draw nigh." Is not this a very precious thought ? for, if the blood before the mercy seat told the Israelites they might draw nigh and commune with God, though it was only the blood of goats, surely the blood of Jesus tells us we may draw nigh to God ! Indeed, there is no other way for vile sinners to approach a holy God but through this precious blood ; and, although without shedding of blood there is no remission, yet "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from *all* sin ;" and oh, how loudly it seems to say, "Draw nigh !"

We read that "the blood of Jesus Christ speaketh better things than that of Abel." Abel's blood cried for vengeance, for it was the blood of a sinner, and flowed from a sinful heart ; therefore it was *sinful* blood. But the blood of Jesus cries for mercy. It is the blood of *God* as well as man ; the blood of the Saviour, which flowed from a pure and holy heart, and therefore it is pure and holy blood. Oh, how precious in God's sight is the blood of His dear and well-beloved Son ! The very mention of it in prayer to God overcomes His heart, if I may so say ; it is a plea He cannot turn a deaf ear to. Thus the priests in olden times were to sprinkle the blood *upon* the mercy seat, that God's eye might rest upon that first, that there might be reconciliation through the blood. And does not this tell us that the mercy seat is now actually sprinkled with the *very* blood of Jesus, and that God is continually reminded that Christ has died, because the blood is ever before Him ? And does not this blood speak for us ?

We would indeed ask the Lord now to look upon the mercy seat, to look upon the blood, and remember us in mercy. It is Christ's *own* blood (Heb. xiii. 12). Well did the Lamb of God know that nothing but His own blood could save such sinners as we are, and reconcile a holy God with unholy creatures. Dear fellow-sinners, though our sins are of the deepest dye, we need not despair while we have this precious blood to plead ; for—

" Christ's precious blood's the only plea ;
Feeling sinner, 'twas shed for thee."

David says, "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered ;" and, if the blood of Jesus is sprinkled upon our guilty consciences, will not our sin be covered ? We know naturally that blood dropping upon anything hides the original colour of the article ; and just so does the blood of Jesus hide our sins from God ; so that actually when they are looked for they shall not be found. Oh, that as often as we contract

fresh guilt we may come to that precious fountain of a Saviour's blood, and yet remember, as one says, it is a serious thing to draw upon God's forgiveness, for He does not so quickly return after repeated declensions.

When God first wrote out the law upon the two tables of stone He gave them to a man (Moses), who brake them (Exod. xxxii. 19). The second time He did not trust them with man, but they were put in the Ark (Exod. xxv. 16), so that the Ark kept them. The first man, Adam, and all his posterity brake the law ; the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, fulfilled the law, or kept it, and kept it for all His seed ; and, as the Israelite's sin in breaking the law was hid, or covered with the mercy seat, which was made exactly the same size as the Ark, and so covered it entirely (see Exod. xxxvii. 1—6), and was sprinkled with blood, so our sins are hid by Christ (the Ark of grace), or are covered with His blood. May we more than ever value this precious blood ; and we would pray that all we think, say, or do, may be sprinkled with it.

It would seem that we shall ever remember the blood of Jesus throughout eternity ; for we read in Revelations v. 6, that in the midst of the throne stood a "Lamb as it had been slain ;" and their song is "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain" (ver. 8) ; and, if we hope to join in that song, and for ever to sing of the blood of Jesus, surely we would desire to sing of it now, though it may be in a low key, for those above have—

" No sin to interrupt their song,
Or aught to make them faint."

Yes, we would ask the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and our Father for His sake, to look upon the hands, feet, and side of His dear Son, from whom rich blood did flow, and remember it was shed for sinners ; and, too, we would ask the dear Lamb of God to look upon them Himself, and see the wounds and scars He received, for He says, "I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands." Oh, that we could plunge ourselves into the loving, bleeding heart of Jesus ! Holy and blessed Spirit, lead us to that precious fountain, open for sin and uncleanness. It is indeed a solemn but real thing, when we hear of the most acute sufferings of our fellow-creatures, to remember the Lord Jesus Christ's were greater. Oh, that we might again be led to the sacred garden of Gethsemane, or to the cross of Calvary, and, whilst creeping to His dear feet, feel the blood drop upon us from His wounded body. It is cleansing blood, and surely we feel the need of that ! We would rejoice that Christ's blood was shed, or we never could have known what pardon was ; but, too, we would weep that His sufferings were so great, and that our sins were the cause. Yes, weep that our honoured and glorious Lord thus humbled Himself

for sinners. Oh, that we may be helped to love, honour, and value the blood of the Lamb of God, for, if we ask ourselves when looking upon the ungodly, "Who maketh thee to differ?" must we not say, "It is the blood"? for, in 1 Corinthians vi. 11, we read, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed"—washed in the blood of Jesus. We are redeemed, brought nigh to God, and enabled to come boldly to the throne of grace through the blood, because "Jesus ever lives to make intercession, and presents Himself to God in His own blood" (Rev. xix. 11).

One day we hope it will be said of us, as in Revelation vii. 14, "These are they that have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Now "unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. i. 5, 6).

OBITUARY OF HENRY LUCAS.

HENRY LUCAS, of Curdridge, entered into rest on August 5th, 1877, at the age of sixty-three. He was called by grace when a young man, and had been a very consistent member with us for many years. He used to conduct the worship and to read a sermon in my absence when I was from home; and he was a very fit person for it, for he feared God above many, and was very much beloved by the church and congregation. He was likewise a very useful person in the Sunday-school, and took a great interest in the welfare of the children. The last Lord's day he was at chapel was on July 29th, when he appeared as well as usual and was very cheerful, and spoke after he got home of how he enjoyed the last hymn he gave out, viz., "All hail, the power of Jesus' name," the last verse of which he gave out with very great feeling—

"We, too, amid the sacred throng
 Low at His feet would fall,
 Join in the everlasting song,
 And crown Him Lord of all."

On the following Monday he was taken ill. He soon had medical advice, and several means were used, but to no purpose; still his case was not considered serious until Thursday or Friday. Then his friends began to have fears respecting his recovery, and wrote requesting me to come and see him, as he lived nearly seven miles from the chapel and from my home. I visited him on the Saturday morning. He had then just gone through an operation of a very painful and serious nature, so that I could not spend many minutes with him. He was perfectly sensible,

and spoke of the peace in which we had walked together for so many years.

He had been a member with us for nearly twenty years, and we never had one word amiss. His sufferings had been very great through the week, and were still so at that time. He said he could not feel the Lord so near as he wished. I said to him, "The Lord has been very precious to you numbers of times, and He is the same now as He was then." I felt a sweet satisfaction respecting his safety, but that would not satisfy *him*. He wanted another token for good, and nothing less than his feeling Jesus to be near to him would do. He wanted Jesus again revealed to his faith; and I am certain that nothing less than this will do for God's living people, especially at such a time. He had been much favoured the last few months of his life in hearing the Word preached.

One morning, a few weeks previous to his death, after hearing, he came into the vestry to me weeping for joy, and told me that he had never heard with so much power, dew, and unction in all his life. My heart was softened with the Lord's goodness to us, and I thought as I looked at him that some trial was coming on; but I did not think of the Lord taking him home so soon. But so it proved; and the Lord was very good to him in his affliction, although at times he was under a cloud. On being asked if he would like to die, he said, "I should like to live a little longer for the sake of my family and the Sunday-school, and to enjoy more of the manifestations of the love of Christ to my soul ere I depart." He frequently prayed most earnestly for the cause and the Sunday-school, saying, "Dear Lord, do bless the cause; do bless that little flock; and if there has been one good word dropped into any heart, grant that it may bear fruit." On Thursday he said he felt the Lord afar off, but on Friday morning the dear Lord gave him a sweet spirit of prayer, and he kept crying, "Come, dear Jesus, come into my soul; assure me of Thy love;

" ' Other refuge have I none ;
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee ; ' "

and added, "Oh, if He would only speak to my soul and assure me of His love, how I would shout victory—how I would like to make heaven's arches ring!" He also repeated a number of verses on the Friday, many of which were forgotten, and said, "I am waiting for my dismissal;" but soon after, being in great pain, and the drops of sweat standing on his face, he said, "Oh, what pain! but what is it compared to Thine, my dear Jesus, when sweat and blood were forced through Thy skin—and for me! for me!"

Being asked on Saturday, after the operation, if he felt happy,

he replied with much feeling, "Yes;" and in the evening he repeated several times those beautiful lines—

"Shudder not to pass the stream,
Venture all thy care on Him ;
Not one object of His care
Ever suffered shipwreck there."

On Sunday morning he said this promise kept coming, "I shall not die, but live to declare the works of the Lord;" and added, "Can I lay hold of it?" His wife, who was a partaker of grace and fellow-traveller with him, said, "Yes, father, you can, for you will declare His works in the higher and better world above." Christ as the Rock of Ages was mentioned to him, when he replied with much feeling, "Yes, He is a precious Rock to me, a sure Foundation." Some hours before his death he spoke of the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the preciousness of His name to him. When reminded of the sufferings of Christ, and what He endured, he said, "Ah! He suffered in the sinner's stead." About one o'clock he became very restless, and some little time after he asked for his children. He kissed them all most tenderly, and at five minutes to three p.m. his redeemed soul fled to the realms of eternal day, where his sun will no more go down, and the days of his mourning are ended; leaving behind a widow and large family, who, with the church and congregation, mourn their loss; but it is his eternal gain.

Swanwick.

GEO. HARDING.

ONE OF HAWKER'S SEALS.

THE following letter was written by the late Dr. Hawker, of Plymouth, to the late Richard Hitchins, of Falmouth, on his conversion. The Doctor preached in Mr. Hitchins' church at Falmouth from these words, "Mine own vineyard have I not kept." The blessed effect was the regeneration of Mr. Hitchins' soul:—

MY VERY DEAR SIR,—If I were to attempt the description of the effect which the perusal of your letter produced in my mind, I should fall miserably short and defective in the account, and leave you still uninformed of what hath been the real state of the case. I do assure you, my dear sir, that, before I had read five lines in that part of it which speaks of the change wrought in your soul, it occasioned a sensation which thrilled through all my frame; and, while I uttered an involuntary exclamation, in which gratitude, holy joy, and, I trust, an humbleness of devout feeling, accompanied with tears, were all blended, I could not but look

round the place where I was with an awakened imagination, as if to realize in a more immediate manner the presence of that wonder-working God who doth all things according to the purposes of His own divine will.

Oh, my dear sir, and is it really so, that "He who commandeth the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in your heart, to give you the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"? And has He really accomplished this great work through my feeble instrumentality? What an endless debt of gratitude have we both to pay; and how may we exclaim, in the language of Scripture, "What hath God wrought?" You know but in part, as yet, the infinite goodness and condescension of God in the appointment and accomplishment of so much mercy. You are looking only, I know, to yourself in the event, and naturally enough are lost in the contemplation of such undeserved favour; but I am compelled to take in another consideration to me much more astonishing, and sufficient to fill any heart but mine with never-ceasing gratitude. That God should call His people to His love, and by instruments of feebleness, to whom He gives strength, is indeed a subject of holy admiration and joy, and only ascribable to the effect of His distinguishing grace. But, when He condescends to go lower even than this, and, instead of faithful servants in His ministry, to make use of the vilest and most unworthy, and single them out to accomplish the purposes of His will, what a contemplation opens here to call up the most animated thanksgiving! May the bountiful Giver of such blessings still impart this grace, that neither you nor I may ever cease to improve them.

I am now doubly interested, more than ever, in your furtherance in the Gospel, and cannot but feel an awakened concern for your highest attainments in it. You have afforded me more real happiness in the communication of this gracious event than though you had the power, and was disposed to exercise it, of conferring upon me an empire. It will, I trust in God, be my encouragement in the darkest hour, and animate me in the glorious service of Jesus when the season seems to be most unpromising. Let it have the same effect, I pray, on you. Consider who it is that sends, who gives the power, and who hath promised that His strength is perfected in weakness. The difference of human talents is, therefore, wholly lost in this charming consideration. "For it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God, who showeth mercy."

You request information what book I would recommend you to use. In answer I would say, that the Book of books is the Word of God; and if (as I am persuaded you now will, my dear brother) you look up to Him who is the Spirit of Truth,

and hath promised to guide into all truth, and implore His grace to guide and instruct you, He alone will be sufficient to make you wise unto salvation, and to make you that you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, as collateral helps have been sometimes blessed to the promotion of godliness, I would subjoin all tracts which are perfectly orthodox, and treat of vital experimental things. I have found the writings of Dr. Watts, Doddridge, and Gill to be eminently useful. I confess they are all Dissenters; but I bless God I have long learned not to be prejudiced against them. It has been a maxim with me, which I have no reason to alter, never to refuse instruction wherever I can conscientiously obtain it.

I hope frequently to hear from you, my dear sir, and more frequently to meet you in prayer at the throne of grace. We need, I am sure, each other's prayers; and let us see which can be most bountiful in this invaluable friendship. Remember we have both the same Almighty Saviour and Intercessor to look up to, whom the Father heareth alway; and, since we need the aid of His grace so continually, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. My mind will be very frequently with you, particularly on the Lord's day. I already begin to frame to myself seals to your ministry. Oh, what a joy it will be to my heart (should the Lord permit me to see you once more at Falmouth) to find many souls begotten to God through your instrumentality!

That the Lord may bless you abundantly in the service of His dear Son is the very earnest prayer of

Your affectionate, but most unworthy brother in Christ,

ROBERT HAWKER.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XII.

MY DEAR RUTH (a gleaner in the field of Boaz).—It does my heart good to know of any that are made "needy," and so constrained to go into the field to glean for themselves; and more especially to know that those that are young in years are compelled thus to do.

What a change has taken place in you, "Passed from death unto life," and from the kingdom and power of Satan into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that for ever! Now your soul hates the things you once loved, and loves the things you once hated. You are now one of those blessed folk that "hunger and thirst after righteousness," and the promise is, "Such shall be filled." You can now understand what David's feelings were when he said, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so

panteth my soul after Thee, O God." Your very heart and soul are on the look-out for some word of grace, a look of love, and some token for good from the Lord. Sometimes you cannot close your eyes, you say, in sleep at night, as you are meditating upon these divine things and wondering whether you are really right; and you say in your heart, "Oh that the Lord would say unto my poor soul, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.'" How you do want Him to say, "I am thine, and thou art Mine"! Ah! my dear girl, the time of love will come, when the dear Lord will say unto thy soul, "Arise, My love, My fair one, and come away;" and you will say, "The King has brought me into the banquet-house, and His banner over me is love."

I have no doubt you will find much to try you and to cast you down; but it will not destroy you, for "your life is hid with Christ in God;" and when Christ, who is your life, shall appear, then you will appear with Him in glory. You will fear that you have not had trouble enough, and that you have never been brought low enough; and think that you would have more understanding in the Word of God, and be more able to live unto His honour and glory, if you were right. You will also be told by Satan (who is a liar) that you take things, when hearing the Word preached, that do not belong to you, and that your prayers are not such as the Lord's people have. These are a few of the things that you will be tried about; so that you will often say with your heart (if you do not with your mouth), "You that love the Lord indeed, tell me, is it thus with you?" Living faith which wants to lay hold on Christ is sure to be tried.

"But let not all this terrify;
Pursue the narrow path;
Look to the Lord with steadfast eye,
And fight with hell by faith."

Still wait and watch at wisdom's gate, and at the "posts of his doors." Such are said to be blessed souls; and I feel sure that you will reap in due time if you faint not. The Lord bless thee and keep thee, and lift up the light of His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace, is the prayer of

Yours in love,

G. MOCKFORD.

To be a professor of piety and a practiser of iniquity is an abomination to the Lord.—*Dr. Goodwin.*

OUR Lord God wills that Jesus shall never be without people who will confess Him, even though it be a thief upon the gallows, or a murderer upon the wheel. These are the stones that cry out (Luke xix. 40).—*Luther.*

THE SOWER.

SERMON BY MR. BOORNE,

PREACHED AT DEVONSHIRE ROAD CHAPEL, THURSDAY EVENING,
DECEMBER 16TH, 1880.

“Cause me to hear Thy loving-kindness in the morning; for in Thee do I trust; cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto Thee.”—PSALM cxliii. 8.

THIS short Psalm comes to us from the pen of David. It is full of prayer. He seemed in too low a place to sing much, his harp being on the willows; for he was persecuted by some one. Whether it was Saul, who often hunted him as a partridge upon the mountains, or whether it was his son Absalom, who wished to inherit his father's throne, does not appear clear. But it is certain he was smitten before a foe, and this Psalm was evidently penned when he was passing through a sore trial.

He begins by begging God to hear his prayer—to give ear to his supplications—and he asked God also in His faithfulness to answer him, and in His righteousness. David seemed to know that he deserved God's hand to go out against him, for he says, “Enter not into judgment with Thy servant; for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.” Whether it was after the Lord had told him that the sword should not depart from his house, when He sent Nathan to reprove him in the matter of Bathsheba, we cannot determine. He goes on to say, “The enemy hath smitten my life down to the ground,” and therefore his praise was turned into the voice of them that weep. But, although it was so, there was still a degree of spiritual activity in him; a spirit of holiness—not inherent holiness; but there was a spiritual-mindedness in him even when he was in this low state. Hence he speaks of lifting up his soul unto God—that is, lifting up his heart in his petitions—and, however latent the life of God may be, it is as our poet sings—

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

The words of our text include two short prayers. In the first, David prays that he might hear God's loving-kindness; and he gives a reason, for he says, “in Thee do I trust.” In the second place, he was concerned about the way in which he should walk; and for this also he gives a reason, “for I lift up my soul unto

Thee ;" and oh, what a mercy to be enabled to give a reason for things, and of the hope that is in you, dear children of God ! And you also want to search out God's way of dealing with you, for "the works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." I suppose we should all acknowledge that God does what is right, yet it may be in some, no less than fatalism ; indeed, it may be sometimes with us little better than fatalism. But to see God's hand, and to discover His handiwork, is the desire of the child of God.

Now, what we want is to follow the Psalmist in these words ; but we are entirely dependent upon the Eternal Spirit, who is the everlasting God, to lead us into the very spirit of the Psalmist's words. "Cause me to hear Thy loving-kindness in the morning." Before we come to the full text, what does he mean by "the morning" ? He says, "In the morning I will direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up ;" "In the morning shall my prayer come before Thee ;" "Cause me to hear Thy loving-kindness in the morning." He exhorts God's people to "show forth His loving-kindness in the morning, and His faithfulness every night." Now, there seemed a reason for this. David had special times for devotion, for he says, "Evening, and morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud ; and Thou shalt hear my voice ;" and he would not suffer any engagement to upset this. What higher engagement can we have than with the Lord ? therefore no domestic or business occupation should interfere with it, but we should say—

" My business lies at Jesus' gate,
Where many a Lazar comes."

You may say, "I am not always able to do this." Well, then, the Lord does not require it of you. You are not called to cut off even a quarter of an hour from your master's time to serve the Lord. "Be not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit."

"Cause me to hear Thy loving-kindness in the morning." Now, David seemed as if he looked for the morning, for at night he had spiritual communion with God, hence he says, "At midnight I will rise and give Thee thanks." When David was in the cave at night, perhaps when his men were fast asleep, he was awake in his Master's service, and he was anxious at the spring of the day to know the Lord had heard his cries. The night is a time of darkness—it is sometimes a time of danger, of loneliness, and of distress.

Now, let us apply this spiritually. How is it with you ? There are dangers in the night ; and there are dangers on the road, sinner ! Depend upon it, yours is a sorry case if you have not felt this. What a state man is in ! He sleeps, and thinks he is

right, and dreams he is feasting upon the good things of heaven ; but, alas ! he may wake up in hell, and find himself hungry and thirsty, and gnaw his tongue with pain. Now, some of you have been in the night of danger, and you remember how fearful you were in the literal night to move about on account of the things that were upon your mind ; and how terrified you were until the Lord was pleased to visit you with His loving-kindness. And what can turn this night of danger into safety ? Only by the Lord enabling us to take shelter under the shadow of His wings. "How excellent is Thy loving-kindness, O God ; therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings." But do all men do this ? Oh, no ; there are but few who feel their need. Then who are they ? Those that know His name. "They that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee." They will want, when the storm is round about them, to hide beneath His atoning sacrifice, as the Israelites were screened by the blood of the paschal lamb, and then they will feel safe, and there find full salvation.

But then there are many nights. A night of distress. Some are not in such a state as not to know their danger, but are in great distress about it, and they would have their cries go up unto the Lord. David did. Thus he says, "I water my couch with my tears." And how many a child of God does this ; and how restless he will feel under such circumstances ! The Church could not always rest. "By night on my bed I sought Him whom my soul loveth ; I sought Him, but I found Him not." Yea, says the Psalmist, "With my spirit did I make diligent search." And so the children of God want the Lord to turn their mourning into joy. And what shall do this ? It is only the Lord's loving-kindness ; and when they are distressed, His loving-kindness meets their case, for this reason—when people are in temporal trouble, temporal deliverance would satisfy them ; but this is soul trouble. It is called "the time of Jacob's trouble ; but he shall be saved out of it." The things of this life will not do for him, for he may have all that concerns this life's welfare, and people may wonder what he has to make him sorrowful. But he needs something better than life's comforts ; and what is better than life ? Why, God's loving-kindness ; and when this steps in, it is better than life's profits, pastimes, or pleasures. "Because Thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee." The people of God would give up their life into God's hands for that.

" For Thee I would the world resign,
And sail to heaven with Thee and Thine."

But there is also a night of darkness ; and what darkness

comes upon the pathway of the dear children of God! Sometimes it will so cover up everything that they will lament with the Church, "We see not our signs; neither is there any that can tell us how long." You know when persons are tossed about with sickness, they will frequently want to know what the time is. Job says, "Wearisome nights are appointed for me." "Oh," says one, "I wait for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning." Such souls want God to give that light which comes to them as a forerunner of a bright day; they therefore long for Him to change the scene.

"'Tis midnight with my soul till He,
Bright Morning Star, bids darkness flee."

But there is another night—the night of desertion. The dear Saviour felt God had deserted Him; and it may seem as if God has forsaken thee, and forgotten thee, dear child of God. How the soul will long for the Lord to change this scene! And what does God's loving-kindness spring from? Why, from His loving heart; and it is seen sometimes through His pitying eye, and by His bountiful hand; and then the soul cannot keep it to himself. His cup runs over. Isaiah says, "I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which He hath bestowed on them according to His mercies, and according to the multitude of His loving-kindnesses."

"Cause me to *hear* Thy loving-kindness in the morning." What! cause me to *hear* it? Why, this is an uncommon expression. David sometimes says, "Show me Thy loving-kindness," and "Hide not Thy loving-kindness from me." Observe, the Lord sometimes brings things to us that seem to appeal to our sight or to our taste. But here he says, "Cause me to *hear* Thy loving-kindness." David *had* heard it. Sometimes we seem to forget it, as a tale that is told; and we may sit and hear of God's loving-kindness to others, and remain unmoved—be deaf to it as it were. You want Him not only to come and show you His loving-kindness, but to take away the scales from your eyes—that you may see His loving-kindness before your eyes—to speak to you of His loving-kindness, and make you to hear it also. This is the case with me sometimes, and it is so with you. The Church said, "Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to Thy voice; cause me to hear it." One may say, "I don't appear to be like one of Thy family, for I don't hear Thy voice. Therefore, 'cause *me* to hear Thy loving-kindness in the morning,' at the spring of the day." After a night of danger, a night of darkness, a night of distress,

a night of desertion, how the soul will value a glimpse of His love and favour!

“For in Thee do I trust”—there is the reason. And why did he make this confession? Because he could not trust any one else safely. At one time he trusted in Saul and in his son Jonathan, in Ahithophel, and in others. Some were worthy of trust and some were not. But, after all, David must say to the Lord, “Thou art my Friend; to Thee I come; on Thee I lean.” “Cause me to hear Thy loving-kindness in the morning; for in Thee do I trust.” David said, “Deliver my darling from the power of the dog;” and he had to commit all his concerns to the Lord. The child of God says, “I commit myself to Thee, Lord. I cannot maintain myself in any position, but I commit it to Thee.” And David did this when he was driven out of his house by Absalom; and he would not have the ark of the Lord taken away from its appointed place, “for,” says he, “if the Lord delight in me, He will bring me back, and I shall see both it and His habitation.”

“The Lord has been our dwelling-place in all generations.” Take away Him, you take away my Shield, my Foundation, my Head. Yea, “God is the strength of my life, and He shall be my portion for ever.” Alas! David found by trusting in himself what a fool he had been, but he says, “‘In Thee do I trust.’ I make my venture for all in Thee, and my prayer shall be to Thee in this my calamity.”

But there is another petition: “Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk.” Not only does he want to hear God’s loving-kindness, but he wants God’s loving-kindness so to come into his heart that it shall affect his outward walk. How often those who are pleased with the liberty of the Gospel are loose in their life! But not so with the true children of God. Oh, no! The more they know of this, the nearer they will live to Him. It is because they know so little about the Spirit of Christ that they contract so much of the spirit of the world. Whence, then, do they get this? The Lord told His people by Hosea: “I have betrothed thee unto Me in righteousness, in loving-kindness, and in mercies.” This loving-kindness He treasures up in His Son, and lets it out to His people as He sees they need it; and draws them by His loving-kindness to Himself. And as it comes down into their heart, what is the effect of it? Why, they begin to be concerned to know “the way in which they should walk;” and oh, my friends, those that take up the truth without this know nothing truly, but get a smattering of it only. The Lord has predestinated us to good walk and to good works, for “God hath fore-ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. ii. 10). Some may say, “If the Lord has predestinated this, how is it that His people are often walking in forbidden paths?” The Lord has—I will

not retract it—but He says, “If My people forsake My law, and walk not in My statutes, then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless, My loving-kindness will I not utterly take from them, nor suffer My faithfulness to fail.” Here is the provision that poor fallen sinners and penitent backsliders should be brought back; and, though He makes them smart for sin, He causes them to know that there is a rich provision in the Gospel for sinners. David could see that the sword had not departed from his house, yet could say, “Although my house be not so with God; yet hath He made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; and this is all my salvation and all my desire, although He make it not to grow.”

“Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk.” What a mercy to have a teachable spirit—to be willing to be anything, or to be willing to be nothing! It is easier work to be something than to be nothing. We are so proud; but the Lord will have His people brought down to that place—to be willing to be counted as nothing.

“When thou art nothing in thyself,
Then thou art close to Me.”

See how He brought down Saul of Tarsus. “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” Well, the child of God wants to know the way wherein God will lead him unto eternal glory. “Oh,” he says, “I do want to get to heaven, whatever it may cost me! I want to walk in that way that shall be well-pleasing in Thy sight. Lord, I have a will of my own, and I find it is rebelling against Thee. ‘Lord, lead me in Thy truth and teach me.’” How often David asked the Lord to lead him, and to guide him, and to instruct him!

Then how are we to know? Why, the Lord will teach us. The grand point is to be meek enough to learn of Him. Yea, “Learn of Me, for I am meek, and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” But the Lord often guides His people by their petitions with Him. He gives them some reason to know that what they have asked of Him is in accordance with His will. At other times we know by this—or it amounts to this—“Speak to Me no more of this matter.”

We were reading this evening how the children of Israel should know *when* they were to move. It may be right to do a thing, but it may be the wrong time. “They that are wise discern both time and judgment.” It is said in Daniel that “the thing was true, but the time appointed was long.” Therefore, it should be not only our anxiety to know the way, but when He would have us to go in that way. Thus they were guided by the pillar of cloud and by the pillar of fire; and the children of Israel could claim

the Lord's protection when this cloud was upon them. And so when "the cloud" is going before a man, it makes him anxious to go on, for he wants to go the way the Lord moves the cloud. It is written: "Ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight; for the Lord will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward." You know for disobedience the Lord said, "Ye shall know My breach of promise;" and the children of Israel had to remain in the wilderness forty years longer, for they listened to the ill report of the ten spies, and did not regard the other two, who gave a good report of the land. But afterwards they went presumptuously, notwithstanding Moses and the ark of the covenant of the Lord abode in the camp, and the result was, they were smitten before their enemies. And so we may at times move without the Lord; but a child of God, kept tender in His fear, would not turn a straw contrary to God's will.

We have a saying, "The burnt child dreads the fire;" and oh, what a mercy it is to know the way wherein we should walk and to learn wisdom by our past follies! Gideon was greatly concerned about this matter, and the Lord made him to know it by the fleece being wet upon the dry floor; then he wanted another proof, and he had the fleece dry and the floor wet; and yet another proof he wanted. And was the Lord angry? No! One said he would not ask a sign, or tempt the Lord; but, although he would not ask a sign, the Lord Himself gave him a sign, not for himself, but for others in ages to come. Oh, to be found walking in the right way! "Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it." You may seek to justify yourself for walking in a certain path, and say, such a person went in that path. But what may be right for him now may be more proper for you to go in by-and-bye. Every man must learn it out for himself. A prudent man has to work out his own problems before God. What a mercy when we feel, "Lord, my times are in Thy hand; my circumstances are in Thy hand. Lord, cause me to know the way that Thou wouldest have me to go." Now, this would open a large field, but time will not allow us to go into it. It is said of Enoch, "He walked with God; and had this testimony, that he pleased God." We shall never please God with anything that we can offer Him. But the Psalmist speaks of a sacrifice that shall please God better than an ox, with horns and hoofs. God is pleased with His own work, and, if you are coming to Him depending on the merits of Jesus Christ, then you are serving God aright.

"When we live on Jesus' merit,
Then we worship God aright;
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
Then we savingly unite."

It is a dreadful thing to be walking in a path and find God's Word against us. David says, "In God I will put my trust: I will not fear what man can do unto me." And we want to walk in God's ordinances. It is said of Zacharias and Elizabeth that "they walked in all the commandments of the Lord blameless." "Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk." "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord, and He delighteth in his way." Oh, to be enabled to discover any of the steps of a godly man, and follow their faith, and to trace the footsteps of our God in His ordinance and providence! When you have gone out in a deep snow, you may have been glad to tread in the footsteps of others; so the child of God may rightly follow the Scriptural footsteps of those now in heaven: "Whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation: Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." "Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk." He wants the Lord to give him knowledge of the way, and strength to walk in it. He that knew not his Lord's will, and did it not, was to be beaten with few stripes; but he that knew his Lord's will, and did it not, was to be beaten with many stripes.

"Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto Thee." And what is this? It is more than lifting up our hands. When the Church seemed to be mourning over her folly she said, "We will lift up our *hearts* with our hands unto God in the heavens;" but here says the Psalmist, "I lift up my soul unto Thee." And what is it to lift up our soul unto God but to hold up our conscience to the light of God's Word, and be subjected to heaven's scrutiny? Our conscience is not likely to deceive us, yet it may be so hardened through the deceitfulness of sin that it may cease to reprove us, as is the case with those whose consciences are seared as with a hot iron. "Their very mind and conscience are defiled."

Then, in lifting up the soul, we ask God to illuminate our understanding. We do not want to go on groping and grovelling from day to day ignorant of the Lord's direction and regardless of His correction. We desire to profit by His leading, and to *know* the way as our own. We sometimes look back when so illuminated, and can discover many things which we did not perceive while passing through the particular path, by which our faith is confirmed and our understanding becomes established. Then there is a surrender of the affections unto the Lord by being divorced from every other object that would compete for the chief place in the heart, and the question is asked—

"Is there a thing beneath the sun,
That strives with Thee my heart to share?"

But, as we hold our affections up to the light, there is a willingness to surrender everything to the Lord.

But more : there is another very unruly thing, and that is the will. We may see things to be right with our judgment which the will ignores, and this stands out the longest. But He that conquered for us will also conquer in us ; and he that has seen and felt the day of God’s power will sing another day of His power. And when the soul is thus lifted up to God, the believer can say, “I drop my will in Thine ; I have no reserve, Lord. See, is there anything that I would keep back from Thee ? Now, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do ? ‘Cause me to know.’ How shall I know ?” By prayer, by watching : “In everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God ;” and by-and-bye he sees a cloud like a man’s hand, and then, as he discovers God’s will and way, he desires strength to walk therein, and so act and live beneath the Lord’s eye that he may ever while on earth seek to please Him who has done so much for him, and borne so much with him, and with whom he hopes to spend a blissful eternity when his time of sojourn here is at an end.

“WITHOUT GOD IN THE WORLD.”

Out of Christ, no real enjoyment ;
 All is fleeting, dead, and vain ;
 Any pleasure or employment
 Will not yield us lasting gain.

Out of Christ is no salvation ;
 All our toiling works or zeal
 Only end in condemnation ;
 Out of Christ is nothing real.

Out of Christ—oh, sinner, listen—
 Thou art tending to the grave ;
 Now earth’s vain delights may glisten—
 Can they help thee ? can they save ?

Out of Christ, if death should find thee,
 How will matters then appear ?
 After death the judgment waits thee,
 Out of Christ God meets thee there.

Out of Christ ’tis all confusion
 Yielding up thy dying breath ;
 Finding all thy trust delusion—
 Out of Christ ’tis endless death.

NIGHT THOUGHTS BY A WATCHMAN.

THE PROMISED SPIRIT.

Oh, come, Thou holy Comforter divine,
 Thy sacred witness bear that I am Thine ;
 Guide Thou my way and dwell within my heart ;
 Though mean the temple, do not thence depart.

ALL that is needful, all that the fallen state of man can ever require in order to his perfect restoration, was provided in the covenant of God's grace. Not only did the Father promise the Son, and in due time send Him, but the Holy Ghost was also promised, and at the appointed season—when the day of Pentecost was fully come—He descended with great power and glory upon the waiting disciples of the exalted Jesus, according to the pledged word of the Lord just before His ascension.

The Holy Ghost, or Spirit, is as much a divine Person as the Lord Jesus Christ, whose place He came to take as the Comforter and Instructor of the apostles, and of all true believers down to the end of time. It was by the power of the Holy Ghost that the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of Christ, and were enabled to perform such mighty miracles in His name. It was by the Holy Ghost also that Barnabas and Saul were called to the work of the ministry. He said, "Separate unto *Me* Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto *I* have called them" (Acts xiii. 2); and He who called them to the work wrought wonders by them to the salvation of many souls. Could any but a divine Person say or do such things as these?

With thankfulness, if not with joy, every needy sinner, whose hope is anchored solely in the Lord Jesus Christ, reads that God "spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all;" and, if possible, he should listen with greater delight to the words of Christ when He proclaims the coming of the abiding Comforter, saying, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever." This promised Spirit is the Regenerator and Teacher as well as Comforter of all the redeemed. Christ, by His life and death, changed our *position* and standing in regard to God and His holy law, removing us from a position of condemnation to that of justification. But it is the Holy Ghost who alters our condition and character. He only can deliver from death to life and from sin to holiness. No man of himself could change his condition, any more than he could alter his position, without the Spirit of God. Yea, it is wholly His work from first to last. The Holy Ghost being a divine Person, and His part of the covenant of salvation being to qualify and prepare the redeemed for the inheritance and place

which Jesus has gone to take possession of and hold for them, is it possible that He will fail in His office, and leave many, or even one soul, for whom Christ shed His blood, ungathered and un-sanctified? The Son of God, although greatly opposed by Satan and sinful men, triumphantly completed all His engagements, and entered into His glory, with the satisfaction that He should "see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied," according to the promise of the Father; and shall Satan or the stubbornness of men prevent the Holy Ghost from fulfilling and consummating the promise of the Father and the desire of Christ? Shall the divine Spirit return from His mission dejected and disappointed because men will not allow Him to regenerate and convert them? Or shall He bestow much labour and care for a long time upon one soul, and succeed in leading it a considerable way on the road toward heaven, and then allow that soul to fall away from grace and sink to eternal woe? No, certainly not. What saith the Lord? His words about the Spirit's work are, "He *will* reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." This He can do—this He will do—and if He sets man's sin and God's righteousness—His righteous character—and the judgment to come before the mind and conscience, the persons thus reprov'd and thus convinced will most gladly accept the salvation God has provided for them. The Holy Ghost has often darted a bright and powerful ray of heavenly light into the soul of the most hardened and ignorant of our race, in a moment causing the heart to bow and the will to bend to His sacred influence and teaching. Must it not be approaching to, if not actual, blasphemy to say that the Holy Spirit strives to convert men, and to bring them to Christ, but cannot prevail because they will not submit to His warnings and drawings? The Apostle Paul did not conceive of a failure in the Spirit's work in the heart where it was commenced; nay, he wrote his belief—"Being confident," said he, "of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

As, therefore, the work of regeneration, sanctification, and consolation, which belongs to the Holy Ghost, is begun and carried on by His power and grace, and as all the precious faith-views of Christ and His redeeming work are by the enlightening rays of the Spirit, should we not fear, love, obey, and rejoice while we sing of Him—

"Thou, ~~with~~ the Father and the Son,
 Art that mysterious Three-in-One,
 God, ~~but~~ ^{yet} for evermore!
 Whom, though we cannot comprehend,
 Feeling Thou art the *sinner's Friend*,
 We love Thee and adore"?

Moreover, this divine Spirit prompts the heart to pray, and brings to our remembrance and helps us to plead the precious promises given by the Father and the Son for the stay and hope of our souls in the time of trouble and sorrow. He applies to the mind just the suited word at the proper time—the time of deep need. Thus He lifts up a standard against the foe, and enables us to wait upon the Lord, and for Him too. He also enkindles the affections and softens the heart in the services of God's house. There is no heartfelt pleasure in the worship of God if He does not help us in our devotions, and fix our hearts on things above. If, then, we have been thus made partakers of the Holy Ghost, we have been made to *feel* our sins and sinful state. If He dwells in our heart, we thirst for more holiness, peace, power, zeal, and fellowship with God; and as this Holy Comforter alone can produce these things in our souls, and cause us to rejoice in the knowledge of our own salvation, should we not take great heed to the injunction, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God?"

W. B.

SPIRITUAL DESERTION.

STILL I seek, but cannot find Thee,
 O Thou Source of all my joys;
 Need'st Thou that I should remind Thee
 What desires my heart employs?
 While Thou'rt absent naught delights me,
 Nothing then has power to please,
 Every little cross affrights me,
 Doubts and fears my spirit seize.
 Well Thou know'st the bitter groanings
 Which from this poor heart arise;
 Thou hast heard my midnight moanings,
 Thou hast listened to my sighs.
 Thou art not, like us, forgetful
 Of the objects of Thy love;
 Why, then, should I be so fretful?
 I shall soon Thy kindness prove.
 Oh, let Thy paternal feeling
 Thee to pity, Lord, incline:
 See Thy suppliant daughter kneeling!
 Am I not for ever Thine?
 Oh, delay not! hither hasten;
 Let me see Thy smile once more.
 Father, Father, cease to chasten;
 View and pity as before,
 Saviour, bring me consolation,
 Lest I sink in deep despair,
 Whisper, "I am thy salvation;"
 Let me know Thou hearest prayer.

OUR MARTYRED FOREFATHERS.

XIX.—JOHN PHILPOT.

THE Lord's Supper was the battle-ground of the English Reformation. Around this Christian ordinance gathered the forces of truth and error, at that memorable period in our history, to engage in a fierce and protracted struggle, which eventually resulted in the triumph of that party whose Captain was Christ, whose standard was the cross, and whose weapon was the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Already it will have been observed by those who have read these papers that the dogma of transubstantiation occupied no unimportant place in the polemics of the Reformation. One of the most scholarly productions of that age—Archbishop Cranmer's work on the Lord's Supper—was especially written in opposition to this article of Rome's creed. It was a dogma that was stoutly resisted by our forefathers, and as stoutly defended and maintained by Rome. The Reformers, with Bibles in their hands and its precious truths in their hearts, were determined, by the grace of God, to endure the fury of the flames rather than subscribe to a creed that contained such a dogma as this. To believe in transubstantiation, or, in other words, the bodily presence of Christ on the altar, is to deny that He assumed a nature like our own, which is not capable of being in more places than one at the same time. How, then, can the body of Christ be present on thousands of Rome's altars at the same time? To believe in this dogma is to admit that the Romish Mass is a "sacrifice," in opposition to the plain statement of the Apostle Paul that our Saviour, "after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down at the right hand of God;" and to allow such a sacrifice is to call in question the veracity of our Redeemer's dying cry, "It is finished!" "There is," says the Apostle, "no more offering for sin." In short, a believer in transubstantiation places himself in direct opposition to the Scriptures; to assent to such a doctrine is to deny the Gospel. As our martyred ancestors loved the Gospel more dearly than their lives, they therefore wrote and protested against transubstantiation, and even sacrificed their poor bodies to the fire rather than subscribe to such an unscriptural and unreasonable tenet. Rome, however, despising the Bible and ignoring its teaching, stoutly contended for this dogma, because it was the main support of her priestly power and one of the many sources of her accumulating wealth. She combined her efforts and concentrated her energies in order to coerce the people of this country to bow down to this idol of the real presence, but the result was a signal failure. Not one nor two, but scores and

hundreds of our forefathers, rather than obey those who had promulgated such a command, walked joyfully to the stake, and sang amid the flames to the praise and glory of God, whose truth and honour they so nobly vindicated.

Among this heroic band we find the name of John Philpot. He was a native of Hampshire, being son of Sir Peter Philpot, who was twice sheriff of that county. Desiring to give his son an education worthy of his position, his father sent him to school at Winchester, where he appears to have made considerable progress in his studies, particularly in the acquirement of languages and the art of verse-making. In the study of Hebrew he attained to great proficiency; and it was probably during his reading of the Old Testament in that tongue that those doubts arose in his mind that eventually culminated in his severance from the Church of Rome.

About the year 1534, he was admitted as a Fellow of New College, Oxford, where he remained for a period of seven years; and, at the expiration of that time, he made a tour on the Continent, Italy being the country in which he made a somewhat lengthy residence. Among other places Rome was visited by him, where he could not fail to discover the gross immorality and glaring corruptions that permeated the whole mass of society, clergy and laity alike, in the metropolis of Christendom. There is every reason to believe that his visit to the Continent materially strengthened that feeling of disloyalty towards Rome and its religion that had been already engendered in his mind; for, on his return to his native country, he gave unequivocal evidence that his religious views were totally different from those in which he had been nurtured. This change was easily discoverable in some lectures upon the "Epistle to the Romans," which he shortly afterwards delivered in Winchester Cathedral to a not altogether sympathetic audience, for a writer of that age tells us that "they were not acceptable to the cathedral clergy or the citizens of that place." But opposition served only to increase his zeal, for not only in Winchester, but in other places in the neighbourhood, Philpot preached the Gospel—a proceeding that considerably irritated his diocesan, Stephen Gardiner. In the reign of Edward VI., Philpot was advanced to the post of Archdeacon of Winchester, and, during the time he held this office, his duties were discharged in a faithful and honourable manner.

But the most interesting part of Philpot's career has yet to be traced. Up to the last three years of his life, there is little to be told worthy of narration, the particulars that have come down to us being very meagre and devoid of interest. But from 1553 to 1555, this worthy man occupied an important position amongst

those noble men who fought for the truth against wealth and power.

On the 18th of October, 1553, but a short time after the accession of Mary to the throne, Convocation assembled in London by royal command, to debate upon religious subjects, when all men were to be permitted, said the prolocutor, Dr. Weston by name, "freely to speak their conscience in these matters, that doubts may be removed and they satisfied therein." In this clerical parliament Philpot was a leading member, and his speeches during the debates are well worthy of our attention. The bodily presence of Christ on the altar was one of the "matters" that occupied a large share of attention during this assembly of the leading dignitaries of the Church. A week after the opening, Philpot declared what sort of presence he believed and what sort he rejected, in the Lord's Supper. "I will, in one word," said the worthy Archdeacon of Winchester, "declare what manner of presence I disallow in the Sacrament, to the intent the hearers may the better understand to what end and effect mine arguments shall tend; not to deny utterly the presence of Christ in His Sacrament, truly ministered according to His institution, but only that gross and carnal presence which you of this house have already subscribed unto to be in the Sacrament of the altar, contrary to the truth and the manifest meaning of the Scriptures—that by transubstantiation of the Sacramental bread and wine, Christ's natural body should, by the virtue of the words pronounced by the priest, be contained and included under the forms of bread and wine. This kind of presence, imagined by men, I do deny, and against this I will reason."

Here he was interrupted by Dr. Weston, who asked him to state his arguments, when Philpot replied, "I am about it, if you will let me alone." Then he boldly stated that Christ is not present in any form in the Romish Mass, and challenged six of the most learned divines in the country to disprove his assertions, adding, "And if I shall not be able to maintain, by God's Word, that I have said, and confound those six which shall take upon them to withstand me in this point, let me be burned with as many faggots as be in London, before the Court gates." He then proceeded with his arguments. "And, first," he continued, "I will ground my arguments upon the authority of Scripture, whereon all the buildings of our faith ought to be grounded; and after, I shall confirm the same by ancient doctors of the Church. And I take the occasion of my first argument out of Matthew xxviii., of the saying of the angel to the three Marys seeking Christ at the sepulchre, saying, 'He is risen, He is not here;' and Luke xxiii., the angel asketh them, 'Why seek ye the living among the dead?' Likewise the Scripture testifieth

that Christ is risen, ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; all which is spoken of His natural body, therefore it is not on earth included in the Sacrament. I will confirm this yet more effectually by the saying of Christ in John xvi.: 'I came from My Father into the world, and now I leave the world and go away to My Father:' the which coming and going He meant of His natural body, therefore we may affirm thereby that it is not now in the world. But I look here to be answered with a blind distinction of visibly and invisibly—that He is visibly departed in His humanity, but invisibly He remaineth notwithstanding in the Sacrament. But I will prove that no such distinction ought to take away the force of that argument, by the answer Christ's disciples gave unto Him, speaking these words: 'Now Thou speakest plainly, and utterest forth no proverb;' which words St. Cyril, interpreting, saith 'that Christ spake without any manner of ambiguity and obscure speech.' And therefore I conclude hereby thus, that if Christ spake plainly and without parable, saying, 'I leave the world now, and go away to My Father,' then that obscure, dark, and imperceptible presence of Christ's natural body to remain in the Sacrament upon earth invisibly, contrary to the plain words of Christ, ought not to be allowed, for nothing can be more uncertain, or more parabolical or insensible, than so to say. Here now will I attend what you will answer, and so descend to the confirmation of all that I have said by ancient writers."

Here we stop, space forbidding us to follow Philpot through the lengthy discussion that ensued; but we would just observe that, as he was the chief spokesman on the Protestant side, and as his speeches display both argumentative ability and a profound acquaintance with the Scriptures, we recommend those who have the opportunity to study these addresses as delivered by this worthy martyr before the Church dignitaries of his day.

At the outset of this debate it had been publicly stated that freedom of discussion would be allowed to all members of the Convocation, no hint being dropped that the use of this privilege would entail imprisonment or discomfort of any kind. But when the business actually commenced, signs were not wanting that this liberty of speech was a mere blind for the furtherance of certain schemes that had been privately concocted by the Queen and her Popish advisers. Only two days after the opening of Convocation, a bill was brought in by the prolocutor for the adoption of transubstantiation as an article of belief; and it was determined by the promoters of this measure that their object should be gained, no matter how perspicuous the arguments and how well grounded the opposition of Philpot and his comrades. Not only so, but it was also resolved that those who had dared to freely

express their opinions should severely suffer for such effrontery. Philpot was speedily thrown into prison, where he continued until his martyrdom. He was not, however, permitted to be alone for any considerable length of time, as perhaps few, if any, of the noble men who went to the stake in those days were subjected to so many examinations as Philpot. At different times, he appeared before no less than seventeen of the leading dignitaries of the Church, including one archbishop and twelve bishops, besides several of the nobles of the land, who often were present on these occasions. From the martyr's own pen, a lengthy account of these examinations, fourteen in number, has come down to us; and a perusal is quite sufficient to show that his enemies spared no pains to obtain his abjuration of the Gospel. But their efforts were barren of result, unless it was that they displayed the courage and steadfastness of the heroic prisoner. After a careful study of these examinations, we can safely say that there is not the slightest indication of compromise and recantation on the part of Philpot. The noble man was true to his colours.

As an illustration of the manner in which Philpot was handled by his judges, we now introduce a few extracts from his account of the fifth examination, which was held in the Bishop of London's palace. There were present, besides the Bishop of the Metropolis, the Bishops of Rochester, Coventry, and St. Asaph, and other clerical magnates. The proceedings commenced by Bonner addressing Philpot as follows:—

“Master Philpot, come you hither. I have desired my lords here and other learned men to take some pains once again to do you good; and because I do mind to sit in judgment on you to-morrow, as I am commanded, yet I would you should have as much favour as I can show you, if you will be anything conformable; therefore play the wise man, and be not singular in your own opinion, but be ruled by these learned men.”

PHILPOT: “My lord, in that you say you will sit on me in judgment to-morrow I am glad thereof, for I was promised by them which sent me unto you that I should have been judged the next day after, but promise hath not been kept with me, to my farther grief. I look for none other but death at your hands, and I am as ready to yield my life in Christ's cause as you are to require it.”

Here the Bishop of St. Asaph interposed. “It is most evident,” said this prelate, “that St. Peter did build the Catholic Church at Rome; and Christ said, ‘Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build My Church.’” Moreover, the succession of bishops in the see of Rome can be proved from time to time, as it can be of none other place so well, which is a

manifest probation of the Catholic Church, as divers doctors do write."

To this the prisoner answered: "That which you would have to be undoubted is most uncertain, and that by the authority which you allege of Christ saying unto Peter, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church,' unless you can prove that rock to signify Rome, as you would now make me falsely believe. And, although you could prove the succession of bishops from Peter, yet this is not sufficient to prove Rome the Catholic Church, unless you can prove the profession of Peter's faith, whereupon the Catholic Church is built, to have continued in his successors at Rome and at this present to remain."

BONNER: "Are there any more Churches than one Catholic Church? And, I pray you, tell me into what faith were you baptised?"

PHILPOT: "I acknowledge one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, whereof I am a member (I praise God), and am of that Catholic Church of Christ whereunto I was baptised."

COVENTRY: "I pray you, can you tell what this word 'Catholic' doth signify? Show, if you can."

PHILPOT: "Yes, that I can, I thank God. The Catholic faith, or the Catholic Church, is not, as nowadays the people be taught to be, that which is most universal, or of most part of men received, whereby you do infer our faith to hang upon the multitude, which is not so; but I esteem the Catholic Church to be as St. Augustine saith: 'We judge the Catholic faith of that which hath been, is, and shall be.' So that, if you can be able to prove that your faith and Church hath been from the beginning taught, and is, and shall be, then may you count yourselves Catholic: otherwise not." He then explained the derivative meaning of the word, as signifying after or according to the sum, or principal, or whole; and he added, "So that Catholic faith, or Catholic Church, is as much to say as the first, whole, sound, or chiefest faith."

BONNER: "Doth St. Augustine say so as he allegeth it? or doth he mean as he taketh the same? How say you, Master Curtop?"

Then CURTOP, who was Dean of Peterborough, replied: "Indeed, my lord, St. Augustine hath such a saying, speaking against the Donatists, that the Catholic faith ought to be esteemed of things in time past, and as they are practised according to the same, and ought to be through all ages, and not after a new manner, as the Donatists began to profess."

PHILPOT: "You have said well, Master Curtop, and after the meaning of St. Augustine, and to confirm that which I have said for the signification of 'Catholic.'"

COVENTRY : " Let the book be seen, my lord."

BONNER, who was considerably annoyed by this request, said : " I pray you, my lord, be content, or in good faith I will break even off, and let all alone. Do you think the Catholic Church (until it was within these few years, in which a few upon singularity have swerved from the same) have erred ?"

PHILPOT : " I do not think that the Catholic Church can err in doctrine ; but I require you to prove this Church of Rome to be the Catholic Church."

CURTOP : " I can prove that Irenæus (which was within a hundred years after Christ) came to Victor, when Bishop of Rome, to ask his advice about the excommunication of certain heretics ; the which he would not have done (by all likelihood) if he had not taken him to be supreme head."

COVENTRY : " Mark well this argument. How are you able to answer the same ? Answer, if you can."

PHILPOT : " It is soon answered, my lord, for that it is of no force ; neither this fact of Irenæus maketh no more for the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome than mine hath done, which have been at Rome as well as he, and might have spoken to the Pope if I had list : and yet I would none in England did favour his supremacy more than I."

ST. ASAPH : " You are the more to blame, by the faith of my body, for that you favour the same no better, since all the Catholic Church (until these few years) have taken him to be the supreme head of the Church, besides this good man Irenæus."

PHILPOT : " That is not likely that Irenæus so took him, or the primitive Church, for I am able to show seven general Councils, after Irenæus's time, wherein he was never so taken, which may be a sufficient proof that the Catholic primitive Church never took him for supreme head."

To this bold challenge one of the bishops indignantly exclaimed : " This man will never be satisfied, say what we can. It is but folly to reason any more with him."

PHILPOT : " Oh, my lords, would you have me satisfied with nothing ? Judge, I pray you, who of us hath better authority—he which bringeth the example of one man going to Rome, or I that, by these many general Councils, am able to prove that he was never so taken in many hundred years after Christ, as by the Nicene, the first and second Ephesine, the Chalcedonian, the Constantinopolitan, the Carthaginian, and that at Aquileia ?"

COVENTRY : " Why will you not admit the Church of Rome to be the Catholic Church ?"

PHILPOT : " Because it followeth not the primitive Catholic Church, neither agreeth with the same, no more than an apple is like a nut."

COVENTRY : "Wherein doth it dissent ?"

PHILPOT : "It were too long to recite all ; but two things I will name—the supremacy and transubstantiation."

CURTOP : "As for transubstantiation, albeit it was set forth and decreed for an article of faith not much above three hundred years, yet it was always believed in the Church."

BONNER : "Yea, that was very well said of you, Master Curtop."

PHILPOT : "Ye have said right, that transubstantiation is but a late plantation of the Bishop of Rome ; and you are not able to show by any ancient writer that the primitive Church did believe any such thing."

Although indications are not wanting in the foregoing brief extract that the Papal authorities were very desirous of sending Philpot to the flames, yet it was not until after the fourteenth examination that Bonner read his sentence of condemnation. Then he was led away by two officers to Newgate gaol, where he was received by Alexander the keeper. Upon Philpot requesting Alexander to show him kindness, the latter replied, "If you will recant, I will show you any pleasure I can." "I will never recant that which I have spoken whilst I have my life," calmly replied the prisoner, "for it is most certain truth, and in witness hereof I will seal it with my blood." "This is the saying of the whole pack of you heretics," angrily exclaimed the keeper, accompanying his words with a command that Philpot's legs should be loaded with as many irons as he could bear. But this cruel treatment was of short duration, for orders came from the sheriff to the effect that the martyr should be treated in a more merciful manner.

On the day after his sentence had been read, he was informed that the following morning would witness the end of his conflict. With feelings of joy did he receive the intelligence, exclaiming, "I am ready. God grant me strength and a joyful resurrection." At eight o'clock the next morning the sheriffs came to Newgate to conduct Philpot to Smithfield. On his way to the stake, owing to the very muddy state of the road, two officers carried him a short distance, when he merrily said, "What ! will you make me a Pope ? I am content to go to my journey's end on foot." Having arrived at the place of execution, he said, "I will pay my vows in thee, O Smithfield." He then kissed the stake, saying, "Shall I disdain to suffer at this stake, seeing my Redeemer did not refuse to suffer the most vile death on the cross for me ?" After repeating two or three of his favourite Psalms, he was bound to the stake, the faggots were ignited, and the heroic martyr passed away as quietly as if his death had resulted from natural causes.

J. C.

A FRATERNAL EPISTLE.

TO THE CHURCH AND CONGREGATION MEETING FOR WORSHIP
AT PARK STREET CHAPEL, GIRENCESTER.

Hastings, September, 1880.

BELOVED,—Although, in the good providence of God, I am not with you personally, yet I can adopt the language of the Apostle and say, “Yet am I with you in spirit;” and having a desire for your edification in the faith, I felt moved to communicate by letter the substance of what I trust I should have preached to you had I been with you in person; for my desire in all my preaching is, to introduce nothing curious, no novelties, but that which you have received, that which the Word of God, the Scriptures of eternal truth, sets forth, “the Gospel of the grace of God;” God’s own account of His favour to poor, needy, destitute, helpless sinners. In what an orderly manner does our God work to bring home and make acceptable to His chosen people His own design to save them by His rich abounding grace. After quickening them into divine life He teaches them, by applying His holy law to their consciences, their need of His grace, and this is painful teaching. Their poor souls conclude that God is against them, that they shall surely be lost, that the Holy God will be their Judge, and in their distress they cry out, “Enter not into judgment with me, for in Thy sight shall no flesh living be justified.” But God sees not as we see; He makes a different account of the matter, and He says by His servant David, “Blessed is the man,” singled out from all other men, “whom Thou chastenest, and teachest him out of Thy law.” Now this is very contrary to the man’s feelings; there does not seem anything blessed in it. Sometimes this inward chastening is accompanied with outward rebukes. God’s providential dealings appear to be all against the individual. Bereavements, sickness, loss of worldly good, all excite in the breast this assurance, that the Lord’s hand is gone out against him, and that after he has been made an example of God’s displeasure in this time-state, his soul will be lost for ever; and Satan will be sure to add his protest that God never intended to save him, and then how terrible to such a soul does the enemy make the doctrine of God’s election appear. “Ah!” says Satan, “if you are not elected, it is no good for you to pray, nor to go to a place of worship, nor to read the Bible. You will never be saved: and, after all, there is no such a thing as religion; it is all a delusion;” and the poor thing is really bewildered. Well, now, the Lord sees and knows all that is going on. His Word still holds good; the man is a blessed man, and in God’s own time he proves it. Thus it is said, “When we were without strength;”

so God brings the man low, that his mouth may be stopped, that boasting may be for ever shut out, for as God teaches so they learn. By His teaching they learn that by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified, and in due time salvation by grace, and by grace only, is sounded in the ears of this blessed man; and Newton says—

“How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed !”

Now grace, free grace, is music to the soul; now the Gospel of our salvation is approved and received; and Jesus Christ, coming to “seek and to save that which was lost,” is admired, honoured, and loved. Let me not lay any stumbling-stone in the way of any of the believing family. The Lord in whom we trust is so sovereign in His working with His people, that it is hardly possible to describe in one the various manners God has and uses to bring about His purpose of salvation, hence the various similitudes our Lord Jesus Christ in His teaching makes use of. It is compared to a stronger than the strong man entering the castle of the heart and spoiling the goods, and obtaining the victory. In some instances it is compared to leaven hid in the meal until the whole was leavened. David says, “Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee.” In others, and this has much encouraged my own soul, the similitude of seed cast into the ground is used, and it is said “it springeth up he knoweth not how.” Now there is a sense in which every case is sooner or later met by each parable, but some seem to be more aptly set forth by one than another, and the object the Lord has in view is to make His dear people prize His grace; hence the Apostle prays, “Grace be with you;” and so for you I pray that this grace, which is spoken of as abounding more in the experience of the saints than even their sin, may dwell in you richly: “But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound,” and it must be so, for it covers all their deformity, takes out all their stain. May it with peace divine be multiplied unto you, that you may enjoy the rich gift of it again and again—not only His favour felt in your souls when you meet in His house, but when you are alone, when on your beds, sweet and precious tokens of the grace of our God may come over your favoured souls, compared by Solomon to a cloud of the latter rain, softening your hardness, breaking down the rock, melting your souls at His divine footstool, and enabling you to receive the dear Immanuel with all His glorious train, His people, His Spirit, His laws, His blessed precepts. Then oh, what humility will accompany this blessed reception. How His Person will be admired! How the soul will say, “His mouth is most sweet; yea, He is altogether lovely;”

and while this sweet enjoyment lasts, that vexed question among the saints, "Which shall be greatest?" will be laid aside, and each will esteem other better than himself. It is in this way, as far as I have been taught, that God works in the hearts of His dear people to make His grace acceptable to them, and these are some of the signs following.

These, dear friends, are not cunningly-devised fables; they are sterling, solemn, blessed, sacred realities. They are truths I desire to live by, and hope to die depending on. I commend them to you. My soul's desire for you is, that you may know, receive, and enjoy them as the rich gifts of the sacred Three-in-One, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

So prays, dear friends, your servant for Christ's sake,

THOS. BARNARD.

EXTRACT FROM THE LIFE OF DR. OWEN.

FOR years Owen had been under the power of religious principle, but he had not yet been borne into the region of settled peace; and at times the terrors of the Lord seemed still to compass him about. We have no means of ascertaining with certainty what were the causes of these dreadful conflicts in Owen's mind—whether an overwhelming sense of the holiness and rectitude of God, or perverse speculations about the secret purposes of God, when he should have been reposing in His revealed truths and all-embracing calls; or a self-righteous introversion of his thoughts upon himself, when he should have been standing in the full sun-light of the cross; or more mysterious deeps of anguish than any of these; but we are disposed to think that his noble treatise on the "Forgiveness of Sin," written many years afterwards, is in a great degree the effect as well as the record of what he suffered now. Nothing is more certain than that some of the most precious treasures in our religious literature have thus come forth from the seven-times heated furnace of mental suffering. The wondrous colloquies of Luther in his "Introduction to the Galatians" reflect the conflicts of his own mighty spirit with unbelief; the "Pilgrim's Progress" is in no small degree the mental autobiography of Bunyan; and there is strong internal evidence that Owen's "Exposition of the 130th Psalm"—which is as full of Christian experience as of rich theology, and contains some of the noblest passages that Owen ever penned—is to a great extent the unconscious transcript of his personal wanderings and perplexities, and final deliverances.

But the time had come when the burden was to fall from Owen's shoulders; and few things in his life are more truly

interesting than the means by which it was unloosed. Dr. Edmund Calamy was at this time minister in Aldermanbury Chapel, and attracted multitudes by his manly eloquence. Owen had gone one Sabbath morning to hear the celebrated Presbyterian preacher, and was much disappointed when he saw an unknown stranger from the country enter the pulpit. His companion suggested that they should leave the chapel, and hasten to the place of worship of another celebrated preacher; but Owen's strength being already exhausted, he determined to remain. After a prayer of simple earnestness, the text was announced in these words of Matthew viii. 26: "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" Immediately it arrested the thoughts of Owen as appropriate to his present state of mind, and he breathed an inward prayer that God would be pleased by that minister to speak to his condition. The prayer was heard, for the preacher stated and answered the very doubts that had long perplexed Owen's mind; and by the time that the discourse was ended, had succeeded in leading him forth into the sunshine of a settled peace. The most diligent efforts were used by Owen to discover the name of the preacher who had thus been to him "as an angel of God," but without success.

There is a marked divine selection visible in the humble instrument that was thus employed to bring peace to Owen's mind. We trace in it the same wisdom that sent an humble Ananias to remove the scales from the eyes of Saul, and made the poor tent-maker and his wife the instructors of the eloquent Apollos. And can we doubt that when the fame of Owen's learning and intellectual power had spread far and wide, so that even foreign divines are said to have studied our language in order that they might read his works, the recollection of the mode of his own spiritual deliverance would repress all self-dependence and elation, and make him feel that the highest form of success in preaching was in no respect the monopoly of high intellectual gifts, but that in every instance it was "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord"?

A GODLY man is under the immediate direction, guidance, and care of Jehovah. It matters not how stationed, he is just *how* and *what* God would have him to be. He has the fittest station in life, the fittest frame of mind and body, and the fittest trials. It matters not what difficulties arise out of the post he fills, every circumstance is ordained, and supplies of grace provided for any emergencies. If God says, "As thy day thy strength shall be," that is enough.

MEMOIR OF THE LATE JOHN CLARK, OF
FIVEASHDOWN.

(Continued from page 120.)

THE Holy Spirit, who is the infallible Teacher of the Lord's living family, and by whose divine instruction they are distinctively marked and separated from that general and notional Christianity which may be soon acquired and easily lost, now begun to lead our friend into a knowledge of the precious truths of the everlasting Gospel.

Thus the eternal and everlasting purpose of God in choosing a people for Himself, in blessing them with all spiritual blessings in Christ (Eph. i. 3), preserving them in Christ (Jude 1), and in choosing them to salvation (2 Thess. ii. 13), now occupied his mind and became food to his soul. He was led also to discover that they who are eternally interested therein are manifested in time by being born again (John iii. 3), conformed to the image of God's dear Son (Rom. viii. 29), and in being changed from glory to glory (2 Cor. iii. 18), being brought to the Father's house clothed with the best robe (Luke xv. 22), "shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace" (Eph. vi. 15), the finger decked with a ring as a pledge of eternal love and union, and a free welcome given with music and dancing, as to the prodigal son. Particularly the doctrine of imputed righteousness was opened up to him, and as he heard this preached, his inmost soul hungered and thirsted after it, that he might embrace it as his own by a free gift from heaven.

About this time he was in the company of the late Mr. Golding, who had been an intimate friend of Mr. Huntington. The conversation of this good man he found to be both savoury and establishing, especially when he spoke of the revelation of Christ's righteousness to his soul. He felt there was a manifest unction, proving that he had been blest with the holy anointing (1 John ii. 27).

While our friend was ardently pursuing a knowledge of this righteousness, and earnestly seeking for an interest therein, the Lord spoke these words home to his heart with power, "Thou art comely through the comeliness that I have put upon thee." The unspeakable happiness that he then felt was indelibly stamped upon his mind. The surrounding fields might have rejoiced, and the trees have clapped their hands, but could not have expressed the joy that he then felt from the sweet knowledge that Christ was his, with all His grace and power.

Such visits as these are rare, and the Lord seldom makes great and rich discoveries of His glory but for an express purpose.

Thus God appeared unto Saul of Tarsus for the purpose that He might make him a minister and a witness of the things he had seen, and of those things wherein He promised to appear unto him (Acts xxvi. 16). But in this matter there needs much counsel and caution, prayer and watchfulness, lest it be but carnal lusting after spiritual gifts, or ambitiously seeking a prominent place in the Church militant. And it may not be out of place here to record a few remarks which the late Mr. Philpot made respecting one of his close friends, of whom he had, as he said, some floating thoughts that God would have called to the ministry. He says, "He had a good experience both of law and Gospel, a fair and increasing knowledge of the Scriptures, a firm and sound judgment in the truth, a great abhorrence of error and evil, combined with a thoughtful, prayerful mind, and good natural abilities, which he desired to devote to the service of God, and a pleasing and ready door of utterance in prayer." What a cluster of seeming qualifications! and yet this good man was not called to the ministry, but was in early life smitten by death, and taken into the immediate presence of the Lord in glory, where "His servants serve Him, and see His face" (Rev. xxii. 3, 4). Good men have often been mistaken upon this vastly important subject. Perhaps, as a rule, those exercises which a man rarely discovers to another result in fruit, whereas, where there is much talk about it, it often ends where it began.

In referring to the before-mentioned special visit from the Lord, our friend says, "I was then just entering the fields, and when I had got under the oak tree, these words were spoken with power to my mind, 'Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry'" (2 Tim. iv. 5). This begat in his mind an inquiry of the Lord if he was to speak of these things before man. His own feeling was that he would tell no man of it, but while pondering the matter, he remembered that when the children of Israel tried to hoard the manna, it bred worms and stank; he therefore believed he should have to proclaim these truths to others; so he purposed to call upon two valued Christian friends, which he did, telling them of the revelation of that righteousness "which makes the sinner just," and they sweetly rejoiced with him, and flowed together to the goodness of the Lord. But of the intimation he had received respecting the ministry he wisely kept to himself, for he felt he needed much teaching before he entered upon that sacred work, besides which he had yet to prove whether he was right in the interpretation he put upon the words, "Do the work of an evangelist," &c.; for, seeing so many discouragements overtake a man who is sent of God to the work, he need not only be fully persuaded in his own mind at first, but, like Gideon, have proof upon proof that

he is in no wise betrayed by the treachery of his own heart, or ensnared by Satan, who to suit his own ends may transform himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. xi. 14).

Not unfrequently before the Lord puts His servants into His vineyard, they have to listen to an unprofitable ministry, and have to groan under the lash of legal preachers, wherein they learn experimentally to feel for the Lord's tried people, as He said by Moses, "Ye know the heart of a stranger, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Exod. xxiii. 9). So it was with our friend. He speaks of one Mr. Hill, of Deptford, who came to preach at Tooting, and who by his teaching tried to make it appear that it was entirely owing to people's negligence that they did not spiritually thrive. This set our friend to work, wherein both he and his teacher seemed to take the mere letter and miss the spirit of the precept, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. iv. 23), for he says no Quaker or Arminian ever strove to be more exact than he was, and he says he watched his feelings to see if they kept pace with his outward demeanour, but, to his dismay, he found they were far behind in the race. This brought on much darkness of mind and bondage of spirit. Being in a miserable frame of mind, he called one evening upon a dear friend at Merton, and talked to him on the subject. He told him that, instead of being better by his striving, he felt worse, but the reply his friend gave him was, that it was right to strive, so he says, "I got nothing from him." But on his return home these words came to his mind, "I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth Himself from the house of Jacob, and will look for Him" (Isaiah viii. 17). Also, he says, while he was standing near a waterfall, fearing that all his religion was a delusion, these words came with power to his mind, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth : for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. xlv. 22). Now, he says, he looked immediately and was lightened, and his face was not ashamed ; the transition was great, and he stood wondering at the Lord's love and mercy to him. Then these words came to his mind with power, "A vineyard of red wine is My beloved : I, the Lord, do keep it : I will water it every moment : lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." Here he saw the secret of his preservation—that the Lord kept him, and not man. While he thus stood amazed at the blessing he was receiving in his soul, these words came with power, "Walk about Zion ; tell the towers thereof ; mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following" (Psa. xlviii. 12, 13). "Oh," thought he, "what a work to be engaged in!" Now bondage gave place to liberty, and darkness to light, for he felt "the law of the Spirit

of life in Christ Jesus had made him free from the law of sin and death." He now saw that the righteousness of the law was fulfilled in us that "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 1, 2); and that "whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James i. 25.) Thus he saw that his teacher was one of those spoken of by Hart, who—

"Strive with a 'Do this and live,'
To drive us to Egypt again."

Being naturally impulsive, he quickly spoke his mind about the preacher, which turned some against him. This he laid to heart, and conferring with flesh and blood, he thought he would speak no more about religion, and, in fact, he laboured to put it out of his thoughts. But, while walking over Wandsworth Common, this was spoken to his mind, "He is precious to the Father, is He precious to thee?" to which he replied, "Lord, I wish Him to be;" and in a moment these words came to him, "By the blood of Thy covenant I have sent forth Thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water" (Zech. ix. 11). The change was so great, he stood still and wondered. Only a little while before he had, as it were, abandoned his religion; now he felt as sure of heaven as if he were in it. Then these words dropped into his mind, "After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession" (Eph. i. 13, 14). Thus he went on blessing and praising the Lord; for having "lien among the pots," he was now like "the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold." He could adore that God who had broken his agreement with death, and had nullified his covenant with hell. Now he understood what the Church means by the pomegranates budding, the mandrakes giving a good smell, and that at Zion's gates were laid up all manner of pleasant fruits, both new and old, for the beloved. Blessed as he now was with sweet liberty, he spoke of these visits to some who knew the Lord, and a few thought they should like to form themselves into a little Church, under the ministry of a faithful man who had been brought to a knowledge of the truth under William Romaine. This minister cordially received our friend, when he gave in his experience, and said, "That man will be a minister in a future day" We are inclined to believe that this was a Mr. Chalice, who for some years preached at Lower Tooting. Speaking of his end our friend says, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

(To be continued.)

WHISPERERS.

THERE is no doubt Christianity has already greatly triumphed over sin, so far as the grosser expressions of it go. It has already made society comparatively safe and decent, and this is much, but it is not enough. There are sins, not gross, not criminal under any civil code, which are nevertheless unmistakable transgressions of the rule of Christ, against which the Church, the Word of God, and conscience seem powerless, for they make their home in the Churches, are committed by those who read the Bible, and profess to have the Spirit in their hearts. Among the transgressors of the sweetest and divinest rule known to the Christian ethics, are to be found certain persons who are accurately described under the name of "whisperers." The order to which they belong is not a new one. Paul met it face to face in the Church at Rome, and placarded it in that infamous companionship to which it belongs. He associated it with "envy, murder, deceit, malignity." The "whisperer" he placed in the rank of "backbiters, haters of God, boasters, inventors of evil things, covenant breakers, implacable, unmerciful." The "whisperer" is a well-known character in our rural villages and churches. They are generally *envious, jealous, suspicious, mean. They scent a slander farther than a hound can a fox.* They relish vile stories about people, and will peddle them from house to house, and from circle to circle, with rare unction. They keep a keen espionage upon the household of their neighbours; and, if anything has gone wrong in a family which that family would like to keep to itself, they are sure to find it out, and retail it everywhere. They are the devil's colporteurs, preaching a message of defamation instead of proclaiming a Gospel of salvation, and of trust and brotherly charity. Paul understood this class, and pilloried them with those that are "worthy of death." He disciplined them from the pulpit, and snapped the line of judgment across their tattling tongues. In his first Epistle to Timothy he described them with the accurate touch of a master, as "wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also, and busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not." How these words cause such people to stand out in imagination and memory, like an outlined figure sketched in chalk on a black board! We have known a dozen whose characters would correspond with the Apostle's description to the splitting of a hair.—*Golden Rule.*

NOTHING can quench the fire that sin hath kindled but the water which repentance hath caused.—*Dr. Goodwin.*

GODLY EXERCISE.

MAY the Lord the Spirit teach you how to put yourself continually under the protection of Christ. May He teach you so to know Christ, and lead you to trust in Him for everything. If you live Christ, you will be a great gainer by your nervous disorder. You will not then be the worse for anything within you, or for whatsoever may befall you. As you live Christ, it will turn to your present good; it will fall into its proper place. You will then see there can be but one end in a believer's living, and that is to glorify God in all things; and your case and circumstances are so suited for you to glorify God in all things, that no one believer's case can be more suited to this than your own. The only way to glorify God in all things is by putting all things that concern us into His hands; by trusting Him with all our concerns; to yield up our wills to His; to acquiesce in the whole good pleasure of His will concerning us. Everything, be it what it may, be it inward or outward, go with it all to Christ. If you call upon Jesus, saying, "Look Thou upon me," He will be sure to hear and answer. The more simply you deal in prayer with the Lord, so much the better. If you get into the blessed holy art of calling on the Lord in your shop, or in your business, when things are irritating, you will find it to be of great advantage to you; whilst I would not have you omit family prayer, yet the other will be most advantageous to you. It will be no loss of time, neither will it interrupt business; so far from it, it will sanctify and increase it, and be a most blessed means of promoting your spiritual welfare, of invigorating your spiritual senses, and strengthening your spiritual faculties. When you enter every day afresh on your necessary concerns, take Christ into them; enter upon them in the faith of Him. The perfume of Christ distilling on you will perfume your mind; the devil will keep at a distance from you; business will be a sanctified employment; your profit in it will be a sanctified blessing; your very shop will be a hallowed place. You will find your earthly matters thus managed conducive to your soul's health and prosperity.—*Extract from Eyles Pierce's Letters.*

THE Bible is like an immense orchard, where many and various sorts of trees are to be found, from which may be gathered a great variety of fruit. For we have in the Bible rich consolations, doctrines, instructions, counsels, warnings, promises, and threatenings. In this orchard there are no trees from which, by shaking, we shall not obtain some fruit.—*Luther.*

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XIII.

DEAR SIR,—Seeing from time to time letters inserted in the SOWER to the young, I have copied the following from the original, hoping it may meet with your approval. The daughter to whom it was written was at that time twenty-two years of age. Her father emigrated to America at the commencement of the present century. He was very much attached to Mr. Huntington's ministry and writings; and, being a bookseller and general storekeeper in Greenwich Street, New York, he was able to circulate many hundred volumes of his works. He was a great sufferer before his death, but those blessed truths that had been his support and stay in health were his support when heart and flesh were failing.

Yours truly,

H. R.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I have hitherto filled this with things that concern this life; and, though I do most earnestly long and yearn towards you, desiring to see you, yet I do more earnestly long after your soul's welfare; therefore may the Lord duly impress your mind with the few things I am going to say.

In the first place, let me tell you, my dear child, you are a sinner, born a sinner, as fallen in Adam, under the curse of a broken law, and under the wrath of God revealed therein; besides, you are conscious you are a sinner by practice, "for all have sinned," and, as such, you cannot see God or heaven with comfort when you die, and die you surely must, and after that appear at the judgment-seat of Christ, and if found a sinner there, under the curse of God's law, you will be condemned to everlasting misery. May God deeply impress your mind with this important truth. But, blessed be God, there is a way of escape, found out by infinite wisdom and sovereign love, and that is by Christ. God the Father appointed Christ the Surety of His chosen ones. Christ undertook to be their Surety. To this end He came into this world, lived a holy life, and fulfilled the law His people had broken, and thereby made it whole or honourable in their stead; and Christ took all His people's sins upon Himself, and bore the curse and wrath of God due to them when He was crucified. Now, God the Father accepts of what Christ did in their stead as though it was done by them, and imputes it to them, whereby they are considered holy and pure in Him; and it is in this way that God can be just, and yet justify poor sinners who believe in Jesus, and save them from the wrath to come, and make them eternally happy.

These, my dear child, are a few outlines of one part or branch of salvation, but there is another part I would give you a few

outlines of also. All those whom God eternally loved in Christ, and purposed to save by Him, and for whom Christ became a Substitute or Surety, and obeyed and suffered in their room and stead, &c., are in God's appointed time brought to see and feel that they are such sinners as God's Word describes them to be, and they are brought to be deeply concerned to know how they can be saved from God's threatened wrath; and this is the Holy Spirit's work, who hath engaged to convince of sin and of righteousness all God's chosen or elect for whom Christ died, and also, in His own time and way, to reveal Christ to their hearts, consciences, and understandings, thus enabling them to believe the promises of God, so suitable to their state and case, which promises He fulfils in them, causing them to love, fear, and obey Him on account of His goodness and mercy to them as sinners; for God hath engaged to work in His people both to will and to do, that He may bring them to inherit that glory unto which they were chosen and appointed.

May the Lord dispose your heart to be concerned to know these things personally and experimentally (if it be His sovereign will); and, if you feel any desires after the knowledge of God, and an experience of His love to you in and through Christ Jesus, then make them known to Him by prayer, for He will always grant those desires Himself has given.

That He may bestow upon you this mercy is, and I trust will be, the prayer of

Your affectionate father,

New York, June 3rd, 1812.

J. CHAPMAN.

A SANCTIFIED heart is better than a silver tongue.—*Dr. Goodwin.*

HE that hath Christ for his God and King, let him be assured that he hath the devil for his enemy, who will work him much sorrow, and will plague him all the days of his life; but let this be our consolation and glory, that we persecuted ones have the Lord of life, of death, and of all creatures, clothed with our flesh and blood, sitting at God's right hand, ever living and making intercession for us, defending and protecting us.—*Luther.*

“SERVE the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling” (Psa. ii. 11). I find it difficult thus to demean myself toward God; but my little John can behave so to me; for when I sit in my study and write or do anything else, then my boy sings to me, and when he is too loud, then I check him a little; yet, nevertheless, he singeth on, but with a more mild and softer voice, and somewhat with fear and reverence. Even so will God have us to do, always to rejoice in Him, yet with fear and reverence.—*Luther.*

THE SOWER.

SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON,

PREACHED AT TAMWORTH ROAD CHAPEL, CROYDON,

BY MR. WILLIS.

"For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ."—PHIL. i. 19.

THE Apostle is writing in the chapter from which the text is taken of his "bonds in Christ," and he says that they "are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; and many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the Word without fear;" and then he goes on to say, "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds."

It seems very strange that such should be the case—that men should thus preach Christ of envy and strife, supposing thereby, if possible, to add affliction to the mind of the great Apostle; and yet, if we believe they were influenced by Satan, we need not be so very much surprised at what they might say, nor even at their preaching Christ out of envy and strife, in order to add affliction to the mind of the man of God, the Apostle Paul.

We are told that every man will "receive according to the deeds done in the body;" and, whatever men may think, God has His eye upon them, and every man's work will be brought into judgment by-and-bye. The Apostle was determined to glory in the preaching of Jesus Christ, as he here says, "Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice;" and then comes the language of our text, "For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ."

We find the Apostle sometimes in exceedingly low places in his feelings, and I believe that, for the most part, those that are the most exercised for God's honour—those whom Satan tries, and who have their minds exceedingly exercised by oppositions and persecutions—are the most favoured of the Lord. They go up and down, and down and up; and much tribulation is the pathway they are called to travel right through the wilderness, until they get to their desired haven above, where Christ is.

Now, I should like to make a few remarks this morning concerning the Spirit. That is all I am about to attempt to do, and may the Lord be pleased to help me. Not so very long since I was speaking

to you about what is called "the Spirit of Christ," and I gave you some reasons why the Holy Ghost was called "the Spirit of Christ," therefore I shall not go into that this morning, but shall go on to something else. I don't know how it is, but my mind is led to try as much as I can to honour the Spirit in His Word and work. There is so much importance to be attached to the work of the Holy Ghost, and I am very much afraid that this part of the ministry is neglected and left out—not that I am going to throw a stone at any of God's dear servants ; God forbid ! for I often feel the truth of what the Master said, "He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone." We are not perfect creatures, and we cannot rightly expect perfection of others while we are so imperfect ourselves. Jesus Christ was a perfect Man, and He was perfect in what He said ; but we are not, nor never shall be while we are in the flesh.

One thing that may be here named with regard to the Spirit is this : you know that every man has his own gifts ; you can find this clearly stated if you read in the Word of eternal truth. It is of no use to find fault with a man concerning his gifts, whatever they may be, for he has what the Lord is pleased to give him. Thus, with regard to prayer-meetings, I don't think it is right to find fault with a man's gift in prayer. He has just the gifts God has bestowed upon him, and he cannot possibly alter them. He could not pray like another man if he were to try, and it would not be right that he should attempt it. God gives to His servants gifts according to His own mind, and not according to the mind of the world. If I could command all the things of grace that I need, I should be filled with the grace and Spirit of God ; and just so with regard to the strength—*that* is bestowed. All the strength that God's people have, and all they will need day by day, must come through the supply of the Holy Ghost.

This, then, is a very important part of the Gospel—to honour the Spirit in His Word and work. When we read about Jesus Christ, we find that He honoured the Spirit all through His ministry. But I daresay I shall speak to you of this again ; therefore, let us now just glance at the Personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit. Though there are Three divine Persons, there is but One God, and the Bible tells us that these Three Persons are co-equal.

Let us just for a moment look at the Spirit as a divine Person. The Spirit is eternal as well as the Father, and the Son is eternal as well as the Father and Spirit. They are Three-in-One. We cannot understand it fully now ; but faith grasps the fact, and grace is willing to leave it there as a profound mystery. I am very much inclined to think that, if we are favoured to get to heaven, a great many things will be revealed to us there that we cannot understand in this life ; and I have no doubt the revela-

tions that will be made in heaven will add very much to the glory and happiness of God's glorified people. Oh, when one is led to think about heaven and Jesus Christ, and taste anything of the hallowed bliss here, how one seems at times to wish to go and be "for ever with the Lord"! Haven't you felt it? I have.

Now, with regard to the Personality of the Spirit, the Psalmist speaks of it in that solemn Psalm, the 139th: "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?" The Spirit certainly is a divine Person, since He is said to be everywhere present; so the text I have quoted speaks of the omnipresence of the Spirit of God; hence the Psalmist says, "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me."

Then, with regard to the eternity of the Spirit, the Apostle says, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, "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?" Here it is said, you see, that Christ offered Himself through the *eternal Spirit*; so the Spirit is not only everywhere present, but He is eternal.

Look again at the knowledge of the Spirit. When the Apostle is writing to the Corinthians, he says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

Now, the Spirit knows all things, and reveals them to the souls of God's people in a greater or less degree. The Apostle says he was caught up to the third heaven, and heard things that were not lawful for him to speak about; things which the Spirit in some measure reveals to the soul, and which God has prepared for His people. Then the Apostle says again, "The Spirit knoweth the mind of God." Yea, there is but one mind, one will, and one way, though there be Three Persons in the Trinity.

The Spirit is also spoken of in connection with the works of God in creation. If we go back to the first chapter of Genesis, it is said, "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Oh, what a wonderful world is this which God has created! We cannot comprehend it. Look at the stars in heaven. The wisest men cannot fully understand them; but I believe that, however much this world may speak forth the glory of God, His people will bring Him much more glory. Now I say, with regard to the creation, the Spirit of God had to do with it; and more than that—He has to do with that great work that is wrought in the soul. No man can go to heaven without that great and mighty change;

that is certain. We come into this world sinners, and we must be born again of the Spirit of God, or else no heaven is in store for us. A great many persons think they are going to heaven who know little about it. Now, I may talk about heaven, about God, or prayer, or anything else; but, if I have no evidence, no witness of the Spirit of God that His work is begun in my soul, then, my friends, I have not the slightest ground of hope as to going to heaven. Christ tells us in the sixth chapter of John's Gospel that "the flesh profiteth nothing." There is no spiritual profit can arise from the flesh; the good work is all of the Spirit. The Lord tells us that His Word is Spirit and life; and you will find that all that great work that is wrought in the soul is by and through the Spirit of God. We cannot effect it in any way. Oh, how often does the dear child of God look upon those who are near and dear to his heart—the wife upon the husband, and the husband upon the wife. Their bowels move with compassion towards them, and what would they not do for them if they could? but it is of no use; they cannot effect the change; it must be of the Spirit of God.

There is another thing in connection with the Spirit of God, and that is, the resurrection of the dead. I must confess I do love to trace these things out in the Scriptures of eternal truth. The Apostle, in speaking of the resurrection from the dead, says, "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead," &c. (Rom. viii. 11.) When I go to the cemetery, and am asked to officiate in consigning my friends to the tomb, I feel that there is something gloomy about it; but, when I can turn it to good account, as I am helped to do sometimes, and can believe with the Spirit that is in me, and that raised Jesus Christ from the dead, that He will raise my poor body also, then a blessed change is wrought in my feelings.

Some have said that the resurrection is past, and some that there is no such thing. I recollect, many years back, reading about an infidel and a poor man who, though very needy, was a good and gracious man. The infidel was trying to work him out of his belief in the resurrection of the dead, and said there could not be any such thing. How was it possible that our dust could be raised up again? The poor man replied, "He that hides can find;" and, if I recollect rightly, it was the means of closing the infidel's mouth. Oh, my friends, whatever we may think, God knows all about the dust, where it is; and, if He can make bodies like yours and mine, cannot He gather the dust together again as it shall please Him? and body and soul shall be reunited, and dwell with Him for ever and ever.

Now, then, I want to call your attention to a few things spoken of by our Lord to Nicodemus. How very simple and plain His

teaching is! I do love to read the Gospels. Christ says to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." Some make a bad use of this, and say that water baptism is necessary, and must go before the work of the Spirit; but I don't believe that water is really meant at all, for Christ goes on and likens the Spirit to the wind: "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."

One or two thoughts strike me here. First, the wind is invisible, and so is the Spirit, for neither of them can be seen. The Holy Spirit works secretly in the hearts of God's dear people. We are not to say the Spirit is not at work because we cannot see it. He may be working in some poor sinner's heart in this chapel this morning, and yet no one else know anything about it; but then there will be the effects of the work, and they may be seen, just as you can see the effects of the wind.

Secondly, the sovereignty of God. The verse I quoted to you just now says, "The wind bloweth where it listeth." You have no power over it, and no more have you over the work of the Spirit. A man may think he can resist the Spirit, but he cannot. Can you stand against the wind and prevent its blowing? No. Neither can you direct the Spirit. He works where He will, and what He wills will be sure to be done. I do feel thankful it does not rest with the speaker. I am as certain, my friends, of the sovereignty of the work of the Holy Spirit, as I am of His power to bring sinners down; and I know He can do that from what I have felt myself, for, if there ever was a poor creature who did cleave to the things of this world, I am the one, but the Spirit has made me give them all up.

Then, again, the Spirit is likened to water. You read in the seventh chapter of John, Jesus said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." This He spake alluding to the Spirit, so you see the Spirit of God is compared to water. How refreshing and reviving is water, and how necessary for furthering the growth of vegetation; and there is no real growth in the things of God without the Spirit of God.

Again, He is likened to fire. Fire purifieth; and I am sure the child of God, when in his right mind, will confess that he has a great deal which needs to be burned up. He has much wood and stubble which this fire comes down upon and consumes. Then fire illuminates; and all the light and understanding we have is certainly from the Spirit.

Then, again, all the liberty we enjoy is from the Spirit of God. Do we know anything about this Gospel liberty? We are told that "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Oh, yes, and sweet liberty too! Sometimes you enjoy a little liberty in reading God's Word, or at a throne of grace. You are not always shut up. Now, all this liberty is from the Spirit of God, and the liberty I have is from the Holy Spirit too, and all the sealing we ever have is from the Spirit.

Then, again, in the Scriptures the Spirit is compared to oil. You know oil is very healing. Perhaps some of the people in this chapel need a little healing, but you know I am only the mouth-piece for God, and unless the Spirit, that is compared to oil, that is so healing and comforting, bless my word to your souls, all I say will be of no use. The Apostle wished that the people might have the supply of the Spirit, and I do not know what he could have wished for them better than that; and you and I want the Spirit, for in proportion as we have the Spirit we shall be able to understand and enjoy the things of Christ. God's people are made to know their dependence upon the Spirit and grace of God, and they are thereby preserved from becoming indifferent to the things of God.

Now, my friends, my desire for you is, that you may have much of the Spirit's teaching and comforting; and I desire the same for myself too, for I confess that in this matter I am very selfish. It would not satisfy the speaker for you to be blessed with a supply while he was left in want. I should say, "I want a little help myself;" for you know that the husbandman must be first partaker of the fruits. May God bless you with all needful supplies of every grace. Amen.

THE SCRIPTURES.

THE Scripture is that which God hath given unto His servants for their continual exercise day and night in this world; and in their inquiry into it He requires of them their utmost diligence and endeavours. This being assigned for their duty, it was convenient unto divine wisdom and goodness to find them blessed and useful work in the whole Scriptures, to exercise them about, that everywhere they may meet with that which might satisfy their inquiry and answer their industry. There shall never be any time or strength lost or misspent that is laid out according to the mind of God in and about the Word. The matter—the words—the order—the contexture of them—the scope, design, and aim of the Holy Ghost in them—all and every one of them—may well take up

the utmost of our diligence. All are divine; nothing is empty, unfurnished, or unprepared for our spiritual use, advantage, and benefit. To stir up and exercise our faith and diligence to the utmost in our study and search of the Scriptures, it is an endless storehouse, a bottomless treasure of divine truth. Gold is in every sand. All the wise men in the world may, every one for himself, learn somewhat out of every word of it, and yet leave enough still behind them for the instruction of all those that shall come after them. The fountain and springs of wisdom in it are endless, and will never dry up. We may have much truth and power out of a word—sometimes enough, but never all that is in it. There will still be enough remaining to exercise and refresh us anew for ever; so that we may attain a *true* sense, but we never can attain the *full* sense of any place. We can never exhaust the whole impression of infinite wisdom that is in the Word; and how should this stir us up to be meditating on it day and night!

Everything in the Scripture is instructive. It proceeds from infinite wisdom, which hath put an impression of itself upon it and filled all its capacity with its blessed effects. In the whole frame, structure, and order of it—in the sense, words, coherence, expression—it is filled with wisdom, which makes the commandment exceeding broad and large, so that there is no absolute comprehension of it in this life. We cannot perfectly trace the footsteps of infinite wisdom, nor find out all the effects and characters of itself which it hath left upon the Word. The whole Scripture is full of wisdom as the sea is of water, which fills and covers all the parts of it.—*Dr. Owen.*

Oh, for a heart to search it more!
Its height, and depth, and length explore;
Till, swallowed up in love divine,
I in my Saviour's image shine.

Great God, from whence is this to me,
That I should e'en desire to see
Thy wisdom shining through Thy Word,
And grasp the Substance—Christ the Lord.

A. H.

REAL religion is to be severed from the world, to be married to Christ, and to bring forth fruit unto God.—*Tiptaft.*

NOTHING doth establish the mind, amidst the rollings and turbulence of present things, as doth a look above them, and a look beyond them—above them to the hand by which they are ruled, and beyond them to the sweet and beautiful end to which by that hand they shall be brought.

OUR MARTYRED FOREFATHERS.

XX.—QUEEN MARY'S LAST STAKE.

ON the 11th of November, 1558, in the city of Canterbury, three men and two women perished in the flames. The names of the sufferers were as follows: John Corneford, of Wrotham; Christopher Brown, of Maidstone; John Herst, of Ashford; Alice Snoth, and Catherine Knight, an aged woman. These five noble martyrs were the last victims of Papal wrath in the reign of Mary. Six days after this tragic scene had been witnessed by a large concourse of the inhabitants of Kent, the unhappy Queen sighed her last breath, and was followed to the grave with the execrations of an indignant people, whom she had wronged and deceived by breaking solemn promises and heeding pernicious counsel. On her accession to the throne, Mary had promised toleration in religious matters, but, by listening to the advice of men like Bonner, Gardiner, and Cardinal Pole, she completely blighted the fair prospects that inaugurated her reign, and rudely alienated the affections of her loyal subjects by sanguinary edicts and still more sanguinary crimes. She ascended the throne amid the shouts of a jubilant nation; she descended into the grave amid the curses of an outraged people.

The policy Mary pursued, at the instigation of Rome and its advisers, has won for her the unenviable distinction that has encircled her name with an epithet by far the most despicable that has become associated with the memory of any English sovereign. Henry IV. had disgraced both his name and his reign by placing upon our statute book the first penal enactment against religion; the victor of Agincourt had sullied his fame as a warrior by his cruelty as a Churchman, in permitting Lord Cobham to be burnt, or rather roasted alive; Henry VIII. had been guilty of sending many men to the stake and to the scaffold more worthy of life than himself; but it was reserved for the first representative of the gentler sex that ever legally swayed the English sceptre, to find victims, by scores and by hundreds, for Rome's fury and indignation. Three years did this persecution rage with a barbarous severity that was hardly surpassed, in later times, by Judge Jeffreys and the "Bloody Assize."

There are two periods in our history particularly remarkable for cruel deeds and tragic scenes, and between them there is a striking analogy. The first was the reign of Mary Tudor, and the other was the reign of James II. Both of these sovereigns were avowed and bigoted Papists; both were determined that their own religion should be the religion of the land; both were resolved to pursue their object at all hazards; and to persecution

both of them resorted, as the most effective means of forwarding their pet schemes. But—and we desire to thank the Almighty God for His goodness—both of them were ignominiously defeated. Their reigns were short, one living but five years as queen, the other but three years as king. At the close of both reigns they were each of them succeeded by great and wise rulers, who reversed their policy, and permitted their subjects to enjoy a considerable amount of freedom in religious matters. Elizabeth, and William, Prince of Orange, are two of the greatest sovereigns that have occupied England's throne. The reign of the former marks one of the most brilliant epochs in our history, and the reign of the latter, we need hardly remind our readers, marks the commencement of an era of activity and freedom, of opulence and prosperity, of renown and success, unparalleled in the history of mankind.

But we must return to the Marian martyrs. Although many estimates have been given by different historians of the numbers that perished at the stake during this persecution, yet there is but a slight difference between their calculations. It is quite certain that from 270 to 300 persons were burnt during these three years. A stake was then a common sight, and a man or woman praising God in the flames was an every-day occurrence. But it was, nevertheless, a revolting spectacle. The great body of the people sickened at the sight of so many persons, whose only crime was reading the Bible, refusing to pray to saints, or denying the real presence, going to the stake to be burnt to ashes. On several occasions, the onlookers did not hesitate to avow their sympathy for the martyrs. When Cardmaker, who had displayed some little hesitation, at last overcame his fears and undressed for the stake, the bystanders, unable to restrain their feelings, cried out, "God be praised! The Lord strengthen thee, Cardmaker! The Lord Jesus receive thy spirit!" In fact, these baleful fires were effecting results that Rome had not intended. Instead of striking terror into the heart of the nation, and increasing the number of Rome's adherents, each successive martyrdom served only to swell the ranks of the persecuted, and to inspire the people with a courage that dared to thwart the arbitrary designs of Popish rulers.

It was from the people—from the artisans and labourers of the nation—that Cardinal Pole and his subordinates chose their victims. It is true that those whom we may term the leaders of this martyred host were men of genius and erudition, whose talents and acquirements were far superior to those of the most eminent defenders of the Church of Rome. Cranmer and Tyndale, Ridley and Latimer, Bradford and Philpot, were eminent divines and famous scholars. But the rank and file of this army consisted of unlettered and industrious sons of toil, such as

artificers, bricklayers, carpenters, farm labourers, and weavers. Referring to this fact, Froude, the historian, has the following sentences: "Although Pole and Mary could have laid their hands on earl and baron, knight and gentleman, whose heresy was notorious—although in the Queen's own guard there were many who never listened to a Mass—they durst not strike where there was danger they would be struck in return. They went out into the highways and hedges; they gathered up the lame, the halt, and the blind; they took the weaver from his loom, the carpenter from his workshop, the husbandman from his plough; they laid hands on maidens and boys who had never heard any other religion than that they were called on to abjure; old men tottering into the grave, and children whose lips could but just lisp the articles of their creed; and of these they made their burnt-offerings; with these they crowded their prisons; and, when filth and famine killed them, they flung them out to rot."

The foregoing sentences are no exaggeration of facts, as a mere perusal of the pages of Foxe gives us abundant evidence of their veracity. On the 16th of March, 1555, a Shoreditch weaver, Thomas Tomkins, was burnt at Smithfield; and eleven days afterwards, William Hunter, an apprentice and a noble youth, whose history has already occupied our attention, followed him in the same path. At Cardiff, a poor, uneducated fisherman, named Rawlins White, perished in the flames for preaching the Gospel, and denying the dogmas of Rome. Thomas Watts, a linen-draper of Chelmsford, having bade adieu to his wife and six children, was led to the stake and suffered manfully for the truth. On the 14th of June, Nicholas Chamberlain, a weaver, was burnt at Colchester; and on the following day, Thomas Osmond, a fuller, was burnt at Manningtree, and William Bamford, a weaver, at Harwich. John Bradford's companion in the flames was an apprentice to a tallow-chandler. In the month of July, a bricklayer was burnt at Rochester; a linen-weaver and a widow at Dartford; a brewer at Lewes; a husbandman at Steyning; and a carpenter at Chichester. At Stratford-le-Bow, in the month of August, Elizabeth Warne, a widow, was led to the stake. She was a woman of heroic spirit. On her last appearance before Bonner, she was exhorted to deny the Gospel, when she loudly exclaimed, "Do what you will; for, if Christ were in an error, then am I in one." At Thetford, a small town in Norfolk, Thomas Cobb, a butcher, perished in the flames. Shortly afterwards, the city of Ely was the scene of a double martyrdom, when William Wolsey, a constable, and Robert Pygot, a painter, both natives of Wisbeach, endured the fury of the flames rather than abjure the truths of the Gospel.

When the year 1556 dawned, the prisons of the land were filled

with victims for the stake. Two artificers, John Judson and John Went, were among the first to suffer, for they were burnt in Smithfield about the latter end of January. In the month of March, because they considered the Lord's Supper was a memorial of Christ's death and passion, two women, one of them the wife of a shoemaker, were burnt at Ipswich. In the same month also, three men of humble birth—John Spicer, a mason; William Coberley, a tailor; and John Maundrel, a husbandman—were burnt in one fire at Salisbury. On being offered the Queen's pardon if he would recant, Maundrel loudly exclaimed, "Not for all Salisbury!" and Spicer, when at the stake, said, "This is the joyfullest day that ever I saw." At Smithfield, on the 23rd of April, six men perished in the flames. Their names were Robert Drakes, parson of Thundersley, in Essex; William Tyms, curate of Hockley, in the same county; Richard Spurge, shearman; Thomas Spurge, fuller; John Cavel, weaver; and George Ambrose, fuller. Five days afterwards, in the town of Colchester, six others shared the same fate. All of them were either labourers or small tradesmen. On the 15th of May, by order of Bonner, Hugh Laverock, a lame and aged man, and John Apprice, who was blind, were martyred at Stratford-le-Bow. When they were chained to the stake, Laverock threw away his crutch, and said to his blind comrade, "Be of good comfort, my brother, for my Lord of London is our good physician. He will heal us both shortly—thee of thy blindness, and me of my lameness. On the following day, three women were brought to the fire at Smithfield. About the same time a blind boy and a poor bricklayer were burnt at Gloucester; and, on the 21st of May, at Beccles, in Suffolk, a fire was ignited for three honest labourers. Four martyrs were burnt in one fire at Lewes, on the 6th of June; and shortly afterwards, eleven men and two women shared the same fate at Stratford-le-Bow. At Bury St. Edmunds, three noble confessors also perished in the flames. On the 1st of August the town of Derby witnessed a very cruel spectacle, when Joan Waste, a poor honest woman, twenty-two years of age, and blind from her birth, was martyred. At Mayfield, in Sussex, on the 24th of the same month, four men, one of them a currier and another a shoemaker, passed in a fiery chariot from earth to heaven; and at Northampton a stake was erected, when another shoemaker was the sufferer.

Thus a hasty glance at the pages of the indefatigable martyrologist speedily establishes the veracity of Froude's statements; and, although we have omitted many instances that would still further strengthen that historian's words, yet we have mentioned sufficient cases to answer our present purpose. We now wish to raise the important inquiry—for what did the Marian martyrs die?

There must have been some potent attraction in the career of the martyr to have caused bricklayers, fullers, husbandmen, and weavers to leave their peaceful vocations to be bearded by bishops, to be harassed and insulted by friars, to be thrown into loathsome dungeons, and to be burnt at stakes. What was there in the sufferings of a Rogers and a Bradford to entice the hardworking but illiterate labourer from his happy home and his comfortable fireside, from his wife and his little ones, to follow in the same path? Where shall we go for an explanation of this remarkable phenomenon? If we turn to the icy and indifferent narratives of the general historian, we find that he talks much of the obstinacy, the misguided enthusiasm, and the blind fanaticism of our martyred ancestors. But it would be difficult to discover obstinacy as a feature in the life of the meek, shy, and reserved John Bradford; it would be mere folly to assert that the venerable Hugh Latimer was upheld by a misguided enthusiasm through the many vicissitudes he experienced during the last years of his life; and to charge Rawlins White, the fisherman, or Hugh Laverock, the aged cripple, with fanaticism is tantamount to declaring that they were beings incapable of smarting under pain or suffering under cruelty. In short, if we attribute the heroism of our martyred forefathers to such causes, we are obliged to conclude that the men of that age were not so tenacious of life as the present generation, and, consequently, they were so easily led by the course of events and duped by their own susceptible feelings, that they madly and thoughtlessly rushed on dangerous paths, unmindful of the inevitable result. But to any person who has carefully perused the pages of Foxe—who, we need hardly say, has been our chief assistant in the compilation of these papers—it will at once appear that such reasoning is incompatible with the character of the men and the nature of the circumstances. Therefore, we have no hesitation in asserting that the Marian martyrs died for that which gave them patience to bear the cruelty of their enemies, which gave them courage to stand before the great ones of the land, and which nerved them to suffer a cruel death—they died for true religion. And we would wish those who read these pages to distinctly understand our meaning. From the extensive circulation of the Bible in our land, from the readiness with which persons unloose their purse-strings for religious objects, from the general tenour of conversation, from the number of religious works that are continually issuing from the press, from the constant increase of churches and chapels, and from various other causes, it is often inferred by those who are mere superficial observers of these matters that religion is in a very thriving and prosperous condition. But it must be remembered that there is a vast difference between the value of a genuine florin and a

counterfeit. There is indeed plenty of religion, but the major part of it is as unlike the religion for which Ridley and Latimer died as a dead branch is unlike a living tree. Religion, without faith, without godliness, without vitality, is strongly represented in our midst, but its nature, its origin, and its results are entirely at variance with that religion for which the martyrs bled. They suffered for the religion that has its origin in heaven, that is brought down to the earth by the Holy Spirit, that besieges and captivates the heart of man by its irresistible power, that effects a complete transformation in his walk and conversation, and in his affections and pursuits; that convinces him of his utter vileness and nothingness, that brings him to the feet of Christ for mercy, that enables him by faith to realise that his sins are washed away in the blood of the Lamb, and that Christ's righteousness is imputed to him; that purifies his heart, and sanctifies him for the service of God, and that eventually carries him into the realms of eternal glory. The religion of the martyrs, in fact, was the religion of the Bible: the truths contained in that sacred volume were the truths for which they suffered ignominy, reproach, imprisonment, and death.

But where is this religion to-day? Is it co-extensive with the vast domains of nominal Christianity, or is it confined within a narrower area?

(To be continued.)

“AND BE FOUND IN HIM.”

“Found in Him,” then naught can harm me;

Having Him I want no more;

Earth's vain pleasures cannot charm me,

Christ containeth all my store.

“Found in Him,” no condemnation

Stands against me in that day;

“Found in Him,” I've full salvation,

Joys that cannot fade away.

“Found in Him,” I cannot perish;

Christ is my unchanging Friend,

He His lamb will save and cherish,

He will love me to the end.

“Found in Him,” when death appeareth,

I would lift my voice and say,

“Sovereign grace my spirit cheereth,

Christ hath borne the curse away.”

“Found in Him,” oh, dying sinner,

This will end all further strife;

He's salvation's End, Beginner;

“Found in Him” is endless life.

IDOLATRY.

WHEN the Lord brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by the hand of Moses, He gave them special commandments. One was, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me; thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image," &c. God had delivered them out of Egypt, from Pharaoh and his hosts, brought them through the Red Sea. He made a way when there seemed to be no way, and slew their enemies before their eyes. They saw His works and sang His praise, and now God says, "Thou shalt have no other God." But one would suppose that, after all this, they would never think of worshipping another god; yet, after all, they made a golden calf, and fell down to worship it. God was very wroth with them for this, and, had not Moses pleaded in their behalf, He would (speaking after the manner of men) have destroyed them. Still they were severely punished for their folly; and God, who is a God of mercy and compassion, went before them in the wilderness, and delivered them still from their enemies.

But they were not the only idolaters. There are many worshippers of idols now, not only in the world, but in the Church of the living God. The Lord's own people are prone to it now, as well as in the days of old. They have their hearts sometimes so taken with the world and the things of the world that they have no heart for God, His house, His Word, or His ordinances. Their possessions, their business, their families, their friends, or something of an earthly nature is set before God, and they worship *it*, and God, His Word, and His great salvation are almost forgotten. Sometimes, too, when the Lord's people assemble to worship Him, and are blessed with a true servant of God to proclaim the good news of salvation, and they are really blessed under him, they begin to think more of him than of the God who sent him, and he becomes their idol, instead of being viewed as the honoured channel through which the blessing has come. We are commanded to esteem the servants of God very highly in love for their work's sake, and to be wanting in this is to dishonour Him who sent them; but our depraved hearts are almost sure either to slight them or to idolize them. The path to heaven in this respect, as well as in other things, is so pressed, so close, so strait, there seems no path at all. Some people may pass over these things and think nothing of them; but those who have been made to mourn over it, and to feel the wretchedness of it, know that it is a truth.

Sometimes the Lord takes away His people's idols, according to His word, "From all your filthiness and from all your

idols will I cleanse you." This is very painful work, and by it they are made to feel that it is an evil and bitter thing to sin against God; yet, as soon as they are a little recovered, so to speak, they begin to set up idols again, and, though God requires the whole heart, they find the world divides their wavering minds and leaves but half for God.

The writer has had painfully to prove these things, and knows them to be true. I was once so taken with an idol that it engrossed almost all my thoughts. I did everything I could to please my idol; it was my chief concern day and night. I knew it was wrong in the sight of God; I felt it was wrong. I feared God's anger. I was afraid He would take away my idol for my wickedness, and the thought of it made me idolize him still more. I mourned over it; I tried to pray against it; but my idolatry remained, and I begged the Lord to take away my idolatry without taking away my idol.

"How simple are Thy children, Lord!
Unskilled in what they pray;
They often lift a hasty word,
Yet know not what they say."

I knew not what I was asking for, but I believe God hearkened to my cry, and answered my request—

"But it has been in such a way
That almost drove me to despair."

He did take away my idolatry, and has left my idol to be as a spear in my side, to cause me daily trials and crosses under which I have had to say with the Psalmist, "It was not an enemy that reproached me; then could I have borne it; neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; for then would I have hid myself from him; but it was thou, a man, mine equal," &c. I have been many times like the Psalmist, so troubled that I could not speak. My tears have been my meat day and night, so that I have been like one drawing near to the grave, yet none but the Lord knew my grief or my sorrow; but, after a time, I found a friend to whom I could make known the secrets of my breast. We could converse together on the things of God, and talk of His ways in leading, guiding, and correcting His people. I felt it good; my spirits revived a little, and, though my cross remained, my health began to improve; also, if not greatly deceived, I had many tokens of love and blessings from God in the means of grace. But I soon had to feel again the abominable wickedness of my heart, for the friend that God had given me I soon began to make an idol of, thus I have been compelled to confess, "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it." Oh, how compassionate is the God of

Israel to His erring children ! He sees our weaknesses ; He knows that, "when we would do good, evil is present with us, so that how to perform that which is good we find not." He knows all those who mourn over these things, and desire to live holy and free from sin, but cannot.

" And Jesus on the eternal throne
For mourners intercedes."

Were it not so, we dare not come before Him, nor take the name of God on our polluted lips, for our sins of idolatry alone would condemn us. Oh, may it be our happy portion to escape these pollutions, and meet in that place where no idol can intrude, in—

" That holy, happy place,
Where sin no more defiles ;
Where God unveils His blissful face,
And looks, and loves and smiles."

A LITTLE ONE.

LIVING RELIGION.

SWEET is that religion that lies between Christ crucified and the sinner's conscience, the great physician and a wounded spirit, the good shepherd and the lost sheep, the perishing prodigal and the fatted calf, the condemned criminal and the Lord our righteousness, the enemy to God and the reconciler. What a meeting, what a match, and what a sweet joint do these two parties make when thus joined together, and made *one* spirit. This is what all seekers in Christ should aim at ; this is the vital part ; "And I, if I be lifted up," says Christ, "will draw all men unto Me" . . .

To be united to Him, as the branch is to the vine, which receives all its life and fruit from the root and stock, this is sweet indeed, and is our sure abiding ; and without being in the vine, and abiding therein, we can do nothing. But too many aim at a fair show in the flesh, and no more ; and if by this they obtain the witness of men and their approbation, they seem pleased and contented. But when temptations come on, when sin revives, when conscience begins his reproaches, when fears are awakened, and terrors surround us, all this external appearance blasts, withers, and fades away . . .

Private retirement, watching the hand of God both within and without ; calling on His blessed name in the secret closet ; acknowledging every favour, both in providence and grace, by thankfulness, by blessings, and praises ; reading His Word and meditating upon it ; feeling after Him in trouble, and confessing what I find amiss. These have been the simple means by which my soul has been kept alive to this day, and I believe I shall never die.

HUNTINGTON.

CONFLICTS AND ENCOURAGEMENTS.

DEAR FRIEND IN THE LORD,—I did not, as is usual, write upon my return, so I consider myself in your debt, and shall endeavour now to acknowledge your favours. . . . I bear the friends at S— an affectionate remembrance, and, from the prayer the Lord gave me in your house on the Saturday evening, I hope the Lord will hold you up, keep you together, direct your steps and go before you, point out your resting-places, and give you feeding times, so that “your hands may be strengthened and your hearts comforted and knit together in love, striving together for the faith of the Gospel.”

Upon my return, preceding trials and present ones set me fast, and I made a sudden stop and was ready to halt. This is often my experience. Clouds, bonds, burdens, storms, and conflicts make me sensible at times how much I stand in need of the God of Jacob to help me, keep me, and deliver me. I am the dust of His creation, the clay of His hand, and the worm of His power, and thus by sheer necessity a dependant upon His sovereign favour for both my outer and my inner man. Sin is a dreadful evil. It blinds the eyes and hardens the heart. The world is dead in sin and lost in darkness, and is called “this present evil world.” No faith is to be found in it, and therefore it is evil in principle and practice. Creeds, forms, and ceremonies without God render men carnally secure, and they cry peace without Christ and the new birth, and, if grace prevent not, are lost. But “the Lord knoweth them that are His.” Not a hoof was left behind of His flock, and the children scattered will all be gathered and housed in the cleft of the Rock. Life, unction, and power in any small measure is worth worlds.

For some time I have had such dreadful turnings up of human depravity as have almost sickened hope to death; have been assailed with the fiery darts of the enemy—dreadful thoughts, causing bitter and severe conflicts, with many other things of a trying nature, but have been helped, and at times delivered; have sung His “Godhead, blood, and name,” and “crowned *Him* Lord of all”—worlds, angels, and men—that once expired on Calvary’s bloody tree. These are lifts by the way, much needed, and, therefore, mercifully given. I had need be sober-minded. The devil is a subtle adversary, and “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” But we are “kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation;” and, if we follow that which is good, who shall harm us? and, if we follow Christ, we follow that which is good in the fullest sense of the word. If I follow myself, I follow a fool and a worthless man. “Show me

Thy ways, O Lord ; teach me Thy paths ;" " Hold Thou me up ;"
 " Guide me with Thy counsel." It will be a great mercy if the
 Lord will direct my steps ; I desire to be guided by Him.

My lingering cold and headache have rendered me a helpless mortal in myself, slothful, timid, and good for nothing. I have been resting of late, if carnal ease be rest, and at times trying to cure myself. Upon the whole I think I am something better, and, when I think I am adequate to the task, I shall write to Mr. L——, that he may command me for a day at W——, according to his request. I like them and their little house of prayer. Make my kind remembrances to them in the Lord ; my kind remembrances to the friends at Salem. I wish you all health and soul prosperity, if the Lord will. I am often sick and nigh unto death, and am at this time heartily sick of myself. " What is man ?" I am often puzzled to make out myself, but, when I come to the cross, I read my character in Hart's lines—

" Then stood the wretch of human race,
 And raised his head, and showed his face ;
 Harder than rocks and mountains are,
 More dull than dirt and earth by far."

Those lines have told out the secret. Oh, to be interested in this cross, and yet not affected by it, when it speaks out volumes of love, wonders of wisdom, riches of grace, and untold depths of mercy to fallen man !

Dear friend, you and I, and all poor sinners who are like David's men of old, in debt, discontented, bitter in soul, are welcome here : " Him that cometh I will in no wise cast out ;" and what is it to come to Jesus ? It is to come to Him for life, for salvation from sin, for mercy, pardon, peace, rest, and all that we need on our way to the kingdom for our walk, work, warfare. I have often been obliged to come with a " Save, Lord, or I perish !" and a " Lord, help me !" " O Lord, deliver my soul !" " Show me a token for good !" and He has not yet cast me out, " for His mercy endureth for ever."

My kind remembrances to Mrs. M——. I hope she duly appreciates those tokens of love that Jesus sends her—reproofs, corrections, and chastenings ; a sense of want, the inward vacuum, and the discovery of a wilderness nature, the drawings of His love, the meltings of heart, hopes and expectations, prayers and sighs, groans and tears. If you have banqueting times, the sound of the trumpet and the alarm of war may soon be given. If so, look to the cross, fight under this banner, and victory is yours. Thank Him who is Lord of all for past favours, and remember how He helped you in your low estate and became the Rock of your salvation. Carry your burdens to Jesus, and He will take them off your shoulders ; not

in your time, but in His own. If you have doubts and fears, tell Jesus; if you feel very carnal, hardhearted, and at a great distance from God, do not conclude that you are cast out or cast off. Remember Jesus hath a compassionate heart, and can pity you in your worst states. Try Jesus; He is a merciful, faithful, and great High Priest. He wears the vesture of His atonement—a garment dipped in blood, bearing this dignified title, “King of kings, and Lord of lords.” He can speak for you in heaven when you cannot speak for yourself on earth. The secret of vital Christianity consists in dealing with Jesus. Make Him your all; make much of Him. If you wear jewels, remember whose they are, and who gave you them; if you are a beggar in rags, do not stay away from court, but show yourself. Grace displays itself in all forms. It fetches down the Pharisee, and picks up a thief, restores backsliders, enriches beggars, and ennobles the minds of heaven-born sons, so that they count all things but loss when put in competition with Jesus; and the cross gives additional firmness to their character—yea, persecutions and tribulations are their glory. When Jesus is sensibly present they glory in tribulations; in His absence they have to fight their way by faith.

Accept of these fragments in love as a part of the debt I owe you, and when it is well with you, remember at the throne the writer. “Brethren, pray for us.”

With affection and respect, yours in Jesus,
King's Cliffe, Oct. 17th, 1856.

R. H. IRESON.

LETTER OF ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

SIR,—Some days ago I received some lines from you, and they were very welcome; for I know no better news can come from any corner of the earth than of a soul attempting to overcome the world and its own self, and in any degree prevailing, and resolving still onwards. All the projects and conquests of the world are not to be named in comparison to it. Oh, what a weariness is it to live amongst men, and find so few *men*, and amongst Christians, and find so few *Christians*—so much talk and so little action. Religion seems turned almost to a tune and air of words; and, amidst all our pretty discourses, we ourselves remain pusillanimous and base, and are easily dragged into the mire; self, flesh, pride, and passion domineering while we speak of being in Christ and clothed with Him, and believe it because we speak it so often and so confidently. Well, I know you are not willing to be thus gulled, and, having some glances of the beauty of holiness, aim no lower than *perfection*, which end we hope to attain by-and-by; and, in the meanwhile, the smallest

advances towards it are of more worth than crowns and sceptres. I believe you often think of these words of the blessed champion Paul (1 Cor. ix. 24, &c.), "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain," &c. There is a noble Guest within us. Oh, let all our business be to entertain Him honourably, and to live in celestial love within, which will make all things without be very contemptible in our eyes.

I should rove on, did I not forcibly stop myself, it falling out well, too, for that, to be hard upon the pest hours ere I thought of writing. Therefore, *good night* is all I add, for whatsoever hour it comes to your hand, I believe you are as sensible as I that it is still night, but the comfort is, it draws nigh towards that bright morning that shall make amends.

Your weary fellow-pilgrim,
ROBERT LEIGHTON.

Edinburgh, Oct. 24th, 1659.

CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

WHEN, with a melting heart, I stood
Near to a fountain fill'd with blood,
It flow'd a crimson tide.
That sight what stranger's heart can guess,
Or mind conceive, or tongue express?—
'Twas Jesus crucified.

But plunged beneath the cleansing flood,
My heart exclaimed, "Behold how good
The God who loved and died!"
None saves from sin, its guilt, its stains,
From death and everlasting pains,
But Jesus crucified."

Oh, let me still this wonder see,
And cry, "He loved and died for me,"
And near the cross abide.

Take off my load, and from my heart
Bid sin and guilt and fear depart,
My Jesus crucified.

Thousands beside the dying thief
Have in this sight found sweet relief,
Feeling the blood applied;
And yet ten thousand thousand more
Shall share the bliss, and all adore
My Jesus crucified.

Oh, make my stubborn heart relent!
May I of unbelief repent,
And every sin beside!

Now tune my heart, my voice, my tongue;
I'll sing, and this shall be my song—
My Jesus crucified.

HINTON.

MEMOIR OF THE LATE JOHN CLARK, OF
FIVEASHDOWN.

(Continued from page 156.)

THE exercises of the Lord's servants prior to their being called into actual service are very diversified, both as to length of time and depth of feeling. But the Lord usually lays those whom He is about to bring into the ministry upon the minds of men of gracious discernment, whereby they have an inward persuasion that such and such a man will be called to work in His vineyard. And this may be somewhat equivalent to the prophecies referred to by Paul respecting young Timothy (1 Tim. i. 18). So it was with our friend. The Lord was not only deepening his personal exercises, but He was impressing the minds of others concerning him. He relates that different passages of Scripture were laid upon his mind. One was, "Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and make the hills as chaff" (Isa. xli. 15). And, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke xxii. 32). Also, "Preach the word, &c." (2 Tim. iv. 2). Now while such portions attracted his attention, he kept pleading his own unfitness for the ministry before the Lord in private, for he thought while he felt sin so working in his mind that he was not qualified for so great an office; as he could only conceive that a minister was a holy man of God, and that he himself did not possess that measure of heavenly-mindedness which becomes a minister of Christ. Besides which his natural temperament seemed to be a hindrance to him, for having a free and outspoken manner with him, he felt that those of a more reserved disposition were better fitted for the ministry. Whereas others, like Moses, have pleaded their disadvantage because like him they have been slow of speech. In both of which it may be clearly seen that the Lord will lay low every mountain and exalt every valley, and that His determination is, "that no flesh shall glory in His presence" (1 Cor. i. 29). But thoughts upon the work would be continually bubbling up in his mind, and after he had tried to get rid of them these words came to him: "Counting me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Tim. i. 12), by which he saw that it was the Lord's work to qualify for, as well as to call to the ministry. One day his pastor, who had predicted to the church what he believed to be the Lord's will concerning him, asked him pointedly if he had not the subject of the ministry impressed upon his mind, to which our friend said, "Why do you ask me?" He said, "Because I find in your conversation that there is a peculiar opening of the word of

truth, and I see the state of your feelings at times, and believe you will not be better before you speak," *i.e.*, publicly in the Lord's name. These things brought the weight of the work heavier upon his mind. And one evening when he was going across Wandsworth Common, on business, he felt led to inquire of God about the matter. So in the simplicity of his heart he addressed the Lord thus: "Lord, some of Thy dear children believe I ought to speak in Thy name, and Thou knowest the thoughts I have had working in my mind about the same, but, Lord, I am afraid I do not know enough about Jesus Christ to preach Him; if therefore I am to preach Him, do manifest Him, O blessed Spirit, do." Thereupon, he says, "Such a blaze of glory came into my soul, and such a view of the dear Redeemer, that I said, in the language of Mr. Hart, 'My groaning, gasping God.'"

Oh, the exceeding riches of grace in Christ Jesus! And the hymn of Dr. Watts came with power—

"My God, the spring of all my joys,
The life of my delights,
The glory of my brightest days,
And comfort of my nights.
The op'ning heavens around me shine
With beams of sacred bliss,
While Jesus shows His heart is mine,
And whispers I am His."

"Oh, the sweet embraces of His love were so great that I talked with Him as familiarly as a man talks with his friend. I went to do what business I had, and glad was I when it was done, that I might get on the Common to walk and talk with my dear Redeemer. I wept for joy at such undeserved love. I never before enjoyed so much as I did at this time; it was, indeed, "joy unspeakable and full of glory." The names the dear Redeemer bore were full of majesty, the offices He sustained were full of love. I knew now what it was to be "changed from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. iii. 18). Now my lips were touched with "a live coal from off the altar;" now my iniquity was purged; and, like His servant Isaiah, I was ready to go (Isa. vi. 8). I looked for nothing but His own glory, bless His name; I loved Him with all my heart, and therefore all connected with Him.

"Love all defects supplies,
Makes great obstructions small;
'Tis prayer, 'tis praise, 'tis sacrifice,
'Tis holiness, 'tis all."

I remember some little time after this being invited by a friend to go to Norwood to hear a man preach, that something seemed

to say to me, "There will not be anyone to speak where you are going, and you must preach." When I got there, there was no one, and they came and asked me whether I would speak, but I contrived to get away. Thus I was not obedient to the heavenly vision. At another time, when going to Croydon, being in a sweet meditation upon divine things, these words came with power, "I have set thee for a watchman: Declare what thou seest." I stood and wept, saying, "Lord, I am so foolish I can see nothing," when the words came again, "Declare what thou seest." Some little time after this they were continually disappointed of a minister at the chapel, and some of the friends came and asked me if I would read a chapter, and, if I "saw anything," to speak. So I opened the Bible upon the forty-fourth Psalm, which I could speak from, as I had the experience of it, especially the third verse. "They got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favour unto them." The word was received with savour and power. This was in the year 1833.

After this they used to get me to speak at times, which I did in the desk, not venturing into the pulpit. But I was sometimes severely tried about it, and much darkness came on. So I thought one Sunday morning, you shall not have me to speak to you to-day; and away I went over Norwood Hills into Penge Wood, and I remember well I had a severe pain in my side when going up one of the hills, but nothing stopped me, for I thought I am not fit for a preacher. Some of the children of God at Bromley believe that I am a good man, but that I am not sent to preach; and very likely they are correct in their judgment. When I got into the Wood I took up a leaf of the Testament that some one had thrown on the bushes, and was struck with the words, "Go and tell My brethren that I am risen, and that I go before you into Galilee." However, I went into the Wood and sat down, and was particularly struck with a little oak tree, and the thoughts I had upon it I put into verse. Thus my day was spent, and I had scarcely any food to eat. I returned home that night, my wife not knowing where I had been, and blessed be God I have never since run away from preaching."

After this his mind was led to ponder the glorious mystery of the Holy Trinity, especially from the cry of the seraphims recorded by Isaiah: "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts," wherein he saw the distinct personality of the Holy Three in the one undivided essence. Also the eternal union of Christ with His church was sweetly opened up to him.

After a time the late Mr. William Cowper, of the Dicker, Sussex, came to supply occasionally at Tooting, who soon made

Mr. Clark's acquaintance, and asked him to go and preach at Ewell. Mr. Cowper said, "I know it is far north in a spiritual sense, as Bunyan would say, and there are but few people!" To this our friend acceded, as he felt he could not face many people at that time. So at the time appointed he went, and to his surprise he found a number of people there; for in consequence of the illness of good Mr. Trot, who was to have supplied at Epsom that day, the Epsom friends adjourned to Ewell. Our friend spoke from the words, "If the light which is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness." He showed first the nature of a false light, then of the true light, and its gracious effects in the soul. The word that day was greatly blessed to a Mr. Charlwood, who lived some few years after this, and died happy in the Lord, requesting that Mr. Clark might bury his mortal remains. This Mr. Charlwood was brother to Mr. Daniel Charlwood, a gracious man who died in Australia.

When first Mr. Clark commenced preaching, he had not a black coat by him, but through the kind providence of God a lady was led to speak to his wife about some clothes she had to give away that were her brother's, and when our friend went for them and the clothes were being put into his hands, the Lord dropped these words into his heart, "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." Thus, he says, in a most conspicuous manner, the Lord clothed him for years. "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord" (Ps. cvii. 43).

He had not been preaching long before he met with opposition from men, who, holding the truth in the letter, despised the operation of God's Spirit in the hearts of His people. For having no other resources than that which he had experimentally known, tasted, felt, and handled of the word of life, he was constrained to preach that, and this stirred up the enmity of some who were strangers to the Spirit's work within. He had about this time lent him by a friend, Huntington's "Arminian Skeleton," and one day he opened the book and read as follows: "I asked my blessed Interpreter what I should preach, and he said, Preach your own experience, which, when I had done, the bears began to growl, the swine began to snort, the serpents began to hiss, and the wolves began to howl." This was helpful to him amidst his many discouragements. But, being sadly perplexed, and not knowing what to do, or how to arrive at and fully know the Lord's will in this matter, he went up into his bedroom to pour out his heart before God and to tell Him how unfit he felt himself for the ministry, and asked the Lord to direct and allow him to open his Bible upon some portion of His Word that should convince him that preaching was not his

work ; instead of which, as God would have it, his lap was to fall upon Rev. x. 10, 11, "And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up ; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey : and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." This led him to believe that the Lord would maintain his lot, and although many tried to reproach him by raising evil reports concerning him, wherein if at any time he was left to his own spirit he did not perhaps show that discretion which should adorn the Gospel of Christ, still when others forsook him the Lord stood by him, and comforted him with these words, "They shall fight against thee ; but they shall not prevail against thee ; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee" (Jer. i. 19) ; upon receiving which he knelt down and wept at the Lord's feet, blessing His dear name for giving him this help, which he felt he should need for days to come.

(To be continued.)

WORDS OF CONSOLATION.

DEAR FRIEND,—Your sad tidings (for such they are to nature) duly reached me ; and willingly would I have granted your wish, in being present at the solemn time of interment, but, having a cold upon me, and the weather being so severe for the season, I dared not venture. How true it is that "In this world ye shall have tribulation ;" but oh, the mercy that we have a covenant God in Christ to go to in all our troubles, who hath graciously promised, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." We do not always, in the time of trouble, *perceive* His supporting hand ; and too often discontent, fretfulness, repining, hard thoughts of God, murmuring and rebelling, for a time almost prevail ; but we know not to what an awful degree those evils would prevail, nor how long they would continue, were it not for the strength a gracious God bestows to oppose and check them ; and He also causes us to discover and hate those evils, confess them, pray against them, be humbled under them, and to obtain a fresh experience of sin-pardoning mercy and sin-subduing grace. It is such a certain truth that the Apostle says : "We *know* that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." He is principally treating of the sufferings of God's people while in this present evil world. Losses, crosses, chastisements, temptations, and afflictions ; the plague of the heart, and the subtle, malicious, powerful efforts of Satan to harass, oppose, and distress, are the

principal troubles of a child of God ; but, when God displays His infinite wisdom, love, mercy, and power, we find ourselves real gainers. Our nature is so glued to the comforts of this life that they often hinder our longing for a better world, and deaden us to better things. God, in mercy, weans our hearts from them, and at times answers our requests to be purged from every idol by "terrible things in righteousness." But His covenant, which stands fast for ever, is, "I will not turn away from them to do them good ; but I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me." Most blessed words ! Most gracious engagement ! Oh, for precious faith to take the comfort, the strong consolation they afford !

May the Lord sanctify the affliction to you, and be "a present help in the day of trouble." He who "knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust," does not forbid natural sorrow, but admonishes that it be kept in due bounds. When accompanied with submission to His holy will, humility under His mighty hand, a justifying Him in all His dealings, and a committing our way to Him by humble prayer, it is then sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and produces "the peaceable fruits of righteousness." May the Lord abundantly make up the loss by His soul-enlightening, quickening, and comforting presence.

Yours affectionately,

Sunderland, April 17th, 1847.

SAMUEL TURNER.

If we desire to honour Christ, we must close our eyes to all that appears fair, goodly, and noble before the world ; nor must we be offended if we appear vile, contemptible, or ridiculous to the world ; let this suffice that we please God who is in heaven.—*Luther.*

TRIBULATION is a right school, and a useful exercise for flesh and blood. Our Lord God acts like a printer, who setteth the letters backwards ; we see and feel His setting to be right, but we shall see the print yonder in the life to come ; in the meantime we must have patience.—*Luther.*

LET those who trust the Lord be glad ;
 God bids them to rejoice ;
 None ever trusted in the Lord,
 But were Jehovah's choice.

Then you who would, but cannot trust—
 Who would, but cannot pray—
 Although your prayers are only groans,
 The Lord knows what you say.

DANIEL HERBERT.

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT.

BY THE LATE HENRY FOWLER.

"The sword of the Spirit which is the word of God."—EPHESIANS VI. 17.

THE sword is a weapon of war, to be used offensively and defensively ; but it must be a poor religion that requires the power of the sword to support it. Here Popery excels in transgression. What is that religion that men are compelled to embrace by the civil power ? Hypocrisy and nothing less. How can that be the free choice of a man, if the sword of power and the fear of punishment urge him to embrace religion ? Is not the man so terrified into religion rather a vassal and a slave than a volunteer ? Would any man in his senses call that man a *volunteer* who is dragged away from his home by a band of ruffians on board of a man-of-war ? Does he enlist or enter afterwards ? Yes, he has no choice but punishment or starvation. Satan took all mankind prisoners, but he cannot retain Christ's captives one moment longer than the ordained time.

In the history of David, the Amalekites fell upon Ziklag where David's family was, burned the place, and carried away the people captives. David and his men pursued the invaders, sword in hand, and *rescued all* as we read (1 Sam. xxx. 19). So our spiritual David rescues his captives from the tyranny of Satan and from the power of sin. David had a right to recover his own and so has Christ, and by the power of His sword His own captives are delivered from the hand of Him that is stronger than they. "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty ! with Thy glory and Thy majesty." With this weapon the Captain of our salvation who was made perfect through sufferings, combated Satan in the wilderness ; He pierced that crooked serpent to the quick, and He left him for a season, and we must use the same weapon to silence Satan's subtle reasonings and foul temptations. When devils rage, or when men persecute, we must use the Lord's sword, and say to them all "bring all your notions and reasonings, and try them by the Word of God, as it is to be understood ; let God's Word speak for itself." This was the course pursued by Calvin, Luther, Knox, and all the stern, unbending servants of God at the time of the glorious Reformation.

This plan is in a great measure laid aside in the present day ; and reasoning and speculating upon the Scriptures just to make them speak what men please, to support their empty notions, is the too common practice. Popery cannot bear the Word of God : that "sword of the Spirit" divides asunder all systems of religion that are established by human invention ; and such is Popery, Armenianism, Socinianism, and many other isms with

which the world abounds. The Roman Catholics are the most audacious corrupters of the Word of God, as their writings show. They pay more respect to the sense, or rather nonsense of their Church, their councils, their creeds, and their *cunning priests*, than they do to God's Holy Word. Seeing they cannot find their absurdities supported by the Scriptures, they, like the Pharisees of old, bring in and impose on the ignorant and credulous their idle dreams and foolish traditions, as if God, the author of the Scriptures, had forgotten to mention some things of vital importance to the souls of men. But the flaming sword of justice will pierce through the deceiver and the deceived, if grace prevent not. That flaming sword the Lord placed at the east of the Garden of Eden, which turneth every way to keep the way of the Tree of Life, may teach us that neither Adam, nor any of his posterity, could enter in by their own works, nor approach unto God unless His justice were satisfied. He that engaged His heart to approach unto God was His only Son; and the sword of justice pierced Him through when the Father said, "Awake, O sword, against My shepherd, against the man that is My fellow." He is God and man, and therefore a proper mediator for poor sinners. The sword of justice will destroy that sinner who presumes to go to God without this mediator. God will not receive any man that goes to Him in any other mediator's name. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men—the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. ii. 5), who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and "the express image of His person" (Heb. i. 3). Not the Virgin Mary, nor any saint must be sought unto, for that is idolatry, and a mockery to God; and He says, "Behold My servant, look unto Me, and be ye saved." To embrace any other doctrine is to dishonour God. Oh! how blind, how ignorant, how presumptuous are the Roman Catholics! They acknowledge Jesus Christ in words, but rob Him of His glory and honour, as do thousands called Protestants.

The saints on earth are allowed, are exhorted, are privileged to pray for each other, and to present all their petitions unto the Father in the name of Jesus, their Mediator and Intercessor; but no man taught of God would rob Christ of His glory by ascribing any power or influence to the saints either in heaven or earth.

We have no divine authority to believe that the saints in glory have any knowledge of what is passing on earth, and in the hearts of its inhabitants; that knowledge belongs to God only. When poor mortals call upon this saint or that saint in their trouble to help them, or when they call upon Jesus Christ to listen to the intercession of saints on their behalf, they might as well call upon

a stock or a stone, for they will obtain nothing for their pains, but be sent empty away. "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord" (Jer xvii. 5). This text is a two-edged sword in the hand of the Spirit, that cuts asunder every Agag, however fascinating he may appear; every antichristian hypothesis must fall before the power of the Spirit. When God's word, like a sword, enters into the sinner's heart, it lets out his malicious blood, and makes him cry like Peter's hearers, being pricked in their hearts, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Such was the power that attended his preaching at that time. When God commands His word to enter, it is full of power; it commands attention, and criticises a man's thoughts, divides a man from himself, from all his legal notions, from his fleshly forms of religion, in point of dependence, if he had any, and makes him feel that he is weak, poor, and helpless! Powerful convictions wrought by the Spirit are in due time generally attended with clear, spiritual, heart-comforting manifestations of God's love. The sinner under the cutting operations of God's two-edged sword may imagine he shall be cut in pieces and sent to hell as the just reward of his iniquities; but He that kills the sinner to all hope of life by his doings, means to give him a better life; for He says, "I kill and I make alive; I wound, and My hands make whole." Paul speaks of this life most sweetly: "I through the law am dead unto the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." The Christian is in a continual state of warfare, and he had need have his sword always at hand, like the builders of the wall round Jerusalem, because of fear in the night. The attacks Satan makes by his agents upon the outworks are not so much to be dreaded by the Christian as the desperate attacks he makes upon the inward works; he stirs rebellion in the camp, and sends forth a troop of distressing doubts and fears, carnal reasonings, and vile blasphemies; by which the poor tried soul is so perplexed that he is often driven to his wit's end. The stronghold of Satan is the infidelity of our hearts; and from this lurking place he often throws his black suggestions to fill our poor minds with dismay and horror. If the devil can make a poor sinner think that God has done nothing for him, he not only robs the sinner of his comfort, but God of His glory and praise. We must meet all the devil's oppositions and objections with God's firm promises, with Christ's fulness of grace and salvation; and when he says, we shall perish after all, we must say, No Satan, "It is Christ that died; yea, rather that is

risen again." The Sword of the Spirit in the hand of faith has done wonders; it has put to flight hosts of devils, banished thousands of distressing God-dishonouring fears, and enabled the poor sinner to shout victory while dying. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

Enemies in troops assemble,
And create a horrid noise;
Oft they make my soul to tremble,
Rob and strip me of my joys.

All is dark and sore distressing
If my Captain's out of sight;
All a curse and not a blessing,
All seems wrong and nothing right.

What a life of tribulation
Is the saved sinner's lot!
Tried he is in every station,
Yet the Lord forsakes him not.

Does thy enemy, believer,
Labour hard to make thee fall?
Call thee hypocrite, deceiver?
Louder on Thy Captain call.

Draw out thy sword when men and devils roar,
And mark the steps of them that went before.

WE are too often, and too much engaged in thinking about ourselves, poor worms as we are; and we believe so much of Jesus Christ, and no more, than as we see and apprehend He hath done so and so, and wrought so and so in our hearts. There is no believing in Christ in all this, indeed there is not. And whilst we go on this way, and all our thoughts are confined about ourselves and what we feel, and what we are in ourselves, we are all the time wholly overlooking Christ. At such times, the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ are subjects which our minds are not engaged on. No, at such seasons it is what I am in myself, what I see in myself. Is it not so? Why, my good friend, the question of importance is not what I and you are in any sense, but what Christ is. He is an all-sufficient Saviour, and nothing should keep us from Him; so far from it, everything we are in ourselves should lead us to Christ. We should renounce self for ever, and cleave to Jesus with full purpose of heart. It does us no service to know and feel what we are, any further than as we are constrained thereby to go with all we are and feel to Christ. What are we at this moment? Poor sinful dust and ashes. And what is there in Christ that most exactly suits us? His exceeding grace and mercy.—*Eyles Pierce's Letters.*

THERE IS FORGIVENESS.

THERE is forgiveness ! O glorious sound !
 Plenteous redemption with Jesus is found,
 Mercy for rebels, compassion divine :
 There is forgiveness—oh, say, is it mine ?
 There is forgiveness ! His wonderful love
 Brought the Redeemer from mansions above,
 Willing His life for His foes to resign :
 There is forgiveness—but can it be mine ?
 There is forgiveness ! a way is made plain ;
 Mercy, through Jesus, for ever shall reign ;
 Just and a Saviour our God is revealed ;
 Pardon and life to His children are sealed.
 There is forgiveness ! O message of peace !
 Health to the sick, to the captive release :
 Though to its fulness I dare not aspire,
 Wilt Thou not cherish the feeble desire ?
 There is forgiveness ! I see it afar ;
 Hope faintly beams like a glimmering star :
 When shall the day-spring more brightly arise ?
 When shall the darkness be chased from the skies ?
 There is forgiveness ! but this my complaint—
 Hope long deferred makes me heart-sick and faint ;
 Wearied with waiting, I feebly pursue,
 Yet would I pray Thee my strength to renew.
 Earnestly, Lord, would I covet to know
 That sweet forgiveness which Thou dost bestow ;
 Though at a distance its glories I see,
 Thanks would I render that mercy is free.
 For the least hope in that mercy I'd raise
 Gratefully, Saviour, my tribute of praise ;
 Yet I more fully its depths would explore,
 So, may I fear Thee and love Thee the more ! VERA.

AT JESUS' FEET.

A MINISTER one day attended the dying bed of a young female, who thus addressed him : " I have little," said she, " to relate as to my experience. I have been much tried and tempted, but this is my sheet anchor. He has said, ' Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.' I know I seek to come to Him, and I expect that He will be as good as His word. Poor and unworthy as I am, He will not trifle with me. It would be beneath His greatness ; I am at His feet. As you have often said—

" 'Tis joy to me, my All in all,
 At Thy dear feet to lie ;
 Thou wilt not let me lower fall,
 And none can higher fly.' "

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XIV.

DEAR FRIEND,—I was pleased to receive a letter from you, and I am very pleased to find that your mind is exercised about your state, and that you desire to know the things of God for yourself. This is all important, for it will not avail us in a dying hour to know that we have many near and dear friends who are taught of God and who have a right religion. We must know it for ourselves, since none of us “can redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.” It is not only to believe in the things of God, but so to believe them as to *receive* them by faith in the heart; and this faith works by love, which is the root of all real or true religion, and love in the heart to God is manifest by loving the people of God, and is an evidence of life: “We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren;” and, again, the Lord says, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.” Perhaps you will say, “I know it reads thus in the Bible, but I want to know if I am the character.” If so, that is a good desire. May the Lord enable you, like Hannah, to go to Him till you are satisfied concerning that matter. Read that hymn commencing, “Ye lambs of Christ’s fold,” &c. I am not surprised that you should (if the life of God is put into your soul, as I hope it is) be tried lest you may have merely learned your religion by being brought up with godly parents, and, as it were, cradled in the letter of the truth; but remember, the carnal heart cannot love the things of God, nor desire earnestly to know them, or the Scriptures would not be true. You may love your parents as kind friends, and you may love the people of God, among whom you have been brought up, as friends, but you cannot by nature love them for the truth’s sake, nor esteem them as the excellent of the earth, so as to desire to be like them. These things are too high for nature; they are the work of the Spirit of Christ.

I shall be glad at any time to hear from you, and would willingly be of any service to you; but do not look to me only as a poor frail instrument, who can be of no use to you unless the Lord makes me so. The Lord help you to look in faith unto Jesus, who alone can save, and cry with the Psalmist, “Let my sentence come forth from Thy presence.”

From yours in Christian love, E. P.

IN hell there will not be a saint amongst those that are terrified; and in heaven there will not be a sinner amongst those that are glorified.—*Dr. Goodwin.*

THE SOWER.

NOTES OF A SERMON,

PREACHED AT SOUTHBOROUGH, ON FRIDAY EVENING,
MAY 9TH, 1873, BY MR. ASHDOWN.

"For the Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody."—ISAIAH li. 3.

THE Holy Ghost, dear friends, uses various figures that we are familiar with, to set forth His gracious work in sinners' hearts. Remember, there is nothing that will stand the great judgment day but what God works in us; everything of natural teaching withers in the dying hour, and all our carnal building for eternity is vain. Therefore the Lord says: "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Psa. cxxxvii. 1). But every particle of the work of the Holy Ghost in a sinner's heart will stand every trial and trouble, and live to the praise of a Triune Jehovah, and to the salvation of that sinner that has it. It is not the quantity of our religion, but the truthfulness of it; therefore we must consider how the Lord works, because He says, "The Lord shall comfort Zion." Zion sets forth the Church of the living God, sought out and gathered to His feet by separating grace, made known by the fear of God, and a godly life, walk, and conversation; therefore it is written: "Come out from among them," that is, from among the ungodly, "and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing" (some don't care to look at it in that way), "and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters." Only of such as are saved from iniquity is it said, they are "children that will not lie: so He was their Saviour" (Isa. lxiii. 8). There you see the power and love of God in a sinner's heart has a saving effect; for by nature we are all alike in the world till God's grace brings us out. When thus brought out, a man becomes a citizen of Zion, and will need the comforting influences of the Spirit which the Lord has promised; for He says "I will send you another Comforter. . . even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (John xiv. 16-18). For, as Job says of man, so it is with the Christian after regeneration; he "is born to trouble

as the sparks fly upwards;" for, "in the world ye shall have tribulation," but in the Lord Jesus peace (John xvi. 33). Then, seeing they are "born to trouble," what a mercy God has said He will comfort them. "The Lord shall comfort Zion." There is room for comfort, because she is full of troubles, hence it is said: "O, thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee" (Isa. liv. 11-14). The Lord makes room in a sinner's heart for His mercy; he by nature has nothing but death, then this makes room for life; it is written: "I give unto my sheep eternal life" (John x. 28). Thus a sinner, once regenerated, can never finally fall; it is impossible; for

"Whom once He loves He never leaves,
But loves him to the end."

And, therefore, this Zion, mark you, is His delight; for He says: "My delight is in her." But these citizens, which the Lord will comfort, will get into a wilderness, and therefore there is a promise for them in every state which they may come into.

When the Lord, by His grace, separates a sinner from this world, it is often such a gradual work, that he does not know what it is; but I will tell you what you will find, if you are the subject of it. You will find an uneasiness, and sometimes the world seems stamped with vanity, and never gives what it promises; there is a vacuum in your heart which the world can never fill; God has made that vacuum if you have it, and nothing but God's love and mercy will fill it up. But how shall I know I have it? You may have comforts in your husband, in your wife, in your family, or in your business. Things may go on smoothly; and yet, at times, in the silent watches of the night, there will be a disquietude, and the soul will not find rest, for there is a little spot within which the world cannot touch. Now such a sinner not being comfortable in his feelings, longs for some one to tell him what is the matter: "If there be an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness" (Job xxxiii. 23), that is God's uprightness; how God can be just and yet justify sinners, such as he feels himself to be, he has an anxious inquiry in his heart respecting this, and it is written: "They shall ask their way to Zion, with their faces thitherward"

(Jer. l. 5). Every soul which has that little secret mark is taught of God the Holy Ghost. The Lord will mark His servants in their forehead. Thus the Lord has marked the soul of every elect vessel of mercy with a living desire, which nothing can satisfy but God's mercy in Christ, and if you have it, you are a blessed soul, though you may have much to contend with; but when your affections and desires move after God, your body moves, and by and by you come to the house of God; and more than that, your soul moves in desires after mercy, and by and by your body moves into a secret corner, to pour out your heart to the Lord for mercy. As Mr. Hart says—

“Mercy is welcome news indeed,
To those who guilty stand;
Wretches who feel what help they need,
Will bless the helping hand.”

Some professors think they shall push in among a crowd and get to heaven; they think because a great many go *they shall*. But it is written, that the “flocks shall again pass under the hands of Him that telleth them” (Jer. xxxiii. 13), “and He shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats: And the King shall say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father” (Matt. xxv. 32-34). Now, the soul who has the Lord's mark will never die; but you will feel you are dead when in a wilderness state. I have sometimes felt to be twice dead, and have numbers of times feared my religion was wrong altogether, and have cried to God to give me a right religion; and, do you know, God has by a touch revived His work in my poor soul; then I knew it was from the Lord, and could bless and praise His holy name, for His goodness and mercy to unworthy me. It is written: “They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon” (Hos. xiv. 7). If God's people had no death, they would want no reviving. Paul says: “We had the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, who raiseth the dead;” they shall grow as the vine. In the winter the vine looks very dry and dead:

“Though bleak winds the boughs deface,
The rooted stock will still remain;
Leaves may languish, fruit decrease,
But more shall grow again;”

but let the Sun of Righteousness arise, with healing beneath His wings, and let the soft breezes from the celestial mountains, or the comforting influence of the Holy Ghost come, then we find the buddings of hope, and living desires again spring forth; but look at a poor sinner when God hides His face, what a poor

forlorn mortal—no buddings of hope or bloom, or fruit of peace; all seems gone, and he, as Mr. Hart says—

“ To his own sad place returns,
His wretched state to feel.”

But let the Lord Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, come and shine upon that soul, and hope begins to spring up directly; and if His presence is enjoyed long, we shall find the poor soul praising and blessing God. And it is written: “Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God” (Psa. l. 23). Thus David says of the wicked: “Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.”

“ My soul through many changes goes,
His love no variation knows.”

“Yea, He loved the people; all His saints are in Thy hand, they sat down at His feet. Every one shall receive of Thy Word;” and one said, when he had received it: “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart” (Jer. xv. 16).

This City was chosen in God’s dear Son, set apart in the counsels of eternity, and is gathered by the Holy Ghost in regeneration. When the soul has known the condemning power of the law, then he seeks with sighs and groans, and the Lord answers: “Look unto me,” and hope begins to spring up, with “Who can tell, it may be the Lord will have mercy.” I well remember the times when the Lord has allured my soul—sometimes in reading, sometimes in prayer, my soul had this little hope: “Who can tell, it may be I shall know His Name.” O what vehement desires such an one will feel; these are the allurings of the Holy Spirit, drawing the soul unto Jesus and into the realities of vital godliness.

“For the Lord shall comfort Zion, He shall comfort all her waste places;” when the poor sinner gets this, then prayer is in season, and the house of God is in season. Did you ever know the time when you sought a secret place to pour out your heart to the Lord, and had a few hours when prayer was so seasonable, and you longed to get alone to pray? Having a little hope, you wanted a greater measure of it; the soul that is brought here sometimes hopes and trusts soon to know and see the Lord; but by and by the Lord removes or withholds His influence, the night comes on, and the beasts of the forest come forth.

The hypocrite never has the plague of the heart; but if you feel this plague and then a famine added to it, it will break down all your self-confidence and fleshly wisdom. There is at such a

time poverty itself stamped upon the soul, and "Blessed are the poor in spirit : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. v. 3). And this is the way "the Lord trieth the righteous;" but He "is angry with the wicked every day." Have you had your religion tried? and did you ever know the day when you had nothing but nothingness, sin and misery in your soul?

"He will comfort all her waste places." There are the waste places where nothing grows, they are trodden down and no one takes any account of them; just so the poor sinner's heart—there is the foot of lust which treads it down, the foot of pride, of infidelity and carnality, and the feet of every foul beast; as Mr. Hart says—

"Swarms of ill thoughts their bane diffuse,
Proud, envious, false, unclean,
And every ransacked corner shows
Some unsuspected sin
Our staggering faith gives way to doubt,
Our courage yields to fear;
Shock'd at the sight, we straight cry out
'Can ever God dwell here?'"

"No!" says carnal reason, "God's people are holy, and you are a guilty sinner;" this is a waste place, but "He will comfort all her waste places." Now, the question arises, how can He do it? dear Hart says—

"When Jesus with His mighty love,
Visits my troubled breast,
My doubts subside, my fears remove,
And I'm completely blest;"

and the Lord says, "I will restore comforts unto him," and the soul knows in a moment when the Lord touches him with the finger of His power; it may be under a sermon, or in the night when he has been agonizing and crying, "Lord don't let me be deceived, save my soul;" the poor soul is in earnest, he wants these waste places comforted; now the Lord comes and touches the soul, and directly God comes, it is within, as when the Lord touched the blind man, He opened his eyes—to see what? "I see men as trees walking,"—he sees in the covenant of grace a glimmering of hope for his soul, and in proportion to the measure of hope thus revealed, the soul is comforted. These waste places are different to the wilderness; you who have been any time in the pathway, if you look into your heart, you will find you have had many waste places. Sometimes a poor soul gets into self. Hart says—

"Save us from the rocks and shelves,
Save us chiefly from ourselves."

There is nothing but misery for a poor sinner while getting into

self, for "He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption." How? Why, pride works and puffs up! then there is no putting forth a cry of humility to God, but His power pulls the sinner down, and by and by the Lord will bring the poor soul into trouble, and he will not have in his heart, according to his feeling, a grain of faith, but—

" True faith's the life of God,
Deep in the heart it lies."

If you look at the bottom of your heart, what desponding feelings arise; sometimes you are too far off to pray, and the soul groans to God; and, mark, it is written of the Lord and Master of this living city, that He spent whole nights in prayer and fasting, and was heard in that He feared. This poor soul becomes halt, and is not strong like others; he will not take things as he has done, but will be ready to prove all things, and begins to live, not on his religion, but on Christ, and this is the secret of vital godliness. Now, then, see the wisdom of God in teaching him these painful lessons; he begins to hang upon the Lord Jesus for everything; he feels to be in himself, as dear Hart says—

" Needy and naked, and unclean,
Empty of good and full of ill,
A lifeless lump of loathsome sin,
Without the power to act or will."

Yet, as he turns his eyes upwards toward the dear Redeemer, he says—

" Hangs my helpless soul on Thee."

"And He will make her wilderness like Eden." A wilderness is a trackless desert, no grain sown, a spot of uncultivated land, where nothing grows but briars and thorns, and where serpents and reptiles live. Is this the experience of the children of God? Yes! And does every soul have to travel here? Yes! for "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness?" (S. of Solomon viii. 5). Therefore, we say, that every soul that travels to heaven must go through the wilderness; the way to the promised land was through the wilderness and Jordan. All the religion of the children of God is in the power of God; this is how you may know whether you are taught of God; for all man's religion may be managed by himself; but if your religion is of God, you may go through forms, but you want the power, and when you feel it working in your heart, it spontaneously goes up to God; and you will be anxious that you may not quench His Spirit, for—

" So gentle sometimes is the flame,
That if we take not heed,
We may unkindly quench the same,
We may, my friends, indeed."

But if you quench it you cannot revive it; it is God's work and free grace gift, and every elect vessel of mercy is an heir to it.

“Not for good deeds, good tempers, or frames,
From grace it proceeds, and all is the Lamb's.”

Thanks to His Holy Name, He alone is worthy to be praised, “and He will make her wilderness like Eden.” Sometimes a poor soul thinks he has a little wisdom, but when he is brought into the midst of affliction, thorns and briars surrounding him, and there seems no way for his soul to pass—

“From sinner and from saint,
He meets with many a blow,
His own bad heart creates him smart
Which only God can know;”

And thus one cries out and says, “Lord, I am full of confusion; therefore see Thou mine affliction, for it increaseth” (Job x. 15, 16). What does the Lord say? “For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion” (Isa. lxi. 7). “And He will make her wilderness like Eden.” The soul travelling here suffers hunger; he may sit under sermons, but nothing comes where he is, and though the promise meets his eye, it will not meet his case. “Thus saith the Lord; behold I, even I, will both search my sheep and seek them out.” Do you ever want God to seek you? He says: “As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day” (Ezek. xxxiv. 12). If never scattered, you will not want the Lord to seek you; it is vain to seek that which has never been lost. “What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost?” What does that mean? The mountains of sin and unbelief, where the soul is lost, and thinks all is wrong; but God sends His dear Son to find this soul, and He puts it on His shoulder, and He rejoiceth more over this sheep which was lost, than over the ninety and nine which went not astray. How wondrous are the works of God! “The father fell on the prodigal's neck and kissed him.”

“Oh to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be.”

“He will make her wilderness like Eden;” Eden was that garden which God planted and put Adam in, and therefore it is perfection. How shall this wilderness become perfection? By the Lord Jesus Christ! His finished work, blood and righteousness, being revealed to the soul by the Holy Ghost. “A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed;” no mortal hand can touch it. Just so with your soul; the little spark

of religion you have is all the Lord's, and you will begin to give Him all the glory. Blessed soul who travels in these paths.

"And her desert like the garden of the Lord." The desert seems the worst of these places that are on the high road to the heavenly country. What, after having tasted of the love, blood, and righteousness of the dear Redeemer, after being justified by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, then shall we come into a desert? Yes—

"When his pardon is signed, and his peace is procured,
From that moment the conflict begins."

Now the poor soul comes from the rich garden into the desert, and it is a sandy desert where nothing grows. "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." The poor soul has been milking out, and has been delighted with the abundance of Zion's glory; his heart has been glad in the Lord; he has been ready to say: "Come hither all ye who fear God, and I will tell you what He hath done for my soul." Now his weaning time comes; the breast is put up, there is nothing that feeds the soul. Some travel long here, after having been brought into the liberty of the Gospel; yes, that distinguishes them from the nominal professor, who never had humility in his soul; but this poor sinner says: "Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness." The pleasure of the Lord does not seem to come here, but the poor child of God is emptied from vessel to vessel. There is nothing good grows here in the desert, and the poor soul is as if perished in the midst of the sands of the desert; he cannot see his way, neither can any tell him how long. "And her desert like the garden of the Lord." How does the Lord do it? "After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise;" now comes the sealing time. The poor sinner's heart is "melted because of trouble;" but not at first, the metal is not melted the moment it is put into the furnace; but when the soul is really melted, there is no way open, and he is completely broken down; thus he falls upon this living stone, which the Lord has laid in Zion, and is broken, and the Lord says: "He will bind up that which is broken;" thus He stamps His heavenly image upon that soul—which is humility and love. From this time that poor sinner has something in his heart he will never give up; he may have sore trials, but at the worst moments he has something he will never give up, never will he be as he has been; he becomes a man, not tossed about, but established in the truth through faith in Christ Jesus. And what does he say when in trouble? "Remember Thy word unto Thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope," and "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

Then, again, with David he will say unto the Lord, "Do as Thou hast said." He begins to believe in God in a different way; he handles the promises by faith, and the eye of faith looks to the Lord Jesus Christ, and the poor soul gets quietness and peace; consequently it is said, "Joy and gladness shall be found therein; thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." As Hart says—

" Bless the Lord my soul, and raise
 A glad and grateful song,
 To my dear Redeemer's praise,
 For I to Him belong.
 He my goodness, strength, and God,
 In whom I live, and move and am,
 Paid my ransom with His blood;
 My portion is the Lamb."

That is the effect of sealing. The Lord often leads the soul that has had this sealing into great difficulties, where he says, how shall I get through? and the poor soul is obliged to hang upon the God of Israel to bring him through. Then the question comes: Will the Lord come to deliver? which tries the soul to the centre; but it is said: "He hath delivered, He doth deliver, in whom we trust that He will yet deliver." Thus, his only hope is in the Son of God. And all this is to make us sick of self, and fond of Him. Vital godliness is not a great outside show; but I hope many of you have it, and I pray that others may be favoured with this free grace gift.

THE FEET OF JESUS.

IF there is one place more suitable than another for a sinner, surely it is the feet of Jesus; and it is the place, too, above all others, the sinner loves. When Lazarus was dead, and his sisters came to Jesus, though they both said the same words (John xi. 21, 32), yet Jesus seemed more affected by Mary's coming, for "He groaned in spirit."

Would this be because she fell down at His feet? Does not Jesus love to see the sinner humbling himself before Him? And does not this sight move His compassionate heart?

It would seem from Scripture that this position (at the feet) showed a teachable spirit. Paul sat at the feet of Gamaliel, and was taught according to the law of the fathers (Acts xxii. 3). And the man out of whom many devils were cast, was found sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind (Luke viii. 35). And would not his "right mind" be, that he felt he was a sinner, and Jesus the Saviour, and so wanted to learn of Him? Though the Pharisees murmured because Jesus received and condescended to eat with sinners, we can bless Him for it, and that He came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

We also read that Mary sat at Jesus' feet to hear His word (Luke x. 39). This "sitting at the feet of Jesus" is a blessed posture! We, too, love to get to the feet of Jesus, like the woman did who was a sinner, and wash His feet with tears and wipe them with the hairs of our head and kiss them (Luke vii. 38). Yes, kiss those dear feet, that once were tired and weary whilst traversing this lower world, and were weary for us. Kiss those dear feet that brought glad tidings of God's grace to sinners, and brought them even to us. Kiss those dear feet that often ascended some lonely mountain to pray, and He prayed for us. Kiss those dear feet, that from the supper-table with His disciples, went to the sacred garden of Gethsemane, where He sweat great drops of blood for sinners, and He went there for us. Kiss those dear feet, that tired and worn, carried Him from the garden to the judgment hall, and from thence to Calvary, and this for poor sinners; yea, for us. Kiss those dear feet, that were pierced with hard thick nails, and from whence rich blood did flow for sinners, even for us. Kiss those dear feet, that, after His resurrection, brought peace to His poor disciples, and brought it also to us. And again, kiss those dear, blessed feet, that now are exempt from all weariness and toil, and only waiting for the ungodly world to become His footstool, when His own dear elect are gathered to Himself.

Surely, when admitted into His sacred presence, we shall cast our crowns at His dear, His lovely, His precious feet, and crown Him "Lord of all," and

While here, we crave a Mary's place,
To wash our Saviour's feet, though base,
With tears of love, and grief :
Also, we'd kiss those precious feet,
Whilst sitting in that humble seat,
So fit, for sinner's chief.

When Moses, the man of God, was speaking of God's majesty, he says: "Yea, He loved the people: all His saints are in Thy hand: and they sat down at Thy feet; every one shall receive of Thy words" (Deut. xxxiii. 3). And is it not when we see most of God's glory, beauty, and love, that we creep to His feet? Is it not His holiness and majesty that discovers our nothingness, and shows us more than ever that the feet of Jesus is the most becoming place for a sinner?

After Jesus had finished His parable about those who were bidden to a wedding not taking the highest but lowest place, in Luke xiv. 7-10, he adds, "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Oh! that we had more of this true humility! for if, through grace, we love to get to the feet of Jesus now, we shall surely be

exalted to sit at His feet in heaven, when faith will give place to sight.

When a kind parent gathers his children round him, the elder ones are on either side, but the little one gets at his feet; and though it is the most humble position, surely there is this advantage, he can look up and get a fuller view of his father's face. Oh! that we might have more of the disposition, love, confidence, and affection of a child, and of a little child, too, who claims his seat at the feet of his parent, because he is the least. Jesus seemed to approve of Mary's sitting at His feet, for He said, "One thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke x. 42). Dear Lord Jesus, favour us often to get to Thy feet now, and, if it please Thee, hasten the time when we shall sit at Thy feet in glory, and "see Thee as Thou art, and love Thee as we ought."

Then, when admitted to Thy sight,
We'll gaze on Thee with sweet delight,
And say, whilst bowing at Thy feet,
"Our vict'r'y, through Thee is complete."

A READER.

GOD'S FAVOUR.

My Jesus is faithful and true,
His Word is as firm as His throne;
His favour descends as the dew,
Refreshing, reviving His own.
Again and again it distills
With gentleness, sweetness, and power;
It comes, yes, it comes as He wills,
The moment, the day, and the hour.
His favour's compared to the dew,
More plentifully may it descend
Until I go upward to view,
My own Best Beloved and Friend.
But oh, whence is this unto me,
That I should find grace in His eyes?
I'm sure 'tis both sovereign and free,
From depths of His love it must rise.
More grateful for favours so great,
Dear Father of mercies I'd be;
Still lean on *Thee only*, to wait
Until I Thy glory shall see.
My heart, in return for Thy love,
Oh, take it and keep it, 'tis *Thine!*
My life and my treasure's above,
For Christ my Redeemer is mine.

A. H.

P 2

OUR MARTYRED FOREFATHERS.

(Concluded.)

WE have only to say that the theology of the English Reformation was decidedly Calvinistic, when it will be at once perceived that only a very small section of nominal Christianity looks upon that term with other feelings than those of abhorrence. Neither do we like the term Calvinism when applied to the Reformation, because it is undoubtedly a misnomer to designate truths that are as ancient as Christianity itself, by the name of a man who lived in the sixteenth century. But as we have no better word, and as it is the historical appellation given to the discriminating doctrines of the Gospel of the grace of God, we use the term in order to make our meaning clear. But where is Calvinism to-day? Where is the necessity of an experimental religion enjoined? Calvinism is now a term of reproach, and the idea of an experimental religion is generally ridiculed. It was for no mere theory of Calvinism that the martyrs died, but, on the contrary, they suffered for a religion that has its seat in the heart and is dependent on the sovereign grace of God for its life and its triumph. But these divine truths are unpopular, and both their teachers and hearers are few. But their unpopularity is an evidence of their veracity; and although they find no favour with the magnates of the earth, yet we feel assured that there are hundreds of persons who would sooner walk to the stake, like their ancestors in the days of Mary, than part with an iota of that gem of divine truth for all the world calls "good and great." Yes, there is a company of poor sinners on our island who would be cast into filthy dungeons and be chained to the burning stake, rather than deny the Father who chose them, the Son who died for them, and the Holy Ghost who instructs them.

Before, however, we bring this series of papers to a finish, a few words concerning the present position of Popery in England may not be out of place. There is a very common notion abroad that the Romanism of to-day is very different to the Romanism of the sixteenth century. Many persons talk of this system as one that has undergone some mysterious change, that has materially modified its intolerance and improved its doctrines. But we have not yet discovered that salutary change. To-day Rome teaches Papal supremacy, transubstantiation, auricular confession, the worship of saints and images, and other doctrines that were embodied in her creed in the days of Mary. To this list, however, have been added the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and the decree of Papal Infallibility, and who will dare to assert, with his Bible in his hand, these late additions have brought the

Church of Rome nearer to the truths of the Scripture. We, however, maintain that the Romanism of Pope Leo XIII. is more unscriptural, more idolatrous, and more blasphemous than the Romanism of Pope Pius V. But some persons say that it is more tolerant, and, on that account, request us to forget all the history of those persecutions in which Rome has played the principal part. Let Foxe's "Book of Martyrs," say they, moulder on the library-shelf. But what proof have we that Popery has changed? What page of history records the fact? We know that councils have been summoned and that cardinals and bishops have assembled for the express purpose of devising means for the persecution of Protestants, but where and when did a council of Romish dignitaries assemble to declare a more tolerant policy? Not only so, but during the present century a very important manifesto has been issued by the Papacy, in which we find a declaration against all freedom, civil and religious. In the Papal syllabus of 1864, liberty of conscience, liberty of worship, and the liberty of the press, were loudly condemned and denounced; and it was distinctly asserted that in Papal countries no religion but that of Rome is to be tolerated. Where then is the proof that the Papacy has relinquished its arrogant claims and adopted more charitable sentiments? But, some will assert, Rome is not now persecuting Protestants. Where, they triumphantly ask, is that system now erecting stakes and burning martyrs? It is true that religious persecution is not carried on to any considerable extent by the Church of Rome, but then the reason is not hard to discover. To-day Protestantism is too powerful, and exercises too vast an influence even in the territory of Popery to allow men to be burnt to death on account of their religion. Rome is still the inveterate enemy of Truth and Liberty; but it is a *chained* enemy. Hence the liberty, the prosperity, and the progress, enjoyed by this and other nations is not due to a change in the principles of Rome, but to a curtailment of its power, caused by the establishment of Protestantism in a large portion of its old dominions. "During the last three centuries," says Lord Macaulay, "to stunt the growth of the human mind has been her (the Church of Rome's) chief object. Throughout Christendom, whatever advance has been made in knowledge, in freedom, in wealth, and in the arts of life, has been made in spite of her, and has everywhere been in inverse proportion to her power. The loveliest and most fertile provinces of Europe have, under her rule, been sunk in poverty, in political servitude, and in intellectual torpor, while Protestant countries, once proverbial for sterility and barbarism, have been turned by skill and industry into gardens, and can boast of a long list of heroes and statesmen, philosophers and poets." Until, therefore, it can be proved that Rome

has laid aside these arrogant claims to universal supremacy, until she renounces these erroneous and blasphemous doctrines embodied in the creed of Pope Pius IV., until she declares with unmistakable clearness to the world that a free and open Bible and the right of private judgment are liberties to be enjoyed by all, it is impossible for us to look more favourably on that system, nor can we forget its sanguinary history as written by the honest and industrious John Foxe.

This unscriptural and intolerant system, however, has obtained a firm footing in our land. Its priests, its chapels, its monasteries, and its nunneries have considerably increased; and, owing to the many legislative concessions that have been made by both of our political parties, Rome occupies a position in Great Britain to-day that she has not occupied since the days of James II. Her agents are busy on all sides and in all classes of society, plotting and scheming for the supremacy of that system in our country. The change of feeling towards Rome, to which we have already alluded, has accelerated its progress. Protestants, who are unworthy of the name, assist their greatest enemy to accomplish its object. May the Lord preserve us from such folly! Let it be clearly understood that we cannot—we dare not—with our open Bibles before us, and the warnings of history ringing in our ears, assist in a work that is dishonourable to God, opposed to His Holy Word, and detrimental to the best interests of our nation.

One thought more, and then we conclude. In spite of the plots and conspiracies, the tortures and persecutions of centuries, Bible Christianity still lives. The greatest potentates of the earth have unsheathed their swords to check its progress; fleets and armies have been arrayed against its unarmed followers; anathemas have been hurled against it by Popes and councils; its disciples have been tortured by the most cruel instruments human ingenuity could devise; its confessors, without number, have been put to death by fire and by sword; but Bible Christianity still lives, not only in the Scriptures, but in the hearts of all true believers. And it is this Christianity, call it Protestantism, Calvinism, or what name you please, that we desire to maintain and defend. For new fangled ideas of religion or for plausible theories we have no sympathy; upon forms and ceremonies we set no value; but for the pure Word of God, for the unadulterated doctrines of the Gospel, we wish to contend. That Truth—God's eternal and immutable Truth—which has withstood the tempests of ages and the wrath of centuries, is the only truth that will eventually reign over the earth. Although its principles may be unpopular and distasteful to the natural man, yet we desire to take our stand upon its hated truths in face of all opposition. We desire to remain in the "old paths," and stand by the side

of the apostles and early Christians, the martyrs and the Puritans, for the maintenance of the pure doctrines of the Gospel. May the Lord instruct and strengthen us to fight wisely and manfully for His Truth against its many malicious foes! Let us fight under the banner of the Gospel; that banner that has floated in the thick of many a stubborn battle, that is deeply stained with the blood of the martyrs, and that has these inscriptions indelibly written upon its folds: "Salvation by grace," "Justification by faith," "Sanctification by the Holy Spirit," and "Eternal union with Christ;" and may the Almighty give us a spirit of courage and faithfulness to withstand the craft and malice of the world, remembering the gracious words of God by the prophet Isaiah: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord." J.C.

[In concluding the regular series of valuable papers on the above important subject, we must express our gratitude to the friend who has so ably performed the task, and also say that we believe our readers have highly appreciated them as they have appeared from month to month. May the Lord cause the seed thus sown to bear fruit in the stirring up of the hearts of His saints to pray, watch, and contend against our national foe.—ED].

THE LORD'S CARE FOR THE POOR WHO TRUST IN HIM.

THE following anecdote was had by the writer, partly from a friend, and partly from the person's own mouth who was the subject of it.

A poor, but God-fearing man, whose name was John Hickling, of Brede, near Ashby-de-la-Zouch, was, on the 10th of September 1806, in great distress on account of his owing a few shillings, which he knew not how he should be able to pay. His business for some time had been to go with an ass to fetch coals from the pit, and the person to whom he owed the money requested that he would bring him a load of coals, perhaps by way of payment, but that is not certain. John, however, wished it to be so, but had no money wherewith to purchase the coals, nevertheless he went to the pit, and on his return thought what must I do to pay what I owe? A few shillings would set me straight, but I know of no means by which I can obtain them. Immediately, said he, these words darted into my mind, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." He was so much affected by them that he kneeled down and

prayed on the road, and thought he would not be anxiously careful, but hope that the Lord would by some means enable him to pay what he owed; and so it was, for as he went on his way, singing part of a hymn, a gentleman passed him a little way and then stood still and beckoned him to come forward. The gentleman said, "You seem poorly, old friend," and then gave him three shillings and went forward a little farther, then stopped again and gave him four shillings and sixpence more. The poor man was for some time lost in astonishment, and filled with gratitude to God and his benefactor. After he had recovered himself a little, he went and told his wife, and they both kneeled down to praise God, who had thus provided him with the means to pay what he owed and a few shillings to spare. And the good man felt a great desire to live to God more than ever he had done before. From hence we may learn that the poor are not forgotten of the Lord, and by such interpositions of divine providence they may be encouraged to put their trust in Him whose watchful care is over them, and who although He try them, yet in the end will not fail to provide for them.

PHILOMELA.

AMONG the many to whom the ministry of Mr. Huntington was made a blessing, not the least was Mrs. Hooper, formerly of Lewes, who afterwards corresponded with him for some years, and from the pleasure he felt in reading her letters he called her "Philomela," which signifies a nightingale. About that period there was a minister of the Gospel (Mr. S. Turner) residing at Sunderland, who had never seen nor heard one of those sweet singing-birds which warble so delightfully during the summer nights in Sussex; and when once on a visit in Lewes, taking advantage of the above name given to Mrs. Hooper, he penned, to a friend in London, the following lines, which may perhaps be interesting to some of our young readers.

BELOVED FRIEND, — Since I've at Lewes been,
 What I have often wish'd to see, I've seen.
 On Sabbath afternoon, 'bout half-past four,
 I heard a rustling at the vestry door;
 Which, when I open'd, to my great surprise,
 A nightingale appear'd before mine eyes.
 The tamèd creature did not yield to fear,
 But enter'd in and perch'd upon a chair;
 Low were its notes at first, but soon did raise
 Melodiously to sound Jehovah's praise.
 My soul delighted, felt an union sweet,
 And hop'd ere long we should together meet

In that blest country where eternal spring
 Makes all the birds of Paradise to sing
 The endless praises of their God and King.
 The great Elijah was by ravens fed,
 Who brought him day by day both flesh and bread ;
 But by a nightingale, though strange to utter,
 Coffee was brought to me with bread and butter.
 I ate and drank, and bless'd our gracious Lord,
 And then went forth to preach His holy Word.

E.

THE state of the Church of Christ is very low, truth is very little known, less beloved and received than is commonly apprehended ; anything and everything seems to go down except the truth as it is in Jesus. This, however, increases an estimation for all those who receive the truth, profess the truth, and abide in the same. I love you in the Lord ; I wish you good and increasing knowledge of the Lord ; I have your spiritual welfare at heart ; therefore I cannot express myself beyond exciting your remembrance of the Lord in all His truths and ordinances. Paul saith, "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free." Believe me, errors of various sorts abound and are spreading. Notions and opinions are more the religion of the people throughout the land at the present, than is conceived of. Therefore, I can assure you, such are most truly blessed who lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth most easily beset them, and who with faith and patience run the race set before them, looking unto Jesus. It is a great honour to live in such times as the present, when sin is rampant, and errors and heresies of all sorts abound, because the grace of God in preserving the feet of His saints, in keeping them alive to Christ, and preserving them from making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, is the more clearly evidenced. Nothing is a greater preservative from error of all sorts than a sound judgment, and right gospel knowledge of the truths of the everlasting Gospel. It is an excellent saying of the Apostle to his son Timothy, "God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim. i. 7). The mind cannot be sound without a true and gospel apprehension of divine truth. The written Word is the only true and right medium from whence truth can be rightly received. We are sure to be right when we receive the true doctrine of God our Saviour from the Gospel itself ; for therein is contained the revelation and record of God concerning His Son. And this is one important truth contained in the record of God concerning His Son, that His blood cleanseth from all sin.—*Extract from Eyles Pierce's Letters.*

"I HAVE GONE ASTRAY."

(PSALM CXIX. 176).

O LORD most holy,
 In goodness infinite ; in all Thy ways
 Most righteous, just, and true, wilt Thou be pleased
 To lend a gracious ear—to cast an eye
 Of pity on a worthless worm that's lost
 In mazes, doubts, perplexities, and fears—
 That's gone astray, and, like the silly sheep
 That wandered from the fold, strays farther still ?
 How far from Thee my soul has wandered, Lord,
 Into recesses of the thickest gloom,
 From whence I cannot even look to Thee,
 Much less retrace my steps, since I'm in such
 A lost, undone, completely helpless state !
 Oh, wilt Thou deign, most great and gracious Shepherd,
 Thyself to seek and bring me back to Thee ?
 Oh, seek and save me, or I'm lost for ever !
 Hast Thou not said, most potent, great, divine,
 Yet meek and lowly Jesus, Thou Thyself
 Dost know, and like a shepherd will seek out
 Thy wandering sheep—how far soe'er they've strayed—
 And bring them back in safety to Thy fold ?
 Ah, Lord, I know if I am one of Thine
 Whom Thou hast chosen from eternity,
 For whom on Calvary's summit Thou didst spill
 Thy own most precious blood, Thou wilt not leave
 My soul to perish finally. But, ah !
 This is a doubt which Thou alone canst solve—
 A darksome gloom these eyes can never pierce,
 Unless the Spirit's breath disperse the mists.
 I cannot rest my soul upon Thy Word
 Unless that Word be by Thy Spirit brought
 Home to my heart, and powerfully applied.
 Though I believe Thou hast determined
 To save Thy people from eternity ;
 Yet, oh ! I cannot easily believe
 Or lightly take for granted I am one
 Included in that happy number. But
 Could I this believe, and were I satisfied
 Of my eternal safety in that firm,
 That fixed and everlasting covenant,
 This—even this—could never satisfy
 The large desires of my capacious soul.
 While I am left to wander thus from Thee,
 I want to feel Thy presence in my soul,
 Taking my heart's affections from the earth,
 Leading my soul to sensibly enjoy
 Sweet fellowship with Thee—the King of heaven,
 To talk with Thee as with a bosom friend,

By Thy perpetual guidance walk Thy ways,
 And keep Thy precepts with a perfect heart,
 The dear remembrance of the moments past,
 When Thou hast been most precious to my soul,
 At times will bury in forgetfulness
 All fleshly fancied joys, and then, oh, then !
 How would my soul, as on an eagle's wings
 Fly from her dark recess of earthly cares
 Once more in perfect freedom, to enjoy
 The glorious sunshine of Thy presence—there
 To bask—in holy rapture melt away
 And lose herself in Thee. But ah ! how soon
 The wings of my desires are clipt ; and down,
 Down, sinks my soul as sinks a stone in air—
 A helpless thing, possessing just as much
 Ability to stir and lift herself
 In warm desires to Thee as lifeless stones
 Possess ability to lift themselves. .
 Such is the lost condition of my soul,
 That if I'm left of Thee till I arise
 And (even in desire) return to Thee,
 I never shall return, but wander on
 Still farther from Thy presence, till at last
 My soul's precipitated headlong o'er
 The fearful precipice into the dark
 And wild abyss of everlasting woe.
 But here, O Jesus, here's my woeful plea :
 Thou hast declared Thou can'st decidedly
 To *seek* and *save* the *lost*. Can any soul
 Be more completely lost than mine ? Oh, then,
 For Thy great name and glory's sake fulfil
 The gracious promise Thou hast made ; so shall
 All honour, praise, dominion, power, and might
 To Thee alone for ever be ascribed.

S. DAW.

The author of the above lines was a very retiring young man, in humble circumstances, who resided in a cottage near Warbleton, and was probably known by few out of the parish. The Lord took him home to glory in 1846 (aged twenty-three). After his decease a few poems and hymns he wrote were published ; but the little book has been for years out of print.

E.

CHRIST did not give Himself for supposed or imaginary sins, but for real ones ; not only for small and little sins, but for great and gross ones ; not only for one or two, but for all ; not for subdued and extinguished sins, but for unconquered, strong, and powerful ones.—*Luther*.

THE REVISION OF THE AUTHORIZED VERSION OF
THE NEW TESTAMENT.

NOVELTY is the order of the day. The most recent discoveries, modern improvements, newest fashions, and latest intelligence are eagerly sought for by the crowd; and things having no charm nor claim but their newness, will often command a fancy price. Nor does this apply merely to the taste of the profane world, the same desire for something modern may be found in all ranks of religious profession. And is there anything new in this? Nay, it is as old as ancient Greece, for when Paul was waiting for his brethren at Athens, he obtained an audience upon that very account, for we are told that "all the Athenians and strangers which were there, spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing" (Acts xvii. 21). And if we turn our eyes from the famed capital of Greece, to the working hive of our great metropolis, what multitudes, both of male and female, are flocking in and out daily upon no other errand, than that which employed the time spenders at Athens. "Who will show us any good?" was the old cry (Ps. iv. 6). Novelty tries to answer but cannot silence it. And whether it be a newly-built place of worship, a new minister, or a new version of the old Scriptures, each helps to gratify curiosity and feed the busy brain of thousands.

Thus, when the morning of May 17th arrived, city men as eagerly sought the latest *New Testament* as they did their daily newspapers. The avidity for it may be estimated from the fact, that on the first day of its issue one retail bookseller in London is said to have sold no less than 15,000 copies. Why this zeal and zest for the Word of Life? Is it that men were tired of the old book, and therefore hailed a new one? Or was it that they so loved the living water that they desired to get if possible a little nearer to the original spring? We would fain hope the latter with respect to no small number, while with many it is to be feared that the former was the case; but perhaps curiosity prompted the purchase of the great bulk which on that day was carried out of London. Nevertheless, it should be a matter of rejoicing that, in this sceptical and irreligious age, so many are found who have not left the Word of God to turn to fables.

Now our object in referring to this important topic which is employing the pen of journalists throughout Christendom, is twofold.

1. To give a word of caution.
2. To drop a word of counsel.

First.—We would say to you, dear friends, who know that the fashion of this world passeth away, and that you yourselves are

daily, by reason of time and decay, getting out of date and becoming old-fashioned, beware that you be not unduly taken up by the new book simply because it is new, and so allow the old one to get shelved or slighted. You esteem old friends, because having long loved, proved, and tried them, they have gained and retained your confidence. So with the authorized version of the New Testament, it has long been the partner of your life and experience; it has reprovèd, counselled, and comforted you, and has stood by you both in sorrow and joy. To cast this aside for the new comer might be to slight Him who has often made the Word spirit and life to your souls. Cleave therefore to the old volume, and rejoice that no one can lawfully deprive you of the daily privilege of reading its rich contents.

Secondly.—We would offer a word of counsel to those who seem afraid to admit the revision to their library. But some may object, and ask what need was there for remodelling our dear old book. Personally, we could have done well enough with the one we have always used; but Greek scholars have long felt that the time had come when the work of nearly three centuries ago should be inspected and traced, as nearly as possible, to its original source. And it should be borne in mind that the present age affords facilities that were not at the command of the earlier translators of the Scriptures.

It is stated upon the authority of Dr. Angus, who was one of the late revising council, that in 1516 there were only sixteen MSS. available to Erasmus in preparing his edition of the Greek Testament, whereas now there are about sixteen hundred to be found. Of course the originals have long since been lost, therefore the most ancient copies are greatly valued. Many of our readers will remember that about twenty-five or thirty years ago Count Tischendorf found at Mount Sinai the very ancient document known as the *Sinaitic Codex*, which he considered to belong to about the middle of the fourth century. The late much esteemed Mr. Philpot, who was no ordinary Greek scholar, attached great value to this recently found copy. And doubtless this, with others of early and later date, has materially aided the revisers.

We believe that most of the Lord's people are jealous of any innovation, and are justly suspicious lest the sacred text should be tampered with. To such we would say, read for yourselves and critically compare the old with the new. We believe it will sooner or later yield you profit.

The present issue may not be an attempt to be more grammatical in our own language than the last. One passage seems to prove this, where the words of Paul are altered from, "*Who* is Paul and *who* is Apollos?" to "*What* is Paul and *what* is Apollos?"

This we think is a pity. Nor have the revisers attempted or effected an improvement in style ; there is evidently no desire to vary an oft-repeated word in the original by giving different words of the same meaning in English ; this was done by King James' translators and adds beauty to our version.

Some may object that the present revisers were not such godly men as the former translators. But if this could be satisfactorily proved either one way or the other, it would not we think materially affect the case in point. Inspiration is God's work, but interpretation is the use of the talents He has bestowed upon man, and we believe the committee employed in the late revision aimed at giving the most faithful translation from the most reliable Greek copies. In some passages the change is very striking. Thus, Philippians iii. 20, 21, "For our citizenship (marginal alternative 'commonwealth') is in heaven, from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ ; who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself." Then the alteration of the word "charity" to "love" in many parts of Paul's epistles is a manifest improvement, for not only is it literally the correct word, but it conveys the very spirit of the thing intended by the apostle. But in other places, while the original has been strictly adhered to, the change of word has in our opinion spoiled the force and beauty of the passage ; as in Colossians ii. 10, where the word "full" is given instead of "complete."

It will also be a matter of regret to many that a verse or two is left out in the revision and preserved only in the margin, the most important being 1 John v. 7. We believe it was upon very grave considerations that this has been excluded, probably upon the ground that it is not found in either of the three most ancient copies. This omission may disturb the minds of some, and shake the faith of those who are not experimentally settled and grounded upon the glorious doctrine of the Trinity. But remember, dear friends, God has not rested the blessed mysteries of the Gospel upon one isolated passage, the removal of which would cause such a particular doctrine to fall to the ground. Truth has a broad foundation and stands upon a firm basis, and it is in its general drift, tenor, and agreement, that we do well to fix our faith and build our hope.

Many of the public journals have expressed a disappointment at the Revision, and we do not wonder at it, for nothing less than a version which would ignore the grand and distinguishing doctrines of free and sovereign grace, especially as set forth by the Apostle Paul, would meet the taste of many, while no book that retains the doctrine of eternal punishment would satisfy

others. But while these ancient truths stand on record, let us be thankful that God has so protected His own Word, and that the caprice of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth is not thereby gratified.

In conclusion, we believe that the living family of God, who love to closely study His Word, will in the end be grateful to the Lord and to the revisers for this addition to our biblical knowledge. Depend upon it no better commentary can be found to the authorized version of the New Testament than the newly fledged revision, and in this way we recommend its use, but we do not wish to see it substituted for our beautiful old version. Let all who have time and mind for reading buy the Tauchnitz edition of the New Testament, which is a fair copy of our own long used Testament with useful foot notes, and compare with it the revised copy issued either from Oxford or Cambridge, and they may in the end more clearly see why some alterations have been made. The revisers modestly admit that their work is far from being perfect. Nor shall we in anything attain to perfection in this life. But if God is pleased to use His own Word to the enlightening of our minds and the warming of our hearts, so that we thereby know Jesus Christ, who is the substance of all the Scriptures, His name shall be glorified world without end. Amen.

THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE.

A LETTER FROM DR. HAWKER TO HIS DAUGHTER.

FROM the base attacks made upon his public character—for against his private character they could allege nothing—some of his friends took alarm lest his public ministry might be impeded, or his personal safety be endangered; others recommended prosecution, thereby to seek redress and to silence slander; while some of his own family began to be apprehensive what would be the result of all this enmity and rancour against him. But a letter from him to one of his daughters pending these circumstances, shows the state of his mind under all this calumny, and with what feelings he met the advice of those who wished him to seek redress by legal proceedings.

MY SWEET DEAR CHILD,—How astonished am I to discover by the complexion of your letter, your distress of mind at the persecution I sustain, after what you have seen and known of the same for many years. Read the twelfth and following verses of the fourth chapter of the first of Peter, and you will immediately perceive that these are among the necessary marks of our high calling. “No man,” saith Paul, “ought to be moved by these afflictions, because you yourselves know that ye are appointed thereunto.” And if no man, no poor humble soldier

in the mere ranks of the army, what a dastard must be a subaltern who carries his king's commission if he be moved. Job says, "Let my enemy write a book, surely I would take it upon my shoulder and bind it as a crown to me" (Job. xxxi. 35, 36). You seem to fear the depth and finesse of my adversary.

Alas! my dear, dear daughter, where is your faith? I can say of him and all the clan, as David did to Goliath: "Thou comest to me with sword and spear, but I come to thee in the name of the Lord whom thou hast defied." You talk also of action. Alas! my dear, dear——, here again you lack faith. The action to be brought is already began; I have brought it and lodged it in court, and the day of decision is coming. And it is in such a court where no lawyer will be wanted, nor counsellor to plead. Fact, mere fact, will be all that is needed, and as sure as the Lord is true, those assassins of my reputation will feel a decision, unless by repentance it is prevented, which will amply do away all the injury they have done me. I might imitate the example of Moses, and if I did, it would be upon equal ground, by saying: "Respect not thou their offering" (Num. xvi. 15). But I rather would copy His bright example who said: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." You forget, my dearest, that this battle I am fighting is the Lord's. It is not against me. It is not Dr. Hawker, Vicar of Charles, with whom they contend, for if I preached only the dry system of morality, and not the doctrine of the cross, never, no never would they have come forward against me, though I had got drunk and tumbled into the grave after the corpse. But it is Dr. Hawker, the preacher of vital godliness they hate, and therefore persecute. But let them alone; His is the cause whom I so poorly serve, and He in His time, not ours, will vindicate His own.

I write this by return of post, merely to make you easy. If my happiness will contribute to yours, be assured that I never, in any one period of my life, enjoyed more perfect happiness, more tranquility, than in the moments I am now writing to my dearest, dear——. If I am ever low in the contest, it is in this consideration, and which the enemy I know suggests, my dear children, who are dearer to me than life will complain: "Oh, had our father used the opportunities he hath had of getting forward, he might have been high in life and raised our fortunes." When I turn my thoughts to this side of the subject, and hear, or fancy I hear, my dear children's reproaches, then I sometimes falter. But blessed be God these thoughts are but momentary. If I do not advance your fortunes in this life, I am truly confident my God will recompense you for what you lose, in a better. Hosanna, my dear, "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth." I hope to see

you next week, till then the Lord be with you, as He is always with me. I preached yesterday from these words: "Is not the Lord in Zion; is not her king in her?" (Jer. viii. 19). And now I feel the sweetness of the passage to my own experience. I can, and do, with full confidence say: "The Lord of Hosts is with me. The God of Jacob is my refuge." Surely you will be easy after these assurances. Only consider these events as furnishing out to me work for prayer, and then you will see the mercy of the dispensation. "Go," says God, "and let the enemy attack him, wound his reputation, asperse his name, I shall have more of his company. Long prosperity makes him like stagnant water. Oh, how gracious is our God. I charge you, my dear, dear child, rest more on the Rock of Ages, and then you will see the unreasonableness of your fears concerning your tender and affectionate father,

Plymouth, December 9th, 1799.

ROBERT HAWKER.

MEMOIR OF THE LATE JOHN CLARK, OF FIVEASHDOWN.

(Continued from page 185.)

THE visitation from the Lord referred to at the close of the last chapter, confirmed our friend in the work of the ministry, and helped him to speak with authority in taking forth the precious from the vile; and thereby he was enabled to confirm the souls of the disciples (Acts xiv. 22). While God in His providence opened doors in different places for him to preach at, so that he had not (like it is feared some professed ministers do), to stand in the market-place idle, with the pitiful cry, "No man hath hired us" (Matt. xx. 7).

He had not preached long before certain men who called themselves modern Calvinists gained influence over a little country cause, where he was called to supply, and bound themselves as if by an oath that they would prevent him preaching there. This cost him much grief, because to obtain their end they tried to traduce his character. However, he was led to spread the matter before the Lord, who gave him these words: "They shall fall by the sword: they shall be a portion for foxes. But the king shall rejoice in God: every one that sweareth by him shall glory: but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped" (Psa. lxi. 10, 11). This portion he felt the Lord solemnly fulfilled, for in about two years after this, most of his persecutors were laid in the grave.

When he began preaching, he was greatly tried in his mind

about taking the money that was given him for his services. At one place where he went two Sundays every month, he had to walk eight miles out and home—*i. e.*, sixteen miles in all, for which he received the sum of five shillings. Small as the amount was, the enemy taunted him that he was preaching for money. He spoke of his exercises to his good friend and counsellor, the late Mr. Cowper, who told him that if he took nothing of the people, he would not satisfy the devil. This he said broke the snare. We refer to this circumstance, because we believe many dear men of God have had scruples of this kind, especially at their first setting out, which some mean-spirited professors have taken advantage of—admiring a cheap gospel as well as a free gospel—and entirely ignoring the scriptural rule: “They that preach the gospel, should live of the gospel” (1 Cor. ix. 14); and “The labourer is worthy of his hire” (Luke x. 7); and (1 Tim. v. 18). However, it should be observed that shortly after, these good people strained a nerve and doubled the stipend; and seeing our friend was struggling to get a living by his own daily labour, and that his wife set up a bread-making business, it could not justly be said that he was trying to live on the charity of the Lord’s people.

After a time he was directed as he believed by the providence of God to seek a living at Keston, in Kent, and before removing, he went to preach to a few people there. It was necessary for him to stay the night, and as his friends could not sleep him, they procured him a lodging at the inn.

Upon getting up in the morning early, before any of the inmates were about, after having bowed his knees before God to ask for protection through the day, in leaving his bedroom he came into a dark passage, but thought he could see two doors before him, and he was about to step forward towards one of them when something seemed to say “Look to your feet,” and giving heed thereto, he suddenly discovered that had he gone farther he would have been suddenly precipitated down a flight of stairs. This kind interposition of the Lord’s protecting hand, led him to contemplate upon the subject of the ministration of angels.

We have long for ourselves believed and received this as a Bible truth, but perhaps through its not being essential to the soul’s salvation, we have not been led very deeply into it. Some who read this may be able more fully to follow our friend in his remarks upon this subject, which we give in his own words, though all may not be inclined to adopt his interpretation upon Peter’s angel.

After being preserved from falling as before stated, he instantly said: “This is my guardian angel!” thereupon, he follows, the words of Toplady came to my mind:

“ Angels elect are sent down
To guard the elect of mankind.”

What love flowed into my mind to the dear Lord for His mercy towards me, that He should lead me into so blessed a doctrine as the ministration of angels, which the apostle speaks of when he asks the question : “ Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation ? ” (Heb. i. 14). It is evident this doctrine was much regarded by the apostles, for we find when they were praying for Peter’s deliverance from prison, that when Peter knocked at the door, Rhoda ran, saying it is Peter, and they would not believe it, but said it must be his angel. It is plain from Scripture that the Lord often conveyed His messages by angels. Witness it in Manoah’s case, and in Daniel, and it shows that those blessed messengers are always delighting in what has to do with the salvation of God’s people. Angels sang at the birth of the Saviour. One was also employed against the host of Assyria (Isa. xxxvii. 36), as Addison sings :

“ So when an angel by divine command,
With terror strikes a guilty land ;
Pleased the Almighty’s orders to perform,
Bides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm.”

These angels are, and will be employed in blowing God’s trumpets, and nothing can take place only as they sound. And the finishing of time will be by the mighty angel putting one foot on the earth and another on the sea, lifting up his hand and swearing by Him that liveth for ever and ever that time shall be no longer (Rev. x. 5, 6). This doctrine, therefore, to me has been a very blessed one—viz., “ the ministration of angels.”

Having taken a residence for himself and family at Keston, he found some of his preaching journeys very wearying. For instance, he went once a month to Cobham, when he had to walk a distance of forty-four miles—fifteen of which he walked after his work on a Saturday, then lodged at a friend’s for the night, and walked the remaining seven on the Sunday morning ; walking the same distance home. We think if some of the preachers of the present day had such journeys, it would cool their courage and quench their zeal ; or that at least they would plead excuse from serving in very inclement weather. But the good man of whom we are writing had the love of God, and love for souls in his heart, therefore both in season and out of season he had his hand upon the plough, looking for that reward that comes from God only, which is not of debt but of grace. And sometimes when the country was flooded, he would take pieces of furze and make a kind of bridge to keep his legs as much as possible out of the water. But though his travelling was often anything but inviting to human nature, his spirit was

refreshed with that meat which the world knows not of; that "hidden manna" which sustains the "hidden man of the heart," and causes the weak to say, "I am strong." And thus while he could compare notes with Paul: "In weariness, and painfulness" (2 Cor. xi. 27), yet he could rejoice that "His light afflictions were working out for him a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. iv. 17).

But human nature cannot, unless more than ordinarily supported, go beyond certain limits of strength and endurance. Thus at length with hard toil, long journeys, broken rest, and a burdened mind, his wiry constitution for a time broke down, and when Mrs. Clark told the doctor what he had done in labour and travelling, he said: "He has done enough to kill a horse." But from this the Lord was pleased to restore him, so that as he felt the Lord secretly sustained him, he seems to have continued his journeying as heretofore.

After this he was called to pass through a sore domestic trial, in the loss of a darling boy. This child had become quite an idol, so that if he felt wearied in body, or tried in mind by business losses or perplexities, he had only to get his little boy into his arms and everything was right. This inordinate affection he afterwards felt the Lord did not approve, and therefore in fulfilment of His word: "From all your filthiness, and from all your idols I will cleanse you" (Ezek. xxxvi. 25), the child was taken ill with scarlatina which terminated in his death. As usual, Mr. Clark started for his journey on the Saturday night with no apprehension that his little boy was seriously ill, but on returning on the Monday, when about thirteen miles from home, his elder son met him, and told him that his brother John was dead. At this he said his soul sank within him and he wept bitterly at his loss, but he could see the Lord's hand in it, inasmuch that He would suffer no rival with Himself in the affections of his now blood-bought children.

Our friend was accustomed to commemorate subjects of interest in verse, and entirely to ignore this, would not be faithfully portraying the man, though we believe before he died he wished all his writings to be destroyed. However, as this mournful event would touch the tender chords of a parent's heart, we trust our readers will in consideration of the subject, not closely criticize the style, but cover with a mantle of love anything that may appear to them a defect in the following lines written by him, which we give with two or three mere verbal alterations:

"The fondling of my heart is gone,
No more his pleasing smile I see,
While I am left the loss to mourn,
And pine my life in misery.

When I had grief with trials great,
 His lovely ways engaged my heart ;
 When at the door I saw him wait,
 As if with me he'd bear a part.

Ye violets droop upon his grave, i
 Ye roses look no more with joy ;
 My pleasures I for ever waive
 Since I have lost my lovely boy.

Ye cheerful lambs that skip along,
 Upon the hillock side so green ;
 Here stop and make a mournful song,
 Beneath the yew tree—solemn scene.

Sweet Philomela cease your voice
 Nor cheer the vale with pleasing strains,
 Let mournful silence be your choice,
 Where death in awful terror reigns.

Oh world of conflicts and of woes
 In which I'm tossèd too and fro,
 Wherein alas, such num'rous foes,
 Assail me as I onward go.

Dear Jesus smile, nor let me grieve
 The loss of that which Thou dost take ;
 But from these things do Thou relieve
 That I to righteousness may wake.

May I in Thee so sweetly hide,
 While ev'ry woe is passing by,
 Secure from ev'ry swelling tide,
 Beneath the notice of Thine eye

(To be continued.)

OBITUARY OF MRS. SUSAN HARRIS,
 OF GREENWICH.

WHAT a diversity in feature and yet what a similarity of character is manifest among the people of God ! And what a variety is seen among them in the experience of the same things. Divine grace permeates through every faculty of the renewed soul, and discovers itself to others, more or less, through the medium of certain gifts. Some are so enriched by the gift of utterance, that one can rarely be in their company without reaping spiritual profit. Some too, in a less degree, may tell out fragments of a past experience or of daily exercise which make their words sweet and their conversation savoury. While others are never able to say many words, but they perform acts of kindness in many and different ways which speak loudly of their love to Christ and His people. But whether by

words or works, separately or together, all who commend the grace of God show by the spirit in which they speak, act, and walk, that they belong to the "one body," and that one and the self-same Spirit divides to them severally as He will (1 Cor. xii. 11). And never is grace seen in its measure to better advantage than it is in such as feel they have no gifts, and fear they have but little grace. And herein we are forcibly reminded of the lines of John Berridge :

"When Jesus would His grace proclaim,
He calls the simple, blind and lame,
To come and be His guest :
Such simple folk the world despise,
Yet simple folk have sharpest eyes,
And learn to walk the best."

The subject of this brief obituary was one of this type. Quiet and unobtrusive as she was, and indeed studied to be, she was a woman widely known, and where she was well known she was much loved.

She was born at Yalding, in Kent, on February 28th, 1809. Her father was a farmer, her mother, who was a godly woman, died when Susan was nine years old. After her mother's death, she remembered many of Dr. Watts's hymns, which her mother used to sing, but she had no one to watch her soul's welfare. Eventually her father married again, and she left home, by choice, to earn her own living. While in her mistress' employ, she was one day sitting on a box in her bedroom, when her many transgressions coming to her mind, she felt herself to be a poor lost sinner. About that time she had a female companion with whom she used to walk out. On one occasion, when she meant to go to chapel, this young woman persuaded her that as she would be late she might as well go with her for a walk. She consented. But these words were a sharp reproof to her, "If sinners entice thee, consent thou not." And, as the burnt child dreads the fire, so she ever afterwards sought to avoid such paths as would bring upon her the Lord's displeasure. Later on her father lost his second wife, and then she returned home to take care of the family, until at the age of twenty-eight, she left to be married.

It would seem that the work of God in her soul was carried on very gradually, both in the knowledge of herself, and of her manifest interest in Christ. But this had the effect of keeping her earnestly enquiring after and humbly following on to know the Lord. When she was about thirty-six years of age she was baptized by Mr. Day, of East Farleigh, where for a time she was a member of the little cause. It pleased the Lord to remove her husband by death, so that she had to struggle with her family to

get a living. Many years ago God gave her this portion, which was often a support and comfort to her: "Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed" (Psa. xxxvii. 3). This promise was fully verified to the end of her days. At another time these words came to her with great power: "Bread shall be given thee, thy water shall be sure" (Isa. xxxiii. 16).

Many years since, in the providence of God, she was removed to Greenwich. This afforded her better and more opportunities of hearing the truth preached. And indeed the Lord so blessed her in the latter years of her life, that, to use her own words, she said she was both temporally and spiritually eating her white bread last.

I believe it will not be known till the last great day, how much she helped the Lord's poor and others. And in these things she was exercised in the fear of God; for on one occasion she was desirous of relieving a poor woman, and while considering whether she was justified in doing so, these lines settled the point with her, and enabled her to carry out her purpose:

"He that hath made my heaven secure,
Will here all good provide."

Latterly she noted a few spiritual incidents, also some verses of hymns that had been very sweet to her. She remarks: "April 24th.—Been to see Mrs. F. to-day; have heard her talk of the love of God to her soul. Oh, how I wish I could talk of that, and be assured as she is, but I must wait the Lord's time. Then I am such a coward, I shrink at the suffering she has to wade through; but I do wish to lie passive in the Lord's hands, and know no will but His."

Though naturally of a cheerful and hopeful spirit, she had many fears about her soul. She notes: "July 20th.—Mr. B's text, Isaiah xxxv. 4—6. He described the character in such a way that made my heart glad; I felt as if I was interested in it. But after I got to bed, I awoke out of sleep in a dismal, dark recollection of my sins in my younger days. After it got light, and I could see to read, I read awhile, and tried to pray to the Lord to pardon my sins, but could not get any satisfaction. When I was asked what I was thinking of, I said I had been thinking of the bad things, when these words came, 'Thy sins and thine iniquities I will remember no more,' but the sweets did not last long."

But while she had many inward fears, she had a happy expression on her countenance when she was with those she loved. And she was not one to

"Fill her fellow-creature's ear,
With the sad tale of all her care."

She would choose rather to obey the apostolic injunction, "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you" (1 Peter v. 7). And sometimes when things at home did not seem to work right, she would say to those about her, "Ah, we should have carried this to the Lord." She was of a very peace-loving and peace-making spirit. Indeed, I have thought that strife could not exist where she was. She would add no fuel to the fire of contention, but would leave off before it was meddled with.

By the grace of God she was enabled to show great diligence in coming to the services of the Lord's house. Not long before her death she said, "Oh, how many prayers have I put up that the Lord would keep me on seeking help in the public means of grace," for she said she had in her time observed so many who in their old age seemed to wither in this respect, and become indifferent to public ordinances.

For many years she suffered from chronic asthma, but her death was caused by bronchitis. It is probable she was not aware that her end was so near. When one of our deacons visited her, he tried to elicit the state of her mind. And this he said seemed to be the sum of it :

"After so much mercy past,
Will He let me sink at last?"

She was frequently overheard in prayer. Once she said :

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,
Oh, Lamb of God, I come."

Also, "Rest! Rest!" "There remaineth a rest for the people of God. The Lord have mercy on me and keep me, I want the Lord to appear." To her friends she said, "Oh, if I had to seek Him now, I could not, this is not the place to *begin*."

A few hours before she departed she said, "The Lord is my portion," and "In pastures green, in pastures green," which she tried to sing. She had promised her friends that if she felt happy when she was dying, and could not speak, she would in token of it raise her hand. A little while before her happy spirit left its clay tabernacle, she raised her hand three times.

Thus died our beloved friend on Monday, January 17th, 1881, in the 72nd year of her age.

"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

J. BOORNE.

WE sail to glory, not in the salt sea of our tears, but in the red sea of Christ's precious blood.—*Dr. Goodwin.*

THE SOWER.

NOTES OF A SERMON PREACHED BY MR. HULL,
AT HASTINGS, ON WEDNESDAY EVENING,
SEPTEMBER 15TH, 1880.

“Lord, Thou hast heard the desire of the humble : Thou wilt prepare their heart, Thou wilt cause Thine ear to hear.”—PSALM x. 17.

IN looking into these words for a little while, let us first notice the Lord's favour to the humble ones who seek His face. To be laid humbly at the Lord's feet, to be a humble follower of the Lamb, a humble waiter at mercy's door, a humble dependent on God's grace, a humble sheep in His fold, is no small mercy. But true, godly, spiritual humility differs widely from that humility which comes from the natural man. This grace being obnoxious to the natural mind, there are but very few people who are rightly affected concerning it, for men mostly judge it as vain or as unnecessary; and if the Lord's people speak in a humble way of themselves, these professors think that they are not sincere in their speech, but the reason why they so judge is, they know not the inward exercise of a living soul, having never been humbled by divine grace, or so taught by the Spirit as to be laid low at mercy's footstool; therefore, they do not understand what it is to be brought near to God. What they look upon as a form, or as fanciful, the child of God highly prizes—a contrite spirit, a heart rightly affected towards God, and by His superabounding grace. Wherever you find partakers of grace, you will find them give evidence thereof by humility. It will always accompany the true knowledge of the grace of God. Compare your own heart and experience here, and see if you have this mark. When have you felt yourself to be the meanest before the Lord, and the most unworthy of His mercy? Has it not been when that mercy has most abounded towards you? Mere professors may think that these are fanciful things, but the child of God loves to be laid low after this manner; yea—

“They never think they're laid too low,
If Jesus on them pity show.”

The more the mercy and love of God is experienced in their heart, the more they will magnify Him. Our sin and His mercy, our defilement and His blood, our unholiness and His righteousness, are meet subjects for our faith, and there is no experience will lay the child of God so low as this. This works true humility indeed. What was it made David feel and express him—

self as he did on the occasion when Nathan had been speaking to him of the Lord establishing his house and kingdom for ever? It was the goodness of God in those words, those promises, and those expressions of His favour. It so overcame the heart of David that he retired in secret and sat before the Lord, overwhelmed with His goodness, and the first word that came out of his mouth was, "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me hitherto?" Did you ever go before the Lord with that feeling of self-abasement, causing you to exclaim, "'Who am I, O Lord God?' A sinner vile in myself, unworthy of Thy love and of Thy goodness; and yet what hast Thou told me, and what hast Thou done for me?" When David put these things together—what God had told him, what God had done for him, and what God had promised him—it filled him with surprise that he should be so high in God's account and have so much of His goodness made known to him. Now, this is the effect of grace. It does not fill the heart with vain feelings and self-sufficiency. You never find a soul puffed up with vain thoughts or with self-conceit who is under this gracious influence. It will bring everything of the flesh level with the dust. It will lay the sinner as low as the earth before God, and he will say with Jacob, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast showed unto Thy servant." Now, the Lord loves these humble souls, and I would ever be such a humble soul, for I love that humility, and I would always have it abounding in my heart.

Sometimes, perhaps, you want to lay yourself low before the Lord, but you are not able to do it as you would. You feel there is something in your heart that is stout and stubborn. There is that enemy, pride, and you would have it down under your feet and spoil it of its power, but you cannot—

"Against it preach, it prompts the speech;
Be silent, still 'tis there."

And wherever you go you find it is working within. Oh, what a subtle serpent is sin! What a hateful reptile is pride, for oft times, when the soul would humble itself, it stands in the way. This makes us feel the mercy of having it overcome, laid low and levelled in the dust. The Lord does this sometimes in the same way He did with David, as before noticed, and sometimes in a way of chastening.

"If God rebuke for pride,
He'll humble thy proud heart;
If for thy want of love He chide,
That love He will impart."

Some of us know that there is no position on earth so sweet

as sitting like Mary at the Master's feet. That is the spot where the child of God desires to be found—in humility at the feet of Christ, having the mind of Christ, the Spirit of Christ, and so clothed with humility. These humble souls are the souls that God looks upon with special regard. These are they to whom He gives more grace. Hannah says, "He lifts the poor from the dust, and the beggar from the dunghill." He raises them from their low estate, and it is that they may be set on high. Thus, "He giveth grace to the lowly." "Oh," says the child of God, "I would be that lowly soul before God; meek and lowly in thought, in word, and in deed. Yea, I would have my heart meek and lowly, as was the heart of Christ." How often that expression has charmed my heart, "the meekness and gentleness of Christ." It is a sweet mark of union with Him to feel something of that grace.

You see these things perfect in Jesus Christ, but it is a mercy to feel a measure of them in yourself. Do we heartily desire that which we see shine so gloriously in the Person of Jesus Christ? Then, wherever you find one that truly covets to be like Jesus Christ, there you will find a person of a lowly heart. They look upon Him as the meek and lowly One, and they covet His Spirit, for they desire to be conformed to His image. While you were singing I thought, "There are some here to-night that know this desire."

We have traced this grace in Jesus Christ, who was anointed above His fellows; and we see it shine with such rich refulgence in Him that we desire to be possessors of His Spirit. Now, God will hear the desire of these humble ones. Yea, He *has* heard their desire. There are many instances in His Word of His having heard the desire of the humble, and I hope there are some here to-night that can bear their testimony that He has heard *their* desire. How was it in the case of Hannah? She went before the Lord; and why did she go there? Because her trouble was more than she could endure. She could not tell it to Eli, the Lord's minister. She had tried to take it to the Lord no doubt many times; but on that particular day she was favoured to draw near, and tell Him what it was that was troubling and distressing her. Eli said unto her, "How long wilt thou be drunken? Put away thy wine from thee." Her answer was, that she was "a woman of a sorrowful spirit." They were not the actions of a drunken woman, but it was the conduct of one seeking unto the Lord in a time of need. And when she poured out her complaint before the Lord, though her lips moved not, she seemed to find relief, for we are told that she went away and her countenance was no more sad, because the Lord had lifted the burden from her heart, and had given her to

feel that He sympathized with her, and even good old Eli, when he knew her case, united his supplications with hers. See what an encouragement it was to her soul when she felt that the Lord inclined His ear; and, while the heart of the man of God was moved towards her, how much more the heart of the Lord Himself.

When Hannah got the living proof of God hearing and regarding her desire, she was so overcome that not only was her heart filled with praise and thanksgiving, but it was so enlarged that she took the very answer to her prayer and presented him to the Lord, for she wished to dedicate that to the Lord which He had given her. Now, all the Samuels in the world would not have gladdened her heart as did that feeling of the condescension and goodness of God in proving that He had a favour toward her by hearing and answering her desire. And has not the very thought that God would admit us to His presence, privilege us to call upon His name and commit unto Him our cause, at times filled our heart with gratitude and with praise that we should be so favoured? Yes, this is a sweet favour, and those that are blessed with a humble mind in coming before the Lord will surely find that what the Lord does in answer to their desire lay them still lower. Perhaps there is one here to-night says, "That is as it should be; but I often find that, if I tell the Lord what I desire, and He hears and regards my cry, I am so carried away by the thought of His gift that in a few minutes I seem to forget Him, and the result is, my heart becomes proud, and, instead of cleaving to Him more closely, I seem to grow self-sufficient, and become estranged in heart from my best Friend. Can these be the feelings of a child of God?" Oh, this proves how bad our hearts are, and if God did not in mercy deal with us according to His covenant, we could have no hope. This is the way the Lord oft proves His people by showing them what there is in their hearts. Sometimes they tremble under His frowns, and sometimes they melt under His favours. But perhaps you will say, "Why, at times, there is nothing affects my heart in the right way. Can I be one of these humble souls?" Well, when things have at times been thus bad in your soul, have you not gone before the Lord, and prayed that you might have a better feeling, and that He would bring you in a right and spiritual frame to His feet?

Now, has God ever done that in your case? Has He ever heard your desire for true humility? Has He ever answered your prayer? Does He ever encourage your heart in secret to seek that His grace may supplant that which is contrary to it? How often the children of God find that He "brings down their heart with labour" and by exercise! He thus weakens us to prepare us

to come to His footstool in humility, not in a dictatorial way. We do not then come as those who think that God is a debtor to us, and bound to do as we desire. We come as beggars, not as dictators—not as those who have a claim upon Him; but we lie low at His footstool, and beg of the Lord to choose for us, to do something in us, and bestow something upon us that will be of service to us.

Now, to come before the Lord with a truly humble mind is to leave ourselves behind, and it is hard work to be nothing; therefore it is a great mercy to be enabled to put off the old man, and to be made free from the workings of fleshly desire; for it is true that we often desire, and have not, because we desire things that would not be good for us. But a truly humble soul knows that what God bestows must be good, and we desire in all things to be submissive thereto. "Oh, bend my will to Thine!" is often my prayer, and when this is done, what humility we have! We then are afraid lest we should desire anything that is contrary to His will, and we wish to have in all things that frame that will be well-pleasing in His sight. If the Lord has blessed you with this grace, and your desire comes before Him, His promise is that it shall be granted. "The desire of the righteous shall be granted;" and when we desire Him to do according to His good pleasure, we confess that we prefer His choice to our own.

Brethren, it is not smooth, it is not easy, it is not congenial; for there is a part in us that is opposed to this, and you will find, even when grace overcomes it, it will twist and writhe, and you are afraid it will get the better of you, and you dare not trust your own heart, therefore you want the Lord to rule and reign in your heart, and you want Him to dispose your heart; and, in fact, the child of God would have his heart in compliance to His will; and then we can do all things, we can suffer all things, and we can believe all things, and we hope for all things that God has promised. And why? Because of the things that God and blessed oneness with Him, because there is that sweet unison ourselves with the Lord in His way, that we have lost, and it is good, for we lose those things that are a burden to us, and there really is a casting ourselves on the Lord; and this is what the Lord Jesus Christ gives His dear people. He says, "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls."

"Lord, Thou hast heard the desire of the humble." It is a mercy to be blessed with a good desire. It is what God's people cannot frame. That is often true in my case which the poet expresses—"I cannot frame a good desire." There are many desires that are not good, because they are not righteous

desires, there being something in the motive that is wrong. God does not judge us by the words we speak; He looks into the heart, and discerns the motive from whence this desire arises, and so far as it is in accordance with His fear, so far God is pleased with it; but if it is contrary to Him, then He does not accept it.

Brethren, this comes very close, and if we try our religion and our prayers by this standard, we may perhaps understand why we have waited so long for the Lord's answer. James says, "Ye ask, and have not, because ye ask amiss;" and, if there is an improper motive prompts our desire, that may ere long be discovered as the secret reason why God denies. What a mercy when you can come before the Lord and say, "Lord, is there anything that is amiss in my desire, in my heart? If there is, show me what it is, and take it away. Oh, save me from seeking anything that it is not Thy good pleasure to bestow upon me, and give me that which will be for my good, and to the glory of Thy name." Those who come to the Lord thus, honestly and sincerely, want their heart to be brought into sweet submission to His will, and to be guided in all things by Him who cannot err. Well, the Lord hears the desire of these humble ones; and in how many instances has He graciously regarded some of our poor needy souls when speaking at His throne. Many instances, too, of His having regarded the desire of the humble are recorded in His Word, and all for the encouragement of these humble, desiring, seeking souls. Yes, *He* is well pleased to receive their desires, and it is His good will and pleasure to replenish every such sorrowful soul. Some of us can say He *has* heard our desire, and we can say so because He has answered our prayers.

The next thing we have to notice is, "Thou wilt prepare their heart." What a mercy to have a heart prepared by the Lord! It is sure to be right, and He can bring forth from it that which is acceptable to Himself. But some one ~~may~~ ask the question, "Who can bring a clean thing out ~~of~~ ^{of} an unclean heart as mine? How can anything ~~right~~ ^{right} come out of such a heart as mine? How can anything ~~acceptable~~ ^{acceptable} to God come forth from such an one as I?" I must answer as ~~Jesus~~ ^{Jesus} Christ did to His disciples, "The things that are impossible with ~~me~~ ^{me} are possible with God." Bless His dear name for that. When He comes and takes the heart of a poor sinner, He puts therein that grace which makes it desire what He approves, and abhor that which He abhors; and He can make that heart so enter into sweet unison with His will that it desires to know no other way but His. Yes, He is able to do all this. Do you sometimes feel to have no heart for the things of God, and is your mind at times unaffected by His goodness, and indisposed toward His service? Oh, how sad to feel this aversation, as Owen calls it, to

spiritual things ! You know it is wrong, and yet you cannot feel pained on account of it as you would. You acknowledge it, but only in a formal way, and there is no power whatever in you to change your state ; but you feel sure that, if the Lord was to let you alone, you should never come out of this lifeless state, and would never more have a heart to love *Him*. But, when the Lord again graciously affects your heart, how soon He disposes it towards Himself ; and, as bad as you are, you want to take your sin before Him, that He may take it all away. You want Him to bless you with a spiritual mind, and to renew you by His grace. This is a sweet preparation, and you go before Him seeking what He alone can give, and what He alone can do. But, sometimes, as the Lord prepares your heart, you feel to be “void of all that’s good and very, very poor.” Well, that is a sad case, but there is something worse than that, that is, to be “empty of good and full of ill ;” empty of all that is godly, and full of all that is devilish. You seem at such times to be empty of things that are spiritual, and full of things that are worldly and carnal. And yet you have to go to the Lord in this state ; and what for ? Why, the Lord has so prepared your heart that you loathe it, and, like the Apostle, you cry out, “Oh, wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?” He has thus prepared your heart for the “sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ,” and for a sweet feeding upon Him by faith ; and now you want Jesus Christ to be found in you as the hope of glory.

Now, only think that the Lord should take such poor, dead, and stupid sinners as we, and so prepare our heart that we can tell Him we would rather He should reign over us than any other ; and we gladly accept Him as our Lord and King, and say with the poet—

“We bow as sinners at Thy feet,
And bid Thee welcome to our heart.”

We gladly embrace His power, and become as clay in the hands of the potter. Bless His dear name, He does prepare the heart, and it is a good thing to feel the heart open to Him, and to be enabled to pour it out before Him ; to seek His blessing, and prefer it above all that earth calls good or great. And it is a good thing to feel the heart prepared for His service. Then we delight to be found in His house, and choose those very things He delights in ; and, when the Lord favours us in this way, we can sing—

“My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this ;
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss.”

Then, in the last place, it is said, “Thou wilt cause Thine ear to hear.” Now, there is never a trouble that these poor sinners

get into but the Lord will be their Friend. Their heart is prepared by Him for a dwelling-place, and He will dwell in them, and walk in them; and that soul must be blessed where the Lord dwells. Can anything be for our hurt while He is ours? And if He dwells in us, it is a proof that He has chosen us as His dwelling-place. He looks upon Zion; and Zion you know is composed of such whose hearts are prepared for Him, and He says, "Here is My rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it." These people desire the Lord, and He desires them; and can you think that the Lord will not hear them when they cry? Did He ever close His ears to His people's cry? He says, "I will bring the third part through the fire; and I will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried"—that is, His people; these humble souls. And then what does He say? "'They shall call on My name, and I will hear them.' In their trouble and distress, 'they shall call on My name, and I will hear them.' I will not be unmindful of their sorrows, but I will be with them in their trouble. I will own them in their trouble. 'I will say, It is My people.' It is the cry of My people. It is the supplication of My people. It is the desire of My people. And when they hear My voice, they shall respond and say, 'The Lord is my God.'"

Now, that is not like rejecting their supplication or their desire. No; even in their deepest sorrows their supplication and their desire shall come before Him, and He will then acknowledge them as His own; and thus He will cause His ear to hear. That is a sweet portion where it is said the Lord "hath looked down from the height of His sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth." And what for? "To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death." And I have often thought, when my heart has been led into this, "What a subject!" You will sometimes hear people say, when they see anything striking, "What a subject for a painter!" But here is one that cannot be put on canvas. Oh, how wonderful that the Lord of glory should look from heaven to hear the groaning of His prisoners! And what do they groan for? Why, they groan for liberty; and their sighs and cries are all before Him; they are written in His Book. And what does He say? "He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him." "Thou wilt cause Thine ear to hear." His ear is open to these tried ones; these humble ones; and in all their troubles, in all their sorrows, in all their griefs, His heart is toward them. What a mercy to have such a Friend, and to be found among those poor, humble souls who are favoured to look unto the Lord who made heaven and earth as their Refuge and Portion. Do you feel to be unworthy of Him—too vile to approach unto Him? Are you afraid to take His name

into your lips? Oh, remember that "Christ is the Friend of sinners." For such He died, and for such the fountain is still open; therefore, vile as you may be in your own sight, fall before Him and tell Him all your fears and desires. He says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

May the Lord add His blessing, and He shall bear the glory.

DEATH CONQUERED.

Lines on hearing that a friend said, shortly before his death, "I have got fast hold of Jesus!"

"FAST hold of Jesus!" what a glorious strain!
 Oh, let-it break upon my ear again!
 Say, was it wafted from those realms above
 Where all is harmony, and peace, and love?
 Or did some happy seraph on the wing
 Tune his sweet harp and wake its golden string?
 No; 'twas no angel's song which met thine ear,
 Or seraph's, passing from a brighter sphere;
 But the glad accents of a ransomed soul,
 By Jesus freed from Satan's dread control;
 A sinner saved, who, with faith's steady eye,
 Looked through the mists of death to Calvary;
 And, while he sunk beneath the chastening rod,
 Still triumphed in his Saviour and his God.
 Oh, wondrous thought! and can a child of dust,
 Sinful, and vile, and helpless, and accursed,
 Thus rest secure, and with his parting breath
 Proclaim for him there is no sting in death?
 Yes; for a way in mercy has been given
 To lead the wanderer back again to heaven—
 A "Living Way," a way of faith and light,
 Which leads us upward from these realms of night
 To that bright land where clouds all fade away,
 Lost in the splendour of eternal day.
 Christ is that Way, and, justified in Him,
 The sinner gains a pardon for his sin;
 His blood can cleanse us from its deepest stain,
 His Spirit free us from its galling chain.
 His grace can sanctify and change the heart,
 Subdue the will, and needful strength impart.
 "Christ was a curse for us," that we might be
 Freed from that curse to all eternity;
 And if in Him, the tenor of our life
 Will be a pilgrimage, a race, a strife;
 Our greatest privilege, our highest aim,
 To seek His glory and to praise His name.

J. L.

R

NIGHT THOUGHTS BY A WATCHMAN.

A BURDEN-BEARER.

ON Thee, Thou holy, spotless One, were all my sins laid by Thy Father ; on Thee the sword of His flaming justice fell ; on Thee were made to meet the iniquities of all Thy chosen people, and by Thee they were borne away for ever ; on Thee the fire of heaven descended which consumed and marked with acceptance the sacrifice ; and Thou wast in an agony, and Thy soul was " exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." With all this, and much more, perfectly foreknown to Thee, yet Thou wast not an unwilling Surety and Burden-Bearer. It was Thy delight to take on Thee the ponderous load which justly lay upon the people of Thy love. How unspeakable Thy grace ! For our sake Thou becamest poor. It pleased the Father to charge our sins on Thee ; it pleased Thee to answer to the charge, and make a full atonement for every crime. It is pleasing to us to come near to Thee, even to Thy feet, and confess our transgressions and obtain our pardon at Thy throne. Sweet Jesus, Thou art altogether lovely ! How world-killing are Thy smiles ! How heart-drawing is Thy beauty to those whose spiritual eyes behold Thee ! How soul-satisfying and sin-slaying are Thy manifested favours !

Our sins destroyed us, but Thou hast destroyed our sins and delivered our souls. We had no help in ourselves ; our help is all in Thee. We cannot despair, for Thou art able to save to the uttermost. How great is Thy power ! " And Thy right hand shall save me " (Psa. cxxxviii. 7). Matchless Saviour, how could I sustain one charge of a thousand that Thou mightest have justly left me to answer ? How could I remove one registered transgression ? How could I fill up one omission ? I cannot lift up myself now Thou hast taken off my load ; and how should I stand before Thee with the oppression of my unatoned guilt ? But Thou hast lifted me up as well as taken my burden. Shall I praise Thee for what Thou hast done, or shall I pray to Thee to do greater things ? I have much to thank Thee for, and I still greatly need Thy supporting hand. My help cometh from Thee, therefore—

" To Thee I come, a sinner weak
And scarce know how to pray or speak ;
From fear and weakness set me free ;
Jesus, be merciful to me."

And not my sins only hast Thou taken up, but my sorrows and cares too. My sorrow, like my sin, is heavy—how heart-saddening and soul-piercing Thou only knowest. " My groaning is not hid from Thee," if from all beside. Oh, Thou Man of Sorrows, the

secret sigh was often heaved by Thee. The lonely mountain and the midnight sky witnessed Thy spirit-withering grief and agonizing prayer. Precious Companion of the sad art Thou! Suited to the heartbroken is Thy tenderness and skill. Thou wast sent to bind up the broken in heart; and Thou art still "the same Jesus." How blest the heart, moaning with sadness, which finds an echo vibrating from Thy breast! How helpful is Thy sympathy! How willing Thou art to hear my frequent and doleful complaints—

" Ah! whither could I flee for aid
When tempted, desolate, dismayed,
Or how the hosts of hell defeat,
Was not Thy throne a *mercy-seat*?"

My load of care—wilt Thou notice this as well? Truly great is Thy compassion, for Thou carest for me, and hast bidden me cast *all* my care on Thee. I am Thy child; why then should I be sad? I have the Spirit of adoption; why is my soul cast down? Why should I be filled with anxious fears? Thou hast ordained my path; why am I perplexed with gloomy thoughts? All because I do not, I cannot, cast my care on Thee. Thou hast studded Thy Book with bright and precious promises suited to me and for me. I cannot ask for more, but I want the power of faith. "Lord, I believe; help Thou my unbelief." Looking back I see—"Thou hast dealt well with Thy servant, according to Thy word;" and, considering the prospect, I am persuaded that "no good thing will fail of all that Thou hast spoken." I feel both my load of care and Thy supporting hand; and Thou hast said, "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise" (Psa. xii. 5). Ah! then—

" Let cares like a wild deluge come,
And storms of sorrow fall;
May I but safely reach my home,
My God, my heaven, my all."

" He is able,
He is willing, doubt no more."

W. B.

TRUE assurance is built upon a Scripture basis. Presumption hath no Scripture to show for its warrant. It is like a will without seal and witnesses, which is null and void in law: presumption wants both the witness of the Word, and the seal of the Spirit. Assurance always keeps the heart in a lowly posture; but presumption is bred of pride. Feathers fly up, but gold descends; he who hath this golden assurance, his heart descends in humility.—*Watson*.

MEMOIR OF THE LATE JOHN CLARK, OF FIVEASHDOWN.

(Continued from page 221.)

DURING the period of Mr. Clark's residence at Keston, he usually preached on a week evening once a week in his own house, and as the number of hearers increased, it seemed expedient to hire a school-room. Here he preached amidst trying circumstances. One he mentions was that one of his supporters, to please the professors of the day, forfeited his promise of helping the little cause, upon which our friend says the Lord gave him these words concerning him: "To have respect of persons is not good: for for a piece of bread that man will transgress" (Prov. xxviii. 21).

Another circumstance he relates in which he felt the Lord had kindly forewarned him. He was going to preach at Limehouse, where he had been before, but as he was going, a voice seemed to say, "This is the last day you will preach there." He preached, as he says, with liberty, but at the close of the day one of the managers said to him: "We wish to dispense with your services for the future." One of the leading men, who said he had heard well, seemed sorry, but the other appeared hard and callous; but, says our friend, "I left them, not knowing where I should get a lodging, but I found a Friend. Tears trickled down my cheeks upon the pavement. I blessed my dear Friend (the Lord) for telling me beforehand, for I afterward saw the mercy of being delivered from them, for most of them were rank Antinomians. I don't like to call people Antinomians, knowing it is a word used by professors who eat up the sins of God's people as they would eat bread. But what I call an Antinomian is the man who talks largely of doctrines and who never had repentance; who is not afraid of sin and does not tremble at it, nor at his own heart, but when he has committed anything wrong, takes the napkin of his hard faith, wipes his mouth, and says: 'Christ paid the debt, and there is nothing left for me to pay.' But as the Lord lives these will be cast into a prison for a sum they will ever owe. I know well a poor child of God may fall, and in falling may break his bones, but the wicked shall fall into mischief."

After various trials at Keston, God's providence seemed to point to his removal back to Surrey. A place opened at Fig's Marsh, Mitcham. When he went to look at his new abode, he says he sensibly fell into the Lord's hands for Him to supply his needs; and there the Lord prospered him in his business for a time, and, as he often preached at Epsom, he was relieved of much of

his toil in travelling. But this prosperity soon became an occasion for the flesh to take advantage of; and, having fallen into a worldly spirit, the temptations of Satan were not viewed with that abhorrence that became a profession of vital godliness. However, his Heavenly Father did not permit him to wither away, or allow the salt to lose all its savour. No, He visited him with paternal chastisement, the relation of which we shall give in his own words. He says: "I did not go without chastisement. These words used to follow me, 'I will make thee sick in smiting thee, in making thee desolate because of thy sins' (Micah vi. 13). Oh, how I prayed Him to withdraw His hand, lest I should be consumed by the blow of it (Psa. xxxix. 10); and at length I was compelled to vomit up all the sweet morsels, and to go like a poor perishing prodigal, confess my sin, and plead for Him to restore to me the joy of His salvation. At last, when on my knees, He gave me these words, 'Thy God hath commanded thy strength' (Psa. lxxviii. 28), and with the words He gave me the needed strength, for He heard me in the day that I cried unto Him, 'and strengthened me with strength in my soul' (Psa. cxxxviii. 3). I found my sins were gone, and their power was subdued. I could hate them with perfect hatred, and triumph in God's name. Then I went and preached that God would chasten for sin, also of the sanctification of the Spirit, and that they must be clean that bear the vessels of the Lord; that Christ was a 'son over his own house,' that He redeemed His people from all iniquity, and that He made them zealous of good works. I well knew what the dear man of God, Mr. Hart, meant by the words—

"From poisonous errors, pleasing cheats,
And gilded baits of sin,
Which, swallowed as delicious meats,
Infect and rot within."

"I knew, too, when there was a controversy in the Churches about chastisement, that those who were not chastened for their sins were 'bastards, and not sons' (Heb. xii. 8), for every one the Father receives are chastened, first, out of His law, and secondly, by His Fatherly rod. 'I will visit their sins with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes' (Psa. lxxxix. 32). I know the argument that is brought forward is this, that, as Christ endured the wrath of God due to sin, there remained no wrath; and then the question is asked, 'How does God chastise them?' to which I answer, He withdraws the light of His countenance, corruptions rise within, rebellion sets in, providence begins to frown, under which prayer may be given up, the Bible left unsearched, and a shyness is manifest towards gracious men. I have not gone to men to learn these lessons, for I have found that my back

has called for the rod, as Solomon says, 'A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back' (Prov. xxvi. 3).

"I must say to the honour of the Lord that He never suffered me to fall foully, and I think there never was a Saturday that I did not find the power of this worldly spirit leave me till the Monday; so that I learnt the spiritual meaning of Aaron and his sons having garments 'for glory and for beauty' (Exod. xxviii. 2), which they were to put on when they went into the holy place while they ministered, and then left them there when they came out" (Lev. xvi. 23).

While living at Mitcham he was privileged with occasional visits of the late much-esteemed Mr. W. Sharp, of Brighton, in whose conversation he says he felt a sweet sanctifying power, and felt himself, to use the Apostle's words, "filled" with his company; and as heart was knitted to heart, and they could see eye to eye, they realized what it is feared many never do who make "the communion of saints" a part of their creed. Happy would it be for Christians, to whatever party they belong, thus to commune from time to time of the Lord's dealings with their souls, for, if union is not created by communion, it is certainly strengthened thereby, and is one of the fruits resulting from an inseparable union to Christ, the living Vine.

This friendship was a link in the chain of God's providence to lead Mr. Clark to visit Brighton, where he was invited to preach the "Word of life" to Mr. Sharp's people occasionally when the latter was from home. There he found many warm-hearted friends, who received the truth in the spirit of meekness, and who showed by their liberality that, in partaking of spiritual things, they were ready to minister their carnal things. Once in particular the people heard well, and loaded him with their gifts, so that when he went to bed he counted the money, and felt it was too much for his poor services, while he blessed the Lord for so inclining His people towards him. The greater part of those dear people are now in glory, as well as their beloved pastor. The funeral sermon for the latter was preached by Mr. Clark, at the Huntingtonian Chapel, Union Street, Brighton, on Sunday evening, March 4th, 1855, and was reported the same week in the *Brighton Pulpit*.

We have often observed a great difference among the children of God in obtaining promises or portions of Scripture in answer to prayer. Some get a word of instruction by the application of a passage from the Bible, which is to them a sure word of prophecy, whereunto they do well that they take heed; while others, no less soberly and graciously exercised, are led to throw themselves upon the Lord in His providential guidance, relying upon the

general scope and tenor of God's Word to comfort those that are in distress. It will have been observed that our friend was often directed in the former manner, and the following is another instance of his having been so instructed.

His son, who had married, and who was employed and lived in London, was visited with typhus fever, and as he and his wife were in great distress, Mrs. Clark went up to London to take them some food and nourishment. After she had left, Mr. Clark poured out his heart before God in prayer on behalf of his son, when these words came to his mind, "Women received their dead raised to life again" (Heb. xi. 35); and he answered, "Yes, Lord, they did; let my son live;" and immediately the words came to him, "Thy son liveth" (John iv. 50). Thereupon he was filled with joy and gratitude, for he felt God had been gracious to him. His wife returned the following day, and, upon his making inquiry respecting his son, she said, "Oh, John, it is wonderful! The fever left him at such a time yesterday;" which our friend remembered was the very hour that he was pleading with the Lord for him, and when the words came, "Thy son liveth."

The next day he went himself to visit his son. When he entered the room, the latter said, "Oh, father, it is wonderful! The doctor cannot make it out, for he said I should be worse before I was better;" to which his father replied, "Well, my boy, it is well for you that you have a praying father;" to which he answered, "It is, for I cannot pray for myself." It would be a mercy if he were one day brought to pray for relief from a greater malady than that of typhus fever, and that he were brought to know his father's God as his God.

After this the subject of this memoir had to wade through many sore temptations—so much so that he says he could find no one in Scripture so correctly to answer to his case as the man among the tombs, out of whom the Lord cast a legion of devils. He says he felt fit for no society, and craved to be alone. Some of his friends thought he had never had a clear deliverance from the law, otherwise he would not have come into such a condition, but these friends perhaps as much mistook his case as did Job's friends his. The Lord often keeps His servants in a low place for a time, that they may be well skilled in tracking out the pathway of the tried and tempted children of God, and so have the tongue of the learned, to be able to speak a word in season to him that is weary. However, such were the feelings working within that he actually feared he should fall into some sin that would bring him before the bar of his country. It happened through an unforeseen circumstance that he was prevented from preaching at Cobham, one Lord's day, and, having heard of

the late William Tiptaft, he thought, as he was then supplying at Zoar Chapel, London, he would go and hear him. As he entered the dear man of God was in prayer, and, singular to relate, he uttered these words, "Lord, we think we may be left to do something that will bring us before the bar of our country." This exactly fitted our friend's case, after which Mr. Tiptaft preached with much unction and savour, and our friend left the chapel like a different man, rejoicing in God, and blessing Him for the instrument He that day made use of to his soul's deliverance.

(To be continued.)

A LOVING CONGRATULATION.

MY DEAR FATHER,—My dear wife reminds me that it is your birthday to-morrow, so I write for us both, and congratulate you, and to tender our best wishes for you temporally and spiritually. You are fast approaching the three-score years and ten, but even before then you may have had an abundant entrance into heaven, where are pleasures for evermore, and where you will not have the furrows, feeble gait, and grey hairs of old age, but bear the likeness of your God and blessed Redeemer. When old age brings with it such bright anticipations; when failing health strengthens the good hope within, and gives new life to the soul, then it were vain to wish you merely earthly joys and pleasures, beyond such as may take away *anxious* care; the rather we wish you on your birthday, and for the time on earth still allotted you, a clearer and a brighter hope in Christ; a stronger and a more lively faith; a deeper and a more self-denying love; yea, a healthy growth in every grace of the Spirit, and a daily conformity to the life and teaching of your risen Lord. That God may grant to you the first born's share, a double portion of His blessed Spirit, is our daily prayer. We desire that your last days may be your best ones, so that by your life, conversation, and death, we younger ones may have encouragement and be strengthened. May self be crucified in you, and Christ more exalted daily in your heart's affections. May you "live Christ," then death will indeed be gain to you. Gain, because you will *lose*. Lose what? Sin, sorrow suffering, and all dross. Gain, because you will gain what "eye hath not seen nor ear heard," &c.

With best love, I am, your only boy,
Stalbridge, August 4th, 1880.

WILLIE.

YOU that have filled the book of God with your sins should fill the bottle of God with your tears.—*Dr. Goodwin.*

THE WATER OF LIFE.

THE Lord Jesus Christ is superior over all the world. He speaks and says, "If *any* man thirst, let him come unto ME and drink." Look at that poor man dying on the cross; it is his just desert for his crimes, yet he thirsts; he has been brought to cry alone to the Lord Jesus Christ for mercy. Satan would hinder him from drinking, but he has been made to thirst deeply for this water, and the Lord says even to such, "Let him come unto Me and drink." Again, there was a woman "which was a sinner," who approached Jesus; Simon, the Pharisee, said immediately, "This Man, if He were a Prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him; for she is a sinner." The devil would insinuate she surely must not drink, but blessed be His holy name, He knew all about her, that she *was a sinner*; but He saw her thirst and knew it was the drawing of His Father, else she had never come to Him, for He says "No man can come to Me except the Father which hath sent Me draw Him." Yes, He knew she thirsted for the water of life, and He says, "If any man thirst," even the greatest sinner, who *thirsts indeed*, "let him come unto Me and drink." How sweet, how refreshing would this glorious truth, this precious declaration, be to her, "THY SINS ARE FORGIVEN."

"A King shall reign in righteousness; and princes shall rule in judgment. And a Man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place." Rivers of water! Who is this MAN who shall be as rivers of water? Only, the "MAN more precious than fine gold" (Isaiah xiii. 12). The MAN of SORROWS (Isaiah liii. 3). The MAN who is Jehovah's Fellow (Zech. xiii. 7). The MAN—the peace of His people (Micah v. 5); and "Jesus of Nazareth, a MAN *approved of God*" (Acts ii. 22). De mark this—how the streams come to those in deep, deep need! "*A dry place.*" Has your heart ever been to you a dry place? Have the world, your own sins, and the temptations of the devil made it so dry that there is not a single drain of moisture in it? And now you dread coming to that awful place of which we read there is not a drop of water to cool the parched tongue. Oh, unless you have been brought to this, if sin is not a heavy burden too heavy for you to bear, if you die without Christ (oh, solemn thought), there is no hope but that you must one day come to that awful place, where not one drop of water can ever cool your tongue in a never ending eternity! God forbid that you or I should ever be left to that awful state! Oh, how we long, if it was His blessed will, that He would send His Holy Spirit to create this thirst and give this longing, and then cause your willing souls to

take of the water of life freely. Yes, the Lord Jesus Christ is as rivers of water to every thirsty soul.

In the thirty-sixth Psalm, at the eighth verse, it is said: "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house; and Thou shalt make them drink of *the river of Thy pleasures.*" Jehovah's first great Pleasure is the Lord Jesus Christ; in Him He is *well pleased*, He is His Elect in whom His soul *delighteth*. Oh, what a river of pleasure it is to hear of His righteousness and blood; His righteousness to clothe me when I feel my nakedness, and His blood to cleanse me when I feel my filthiness and to atone for all my guilt. It is not "They may drink," but "Thou shalt *make them drink.*" What! Will He indeed *make* them drink? Dare they not, can they not drink except He *makes* them? Oh, what love that Jehovah should condescend to make them drink! He alone can give the thirst, and He alone can satisfy that thirst. Yes! The Lord Jesus Christ is God's Pleasure, and every stream of grace and glory flows from Him.

Again, the doctrines of divine truth are Jehovah's pleasures, so when your heart and mine finds delight in them, surely we are brought to the same mind with Him and can drink of these rivers of His pleasures. So Paul, in his Epistle to the Ephesian Church says, that the doctrines of election and predestination are "*according to the good pleasure of His will.*" "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, *according to the good pleasure of His will*" (Ephes. i. 3—6). To the natural mind there is no pleasure in these precious doctrines; indeed the carnal mind hates them, but the Apostle Paul says, "*Blessed be God*" for such precious truths. Many, even young children of God, say they do not like them; but in the Lord's own time His people *shall* be willing to receive His truth wherein *He* takes pleasure, and they shall take pleasure in it too. Yes! "The heart of these rash ones who speak against these truths *shall* understand knowledge, and the tongue of these stammerers *shall* speak plainly" (Is. xxxii. 4). Their tongues may for a time stammer out a yea and nay Gospel, but the Lord will teach His own children to speak plainly and to give forth a *certain* sound. I find also the Lord Jesus Christ thanking His Father for these very truths, "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.* Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight" (Matt. xi. 25, 26).—*Extracted from a Sermon by W. L. Rolleston, M.A.*

A SHORT SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF MR. THOMAS HALYBURTON.

[THE following brief account of that excellent man, Thomas Halyburton, is copied from an old *Gospel Magazine* (1769), and we hope the reading of it may prove profitable to many of the Lord's family who often complain of bondage through fear of death. We would that, in this evil day, the servants and people of God were like him, more deeply concerned to enjoy that communion with Christ which gives a divine savour to the life and conversation, instead of being engaged in petty strifes about matters in which self is more concerned than the honour of God and the true welfare of His Church. May the good Lord pour upon us a copious measure of that grace which so abounded and shone among our honoured forefathers.—ED.]

HE was born at Duplin, in the parish of Aberdalgy, near Perth, December 25th, 1674. His father had been minister of that parish, but was in the year 1662 ejected, with about three hundred ministers more, for refusing submission to episcopal government.

In the year 1682 his father died, soon after which his mother, with her son-in-law and his wife, withdrawing on account of the episcopal persecution to Holland, she took him with her and put him to Erasmus's school. They continued in Holland till August, 1687, when they returned to Scotland, narrowly escaping shipwreck.

On his return he was again put to school, from whence, in due time, he was sent to the university; where, having finished his studies, he was received as chaplain into a noble family. In the year 1699 he was licensed to preach, and was appointed, the year after, minister of the parish of Ceres, in which he had lived but a few years when his health fell under so great an impairment that he was hardly able to go through his ministerial work.

In the year 1710 he was appointed, by patent from Queen Anne, Professor of Divinity in the new college of St. Andrew's; and on September 23rd, 1712, at seven in the morning, he fell asleep in the Lord, and him will the Lord bring with Him.

The following is an account of his last words. On Wednesday, September 17th, 1712, a friend being come in the morning to see him, and having asked him how he had passed the night, he answered, "Not well. I was last night sorely tossed with the thoughts of eternity; but I dare not say they were distracting. My evidences are indeed much clouded. I have been thinking on

the terrible things of God, and all that is difficult in death to a saint. All my enemies have been about me. I have had a great conflict, and faith had like to have failed. Oh, that I may be kept in this last trial, now coming on, from being an offence to God's people!"

In the afternoon, some of his brethren in the ministry being come to see him, he said to them, "I am young, and have but little experience; but this death-bed makes me old: and therefore I use the freedom to exhort you to faithfulness in the Lord's work. You will never repent it. He is a good Master; I have always found Him so; and, if I had a thousand lives, I should think them all too little to employ in His service." All that day, as he had likewise been for some days before, he was in darkness and desertion.

On September 18th, being asked by a friend how he did, he replied, "Oh, what a terrible conflict had I yesterday! I can now say, 'I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith.' He hath now filled my mouth with a new song. 'Jehovah-Jireh—in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.' 'Praise is comely for the upright.' I shall shortly get a different sight of God from what I have ever had, and shall be more meet to praise Him for ever. Oh, the thoughts of an *incarnate* God are sweet and ravishing; and oh, how I wonder at myself that I do not love Him more, that I do not admire Him more! What a wonder that I enjoy such composure under all my bodily pain, and in the view of death! What a mercy that, having the use of my reason, I can declare His goodness to me!"

On this occasion he said to his wife, "He came to me in the third watch of the night, walking upon the waters, and said to me, 'I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. I was dead, and am alive, and live for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death.' He hath stilled the tempest, and there is a sweet calm in my soul."

Being attended by the physician, he said to him, "The greatest kindness I am now able to show you is to commend religion to you. There is, doctor, a reality in religion. This is an age that hath lost the sense of it. But 'He hath not said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye My face in vain.' I bless the Lord I have seen that holiness yields peace and comfort in prosperity and adversity, therefore 'I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, because it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.' I am so far from altering my thoughts of religion on account of the opposition it meets with, and the contempt with which it is treated, that these things endear it the more to me. For the simplicity of Gospel worship many must have now-a-days the pomp and parade of devotion. This is an evidence of the

decay of religion, for when people have not the power and spirituality of it in their hearts, they must have something to please their senses. This is my judgment, and I speak the words of truth and soberness. Every one that is in Christ is a new creature; he hath union with Christ and a new nature. This is the groundwork of the matter. The Christian religion is little understood by most of us. Seek acquaintance with God. It is good to have Him to go to when we are turning our faces to the wall. 'He is known for a refuge in the palaces of Zion;' 'A very present help in trouble.' But oh, the strange hardness in the heart of man! I believe there are few who are come to maturity but, when they see others dying, fall under a conviction that they themselves must die; but they are not duly affected with it. What they see is like one rising from the dead. 'They have Moses and the prophets; if they hear not them, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.' We must have an ear from God before we can hear."

On that day he had, at his own desire, one of Mr. Rutherford's letters read to him, whereupon, addressing himself to those about him, he said, "That is a book I would commend to you all. There is more practical religion in that letter [the 139th, to Mr. John Mein] than in some large volumes on the subject."

One of his brethren in the ministry having reminded him of the Lord's goodness to Principal Anderson, in taking him away before the heart-breaking providences came on which had taken place since his death, he replied, "I know that things will have a good issue. The cause that is now down will not abide down. I have said it, and will stand to it, and venture my soul on it: 'Say to Zion, Thy God reigneth.' Kings and their ministers, who for the support of their states build and fortify on the ruins of Zion, shall together with all their works be ruined and perish, and their memorial shall perish with them. I will tell you, brother, what I have long thought. I am no prophet. I pretend to know nothing more than what appears from the Word of God. My judgment on the taking off the servants of God at this time is, that there is no stop to be put to the torrent, and that it is probable it will overflow not only this, but all the reformed Churches."

Being attended by the apothecary, a young man, he said to him, "The Lord show you mercy. Study religion in your younger years, and remember that you will, on a death-bed, have no comfort without it; and I solemnly warn you that, if you shall become hardened by the frequent sight of persons in my circumstances, you will be in danger of losing all sensibility of conscience and of being hardened for ever."

To three of his brethren in the ministry he said, "When I

have been diligent in study and meditation, I have ever found the Lord shining upon me, and testifying His approbation. There is nothing to be had with a slack hand. It was the delight of my heart to preach the Gospel, inasmuch that it made me sometimes neglect a frail body. I have ever thought that, if I could contribute to the saving of a soul, it would be a star, a crown, and a glorious crown. I know that this was the thing that I aimed at. I desired to decrease, that the Bridegroom might increase; and to be nothing, that He might be all; and I rejoice in His highness. I was fond enough of books; but I must tell you that, in the course of my ministry, what the Lord let me see of my bad heart, and of what was necessary against it, was of more avail than all my books."

Afterwards, to two other ministers, he said, "The work of the ministry was my deliberate choice; and, were my days to be much lengthened, and the times at hand as troublesome as they are like to be, I would rather be a contemned minister of God than the greatest prince on earth. I preached the Gospel with pleasure, for I loved it, as the salvation of my own soul was upon it; and I have not changed my thoughts of it since. I exhort you to be very diligent. There may be hard conflicts. We are all good untried, but we have need to watch and be sober, and to have on us continually the whole armour of God."

To a gentleman, who was on a visit to him, he said, "Follow the example of Jesus Christ, and be conversant with the Word of God. Be careful not only to read the Word (you may soon be tired of that), but likewise to pray for the Spirit of the Lord to quicken it, for, when this shall be granted, you will pursue the Word as the child does the breast, who cannot live without it; and, withal, be diligent in your attendance on ordinances."

On the same day, he said to another person, "Let not the scorn and contempt which are thrown on religion induce you to give it up. You have found it not in vain to seek the Lord. The Scriptures of truth are writings contemned of men, but they 'are able to make you wise to salvation.' You will find your account in conversing with them. The course I have weakly followed hath been at least to side with them that are for God, and now it is come to a push, I have peace. I have always wished to have God for my God, and to have the heritage of His chosen; and I have heard some of them, who have walked contrary to Him and forsaken Him, when they were brought to extremities, cry out, each for himself, 'Shame on the way in which I have run!'"

The next night, finding some sweat on his face, he said, "I fancy it is an indication of a greater change; but I know not how it comes to pass, that one who hath met with so much of

God as I have should be so disingenuous as in the least to doubt Him for what is to follow. Oh, what an evil heart of unbelief, cursed unbelief, have I! Oh, how much hath God honoured me! Oh, that I should yet have such an enemy in my bosom as an evil heart!"

The same night, after the reading to him, at his own desire, of some comforting passages in the Word of God, he said, "Now, there it is all. I was under a heavy damp, but God hath delivered me, and filled me with peace; and I hope He will deliver me, even from that which I have feared in death. I hope the God of peace will so bruise Satan under my feet shortly as that he shall get up no more, and give me the victory over a cunning world and a deceitful heart. Oh, many a weary day I have had with my unbelief!"

On September 19th, in the morning, being desired to lie still, and try if he could not sleep, he replied, "Should not I employ the last remains of my strength to set forth His glory?" Then, lifting up his hands, he said, "Lame hands and lame legs [his hands and legs being greatly swelled]; but see a lame man leaping and rejoicing."

Finding himself, before noon, very weak, he took leave of his wife and children, saluting and speaking particularly to each. His words on this occasion to his wife were, "A kind and affectionate wife you have been. The Lord bless you; and He will bless you. After this, having his servants called together, he said to them, "My dear friends, make religion your main business, and mind that above all things. I charge you all, beware of graceless masters, and endeavour to live with those who fear God."

He then said, "Here is a demonstration of the reality and power of faith and godliness, that I, a poor weak and timorous man, once as much afraid of death as any one; I, who was many years under the terrors of death, come, in the mercy of God, and by the power of His grace, composedly and with joy to look death in the face. I have seen it in its paleness, and all the circumstances of horror that attend it. I dare look it in the face in its most ghastly shape, and hope to have, in a little time, the victory over it."

Some ministers being come to see him, he said to them, among other things, "Well, sirs, what shall we say of the Lord Jesus Christ? 'He is altogether lovely.' Oh, study the Word. Observe the accomplishment of it. It is the thing I have loved all my days, and it is sweet to the last."

Afterwards, exhorting some to think of death, he said, "To think of death is a profitable thing; but this is not done by going in to churchyards and visiting tombs, but by getting under the

impressions of death in its first appearance and cause, and in its different issues and consequences, with a view to both covenants—that of works, by which it was brought into the world, and that of grace, by which believers are delivered from it.”

During another conversation, he said, “I know that a great deal of what is said by a dying man will pass for canting and raving, but I bless God, He hath so preserved the little judgment I had that I have been able to reflect with composure on His dealings with me. I am sober and composed, if ever I was sober; and whether men will forbear, or whether they will hear, this is a testimony. Am not I a man wonderfully upheld of God under affliction and death? The death of the saints is made a derision in our day. But if I am laughed at, I can laugh again, and I think I have most reason. When such people shall come to my pass, they will not dare to laugh. ‘I will rejoice in my God, and joy in the God of my salvation.’ I want death to complete my happiness. Oh, what a care hath God of me! He is hiding me from the evil to come. I pity, I pity, you that stay behind. I am no prophet; I do not pretend to prophesy; but I am persuaded a storm is coming on the Church. But the day must break, and I hope the Lord will arise, and the Church be made a wonder.”

September 20th.—Among many other heavenly and very affecting things, spoken in the like spirit of faith and joy with those already inserted here, he said to those about him, “You will meet with difficulties and discouragements, but this may encourage you, that God owns His servants; and now I find that He meets them who rejoice and work righteousness. Glory, glory to Him! Oh, what of God do I see? I have never seen anything like it. The beginning and end of religion are wonderfully sweet. ‘Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright,’ &c. Not that I call myself perfect; the Lord knows I am far from it. I have found corruption stirring since you came in this morning;” after which, a friend said to him, “The Lord’s dealing with you hath been very uncommon.” He replied, “Uncommon indeed, if you knew all that I know. But in this is the glory of the Lord, that He makes the weak strong, and so the excellency of His power is more plainly seen.” Afterwards, “I long for His salvation. I bless His name, I have found Him. I am taken up in blessing Him. I am dying rejoicing in the Lord.”

September 21st.—Being the Lord’s day, he said, “Shall I forget Zion? Nay, ‘let my right hand forget her cunning, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.’ Oh, to have God returning to this Church, and His work going forward in the world! If all the drops of blood, all the particles of my body, and all the

hairs of my head were men, they should for this go all to the fire. Oh, sirs, I could not have believed that I should bear, and bear cheerfully, as I have done, this rod which hath laid on me so long. This is a miracle, pain without pain; and this is not the fancy of a man disordered, but of one who is fully composed. Oh, blessed be God that ever I was born! I have a father and a mother, and ten brethren and sisters in heaven, and I shall be the eleventh. Oh, blessed be the day that ever I was born! Oh, that I were where He is; and yet, were God to withdraw from me, I should be as weak as water. All that I enjoy, though it be miracle on miracle, would not support me without fresh supplies from God. The thing that I rejoice in is, that God is altogether full, and that in the Mediator, Christ Jesus, is 'all the fulness of the Godhead,' and it will never run out."

September 22nd.—He said, among other things, "I awoke in a sort of carnal frame, and thought I had lost my jewel; but now I hope He will stand by me to the end. If ever I was of clear judgment and memory in my life, it hath been since He laid His hand on me. What shall I render to Him? My bones are tearing through my skin, and yet all my bones are praising Him. Glory to God that a vile worm, the chief of sinners, is singled out to be a monument of His grace, and a trumpeter of His praise. I listened to unbelief since I came to this bed, and it had almost killed me, but God rebuked me. I fought the victory by prayer, and God gave it me. He is the Hearer of prayer."

After struggling with a defluxion in his throat, he said, "The Lord hath sent another messenger for me, to hasten me home;" and some persons present fixing their eyes on him with looks expressive of a wonderful attention, he said to them, "Why look you so steadfastly on me, as if by my might and power I were as I am? 'Not I, but the grace of God in me.' It is the Spirit of God that supports me."

Afterwards he said, "What cannot grace do? You see a man dying a monument of the glorious power of astonishing grace, and generations to come shall call me blessed. Follow my advice, study the power of religion. It is that, and not a name, that will give the comfort I find. That is telling in this providence, and I shall be telling it to all eternity. If there be such a glory in His conduct towards me now, what will it be to see the Lamb in the midst of the throne—the Lamb that was slain, in the midst of the throne? My peace hath been like a river."

To some of his brethren in the ministry he said, "What a demonstration hath God given to you and myself of the immortality of the soul, by the vigour of my intellects, and the lively efforts of my spirit towards God, and the things of God, now when my body is so low and so pained."

At night he became very weak, and after a sore struggle saw Ebenezer. Some time after he said, "When I shall be so weakened as not to be able to speak, I will give you, if I can, a sign of triumph when I am near to glory." A good while after, having made some efforts to vomit, he said, "I am effectually choked;" and lifting up his eyes, said, "Pity, pity, Lord!" Then, speaking to his wife and those about him, he said, "Be not discouraged; the Lord's way is the best way, and I am composed. Whether I go away in a fit of vomiting or fainting, it is all one. I did not know whether I was up or down."

Soon after, one of those about him having said, "You are now putting your seal to that truth that 'great is the gain of godliness,'" he replied, "Yes, indeed." Then said another, "And I hope you are encouraging yourself in the Lord;" on which, not being able to speak, he lifted up his hands and clapped them, and quickly after he departed to the land "where the weary are at rest."

A PURE LANGUAGE.

SOME years ago an English gentleman, by a particular providence, had occasion to be in North America, where the following circumstance occurred to him, which is thus related in his own words.

Every day's observation convinces me that the children of God are made so by His own special grace and power, and that all means, whether more or less, are equally effectual with Him, whenever He is pleased to employ them for conversion.

In one of my excursions, while I was in the province of New York, I was walking by myself over a considerable plantation, amused with its husbandry, and comparing it with that of my own country, till I came within a little distance of a middle-aged negro, who was tilling the ground. I felt a strong inclination, unusual with me, to converse with him. After asking him some little questions about his work, which he answered very sensibly, I wished him to tell me whether his state of slavery was not disagreeable to him, and whether he would not gladly exchange it for his liberty. "Massa (said he, looking seriously upon me), I have wife and children; my massa takes care of them, and I have no care to provide anything; I have a good massa, who teach me to read; and I read good book, that makes me happy." "I am glad to hear you say so; and pray what is the good book you read?" "The Bible, massa, God's own good book."

"Do you understand, friend, as well as read this book; for many can read the words well who cannot get hold of the true and good sense?"

“Oh, massa, I read the book much before I understand ; but at last I feel pain in my heart ; I found things in the book that cut me to pieces.”

“Aye, and what things were they ?” “Why, massa, I found I had bad heart, massa ; a very bad heart indeed : I felt pain that God would destroy me, because I was wicked, and done nothing as I should do. God was holy, and I was very vile and naughty, so I could have nothing from Him but fire and brimstone in hell.” In short, he entered into a full account of his convictions of sin, which were indeed as deep and piercing as almost any I had ever heard of ; and what Scriptures came to his mind, which he had read, that both probed him to the bottom of his sinful heart, and were made the means of light and comfort to his soul. I then inquired of him what ministry or means he made use of, and found that his master was a Quaker, a plain sort of man, who had taught his slaves to read, but who had not, however, even conversed with this negro upon the state of his soul. I asked him likewise, how he got comfort under all this trial. “Oh, massa (said he), it was Christ gave me comfort by His dear word. He bade me come unto Him, and He would give me rest, for I was very weary and heavy laden.” And here he went through a line of the most precious texts in the Bible, showing me, by his artless comment upon them as he went along, what great things God had done in the course of some years for his soul. Being more acquainted with doctrinal truths and the analogy of the Bible than he had been, or in his situation could easily be, I had a mind to try how far a simple, untutored experience, graciously given without the usual means, could carry a man from some speculative errors ; and I therefore asked him several questions about the merit of works, the justification of a sinner, the power of grace, and the like. I own I was as much astonished at as I admired the sweet spirit and simplicity of his answers, with the heavenly wisdom that God had put into the mind of this negro. His discourse, flowing merely from the richness of grace, with a tenderness and expression far “beyond the reach of art,” perfectly charmed me. On the other hand, my entering into all his feelings, together with an account to him, which he had never heard before, that thus and thus the Lord in His mercy dealt with all His children, and had dealt with me, drew streams of joyful tears down his black face, that we looked upon each other and talked with that inexpressible glow of Christian affection which made me more than ever believe, what I have often too thoughtlessly professed to believe, the communion of saints. I shall never forget how the poor excellent creature seemed to hang upon my lips, and to eat my very words, when I enlarged upon the love of Christ to poor sinners, the free bounty and tender mercy

of God, the frequent and delightful sense He gives of His presence, the faith He bestows in His promises, the victories this faith is enabled to get over trials and temptations, the joy and peace in believing, the hope in life and death, and the glorious expectation of immortality. To have taken off his eager, delighted, animated air and manner, would have been a masterpiece for a painter. He had never heard such a discourse, nor found the opportunity of hearing it before. He seemed like a man who had been thrown into a new world, and at length had found company. Though our conversation lasted at least two or three hours, I scarce ever enjoyed the happy swiftness of time so sweetly in all my life. We knew not how to part. He would accompany me as far as he might, and I felt, on my side, such a delight in the artless, savoury, solid, unaffected experience of this dear soul, that I could have been glad to see him often then, or to see his like at any time now. But my situation rendered this impossible. I therefore took an affectionate adieu, with an ardour equal to the warmest and the most ancient friendship, telling him that neither the colour of his body, nor the condition of his present life, could prevent him from being my dear brother in our dear Saviour, and that though we must part now, never to see each other again any more in this world, I had no doubt of our having another joyful meeting in our Father's house, where we should live together and love one another throughout a long and a happy eternity. "Amen, amen, my dear massa; God bless you and poor me too for ever and ever." If I had been an angel from heaven he could not have received me with more evident delight than he did; nor could I have considered him with a more sympathetic regard if he had been a long known Christian of the good old sort, grown up into my affections in the course of many years.

The above is extracted from Serle's "Church of God," published in 1806. E.

CHILDREN take more notice of what their parents do than what they say.—*Tiptaft.*

OH! did sin bring sorrow into the world? Then let sorrow carry sin out of the world.—*Dr. Goodwin.*

CHRIST did not give Himself for supposed or imaginary sins, but for real ones; not only for small and little sins, but for great and gross ones; not only for one or two, but for all; not for subdued and extinguished sins, but for unconquered, strong, and powerful ones.—*Luther.*

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XV.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I feel I cannot rest satisfied till I have written a few lines to you. Last Tuesday evening I went to chapel so wretched and miserable I could scarcely bear myself. I felt I must sink. I was in such darkness of mind I thought my poor soul must be lost. I inwardly cried, "Save, Lord, or I perish!" "Give me Christ or else I die!" And oh, I thought, "The Lord will not look upon such a vile, base wretch as I am!" I concluded He would not hear my petitions, but that I should be cast at last into that place where I deserve to be sent—into everlasting punishment. While in this distressed state of mind you gave out the 339th hymn—

" Oh, my distrustful heart,
How small thy faith appears !
But greater, Lord, Thou art
Than all my doubts and fears:
Did Jesus once upon me shine ?
Then Jesus is for ever mine."

Oh, how sweet the first two verses were to my soul! Yes, the Lord was far greater than my doubts and fears. Instead of disregarding me, He showed Himself gracious and merciful, and I dared not say He had not shone into this cold heart of mine, for I felt that He had. Sweet indeed were those two lines—

" Did Jesus *once* upon me shine ?
Then Jesus is for ever mine ;"

and this verse also—

" Unchangeable His will ;
Whatever be my frame
His loving heart is still
Eternally the same :
My soul through many changes goes,
His love no variation knows."

I knew I had felt Him to be a gracious and merciful God to me, and then I thought His love was the same towards me both when I realized His presence and when I did not. This consideration cheered my heart for the moment; but how very soon I sink down again as low as ever, and I then want the Lord to come again; I want Him to visit me again; I want Him to tell me that He died for me. I feel I cannot rest till I know this experimentally; but oh, how afraid I am that I shall never realize it! I am sometimes afraid I am deceived—that what I hope I have sometimes realized is what I have picked up from others—but I cannot get away from these feelings of uneasiness respecting an interest in Jesus. Sometimes I think I will give it all up, and think no more about it, for I conclude the Lord

will not look upon me, and that it is no use trying to call upon His name. But when I think I will give it all up I cannot, for I am not able to cast away all the concern I have for the welfare of my immortal soul. Satan tempts me to believe that the Lord will not bless me because I am so young, and have been so wicked. But I know my age will not make any difference, nor all my sins and wickedness, for, if the Lord loves me now, He loved me before I was born. I want the Lord to forgive my sins, and to tell me that He has put them away. I want to call Him mine. I want Him to say, "I am *thy* God." Oh, that He would come and bless me thus! "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him!" Oh, that He would tell me, so as to for ever assure me, that He has chosen me! I feel nothing short of this will do. I must have Christ to be my Saviour, or I must perish. I do fear greatly at times that He will cast me away from Him, but I am sure I cannot bear the thought of being parted from the Lord of life and glory. I feel I must continue crying to Him, whether He will take any notice of me or not. If I must perish, I will perish praying at His footstool.

"I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try,
For, if I stay away, I know
I must for ever die.

"I'll to the gracious King approach
Whose sceptre pardon gives;
Perhaps He will command my touch,
And then the suppliant lives.

"Perhaps He will admit my plea;
Perhaps will hear my prayer;
But, if I perish, I must pray,
And perish only there."

The Lord helping me, this shall be my resolve. He declares in His holy Word, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out;" and I do want to come—yea, my soul does long and pant to come unto Him. Oh, that He would assure me that I am born again! I feel that, if I were sure that the Spirit's work was begun in my soul, I could wait more contentedly, for I know where He begins He will complete the work of grace. I want to know and feel that I am seeking rightly.

Did you, my dear friend (if you will allow me to call you friend), ever feel anything like what I have described? I must now close, having no more time at present.

I remain, yours,
A Poor Worm,
L. W.

Coventry, April 1st, 1880.

[The answer to this is (D.V.) to appear in our next.—ED.]

THE SOWER.

SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON PREACHED BY
MR. BOORNE,

AT GALEED CHAPEL, BRIGHTON, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
JULY 17TH, 1881.

“For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.”—HEBREWS iii. 14.

THERE are two very important points in a man's religion which he will do well continually to consider, for a profitable pondering of them in life is likely to yield comfort to his soul in death.

Much of our experience may be such a labyrinth of trials and temptations, resulting in no particular spiritual gain, that it may seem to lack point, at least at the time, though afterwards one might have said, “The Lord was there, but I knew it not.” He was there, lending an unseen hand, and secretly sustaining us, but, in reflecting upon it, we may not have felt it bore that definite stamp which we could desire, as giving an indubitable proof that it was the work of God.

Now, what are these two points which, as we have said, are of so much importance? They are the beginning and the end of a man's religion.

Some talk of having had a wonderful beginning, but there their religion seems to end. Nothing is seen to corroborate their assertions of so great a work. However, this is certain, that a right beginning will lead to a right end; also, that the nature of the beginning will be best tested by the end. “He that endures to the end the same shall be saved.”

In endeavouring to speak to you, we shall glance at three features in our text—

I. “The beginning of our confidence.”

II. The holding of this beginning “steadfast unto the end.”

III. That it is in this steadfast holding that we are manifestly “made partakers of Christ.”

There is a beginning to everything. “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; and God said, Let there be light: and there was light.” So, in the commencement of the work of grace in the heart, God commands the light to shine in this dark place; and, by reason of the darkness of a man's mind, he no more comprehends the light than did our dark earth at first comprehend the light of heaven. Yet it is so disseminated within until it leads the soul up to the fountain of light and

life, for "he that doeth truth cometh to the light;" he is drawn by it, and cannot walk in perpetual darkness.

Now, there must be a beginning to our confidence. You may have heard some talk in this way: "I was converted twenty years ago. I accepted Christ as my Saviour, and have had no doubt about my safety since then." Now, wherein do these manifest themselves as good soldiers of Jesus Christ? Where is the daily conflict? How very different to the experience expressed by our favourite poet—

"When his pardon is signed and his peace is procured,
From that moment the conflict begins."

Others may seem to gather a confidence from the opinion of a good man concerning them. If they find they are thought well of by such as are counted discerning people, upon that they will build, and upon that they will rest. But what saith the Scripture? "Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom" (Micah vii. 5). Again, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Isaiah ii. 22.) Others will make the prayers of the godly their confidence. "Such and such a good man has prayed for me." True; so Jeremiah prayed for many in Israel, but at length the Lord said to him, "Pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them" (Jer. xi. 14). Doubtless Samuel prayed for, as well as mourned over, Saul; but the Lord said, "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel?" (1 Sam. xvi. 1.) Many, too, acquire a confidence from their acquaintance with the letter of truth; a mere speculative knowledge of the plan of salvation has puffed up many; but, when the day of trial comes, all this confidence melts away, and stands for nothing in the sight of God.

All confidence in one's own heart must be abandoned. "He that trusts in his own heart is a fool." Yet we are continually finding ourselves guilty of it; so that it becomes a life-long lesson to learn what fools we are. But, as the Spirit of God goes on to discover to us our thoughts, motives, and intentions, and the greatness of inbred sin is beheld by us, we learn more than ever to distrust our desperately wicked and deceitful hearts, so that we dare not promise ourselves any satisfaction by diligence in reading, meditation, or prayer, but are constrained to rely on something out of ourselves, which is made known to us by a divine revelation. And where, then, shall a guilty sinner look? Whither shall he fly? Worldly things will yield him no relief. At length, drawn by the Father, he comes to Him who is "the confidence of all the ends of the earth" (Psalm lxxv. 5), and falls down with this

request: "Lord, help me!" Thus he is brought to venture his naked soul upon the hope set before him in the Gospel; and thus, lost or saved, sink or swim, he falls upon Jesus Christ—

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

And, although he may not feel much confidence of being saved, yet this is the beginning of his confidence, for here only can he find an anchorage for his tempest-tossed soul.

But now let us glance at a few of the concomitants of this beginning. Look back, child of God, at the time when the Lord brought you to seek His face. How you were constrained to cast your anchor within the veil, whither Jesus, as your Forerunner, had entered. How it separated you from the world, made you leave off old and ill practices, and give up bad or unprofitable companions. You might, while striving under a spirit of bondage, have made many resolutions to change your ways, which you found yourself too weak to perform. But, when the Lord blessed you with the spirit of love, life, and liberty, you could give up every companion for Christ. Nothing would you withhold from Him then; whereas, since, you may have found it hard work to squeeze out a sovereign, or even less, for His people or His cause. Then what great love you felt for the Lord's family. You esteemed them the excellent of the earth, and coveted them for your companions; besides which, your desires and affections were continually going up to the Lord in secret communion with Him. These were some of the fruits flowing from the beginning of your confidence.

But one of you may be saying, "My beginning tries me much." Well, I am glad of it, for you may then enter into the spirit of Peter's injunction, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure" (2 Peter i. 10). Yet you will in some measure know what first gave you hope, and what was the beginning of your confidence, and you will tell the Lord of that, and He will allow us to talk to Him of His own work. If it be work of our own getting up, we shall have no desire for communion with the Lord, nor any gracious longing for Him to attest it. "Ah!" one may say, "the work in my soul is by no means clear, yet I dare not say it is of my own production, and it causes me much anxiety." Well, poor sinner, where there is a genuine work there will be anxiety. As one says, "Oft it causes anxious thought;" and this will produce watchfulness. What, then, is God's word to such? "Blessed is the man that heareth Me, watching daily at My gates, waiting at the posts of My doors. For whoso findeth Me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord" (Prov. viii. 34, 35). God's favour, then, is the soul's desire. And what are

we all met for this morning ? Is it for God's favour or for man's patronage ? You know, at least in some measure, whether you are waiting for the Lord ; and, if you are really waiting upon God, you have an expectation from Him. Yea, God's thoughts towards you are " thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end " (Jer. xxix. 11) ; and for your further encouragement He declares, " They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me " (Isa. xlix. 23).

II. The steadfast holding of this confidence : " If we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end. " In the Book of Proverbs, Christ is described in the character of Wisdom, and thus it is said of Wisdom, " She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her : and happy is every one that retaineth her " (Prov. iii. 18). And who will lay hold on this ? None but the ready to perish sinners to whom, when sinking, God throws out a rich promise, which is like a rope to a drowning man. That very promise is as the beginning of his confidence. He treasures it up, makes much of it, marks it in his Bible, and tries to put it in suit before God : " Remember the word unto Thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope " (Psa. cxix. 49) ; and thus he reasons with his soul : " If anything ever came to me from God, that promise did. I may have to part with many things, but this I cannot give up ; " and, although he may seem to lay it aside for months, or even for years, yet in the day of distress it becomes like a sheet anchor to his soul.

Now, the soul who has his face Zion-ward will be attacked by the enemy, who, although he cannot rob him of eternal life, may try to strip him of his profession of God's name. Thus he may be tempted to go back into the world again ; but he dare not, he cannot do that. " We are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul " (Heb. x. 39). But what a conflict he finds ! He is anxious to be found right at last, and to get to heaven, yet he fears he shall give all up ; but he does not, for he finds, as the poet sings—

" The Gospel bears my spirits up ;
A faithful and unchanging God
Lays the foundation for my hope
In oaths, and promises, and blood. "

And, as we journey on, having been blest with a hope in the mercy of God, and with the pardon of our sins, Satan may ply us thus : " You have no need to be so anxious now. You are sure that you are one of God's elect people ; and, if you do go astray, you are sure to come back again. " Now, to correct this, God allows some bright professors of religion to rise to places of eminence, whence they fall, never more to rise again ; and it was

to warn the Hebrews of the danger of final apostacy that the Apostle penned this Epistle. And such as walk humbly with their God listen to the word of exhortation we have in the context: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Now, if God has bestowed upon you the rich gift of faith, it has discovered to you "an evil heart of unbelief," and this the Spirit of God reproves us for. "He shall reprove the world of sin—of sin, because they believe not on Me" (John xvi. 8, 9). Oh, that we may not grieve the Spirit of God by trying to reduce this sin to a mere infirmity! May the Lord rather help us to confess the guilt of it, for this "evil heart of unbelief" is the cause of all our secret departures from God. You may come to hear the Word preached, but your heart may be wandering like the fool's eye to the end of the earth. You may retire to your closet for private communion with God, and there the enemy may stir up the lusts and corruptions of your heart, so that your lips become like a moving machine—no breathing forth of supplication with your words. And then, too, while reading, you think this and that are nice portions, but all at once your heart has turned aside from the search. And it is not a question whether we can help this or not. God says by the Apostle, "Take heed, brethren;" and "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy Word" (Psa. cxix. 9). And this the exercised soul ardently desires. But the admonition does not rest with ourselves; it extends to others: "Exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." But, alas! in the present day, how few will suffer the word of exhortation from their brethren! It is termed legality and bondage; and faithfulness is misconstrued as unfriendliness. Where is there one to be found who has the courage daily to exhort his brethren? And this should not be put off till to-morrow; it is "while it is called to-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

Sin left to accumulate upon the conscience will harden the heart and blind the eyes. Feeling, then, that we have such "an evil heart of unbelief," what need we have to cry daily to God to uphold us; and I believe all God's people have, more or less, a fear at times that they shall not hold out to the end; and yet the very fear of falling may prove a means to preserve them from it. Doubts and fears are bad masters, but they may be good servants in sending us to the Lord thus: "Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not" (Psa. xvii. 5).

How often the poor child of God is tried lest all that liveliness and affection he had in the days of his youth should wither away; and, in feeling a sensible decay of zeal and

vigour, mind and memory, such fears will show themselves, and make one tremble. I think I somewhat understand what David meant by this petition, "Forsake me not when my strength faileth." You that are older and further advanced in the ways of God more fully realize it. The religion of some people seems to expire before they do. Bitter trials may be a means of maintaining our lot. One has said, "It is better to be preserved in brine than to rot in honey." We as much need the power of God to preserve us in the way as we did to set us in the way at first. Hart says—

"He guides and moves our steps,
For, though we seem to move,
His Spirit all the motion gives
By springs of fear and love."

And, when the Lord refreshes and bedews us with His Spirit, it stirs us up to earnestness, and causes the hardness of our heart to yield and melt before Him.

But, as we journey on, worldly cares increase. Children grow, and entail more responsibility upon us; and we may fear lest their natural worldliness may increase worldly-mindedness in ourselves. It is a mercy to have sufficient grace in exercise to repel this worldliness both from without and from within.

Then, what a great thing it is to be kept steadfast! We don't like changelings even in worldly things. It is specially remarked of young Ruth that she was "steadfastly minded to go with her mother-in-law" (Ruth i. 18). So when Christ was about to suffer, "He set His face steadfastly to go up to Jerusalem" (Luke ix. 51); and Paul exhorted his brethren at Corinth to be "steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (1 Cor. xv. 58). So there is in some of you a greater steadfastness in the truth than there once was, and, notwithstanding you may not have the bright assurance you could desire, you are grounded and settled in the truth of God.

Then you are more steadfast in the belief that salvation is all of free and sovereign grace. As Herbert says—

"There's not a man that's born of God
But readily will say,
'If ever my poor soul be saved,
'Tis Christ must be the way.'"

In earlier days you might have had, as you thought, a good experience, but now it seems all to be gone, and you have to stake your all upon the precious blood and spotless righteousness of Christ. This you did at first, but it becomes a growing necessity to do so. When the ark of the covenant was placed in the tabernacle, there were the two tables of stone, the golden pot of

manna, and Aaron's rod that budded. But, at a later date, we are told there was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone. Oh, poor sinner, if you have Jesus Christ as your Law-fulfiller, you are safe, though all your comforts may have fled. But there may be in you a growth in grace, and yet you may not see the fruits. The cry of the most fruitful ones is often, "My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me!" And such will endure to the end, for they have already the earnest of the Spirit in their hearts. The end will come to us all, and sometimes short is the warning. What a mercy to have the assurance that, whether living or dying, we are the Lord's!

Some are taken away in their sleep. Others labour under severe bodily sufferings and mental infirmities, and cannot speak in their last moments, who yet find that the many prayers they have put up to the Lord in life He has answered in death, for, when heart and flesh have failed, God has been to them the strength of their heart and their portion for ever; while others, again, have not been able to speak many words throughout their pilgrimage, who yet have left the world shouting, "Victory! victory! through the blood of the Lamb!" and thus, though having been looked upon as only weaklings, they have steadfastly held their little confidence, and found its value at the end of their days.

III. "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." Is this "if" to be taken conditionally, and so our partaking of Christ to turn upon that? Oh, no; it would seem the Apostle intended thus much, that it is in the weathering the storm and entering at length the haven of rest that we are evidenced and declared as being partakers of Christ. We partake of Christ's Spirit: "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. iv. 6); and, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Rom. viii. 9). Hence we are enjoined to "try the spirits whether they be of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John iv. 1). It was said of Joshua and Caleb that they had "another spirit" (differing from that in the rest of the elders of Israel); "they wholly followed the Lord" (Num. xxxii. 12); and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, and that blessed Spirit leads the soul to God's great treasure-house, where the saints were "blessed with all spiritual blessings before the foundation of the world" (Eph. i. 3); and by grace he chooses Christ for his portion, his meat and his drink—yea, his, "All and in all"—

"Loved of my God, for Him again
With love intense I'd burn;
Chosen of Thee ere time began,
I'd choose Thee in return."

He beholds Christ as both "the Author and the Finisher of his faith," and so beholding Him, he "runs with patience the race that is set before him" (Heb. xii. 1). Indeed, he partakes of Christ, and lives on Him by faith; as the Apostle says, "The life that I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God" (Gal. ii. 20). Christ is to him the substance of God's covenant, "even the sure mercies of David" (Isa. lv. 3).

Then we partake of Christ's sufferings too—that is, in our measure. Upon this Paul enjoined Timothy, "Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, according to the power of God" (2 Tim. i. 8). Two of Christ's disciples once sought a prominent place in His Church, whereupon He brought before them the subject of His baptism of suffering and His cup of suffering. It is in partaking of these that we have the true test of discipleship. If our religion costs us no suffering, it makes it doubtful whether it is a right one. When Paul desired to have fellowship with Christ in His sufferings (Phil. iii. 10), it was not so much to gaze upon his suffering Lord in Gethsemane, as it was to fill up in his own body the afflictions of Christ's mystic body; and, if we are partakers of Christ's sufferings here (not penal wrath; that Christ alone could bear), we shall partake of His glory hereafter: "If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. viii. 17); and, by-and-bye, it will be said to all His faithful followers, "Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matt. xxv. 21).

But what shall be said to those who are eagerly following after the fleeting things and fading vanities of time? Follow them you may, but they will deceive you in the end. Or to those who are resting in a "name to live," and are at ease in Zion? You are receiving all your good things now; God's people have their good things to come.

How much better, then, dear child of God, for you to be harassed by the devil, distressed by the world, and plagued with your own heart, and making up all your happiness in the Lord, than to have your affections locked up in an inheritance that you must soon quit for the interest of others!

AND surely there is every encouragement for poor guilty sinners—self-condemned and self-abhorred—thus to believe and thus to hope in God, as having sent "His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," as all such will, sooner or later, find to the joy of their soul.—*J. C. Philpot.*

THE CONTRAST.

WHAT great disparity there is between "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy," and the creature that He loves! "Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" Wherever we look we discover some marks of the superiority of the Eternal Being. In the Revelation of John, we get a glimpse of His glory in heaven, as King of kings and Lord of lords over the holy angels and ministering spirits, who, together with glorified saints, fall down and adore His sacred Majesty, whilst they say, "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen." If we look upward, and view the sky with its varied hues, and see the sun, moon, stars, or rainbow, we are compelled to acknowledge the sublime and almighty power of their Creator. The earth, too, is full of His riches. The majestic mountain, the lofty hill, the pretty valley, the noble tree, the evergreen shrub, the beautiful sweet-smelling flowers, with the tender grass and useful herb, all tell us of the glory, excellency, and wisdom of the great and mighty God. Also the day and night, summer and winter, thunder and lightning, the wind, snow, hail, rain, ice, frost, and dew declare His greatness. The beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish in the sea all loudly speak His praise. What can the infidel or sceptic say to all this? Ah! what indeed? We can but add, "Great is our God, and of great power; His understanding is infinite." His names, which are over one hundred and fifty, tell us of His character; as one has said, "The name of God is His character."

If we contemplate this glorious truth, we may well exclaim, "O Lord, what is man, that Thou art mindful of him?"—"Man that is born of a woman, of few days and full of trouble;" that is "but dust and ashes," "a sinful nation," "a seed of evildoers;" that is like a shadow, or flower, that passeth away; that is a stranger and sojourner; that is vain, wicked, and corrupt, black with sin, and deformed in every part? for the whole imagination, purposes, and desires of his heart are nothing but evil, and that continually.

"To whom, then, will ye liken God?" (Isa. xl. 18), the God that filleth heaven and earth? Surely not to man—poor, puny man, who receives his very being from Him! Oh, no; there is none that can be compared with Thee, O Lord, for Thy greatness is unsearchable. Oh, may we never presume to come before Thee, or speak of Thee, but with profound reverence! It seems no wonder that, when God talked with Abraham, he fell on his face; that, when He appeared to Jacob, he should say, "How

dreadful is this place!" that Moses hid his face, and was commanded to put his shoes from off his feet, when God appeared to him in a burning bush; that Gideon should say, after he perceived an angel of the Lord had spoken to him, "Alas! O Lord God, for because I have seen an angel of God face to face;" that Manoah and his wife, under similar circumstances, should fall on their faces, whilst the former said, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God;" that David should say, "Who am I, O Lord God, that Thou hast brought me hitherto?" that Solomon should be surprised that God would dwell in the house he had built, when the heaven, and heaven of heavens, could not contain Him; that Ezra should fall upon his knees, and say, "O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to Thee, my God;" that Job should confess, "Behold, I am vile;" and again, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes;" that Isaiah, after seeing God's glory, should say, "Woe is me! for I am undone;" that Ezekiel, at three different times, after seeing God's glory, should fall upon his face; that Daniel, after seeing a vision, should be afraid, and fall upon his face, and at another time should feel his comeliness was turned into corruption.

Does not all this show that a sight of God and His glory discovers the nothingness and sinfulness of the creature? Is it not the incoming of the light of God that makes manifest the darkness of sin? And if God, the great and mighty God, humbles Himself to behold His creatures, and even to talk with them, ought we not also to humble ourselves before Him? It is five times recorded in the Revelation that, when the angels worship God, they fall upon their faces—a humbling posture, showing us what kind of adoration is pleasing in His sight. Oh, that we might be more favoured with true prostration of soul! Not only may our bodies bend before Thee, but our hearts. Lord, grant us this true humility of soul!

But, though the Lord be so high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly, and even deigns to "dwell with him who is of a poor and contrite spirit, and trembles at His Word." We would desire to bless the Lord for the gift of His dear Son, through whom He can make this wonderful stoop. It is alone through the God-Man, Christ Jesus, that God can look upon the sinner, and that the sinner can approach unto God.

Lord, bless us with a greater knowledge of Thy dear Son! May Thy Holy Spirit inspire earnest, longing desires in our hearts to grow up into Him in all things; and, though the contrast is so great between Thee and us, yet may we feel we are "one with Jesus."

A READER.

A BRIEF MEMOIR OF JOHN BARNETT.

JOHN BARNETT, the subject of the following brief memoir, was born at Whitchurch, in Hampshire, December 9th, 1821, and fell asleep in Jesus at Winchester, January 28th, 1881.

Called in very early life by the grace of God, he was thus preserved from many outward sins which others delight in, and which often leave a bitterness in the soul even when through mercy they are repented of and forsaken.

When first he applied to the Baptist Church for admission, he was requested to wait a time, on account of his youth. This, he said, was a keen blow to him; for in the ardency of his first love he was desirous of following his Lord and Saviour fully; and this desire to follow in all the footsteps of the Lord Jesus was manifest throughout his sojourn below. After a short interval, the pastor sent a note of invitation on behalf of the Church, and he was baptized and received into Church fellowship. In the providence of God, he subsequently settled at Winchester, and joined the Church now worshipping at Silver Hill, of which he continued a member until his death. His path was indeed a tribulative one—trials in family and circumstances, a severely afflicted body, with petty persecutions from Papists and others, and withal a continual struggle to defend the little Church of God from those who would gladly have said, "Aha! so would we have it." Yet, though "the afflictions of the righteous are many, the Lord delivereth him out of them all." In the case of the departed one, the deliverance was not wrought until the Lord received him unto Himself. This He did in so gentle a manner that his beloved wife, who was by his side, did not know the exact moment of his departure.

It is not the purpose of the writer to enlarge this account by relating the many things which might be truly said of him as a Christian, but to give a few extracts from letters written during the last two or three years of his life—years in which both mind and body were much weakened and depressed by disease, yet in which it will be seen grace reigned, often triumphantly. The abruptness of some sentences may appear singular; but it must be remembered that they were the overflowings of a soul which had not strength of body or mind to fully communicate the same. More than once it was our privilege to converse with him during these seasons, and thus witness the mighty power of the grace of God in him.

That this little tribute to his memory may be for the glory of God is the earnest desire of the writer.

EXTRACTS.

April 20th, 1878.—I see more and more that the religion worth

anything when cast into a hot furnace is a feeling religion, in which and with which nothing more or less than the presence of God in the power of the Holy Ghost will do. Our Redeemer comforted His dear ones before He left them by telling them He would send them another Comforter, which should abide with them for ever; and those who have been favoured with His company cannot wonder at the inquiry, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost?"

August 28th.— . . . The love of Christ is a mysterious and wonderful love, is it not? I love to think of it, to dwell upon it, and trace it to its Source; but when I begin to search, I melt and give vent, exclaiming, "Oh, Love divine, how sweet Thou art!" Your letter gave me refreshment this morning. I do thank our Father for instructing you to comfort me; for, though "in the multitude of my thoughts within me, His comforts delight my soul," yet I do like a little sympathy from the saints. Would that I could see more of this in the conduct of those who have named the name of Christ!

August 29th.—Weakness compelled me to break down yesterday. I cannot arrange my thoughts, so please accept the will for the deed, rejoicing that He whom our souls love has said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Let us lean on the arm of our Beloved as we go up out of this wilderness.

September 2nd.—The poor body still very weak; the exercised mind very busy; goes and comes, but can get no rest apart from the Olive-tree; but if only a leaf the soul seems somewhat comforted. Bless Him, He rests in His love. Oh, for more of *it*, and greater conformity to our Emmanuel! May He help us to be obedient children; for I know a father takes pleasure in his children's willing obedience; and to have our Father's smile of approbation gives us joy and peace. Oh, I love peace! He said, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you."

" Dear Jesus Christ my Lord,
Thy work for me behold;
On Thee alone I rest;
Cause me to keep my hold."

October 5th.— . . . This nice weather does suit my poor afflicted body, but I don't get any stronger. I still have very restless nights; but God's Word by the Holy Ghost is made very seasonable to me in this my time of need. I would not be without it for anything this world can give—

" Oh, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!"

I feel it must be, "Jesus, Thy *blood* and *righteousness*;" but with me—

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On Thy kind arms I fall."

Thus do I desire to be going up out of this wilderness "found in Him."

November 9th.—I am obliged to constantly resort to the strongholds: "I am the Lord; I change not;" "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;" "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all, and by His stripes we are healed." But though He has left these blessed truths for us, my soul seems very dead; I cannot find Him at the throne of grace; He seems to have hid Himself.

December.—I vary much, and have constant reminders that this is not my rest; but the Lord is my refuge and my help. He, I find, abides the same. This is a truth that few believe or enjoy.

January, 1879.—*Saturday afternoon.*—Just left my bed. The Lord honoured me with a visit while reading His Word—John, sixteenth chapter; and when He spake the thirty-first verse to me, my heart burst forth, "Oh, sweet company!"

February 7th.—Mine is a solitary path; but His was much darker and rougher than mine; and, bless Him, He visits me for a few moments now and then, chiefly in the night, for I cannot sleep much. With my afflictions and almost continual conflicts, without and within, I cannot perform what I would.

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

"Dear name, the rock on which I build,
My shield and hiding-place."

March 5th. . . . I am still in my room, where I have been fourteen weeks; but it has been a Bethel to me and to — hundreds of times; therefore I still look up, and He condescends to come with us, and speak comfort to our hearts; so that communion is sweet, and I feel—

"If such the sweetness here below,
What must it be above?"

"A fulness resides in Jesus our Head," &c.

"I love the sacred Book of God;
No other can its place supply;
It points me to the saints' abode,
It gives me wings and bids me fly."

I think I can say I never found such loads of refreshing, strengthening portions as I have the last eight or nine months. Well may our dearest Friend advise—yea, command—"Search the Scriptures,"

&c. Oh, how guilty, guilty, guilty have I been! Confusion of face belongs to sinful me. Yet I know—

“His heart is made of tenderness,
His bowels melt with love.”

“He brought me into His banqueting-house, and His banner over me was love.” May we still abide in union with each other and the Lord.

May 30th. . . . I know what darkness is, and, bless the Lord, I also know Him when He shines, and I am reluctant when I am losing my hold. Thus there are many ins and outs with me; but I know He changes not. He only hides his face, and then I am troubled—it was so more than forty years ago. You may say, “How slow you are to learn!” I cannot help it; but I assure you that the first display of His love I cannot forget.

June 6th.—I desire to acknowledge the power and loving-kindness of our almighty and wonder-working Lord Jesus Christ. Truly, He bringeth low, very low, and He raiseth up. His works and ways are past finding out; but it is a mercy indeed that He found us out; and I cannot help saying at times, “Why was I made to hear Thy voice?” and, “Oh, to grace how great a debtor!” Ah! yes; and for this grace “I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth.” I feel that this divine love, blood, and righteousness in my soul has been for many years more to me than all the world calls good or great. For more than forty years I have in my soul felt the workings of this heavenly grace and gift, which lays hold of poor helpless sinners like myself and gives us power, that we worms may cling to, and hang upon, Him; so that our love is mutual.

“Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart and the boast of my tongue;
Thy free grace alone, from the first to the last,
Has won my affections and bound my soul fast.”

Yet I find that—

“Still I must fight if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord,
To bear the cross despite the shame,
Supported by Thy Word.”

And then a glorious victory will be ours, to reign through Him alone who hath loved us and given Himself for us.

August 30th.— . . . An unseen hand and an unseen Friend I have often found has gone on before me. Truly, He is near unto all them that fear Him: “The same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” The omnipresence of our God I love to think upon, and desire never to forget either His omniscience or His omnipotent power. . . . The cloud has been densely dark again

since I last sent ; our hearts bleeding, our souls crying. But hope cannot give up ; there is a chain which seems to hold it fast. The day will come when all will be made plain, for God's Word abideth sure. The Lord will accomplish *all* His purposes, and do all His pleasure ; therefore I desire, come what will, to be obedient to His word ; to " be still," to " stand still," to " sit still," to " watch and pray ;" and when I cannot order my speech aright, shake my chain. Do pray for us ; my soul is in trouble, yet happy in Jesus as regards myself. But the cloud, the furnace, and the lions' den are part of my lot ; and yet I am satisfied, believing our God shall be glorified in the end, and we ourselves shall not suffer loss ; therefore I leave it like one who said, " It is well."

" 'Tis well when at His throne
We wrestle, weep, and pray."

I thank you very much for Mr. A——'s meditations ; he is deeply led into Gospel mysteries. I feel verily God, our God, will bless him in searching out solitary ones and confirming feeble knees. God be praised ! " He will search them out in [this] the cloudy and dark day." Yes ; God will gather His elect, and then cometh the end. The Lord help us to watch and pray, looking unto our Captain, the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom we trust, whose we are, and whom we love and delight to obey, and with whom we hope we shall shortly be ; and we know that then we shall be satisfied.

September. . . . Your letter reminds me of One " whom, not having seen, we love," and there is such a thing as loving our fellow-creatures whom we have not seen. Surely the love of God is a peculiar love ; nothing on earth or in hell can destroy it. Lord, help us to hold fast our confidence in Thy strength. Referring to our dear Redeemer, you say, " He was made perfect through suffering." Oh, how I did muse on that Scripture ! Holy and one with the Father before all time, holy and perfect when He made the world, holy when in His mother's womb, holy in all His intercourse with men, holy all through His life, holy in all His suffering on that cross of all crosses, and equally holy when He expired, saying, " Father, forgive them." Won't this melt the stony heart ? It surely must, if they are ever such stubborn children. Well may the hosts above exclaim, " Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty !" Amen and amen.

Friday, 1879.—I write to-day because I know not that I may be equal to it to-morrow, for I vary much in my weak body, as I do in my soul ; but, bless the Lord, I rejoice to give glory to Him. Life in soul as well as in body is continued ; this demands my highest praise. I scarcely know where to begin so as to

secure the company of Him whom we love best ; but I remember one said, " My heart is inditing a good matter ; " other two said, " Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us by the way ? " Also, " They that feared the Lord, and thought upon His name. " These, with the numberless hosts who have gone before, I have no doubt *all* found His company so sweet that they could not consent, willingly, to His leaving them ; but He seeks to comfort us when He sees in our hearts that love-sick fear. He, as it were, steps back and whispers to us, " I will come again ; " " I go to prepare a place for you ; " " Let not your heart be troubled ; " " Fear not, little flock ; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom ; " and we know, " having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. " Perhaps I had better turn my thoughts, but " out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, " and " where the treasure is, there will the heart be also ; " so, although we do feel we are in a foreign land—

" We are not far from home,
And nearer to our Father's house
We every moment come. "

" One gentle sigh, the fetters break, " and then, ah ! then, " the willing spirit takes its mansion near the throne. " " Absent from the body, present with the Lord. "

In reading the fifteenth of John's Gospel, I have found much sweetness and refreshing ; and of late my mind has been guided to God's " wills " and " shalls ; " one in particular: " Thy people *shall* be willing in the day of Thy power. " Here I went back, as in a moment, for more than thirty years, when my soul burned within me to follow my dear Lord, by treading in His steps, in being baptized, and sitting down with those who delighted to meet at His table. Indeed, I felt that in keeping His commands there is great reward. I could bear my humble testimony to many things, but will close by saying, God makes us willing to die also, for I have been twice in my journey so near that there seemed but a step between me and death ; but I am still spared to tell to sinners round of the almighty power of God and His free grace. With humble reverence and inward gratitude I would ever do so, and desire that life so spared may be for some good amongst others, that God may thereby get glory to Himself, for I feel " unto Him who hath loved us, and washed us in His own blood, " shall be, here and hereafter, all the glory.

June 18th, 1880.—I rejoice still to declare that God abideth faithful to me, and to His holy Word, which is very precious in these days of " Lo, here, and Lo, there. " I am hanging just now upon the hope that, " when heart and flesh faileth, God will be the

strength of my heart and my portion for ever ;" for I know not from day to day what may take place, and I am nightly expecting the end. But what mercy do we see in our compassionate and loving Lord in not revealing this secret ; nevertheless, there is a secret which the Lord reveals to His seeking, waiting, watching people. Bless Him, oh, my soul, continually, till He takes His pilgrim home, then "I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness." Oh, to be found in Him, even in Christ Jesus! Methinks "this is all my salvation and all my desire."

I must forbear, remaining yours in the dearest of ties, made worthy and brought nigh to God by the blood and righteousness of His only and well-beloved Son Jesus Christ, our Lord, Saviour, and King.

September 24th.—I have not any new thing to set before you, but for myself I can say that to get a few drops of the good old wine is very refreshing and strengthening, and I am blessed by my Father above many of His children, even as regards this world's comforts ; and though I cannot go forth as I used to do, to fill up the ranks in open battle, yet I rejoice that I have not found it in my heart to desert, or make a confederacy with the world—the enemy of God and man. What a mercy to be kept in this dark and cloudy day! "Oh, to grace how great a debtor!" &c. So we must ever sing: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us." The Word of God tells us everything to encourage us, for, where He has begun a good work, He will perfect it, so that "the righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger." "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end," says He who is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever ;" also, "I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands." It is sweet to visit the cross often—

"Stay here, my soul, and on that tree
Behold the wondrous mystery ;
The glories of the cross unfold,
For ever telling, yet untold."

I don't wonder at the Marys and the rest of the disciples loving Him so much. "Did not *our* heart burn within us while He talked with *us* by the way, and opened to *us* the Scriptures?" I think I shall never forget when He said to me, "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of Me." I have not lost its sweetness yet, nor do I think He will allow me to, for I believe it implied all temporal and spiritual, present and future good, and was the promise of this life and of that which is to come, for "He will come again and receive me unto Himself," therefore "I will not fear what man can do unto me." . . . We are to tell these things to the generations following, and I desire to do so. What a mercy

our God looketh at our desires, seeing we are still in the body ! Let us pray, "Look Thou upon the works of Thine own hands," for sure I am He hath "wrought all our works in us," so we will again exclaim, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to Thy name give glory." "Unto Him who hath loved us, and washed us in His own blood," to Him be glory, both now and evermore. Amen.

"Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress ;
'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

"When from the dust of death I rise
To take my mansion in the skies,
E'en then shall this be all my plea,
Jesus has lived and died for me.

"Thus Abraham, the friend of God,
Thus all the armies bought with blood,
Saviour of sinners, Thee proclaim—
Sinners, of whom the chief I am."

I remain, ever yours affectionately,

J. BARNETT.

It may not be out of place to close these extracts by relating one kind providence manifested to the dear departed one on the Saturday previous to his death. It had been customary for him to receive on Saturdays a light pudding, for which he looked with the peculiar expectation of an invalid. On that day, however, the roads were blocked with snow, so that it was impossible to convey it as usual. He asked if M—— was come, and on being told that the roads were impassable, he quietly said, "No pudding then." It was but a short time after, when some one living near sent just such an one as he was accustomed to receive. He tried to eat, but the power of swallowing was gone ; yet, to those who observed this special favour, and doubtless to him also, it was a verification of Christ's own word, "*Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.*"

"Thou art gone, blest one, and who shall say how blest
Thy wearied soul, reposed on Jesus' breast ?
Life's stormy voyage o'er, thou'st entered in
That land unmarred, untainted by a sin.

"Thou art gone, loved one ; full well thy heart did know
That love which passeth knowledge e'en below ;
And often like a golden thread it ran.
In sympathy toward thy fellow-man.

"Thou are gone, dear one ; twice dear to kindred hearts,
Who felt they shared with thee 'the better part ;'
The shining of thy gracious light they miss,
And darker seems to grow this wilderness.

“Gone to the blest, rejoicing evermore ;
 Gone to that love which ever brimmeth o'er ;
 Gone to that dearest One whose matchless grace
 Prepared and meetened thee to see His face.

“Thou art gone ; we would not ask thee back again,
 But follow on till we the prize obtain ;
 Until we meet beyond the starry skies,
 And God's own hand shall wipe our weeping eyes.”

RUTH.

MEMOIR OF THE LATE JOHN CLARK, OF
 FIVEASHDOWN.

(Continued from page 240.)

It seems difficult from the relation of circumstances in a long and chequered life to select matter of interest for our general readers. Some things might be recorded that would interest a few, but our object is to profit the bulk of those who peruse these pages. We shall, therefore, pass over the detail of controversy which our friend had with one or two individuals upon certain points of doctrine, whereby he became more than ever grounded and established upon some parts of truth, particularly such as related to the proper Deity and eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ ; and thus believing and receiving the truth by the commendation of it to his conscience, and in the revelation of it to his heart, it became indelibly fixed, and enabled him to withstand, both publicly and privately, various errors upon which many have stranded and perished.

About this time he had an invitation to preach at Norwich, where the Word was received with such acceptance that some of the friends hoped the way would have been made plain for him to have become their pastor ; but our friend felt that that was not to be his pathway, so he declined it. He also preached occasionally at Watford, in Hertfordshire. One of his visits there, was to him a time never to be forgotten. He was walking through the churchyard on his way to the chapel, when he was led to contemplate on the substitutionary work of Jesus Christ, and he was led to see that he was united to Christ upon the cross (Gal. ii. 20), in the grave, and when He arose therefrom (Eph. ii. 5) ; and that he was with Him in heaven (ver. 6). The view of this so overcame him that he wept, as he says, with the “most unctuous feeling,” and feared, on account of his tears flowing so freely, that he would not be able to preach. He says, “When a friend came into the vestry, just before I went into the pulpit, I broke into tears, and asked the Lord to hold back His hand, for I was so overcome. This He graciously did, and I was

enabled to go on with my preaching. I am well aware that some may wonder at such things as these, and say, 'Surely this can be nothing but natural feelings wrought up.' But the soul who is acquainted with this knows that neither the flesh nor the devil will ever move any one to love; for the soul at such times as these has the wings of a dove, and would fly away and be at rest. Mr. Romaine says, 'That which comes from God leads to God;' and the soul that is brought here wishes to be always here—

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

"I now went on more and more confirmed in a revealed religion, finding that nothing would stand but revealed truth, according to Holy Writ: 'I will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth' (Jer. xxxiii. 6); and 'In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby He shall be called, the Lord our righteousness' (Jer. xxiii. 6). And what God thus gives to a poor sinner is his own, as Bunyan blessedly says, when speaking of one, 'I don't see wherein we differ, except it is in the robe that is on thy back, and that I trow was given to thee by a Neighbour;' and truly it was given by Him who was Neighbour to the man that fell among thieves, who poured in the oil and the wine, sat him on His own beast, took him to an inn, gave the host faith and love—faith to believe the work was genuine; love to receive him—and a promise for the future (Luke x. 34, 35). And this is the way the Lord visits His Church; He clears up all doubts and rectifies all mistakes. He that walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks observes everything, rebukes the lukewarm, and encourages the tempted to hold on, telling them there will be an end to those things which they suffer, that 'He setteth an end to darkness' (Job xxviii. 3), and turns 'the shadow of death into the morning' (Amos v. 8), and that He 'doeth great things, past finding out' (Job ix. 10).

"I went on for some years preaching, and working at my trade, sometimes sorrowful, and sometimes rejoicing, my body generally very weak, so that I have had to bend my knees in my shop to ask the Lord to give me strength to do the labour He had assigned me, and, bless His dear name, He has often heard my request."

But afflictions attend the lot of the righteous; and now the Lord began to lay another burden upon the poor man's shoulders. His wife showed signs of imbecility, so that it became needful that she should be relieved of domestic responsibilities, and finally it became necessary that she herself should be watched like a child. This circumstance led to a removal to Merton, where a way was made for our friend to build a house; and, though this

house was threatened while building with destruction by water, on account of unusually heavy rains, and by wind, as well as by the breaking out of a fire, yet it took no harm. Mr. Clark felt, in building this house, he received the fulfilment of words given him some years previously. His poor wife gradually declined, both mentally and physically, and after a few years the Lord removed her from this world of sin and sorrow; and though, on account of her weakness of intellect, little could be gathered from her of her spiritual condition, yet her husband, as well as some others who knew her in former days, have borne testimony that she was a gracious person, and that her conduct as a wife, a mother, and a Christian, well became a woman professing godliness.

In the order of God's providence the people worshipping at Ebenezer Chapel, King Street, Deptford, having heard Mr. Clark with acceptance, desired him to come amongst them stately. The cause was then in a very low condition, and the stipend offered to a minister was small, and therefore there was nothing, either temporally or spiritually, to induce a man of God to settle there. But a meeting of the people was held, when Mr. Clark attended, and at which meeting he very freely expressed his felt inability and unsuitability to be a pastor of a Church. However, this diffidence was considered by the friends a very proper qualification; so, being ruled perhaps by the voice of the people, our friend accepted the pastorate, and while contemplating coming there, he believed the Lord gave him these words: "I will raise up the decayed places" (Isa. xlv. 26); and it must be said that at first the Word was gladly received by many, and some obtained a permanent blessing thereby; but friends at distant places, who seemed to show more warmth of feeling than most who were at Deptford, won upon him, and invited our friend away, and, in accepting these invitations, it was felt by some that there was a want of watchfulness over, if not of affection for, the people over whom it had been hoped he had been placed by God. And this doubtless worked prejudicially on both sides, for that love and sympathy that should have been shown in a people to their pastor, and in a pastor to his people, appeared greatly lacking, so that the cause did not grow up as it was hoped it would have done. However, as it was with Paul at Athens, so it was with John Clark at Deptford—"certain clave unto him," of whom, if it were needful or prudent, mention might be made, as at Athens, of "Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them" (Acts xvii. 34). And, as the man of God had many sore trials and fierce temptations, he was enabled from time to time to speak a word in season to some of the Lord's weary ones. Nor was he without

some manifestations of the Lord's love to his soul. Once in particular he relates: "One Sunday morning I was so blessed, I walked from room to room wondering and saying, 'What is it? What is it?' Something so wrapped up my spirit, and bound me so fast to the Lord, that I was lost in Him, in the fathomless ocean of His love, and with it such a staying power that, as the Psalmist says, 'My heart is fixed,' trusting in the Lord (Psa. lvii. 7). I gloried in His presence, and the high praises of God were in my mouth. I went and preached, and the Word was much blessed that morning; and I am persuaded of this, that when a man has the precious dew of God's grace and unction of the Spirit, it will rest upon the people." That there were such seasons as these, some who are now singing in heaven and others who are still sighing on earth can testify.

But it became at length apparent that the time had not come for the withered branch at King Street to revive; and we are sure our friend felt it to be heavy, dragging work, wherein he saw but little reward of his labour; and this being the case, it cannot be wondered at that he yielded to the cordial entreaties of brethren at Smart's Hill, Fiveashdown, and many other places, to preach to them the Word of life.

Still the Lord was with our friend to supply his needs; for, although he accepted the pastorate upon a small salary, and the cause did not improve, to guarantee him a larger income, yet some few friends helped him in a private way. Money would even be found placed under his street door by persons who evidently wished him success, yet who did not want to be known as his benefactors; and in other ways he was helped, so that the Lord's promise to him when he went to Deptford, "The just shall come out of trouble" (Prov. xii. 13), was fulfilled; for he went there with an afflicted wife, from the nature of which affliction he was continually distressed in mind. But the Lord was gracious, to cut short her sufferings by taking her home; and, He was pleased to raise up another very suitable person to be Mr. Clark's second wife. This person had long lived a widow at Penshurst, and had two sons, one of whom died after her removal to Deptford, and made a good end; and as this good woman was one that feared God, she became in every way a comfort to Mr. Clark, so that his latter days were in every sense of the word his best days, which will be seen by the close of the narrative. Thus the Lord fulfils His promise to His people, supplies their needs, shows His care over their bodies, and His love to their souls, and makes Himself still known as "Jehovah-Jireh" (Gen. xxii. 14), a promise-making and a promise-performing God.

(To be continued.)

“THE WAYS OF THE LORD ARE RIGHT.”

Hoxton Old Town, November 4th, 1840.

DEAR FRIEND,—I was very glad to see another letter from you, being anxious to hear whether my poor afflicted friend was still in the land of the living; rather wondering that I had not heard from you for so long a time; but I now excuse you, seeing you have been under so painful a trial. However painful the trial may have been, yet I feel persuaded that you have no cause to sorrow as those that have no hope. No doubt it would have been more gratifying to you could you have been with your daughter in her last hours, or while she was able to speak; or had there been any one with her that feared God who could have conversed with her and have related to you all that she said; yet I think what you have heard is a sufficient ground for you to conclude that her end was peace. It appears to me that the light she saw shining round about her was something of what the Apostle means in these words: “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). I think that the words she said came through her mind quite prove it: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;” and I think you may conclude that this was indeed an answer to your prayers—that the Lord did appear and make known His salvation to her at that time—for what else could have caused her to look so smiling and pleasant? All fear of death must have been removed, and perfect peace and tranquillity reigned within: “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace” (Psa. xxxvii. 37); and again, “The righteous hath hope in his death” (Prov. xiv. 32). I think also that she had joy as well as peace, for a smiling countenance is often the index of a joyful heart.

How various are the dealings of God with His people! Some are long and sharply exercised with the terrors of the law before they are raised to any comfortable hope; and, after they have had a little comfort of hope, they go on a long time between hope and despondency before they experience a clear manifestation of the love of God in the sensible enjoyment of the forgiveness of their sins. Others there are who are gradually led into a sense of their miserable state as fallen, helpless sinners. They now and then feel a hope that they shall attain to the enjoyment of those things which they hear and know God’s people are favoured with, but often fear, and are ready to conclude that, because they have not sunk so deep into despondency, and undergone such dreadful horrors and terrors of mind as some they have known or heard of, that their experience

is not right, but in process of time, feeling much sinking of mind at times, they are led earnestly to cry to the Lord for a sense of His mercy, and are favoured with some sweet comfort in reading the Word, or hearing, or perhaps in secret prayer; so that, while the comfort lasts, they feel persuaded of their interest in Christ and of the favour and love of God towards them; but they do not enjoy these comforts so long as some do, and their life, or a great part of it, is spent in grief, as David complains, their years in sighing, feeling so much of the power of indwelling sin and the fiery darts of Satan (Psa. xxxi. 10). Sometimes the Lord is said to cut short His work in righteousness, as was the case with the thief upon the cross. This has been the case, I doubt not, with others, though not in the same way. Some have been favoured with a happy deliverance out of sore trouble who have been but a short time in it. Witness the Apostle Paul; he received the forgiveness of sins as soon as Ananias came to him, which was only three days after he was struck to the ground, and was sent immediately to preach the Word. But he had many things to suffer afterwards for Christ's sake, and in the end to give up his life for the cause of God. But we do not know of any like him, though there have been some whose troubles at the beginning of their profession have been but short; yet, although they have been favoured with particular manifestations of the love of Christ so soon after they have been in trouble, such have generally (I believe) been sorely exercised afterwards with various trials, temptations, and afflictions; so that they have not found it all joy, or always smooth and easy throughout their pilgrimage. Sometimes the work has been cut short in some, as appears to have been the case with your daughter. Nothing particular has been seen till a little before their end; then they have been alarmed, the fear of death has roused them to a sense of their danger on account of their sins, and they have been helped by the Spirit of supplication to cry to the Lord in their trouble, and He has been pleased to have mercy upon them. Some in such a state have been favoured with a very conspicuous deliverance from all their fears, and have been enabled to bless and praise the Lord, declaring to those about them the peace and joy that they have been filled with in believing, and have died very happy. Others again have been exercised with much fear, darkness, and despondency of mind almost to the end, so that they have not been able to express more to those that stood by than a little comfort of hope.

But I say again, that I am persuaded you have no cause to sorrow as those who have no hope, for had she been able to speak what she felt, I think she would have told her sister that she had got such a manifestation of the love of Christ as satisfied her of her interest in Him. I can but feel for you,

for I doubt not the enemy has at times greatly harassed your minds, especially my poor afflicted friend, she not being able to see her during her illness, and not being able to get more information of what took place. Perhaps he may have suggested that, if your prayers had been answered, she would have been able to have said a great deal more, so that you would not have had the least shadow of a doubt concerning her. But the Lord is a Sovereign, and in all His dealings and dispensations toward the children of men, He performs all things according to the counsel of His own will, and our place and wisdom is to bow with humble submission and be thankful for the smallest token of His favour, and this will lighten our burden. This in some measure, I perceive by your letter, you have found. Beg of the Lord to increase it. Is my poor friend restless, uneasy, and dark in her mind, having lost the comfort and satisfaction she some time ago enjoyed? Does she miss the presence of her Friend? Is He gone? Then follow hard after Him; give Him no rest. He is a Friend that loveth at all times, though we cannot always think so, but He will be importuned. If He chastens it is in love, for He will not allow any rival, neither will He suffer any evil to be indulged—no murmuring, fretfulness, impatience, or rebellion against His dispensations; if there is, He will make us sensible of His frowns by keeping at a distance, and sometimes He will suffer the enemy so to harass and buffet us, by accusing and condemning us, and by trying to make us despair of all help or hope, that we shall write many bitter things against ourselves. Then, when we are led to humble ourselves before Him, confessing our vileness and acknowledging that the Lord is righteous in all His ways, and that He has never dealt with us according to our sins, at the same time putting Him in mind of His word, and of His faithfulness to fulfil what He has promised, His love, pity, and compassion are such that He will surely turn again and have compassion upon us, and heal all our backslidings, and manifest Himself afresh to our hearts so as to put everything right. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him; for He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust" (Psa. ciii. 13. 14).

All real happiness does indeed lie, as you observe, in the enjoyment of His presence. "In His favour," says David, "is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," and it is always night when He hides Himself. But as it is in the natural world, so it is in the spiritual. The promise made to Noah after the flood was that, while the earth remains, there should be seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night. These changes take place more or less in every one that has divine life. But, as He made a covenant with Noah that the world should no more be drowned with a flood, so has He promised

that none of His people shall ever be overwhelmed with the flood of His wrath and indignation ; and though they may be exercised at the thoughts of desertion, and feel the chilling cold of the north wind, or His Fatherly anger reflected in the law to chasten them for their sins, yet the Sun of Righteousness shall arise and shine afresh upon them. Then there will be heat instead of cold, and light, or day, instead of night. Thus runs the promise, " For this is as the waters of Noah unto Me ; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee "—that is, in a vindictive way to destroy—" for the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed ; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee " (Isa. liv. 9, 10). Again in Malachi iv. 2 : " But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings." These are precious promises. May you, my friends, be enabled to lay hold on them ; plead them in prayer and watch unto prayer, and in due time you will feel the comfort of them, for though we cannot expect while we are in the body always to be joyful, feeling such a body of sin and death within, yet there are to be days of prosperity, and we are encouraged and exhorted to follow after these good things, and to get as much of them as we can ; then shall we be enabled to look forward with comfort to the end, when we shall lay down these clay tabernacles and enter into everlasting joy, where there will be no winter, no night.

May this be our happy lot is the prayer of your sincere friend,
To Mr. Henry Fenner, Mayfield. JAMES ABBOTT.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XVI.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—Allow me to say at the outset that, although I have been so long in answering your letters, it has not arisen from a want of interest in your behalf. I have a great many things to attend to—things which cannot fall to your lot, owing to the difference between your circumstances and mine, hence there is often a lack of opportunity, when there is no want of willingness on my part, to write a few lines to you.

And now, before proceeding further, let me drop a word of caution. It may or may not be necessary in your case, but still I must discharge my own conscience in the matter. I must be honest, and yet I desire at the same time to deal tenderly and affectionately towards you, and towards all with whom I come in contact, in whose heart I have reason to hope the Lord has begun the work of grace. Depend upon it, if there is a looking too much to the creature, if there is a resting satisfied with the opinion

of man, if there is a disposition to seek comfort from the approbation of poor dying mortals, if there is a supposing that all is right simply because this or that person thinks so, if there is a relying upon an arm of flesh, and if there is a proneness to creature idolatry—that is, a thinking of the creature more highly than we ought to do—rest assured, my dear young friend, that the Lord will make such of His children who are given to these things to prove, painfully and bitterly, the necessity of the prophet's words, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils : for wherein is he to be accounted of ?" (Isa. ii. 22.) "Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide" (Micah vii. 5). The Lord intends to have the first, and the last place, too, in His people's affections. He has said, "My glory will I not give to another, neither My praise to graven images" (Isa. xlii. 8). The Lord grant that, if this caution is needful in your case, or in my own, we may give heed to it, and have grace imparted in such a precious manner as shall lead us to look right away from man to the Lord alone for all we need while here below.

Well, now, for a reply to your unanswered letters. You tell me that you went to chapel very miserable, wretched, and cast down, upon a certain occasion, feeling your soul must be lost for ever, when hymn 339, Gadsby's Selection, was given out, and that the first two verses were made very sweet to your soul. Such was the effect of this upon your heart, as you say, that you dared not then tell the Lord that your soul had never been favoured with a sweet sense of His mercy. Whence do you suppose, my dear Lizzie, these various feelings arise ? First, on the one hand, you speak of misery, wretchedness, darkness, coldness, hardness of heart, and bondage of soul ; and then you speak of light, hope, love, peace, and freedom before the Lord, under a realization of His great goodness to such a poor sinner as yourself. While I would, by all lawful means, seek to encourage you, yet I would say, avoid anything that might tend to cause you to sit down short of being able to say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His." But how came you to know that you were poor and miserable, and blind and naked, as a sinner in God's sight ? How came you to crave after the Bread of Life—Jesus Christ ? and how were you made acquainted with your ill-deserts as a hell-deserving sinner before the Majesty of heaven ? Doubtless there was a time when you were destitute of these feelings, and careless about them too. How is it that now you cannot rest content without some token for good ? Is not this sometimes the language of your heart—

" Oh, could I but believe,
Then all would easy be ;
I would, *but cannot* ; Lord, relieve !
My help *must come* from Thee " ?

Discontent, dissatisfaction, uneasiness, restlessness, and covetousness are felt by all who have divine life within. Perhaps you will be ready to say, "Well, that is strange!" Let me try and explain it a little, and, in so doing, I shall select a passage of Scripture and a verse of a hymn to set forth what I mean.

1. Discontent (1 Sam. xxii. 2).

"What empty things are all the skies,
And this inferior clod!
There's nothing here deserves my joys,
There's nothing like my God."

2. Dissatisfaction (Psa. lxxiii. 25; xvii. 15).

"Satisfied! not they indeed,
Till with Christ, their living Head,
They in heavenly bliss appear,
And His likeness fully bear."

3. Uneasiness (Psa. xlii. 6).

"Uneasy when I feel my load;
Uneasy when I feel it not;
Dissatisfied for want of God,
Though oft of Him I've not a thought."

4. Restlessness (Job xxiii. 3, 4).

"Jesus, my soul's athirst for Thee;
Absent from Thee I cannot rest;
Come now, reveal Thyself to me;
I cannot leave Thy throne unblest."

5. Covetousness (1 Cor. xii. 31).

"Let the sweet hope that Thou art mine
My life and death attend;
Thy presence through my journey shine,
And crown my journey's end."

Now, my young friend, what do you say to these five things? Are you not at times the subject of them? The language of your letters bespeaks that such is the case. You may not always feel your heart lively in these matters, but still, are there not moments when you feel filled with ardent desires and longings after the Lord Jesus, and a manifest interest in that salvation of which He is the Author, Maintainer, and Finisher? And will He disappoint those desires, think you? Oh, never, never!

"Those feeble desires, those wishes so weak,
'Tis Jesus inspires, and bids you still seek;
His Spirit will cherish the life He first gave;
You never shall perish, if Jesus can save."

But let me once more urge upon you the necessity of not resting satisfied with the testimony of mortal man as to your con-

dition before God. Appeal to Him, again and again, in the language of the Psalmist: "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." Man looks upon the outward appearance; God looks upon the heart. Hence it becomes us to ask the Lord for His decision in our favour. For some years past the Lord has made my soul extremely desirous about the matter of His precious approbation—so much so, that the language of my heart has been again and again—

"Careless, myself a dying man,
Of dying men's esteem;
Happy, my God, if Thou approve,
Though all besides condemn."

"For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth" (2 Cor. x. 18).

But to proceed. You say you want the Lord to visit your soul again. Rely upon it, one of the marks of the Lord's work upon the soul is a desire for the repetition of His sweet love-visits, and if so be that we have tasted that the Lord is gracious, there will be a constant coming to Him in desire and soul-aspiration. You say you cannot help thinking about your immortal soul, though you are tempted sometimes to give up seeking, concluding it is all in vain, and the cry of your soul is, "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him!" &c. Listen to what the Lord says respecting these poor trembling thinkers: "A book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that *thought* upon His name. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him" (Mal. iii. 16, 17). These spiritual thinkers think themselves unworthy of the least notice from the Lord; they think of their vileness, and of their entire spiritual destitution by nature; of the hardness of their hearts, and of the curses pronounced in God's Word against sinners; and they think at times that they shall surely sink to hell after all. But then, on the other hand, they think of Christ's power to save unto the uttermost; of His precious, precious blood, as being efficacious to cleanse them from all their transgressions; and of His righteousness, as being all their souls need to make them acceptable in the sight of God. They think of Him as He is set forth in the Scriptures, as a Rock upon which they desire to build their hopes for eternity, as a Refuge to which they desire to flee for safety from the storm of God's justice, as a Hiding-place from every foe and from every fear, and their language at times is—

"To Him, my only Hiding-place,
Let me for shelter fly;
The storm of death draws on apace,
And who can say how nigh?"

“In that dread moment, oh, to hide
 Beneath His sheltering blood !
 ’Twill Jordan’s icy waves divide,
 And land my soul with God.”

They think of the promises of God’s Word as being made to the poor, the needy, and the destitute ; they think of the free invitations of the Gospel addressed to all hungering, thirsting sinners ; they think of the rich provisions of eternal love as displayed in the sufferings and death of the Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ ; and they think—yea, they believe—that none but the Lord Himself can save them, and they are heartily willing that He should have every atom of the glory of their salvation.

Now, my dear young friend, these are some of the things which those think about who are made alive by the Holy Spirit’s teaching. Can you come in somewhere among the company of Gospel thinkers? Dare you say, “No, I cannot”? Perhaps you may say, “I hope I can come in among them now and then, but”—oh, how many “buts” and “ifs” are urged by the devil and our wicked hearts against the Lord’s work! Well, in spite of all the sinkings and fears that you may be the subject of, I trust that you will be favoured some day, before the Lord calls you hence, to sing with a warmth of heart at present unknown to you—

“Jesus, I know, has died for me ;
 Here is my hope, my joy, my rest ;
 Hither, when hell assails, I flee ;
 I look into my Saviour’s breast :
 Away, sad doubt and anxious fear !
 Mercy and love are written there.”

In conclusion, I would say to you, spread your case before the Lord, seek His help, ask counsel at His hands, entreat Him to enable you to look singly and solely to Himself, seek peace and pardon through the blood of the Lamb, who is mighty to save, and may the Spirit of the living God give you grace to roll yourself upon the Lord Jesus, and trust alone in His blood and righteousness for salvation. The Lord smile upon each of us, and grant that at the last we may be privileged to join that anthem of everlasting praise, “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

So prays your present and future well-wisher in the Lord,

Foleshill, September 27th, 1880.

J. BURTON.

A BELIEVER’S dying day is his crowning day.—*Dr. Goodwin.*

THE SOWER.

SERMON PREACHED BY MR. SMART,

AT CRANBROOK, ON SUNDAY, APRIL 23RD, 1876.

“And He answered and said unto them, My mother and My brethren are these which hear the Word of God, and do it.”—LUKE viii. 21.

I HAD a divine ray from the blessed Spirit dawn upon my soul in the past week, and I saw as clear as a sunbeam that there is no salvation except we are born again. Without eternal life, where is any sorrow for sin? Where is any love for the Saviour? Where is self-loathing or self-abhorrence before God? And where is any heartfelt praise to the honour and glory of His name and grace? Where is there any union or communion with the saints, except a man be born of God? And where is there any meanness for the kingdom of heaven, or capability of being happy with God and His saints, except we are born again? “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again.” “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.”

This morning, before I was up, I had a blessed sense in my soul that God had a favour to me, and that He was the Lifter-up of my head; and the brightest and clearest evidence that He has a favour to me was a clear, overpowering revelation of His dear Son, and salvation by Him, to my soul. And how I felt that, in providence and grace, and in every sense, He had been the Lifter-up of my head! When I consider what I am, and what God in Christ is to me, it is wonderful to me indeed.

Then, as He has encouraged me, I am come desiring I might speak something to your profit. I know something of the difficulties of the children of God, but, where the Lord has a favour to a poor sinner, He will see him through, and He will be the Lifter-up of his head. “Whosoever shall gather together against thee, shall fall for thy sake.” He will take him to glory, though sin, earth, and hell obstruct the way. I know He will.

I asked a man last Sunday, concerning a brother recently dead, “Was there enough to square up your brother's accounts?” He said he believed there was. No doubt he had had thousands of anxieties that he should never get honestly and safely through. I have no doubt his honest heart was often bowed down, but God made all square, and took his happy soul home to glory.

And God has had millions of children bowed down with anxiety, fearing that they should never leave the world as well as they found it. Look at the man that died in debt, and yet God performed a miracle to pay his debts. Yes; and the Lord Jesus is always the Friend of His poor saints.

We find in the context that His *mother* and His *brethren* came to the Lord Jesus, and could not get at Him for the press. They were His relatives. What a mercy if there is any relationship between Jesus and us! You know He is an Everlasting Father; "a Husband to the widow, and a Father to the fatherless;" a "Brother born for adversity;" and none but His relations will love Him. Humanly speaking, we can choose our friends, but not our relations. Now, Jesus Christ ever did and ever will love His relations, and none but those will ever have a desire to know Him. And wherefore do His brethren come to Him? To fulfil the promise (and it will have its fulfilment), "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me." It is an absolute, unconditional promise, and will have its fulfilment in the salvation and glorification of every child of God. Christ has said it, and will make it good. This is the reason why His relations come to Him, because the promise runs, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me."

There are difficulties in coming, and *you* will find difficulties if you are coming aright—

"If unto Jesus thou art bound,
A crowd about Him will be found,
Attending day and night;
A worldly crowd to din thy ears,
And crowds of unbelieving fears,
To hide Him from thy sight.

"If thou press on, the crowds will fly;
Or if thou faint, to Jesus cry,
And He will send supplies."

"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me." There is no "if," "but," or condition. But then difficulties will attend it. Look at the poor young man that came to Christ. While he was yet coming, the devil threw him down till he foamed and wallowed. Why should Satan be in such a rage? He has possession of millions. Why not raise a hubbub in their minds? Did ever poor sinner come to Christ and not be opposed? But the promise stands good, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

His mother and His brethren came to Him. Poor sinner, didst ever set out? All that those dead in a profession want of Christ

is, to escape the wrath to come; but heaven-born souls come with earnest, warm desires; and their desires are mixed with love to Christ. Now, you square it up. I say, in the case of most professors, all they want of Christ is to escape punishment; but heaven-born souls love Christ because Christ loves them, and they will come to Christ because the Father draws them; and "no man can come to Me except the Father which hath sent Me draw him."

Oh, poor sinner, didst ever set out, and the devil set after thee with, "You are not elected"? There will be a terrible hue and cry, but "all that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Is it not wonderful? If you do not wonder, I do. John Newton says, "I am going to heaven on two crutches." One was, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me." Newton had that crutch under his arm, and felt he had it. And the other crutch was, "And him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." I have been so low in my soul, ah! since I have been at Cranbrook, that I could not get one of these crutches under my arm.

And then, poor sinner, it stands true that "all that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me." I must lie if I was to say I had not come and *got at Him*; and we have walked and talked together, and loved one another; ah! and dearly too. "And him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Well, but the devil says, "I have fifty charges against you." So he may, and a guilty conscience a thousand; but Jesus says, "I will in no wise cast out."

"But think of the heart I have!" says one. "You don't know what a wretch I am." But Christ knows, and He says to our fears and foes, "*shall come unto Me*; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

His mother and His brethren came, but that was not enough; they "could not come at Him for the press." "*Come at Him.*" A poor woman came from necessity, and got help, for she would not go away without it; and blind Bartimæus came and got the blessing. Oh, what a wonder-working God is ours!

"The feeblest saint shall win the day,
Though death and hell obstruct the way."

But the moment a quickened sinner is after salvation by Jesus Christ, the devil, unbelief, and sin will mob him all the way along. But God Almighty says, "I will not put him away;" and Christ says, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me." "If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself." I am at a point about one thing—if ever He

begins to cast out the children, I believe I shall go out the first. But He says He will not. You think of the devil, our accuser, which accuseth us before our God day and night. And so he may; but there is an Interpreter that shall show unto man His uprightness. Christ will cast down the accuser. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head;" and God the Father, accepting a soul in Christ, says, "I will in no wise cast My child out."

"Then came to Him His mother and His brethren, and could not come at Him for the press." Now, the bulk of God's people are here—standing without, desiring to see Him. They hear about Him, read about Him, and sometimes get a touch, a gracious taste, a little of the water of life; but what they want is to get at Him unmistakably—to have an overpowering revelation of Him. If you have ever come to Christ by the leading of the Holy Ghost, you have never come as close as you want to come, and you never will till you get home, till you "see Him as He is," and glorify Him to all eternity for saving thee. "Having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." I have felt that desire in my soul, when I have had plenty of trouble pushing behind, and the grace of my God pulling in front. This made Paul "desire to depart and to be with Christ." The roots of self, how they cleave to mother earth! They say the roots of a tree go as far along under the ground as the boughs do above. The boughs of the oak reach far. If it was all boughs and no root, it would only require a good push, and down goes the oak; and so, if it were not for the roots of our faith in Christ, we should never stand.

It is a nice thing when one wakes in the morning to feel God has a favour to us, and ever will have; that nothing has ever transpired, or ever will transpire, but shall be overruled for our good.

His saints long to get at Him; and what hinders? They "could not come at Him for the press." Poor sinner, you know Christian started and got safe home at the last; Obstinate made a start, and soon turned back; Pliable got into difficulty, and went back. Bunyan says, when he got into the slough, he made a desperate struggle towards his own house. If you are dead in sin, your hearts are toward the world; if alive to God, your hearts will go to the saints, and to God. All Christian's struggles were towards the wicket gate; but as to Pliable—

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

"Then came to Him His mother and His brethren, and could not come at Him for the press." Jesus Christ had thousands to

follow Him, and He told them why they came—"because they did eat of the loaves, and were filled." They got what they came for. It shows the poverty of the times when thousands of people would follow Him, it is said for twenty miles, for a little bread and fish; and so He tells them why they came—"because they did eat of the loaves and were filled." And you may depend upon it, millions have made a profession of Christ to pick up a living out of it.

"Could not come at Him for the press." Look at the poor woman that had a deadly disease. The most deadly disease is sin, and yet who cares one snap about it? It is said that, during the plague in London, when some of the people ran out into the villages, they came out with pitchforks to keep them off. Who runs away from the plague of sin? Who is scared at it? It is a rare thing to find anybody convinced of sin. Real religion is a soul afflicted for sin, and in earnest to come to God by Jesus Christ. That is what a knowledge of sin brings about in the soul. "Did He die for me?" So the man is in earnest; he knows he must perish if not found in Christ. "Could not come at Him for the press." This poor woman with the deadly disease—the money went till at last she had none to satisfy the physicians—

"Few, if any, come to Jesus,
Till reduced to self-despair."

Old Berridge says, when anxious about his soul, he looked on the one hand and on the other, and "nothing neglected excepting the door." And so do poor sinners now, till from necessity they come to God with weeping and supplication; "and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

This woman had heard of Christ: she came where He was. That did not do. Just see how things went on in her soul, and see if the like things are going on in thy soul. What did the poor woman say? That she had spent her all, and was "nothing bettered, but rather grew worse." That is the case with all heaven-born souls. Every leper in whom eternal life is implanted will grow worse as long as life is in the body. If we do not get worse and worse, by-and-bye we shall get enough to bring a fee to Jesus. Ours is a spreading leprosy, and there is no cure but taking down the house, and burying the body in an unclean place; but at length the redeemed body and soul shall be with the Lord. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

This woman with the deadly disease could not get at Christ for the press, but the Spirit wrought precious faith in her soul. She said, "If I may touch but His clothes, I shall be whole." Think of the woman's faith. Has God granted thee the same

faith? Then you cannot give it up. Look out for Him and watch for Him. "If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole." The oil of Aaron's grace flows down His beard to the skirt of His garment. It reaches poor sinners at the very hem, dragging along in the dust and dirt. "'If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole;' but I cannot get at Him, and cannot give it up." Jesus knew all about her case. He loved her from eternity, and He made a way through the press, and the woman came and touched Him, and added to her faith, virtue. And Jesus turned Him about and said, "Who touched Me?" The disciples said, "The multitude throng Thee and press Thee, and sayest Thou, Who touched Me?" What is the multitude come for? Loaves and fishes. But the poor woman came, according to the promise, and could not get at Him, yet could not give it up. Then He enabled her, and she touched the hem of His garment—drew peace from the blood of the Lamb. "And Jesus said, Who touched Me? I perceive that virtue is gone out of Me." He wrought the faith in her soul, He emptied her pocket, and brought her to venture on Him alone. The poor woman (I wish I could do her justice while I speak of her) came forward when she could not be hid, and told Him wherefore she had touched Him. What are you after Him for? Is it nothing short of the vital touch will do for you? You say, "I want the sealing witness of the Spirit." The poor woman came and told Him honestly and humbly: "I had a deadly disease. I expected to die, but I heard that others were healed, and I longed to be healed. I knew there was virtue in Thy blood, but could not get Thee for the press." She told Him why she came, and that she was healed immediately. There are millions in heaven that have by faith touched atoning blood, and here stands one as sensible that that blood has been extended to him as he is of his own existence.

Look again. You know Christ went out of His common way when He saved a rich man. The Bible looks wondrously sour at the rich, and the rich look wonderfully sour at the Bible. Here was Zacchæus: there worked in this man's mind a desire to see Jesus, and he could not because he was little of stature. There was a mob round Jesus; but he sought to see Him, and could not, because he was little of stature. Well, then, go home to thy money. "No; I cannot give it up. Things work about in my mind towards Him, and I want more than a hear-say tale about Him;" and an idea got into his head that he must run for it. To see a rich man running to get a glimpse of Jesus Christ is about the greatest wonder that ever was in this world. He knew where Christ was coming. Poor sinner, you know where Christ takes His walks. He comes

to water His saints in the house of prayer; and so you come, again and again, on the look out for a crumb, and that thy poor soul may get at Him, and go on thy way rejoicing. So he ran and "climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was to pass that way." Jesus was looking out for His child, and the child for Him; that is the way to find one another. There were two at work—one setting the other at it. Jesus came and looked up. Zacchæus was looking after the Son of God and Son of Man, and Jesus looking after him; and so their eyes and hearts met, and Zacchæus came down at the first bidding, and "received Him joyfully."

And then look at the wonderful effects of the grace of God. No sooner had Christ told him to come down than he said, "The half of my goods I give to the poor." Hear this, ye that cleave to the muck-rakes! When salvation came to this man's soul, half went at a stroke. "And if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold." How about you and money matters? "Riches profit not in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivereth from death." What has the Gospel done for thee? Zacchæus received mercy from the Lord's hands. It entered his heart, and made him honest and upright to the backbone. "Go to now, ye rich men: weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you." Oh, the millions of covetous professors now in hell-fire; and what a mercy for you and I to know anything of the Gospel of the grace of God; for "they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life."

"And could not come at Him for the press. And it was told Him by certain which said, Thy mother and Thy brethren stand without, desiring to see Thee." He knew it, and knew what they came for: they were not nigh enough; and, if you cannot get nigh enough to Him, He will come to you some day, and you will unite with Zacchæus in being kind to the poor and in being honest.

"Thy mother and Thy brethren *stand* without, desiring to see Thee." It is a tiring position. Look here: if God puts His fear in your heart, it will cause you to stand without a wicked world. "So did not I because of the fear of God." "The fear of God" will cause thee to stand without a wicked world; and, poor sinner, a want of a knowledge of salvation by Jesus Christ will keep thee standing outside the Church—

“ Who fain would believe Him,
 And in their best room
 Would gladly receive Him,
 But fear to presume.”

It is something, sinner, if “ the fear of God ” has made thee to differ, and brought thee to stand without the world. Judas stood *with* them when they came to take the Lord. Oh, to be standing *without* the world, with “ the fear of God ” in the heart ! And they stand without the Church for want of manifested salvation ; but delays are not denials ; and, though they stood without, they were His brethren and His mother still. And what do you desire to see ?

“ Ask thy conscience, ‘ Where’s thy treasure ? ’
 For be certain there’s thy heart.”

“ Desiring to see Him.” There’s only here and there one “ desiring to see Him ; ” panting and crying out after Him. “ Desiring to see Thee.” And Jesus Christ said, “ My mother and My brethren are these which hear the Word of God, and do it.” The God of truth says—and none but His saints will take heed to it—“ Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness ; and all these things shall be added unto you ; ” and from Adam to the end of time, nobody will lay it to heart, or carry it out in the practice, but those that the Father has promised “ shall come to Him ; ” “ and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.”

STUDY the Word, and pray when you retire to your bed or rise from it, that the enemy may never find you idle or unarmed, and sift the wheat out of you.—*Luther.*

To do unnecessary things in the first place, and neglect those which are most necessary, and put them off to the last—is not this the part of a fool ? If a man should go to London to get a pardon, or about some great suit at law, and should, in the first place, spend the most or chiefest of his time in seeing the lions at the Tower, the tombs in Westminster Abbey, or the streets and buildings of the City, or in visiting friends, and put the other off to the last—would he not be a fool ? Christ, who was wisdom itself, judged it folly in Martha to be busy about many things, and to neglect the main, that one thing necessary. It is not necessary to be rich or learned or great, though we have cause to bless God if we are so. But God’s favour, and Christ, and grace are absolutely necessary ; therefore says Christ, “ But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”—*Goodwin.*

AN AFFECTING INCIDENT ;
OR, THE STUBBORNESS OF A CHRISTIAN CURED BY A
SEVERE ROD.

MANY years ago, there lived in London a godly man and his wife, both of whom were eminent for godliness and charity. They lived together many years with no family, but often sought the Lord to build their family for them; and at last God was pleased to give them a son, to their great joy, which lived and grew to be three or four years old, exceeding fair and witty, very delightful and pleasant, tractable and teachable; and, they having but this one child, their affections were much set upon him, and very likely *too much* so. The husband and wife lived exceedingly happy together, insomuch that many observed their sweet carriage to each other, he being of a lovely disposition, a man of good parts, and of a holy life; so amiable and tender to his wife that her life was bound up in his. In the midst and height of this their prosperity, the gentleman falls sick and dies, which was so heavy a stroke to his poor wife that she could not bear up under it. Her spirits sank, and she refused to be comforted. Many prayers were put up to God for her in the public congregation, and many ministers and godly friends visited her to comfort her, but to no purpose, for she had no regard to herself, or cared to eat or drink more than was barely necessary, but would sit in the chimney corner all day sighing and weeping, and hanging down her head, seldom giving an answer to anybody.

Upon a certain day, some godly ministers with Christian friends, by agreement, met at her house to pray and seek God on her behalf; and it came to pass that, after they had ended their work, and were walking up and down where this disconsolate widow was, her child, of whom she took no notice, playing there in the room, had got a joint-stool, and carrying it up and down. At last he turns the stool upside down, and immediately fell or thrust himself into it, no one knowing how; but the stool and the child overturning together, and the child's head being downward, he broke his neck. They sent immediately for physicians and surgeons, but the child died, for no means would avail to get so much as one breath from him, which was most amazing and astonishing to the beholders, the chamber being then full. The poor mother sat there all this while in her usual posture, but, when she saw the child was really dead, she arose up, and before them all uttered words to this purpose: "Oh, blessed Jesus, will nothing please Thee but the heart of Thy poor creature, and the whole heart, and the whole love? Now, take it, Lord; take it! Thou hast won it. Thou art worthy of it! I give Thee my whole heart, Lord! Take it, take it! Fill it with Thy love, and possess it

for ever!" and from that very moment she was filled with joy and comfort, and walked comfortably several months, even till God took her to Himself.

Thus the Lord made the blastings and breakings of her outward man the means of refreshing and comforting her soul. "O Lord, how unsearchable are Thy judgments, and Thy ways *past finding out!"—*From an old "Gospel Magazine."*

FAITHFUL WARNINGS.

PART OF A REMARKABLE SPEECH DELIVERED IN PARLIAMENT, JANUARY 26TH, 1629, BY FRANCIS ROUSE, ESQ., A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

[The speech from which the following extract is taken was delivered at the time Charles I. was endeavouring to suppress the rightful liberties of his subjects, and treasonably seeking to re-establish Papal supremacy in England. We would that in the present day we had many such representative men as Francis Rouse.]

WE have of late entered into consideration of the Petition of Right, and the violation of it; and upon good reasons, for it concerns our goods, liberties, and lives. But there is a right of a higher nature—a right of religion, derived to us from the King of kings, confirmed to us by the kings of this kingdom, and enacted by laws in this place; streaming down to us in the blood of the martyrs, and witnessed from heaven by miracles, even miraculous deliverances—and this right, in the name of this nation, I this day claim, and desire that there may be a deep and serious consideration of the violations of it.

I desire, first, it may be considered what new paintings are laid on the old face of the whore of Babylon, to make her more lovely, and to draw more suitors to her. I desire that it may be considered how the See of Rome doth eat into our religion, and fret into the banks and walls of it, by which banks and walls I mean the laws and statutes of this realm. I desire that we may consider the increase of Arminianism—an error that maketh the grace of God lacquey it after the will of man, that maketh sheep to keep the shepherd, and makes mortal seed of the immortal God. I desire that we may look into the very belly and bowels of the Trojan horse, to see if there be not in it men ready to open the gates to Romish tyranny and Spanish monarchy; for an Arminian is the spawn of a Papist, and if there come of the warmth of court favour upon him, you shall see him turned into one of the frogs that arise out of the bottomless pit.

If ye mark it well, you shall see an Arminian reaching out his hand to a Papist, a Papist to a Jesuit ; a Jesuit gives one hand to the Pope and the other to the King of Spain ; and these men—the Arminians—having kindled fire in our neighbour's country—the Dutch provinces—have now brought over some of it hither, to set on flame this kingdom also.

[Although Spain is not at the present time an object of national fear to us, yet in other points the warnings given by honest Francis Rouse are well worthy the consideration of all lovers of true liberty, who deplore the fearful spread of Jesuitism and libertinism—those two terrible evils which threaten to work such awful mischief in our midst. May God, in mercy to us and to our children, arise for our help, and avert the threatening storm ! Brethren, “ watch and pray.”—ED.]

AN ALLSUFFICIENT FRIEND.

“ This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles.”—PSALM xxxiv. 6.

UNTO the Lord who reigns above
 I cried in my distress ;
 He quickly showed His wondrous love,
 And did my spirit bless.

My way so rough and hedged up
 He saw, and pitied me ;
 And He who drank the bitter cup
 Appeared to set me free.

He showed me it was for the best
 That I should suffer loss ;
 That all my trials should be blest
 But I must bear the cross.

“ All things,” He said, “ shall work for good
 To those who fear My name ;
 Trust Me for strength and daily food ;
 You shall not suffer shame.”

The crown of life He soon will give,
 The victory over all ;
 And I with Him in heaven shall live
 Before His throne shall fall.

There to acknowledge all He did
 Was well—was good for me ;
 And, though His purposes He hid,
 His wisdom I shall see.*

G. H. M. READ

* John xiii. 7

MEMOIR OF THE LATE JOHN CLARK, OF
FIVEASHDOWN.

(Continued from page 276.)

AFTER our friend had held the pastorate at Ebenezer Chapel, Deptford, for about two years, he was invited to supply the pulpit at Fiveashdown, Sussex, on Lord's day, November 9th, 1856. Here he found a goodly number of gracious persons, some of whom had listened to the preaching of such men as William Abbott, of Mayfield; Henry Fowler, of London; John Vinall and his sons, of Lewes; and John Grace, of Brighton. After this he was asked to visit them periodically, whence a mutual attachment was formed between him and the people there, which finally resulted in Mr. Clark settling among them. From August, 1858, he commenced supplying the pulpit once a month, about which period the late Mr. Tatham preached there frequently, whose ministry was made very useful, especially to several young people in the congregation. But at that time good old Thomas Pitcher, whose memory is dear to many in Sussex, supplied the pulpit about two Lord's days in the month. Eventually, the friends at Fiveashdown, having duly considered the matter, intimated to Mr. Clark their desire that he would come and take the services with Mr. Pitcher. It became a matter of great exercise to Mr. Clark, as he earnestly desired to follow the Lord's providential and gracious leadings in the matter; and what tended to increase his perplexity was, that while some were wishing him to come to the south of England, others were desiring him to go north. Once, while supplying the pulpit of the late Samuel Turner, at Sunderland, the little remnant was entreating him to remain there. But, while looking to the Lord for guidance, he begged of Him to direct him to a word of Scripture, that he might know the way wherein he should walk; whereupon he opened his Bible upon Ezekiel xxi. 16: "Go thee one way or other, either on the right hand, or on the left, whithersoever thy face is set;" to which he replied, "Then, Lord, my face is set to the south of England." After this, amidst many fears, he accepted the invitation, and removed to Fiveashdown. There he preached in conjunction with Mr. Pitcher; and, as they both contended for the work of the Holy Spirit in the soul of a sinner, we doubt not that the ministry of each confirmed the other, for they were led to walk by the same rule, and to mind the same things.

After a few years the Lord was pleased to remove Thomas Pitcher from the scene of his labours, at the ripe age of eighty-one. He was called to his rest February 14th, 1862.

The following lines were written by Mr. Clark, in memory of his fellow-labourer—

The man of God hath finished well his race,
Through Christ, who is the Source of every grace ;
And under nature's pains support He gave,
Which made him look with peace towards his grave.

When first convinced, his grief was clearly seen :
When first the arrows pierced his heart, so keen,
He prayed that blood might be applied to him,
That he through that might be for ever clean.

At last the Lord with power upon him broke,
And, thus redeemed from every galling yoke,
He stood before Him, sweetly blest with peace—
The trumpet blew, and sounded his release.

He lived beyond his threescore years and ten,
Proving that he was loved by many men
Who loved the truth that purified his heart—
That made him willing from the world to part.

What sweet humility adorned his mind !
His words were tender, and his actions kind ;
And thus kept low, he did not walk in pride,
Wishing with Jesus ever to abide.

To cheer him with His presence kind and sweet—
To let him know he might to Him retreat—
When strife of tongues did meet him in the way,
Wishing his peace and comfort then to slay.

A savour rested on the words he said,
Which he obtained from Christ, his living Head ;
He dearly loved Hart, that man of God,
Because, like him, a chequered path he trod.

Oh, when his dying hand he placed in mine,
My fondling heart around him did entwine ;
Our union with each other here was great,
And willingly we bore each other's weight.

But when unto his end he nearer came,
He proved the power of his dear Master's name,
And " Glory, glory, glory !" then he spoke,
Before in heaven's glory he awoke.

Thus, like a sheaf of corn that's fully ripe,
He's gone to be adorned with robes of light ;
And when, dear friends, our end is fully come,
We with our brother then shall be at home.

We thank and bless Thee, O Thou dearest Lord,
For making good to us Thy holy Word,
In making known Thou art our loving Friend—
In loving those who're chosen to the end.

And now, dear Saviour, look upon Thy worm,
 Who must in Mesech's vale awhile sojourn ;
 Oh, grant Thy presence, and Thy Spirit's might,
 To make him well his Master's battles fight.

The way was now open for John Clark to minister there more stately. For nineteen years he preached there the Word of life to God's hungry poor ; and the rural habits of the people, and country scenes and associations, were more congenial to our friend's mind than those of town and of townspeople, so that we believe it was felt that both minister and people were well matched ; and although, in the course of years, they no doubt discovered some of each other's infirmities, yet they found Mr. Hart's words true—

“ Love all defects supplies,
 Makes great obstructions small ;
 'Tis prayer, 'tis praise, 'tis sacrifice,
 'Tis holiness, 'tis all.”

One thing we believe our friend regretted, namely, that there was no Church formed at this old-established “ cause of truth.” Glad should we be to hear that there were an exercise in the minds of the people, and in Mr. Clark's successor, to observe those ordinances which the Word of God enjoins. How often have we been refreshed at our weekly prayer-meeting ! We have felt that our people were to us like Aaron and Hur were to Moses (Exod. xvii. 12), in holding up our hands by prayer ; and truly, if the great Apostle of the Gentiles needed the prayers of the Lord's people, may not every minister sent of God do well to exhort his hearers in Paul's own words, “ Brethren, pray for us ” ? (1 Thess. v. 25.)

By a singular arrangement Mr. Clark had to vacate his pulpit once in four weeks ; but this gave him opportunities of supplying other causes, among which were Eastbourne, Grantham, Bottesford, Newark, and Sunderland, where he found dear old saints of the Huntingtonian type, to whom we believe the Word spoken by him was attended with life, savour, and power. Many other parts were visited by him, both occasionally and periodically ; so that at his death a gap seemed to have been made at several places, and many felt that they had lost an old and tried friend and minister.

In closing his autobiography, Mr. Clark says : “ I am now in my sixty-sixth year, and, if it should be asked how I go on now, I must say that the remembrance of God's mercies sinks me, as it were, into nothing, so that I can endure reproaches for Christ's sake, and look upon myself as one of the vilest that ever God saved. I often tell Him that I would

acknowledge His justice if He were, after all, to send me to hell ; and that there cannot be any one in heaven that will sing of free and sovereign grace more than myself. I also find the need of much watchfulness and prayer ; not that I am saved by it, and yet I cannot be saved without it. The Lord spake concerning this, telling His disciples to ‘ watch and pray,’ that they entered not into temptation ; and when He spoke to John, as recorded in the Revelation, He said if they did not watch He would come upon them as a thief, and that they should not know what hour He would come upon them ; and the Apostle tells Timothy that he was to watch in all things, doing the work of an evangelist, and making full proof of his ministry. And this should be particularly seen in those who are in the ministry, for a watchman is to tell ‘ what of the night ’ (Isa. xxi. 11). A porter is to keep the door, and not to suffer any to go in to the supper who have not the royal robe ; a soldier is to fight the battles of his country ; and a steward should be found faithful, feeding God’s household with proper meat, and in due season, and be faithful unto death in what is entrusted to his care. A shepherd must look after the diseases of the sheep, and not over-drive them ; must take the lambs up from the cold ground, bringing that back which has been driven away ; must not care much about himself, but be continually looking after the welfare of others. I am therefore much in prayer, committing everything into His hands, that were pierced for me ; the hands that hold everything, even the hearts of all men ; for, as Habakkuk says, ‘ There are horns coming out of His hands, and there is the hiding of His power.’ These hands He spread out when He went to glory, that His disciples might call to mind that, when the high priest in former times dismissed the people, he spread out his hands, saying, ‘ The Lord bless thee, and keep thee ; the Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.’ Yes, it is the Lord must do all, for man can do nothing.”

(*To be continued.*)

DEATH is a prevalent and insuperable evil ; hence the proverbial expression, “ Strong as death, that subdues all ; cruel as the grave, that spares none.” It is in vain to struggle with the pangs of death. No simples in nature, no compositions of art, no influence of the stars, no power of angels, can support thy dying body, or retain thy flitting soul. “ No man hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit ; neither hath he power in the day of death : and there is no discharge in that war ” (Eccles. viii. 8). The body sinks in the conflict, and death feeds on its prostrate prey in the grave.

—*Bates.*

A VOICE FROM THE STAKE—"REPENT!"

DEAR FRIEND,—I have been reading two sermons by the godly martyr, Bradford, an account of whom appeared in the SOWER for November and December, 1880. These sermons were published in a little book form in the year 1581, just three hundred years ago. There is an epistle to the reader by Mr. Bradford, dated 12th of July, 1553; also a preface by Thomas Sampson, one of Bradford's intimate friends, on reading of which I thought it would be well if a part of it were printed in the SOWER, and thus go forth again far and wide, in this critical juncture of our history, when there is but very little acknowledgment of God in the land, and still less close dealing with Him in secret, personally.

Hoping it may please the Lord to use it to the awakening of His people to prayer and watchfulness, zeal and faithfulness, in regard to all the words and ways of our great Redeemer,

W. B.

"To the Christian reader, Thomas Sampson wisheth the felicity of speedy and full conversion to the Lord.

"Godly and learned men do write and publish books to profit the age in which they do live, and also the generations to come. This desire was in the author of this treatise, Master John Bradford, who was the preacher and publisher of this sermon on 'Repentance.' And now, to the end that we which do live on the earth after him, and are the posterity, may take as much or more profit by it than they did to and for whom, in his lifetime, he did both preach and publish it. . . . They are accounted the most profitable teachers who have themselves good experience by practice of that which they teach others; such as may safely say, 'Brethren, be ye followers of me, and mark them which walk, so that ye have us for an example.' And surely such a pattern was Mr. Bradford, in his lifetime, of this doctrine of repentance, which in both these sermons he teacheth, that I, who knew him familiarly, must needs give to God this praise for him—that among men I have scarcely known one like him. I know when, and partly how, it pleased God, by effectual calling, to turn his heart unto the true knowledge and obedience of the most holy Gospel of Christ our Saviour, of which God did give him such a heavenly hold and lively feeling that, as he then knew many sins were forgiven him, so surely did he declare by deeds that he loved much; for, having both gifts and calling to have employed himself in civil and worldly matters profitably, such was his love to Christ and zeal for the promotion of His glorious Gospel, that he changed not only his course of life, but his study also.

"After God touched his heart with that effectual calling, he sold his chapters, rings, brooches, and jewels of gold, which before he used to wear, and bestowed the price of these his former vanities in the relief of Christ's poor members. . . . But, besides this, he had his daily exercise of repentance. His manner was to make a catalogue of the greatest sins which he had committed in his life of ignorance, and lay the same before him when he went to prayer in private, that by the sight and remembrance of them he might be stirred up to offer to God the sacrifice of a contrite heart. . . . Such continual exercise of conscience had he in private prayer, that he did not count himself to have prayed to his satisfaction unless he had felt some inward smiting of heart for sin, and some healing of the wound by faith. . . . And not only was he a practiser of repentance in himself, but a continual provoker of others thereto, not only in public preaching, but in private company also. In all companies he would freely reprove any sin and misbehaviour which appeared in any person. . . . As his life was, such was his death—a provocation to repentance. At his death, as the history doth witness, when he was burning at Smithfield, and the flames of fire did fly about his ears, his last words, publicly noted and heard, were these, 'Repent, England!' . . . To England Bradford did and doth still preach repentance; and surely England has much more cause to repent now than it had when he lived and preached repentance. Let, therefore, now Bradford's sermon, life, and death move thee, O England, to repentance. May every one of us repent, and depart from evil, and turn wholly to the Lord! This work in us, O gracious God and Saviour. Amen."

WHAT a sad visitation is that where the black horse of death goeth before, and the red horse of wrath followeth after!—*Dr. Goodwin.*

As the Lord upbraids the Jews for their black ingratitude, in bargaining for thirty pieces of silver to have Him betrayed to their malice—"A goodly price that I was prized at of them"—so when there is a universal prostration of all the powers and faculties, when the spirits are damped, the vital heat is checked, and the senses are obstructed in their exercise, then to seek God for mercy and to make fair promises of obedience, may He not justly reproach the presumer, and say, "A goodly time you have allotted for Me! Your youth and strength, the golden age of your life, has been wasted on your lusts and in the business of the world; and the wretched remains you think worthy of My acceptance"?—*Bates.*

STRENGTH EQUAL TO THE DAY.

A YOUNG man who "had spoken contemptuously of images, comparing them to the gods of the heathen," suffered martyrdom at Paris, in the year 1542.

"As the youth refused to retract, he was to have his tongue cut out. No change could be observed in his face when the hangman approached him to perform this first act of cruelty. He put the tongue out as far as he could, the torturer pulled it out still further with pincers, and cut it off, slapping the martyr with it on the cheek. He then threw the tongue among the crowd, who, 'it is said,' adds the writer conscientiously, 'picked it up and flung it back in the martyr's face.' As he got out of the cart, he looked as if he were going to a feast and not to punishment. Unmoved by the howling and the savage cries of the mob, he took his place calmly at the post, where a chain was passed round him. He now and then spat the blood from his mouth, but kept his eyes fixed on heaven, as if looking there for help. When the executioner covered his head with sulphur, and pointed to the fire, he still smiled and bowed, as if to show that he died willingly.

"One of the last victims of the reign of Francis I. was Jean Brugière, who, after several imprisonments and escapes, was taken to Paris, tried, and condemned to be burnt alive at Issoire (3rd March, 1547). He was transferred to Montferrand, where Ory, the inquisitor, discussed the 'real presence' with him. 'If you deny,' said Ory, 'that the body of our Lord is in the host, when the priest has pronounced the sacramental words, you deny the power of God, who can do everything.' 'I do not deny the power of God,' answered Brugière, 'for we are not disputing whether God has power or not to do everything, but what He has done in His holy Sacrament, and what He desires us to do.' When the time of his suffering came, the priests pressed a crucifix to his lips, and bade him call on the Virgin and saints. 'Let me,' he said with a smile, 'let me think of God before I die! I am content with the only Advocate He has appointed for sinners.' While preparing the rope or chain, the executioner slipped and fell. Brugière, who remained calm and unmoved, held out his hand to raise him. 'Cheer up, M. Pouchet! I hope you are not hurt,' he said. When the fire was kindled, he raised his eyes to the cross and exclaimed, 'Oh, heavenly Father, I beseech Thee, for the love of Thy Son, that Thou wilt be pleased to comfort me in this hour by Thy Holy Spirit, in order that the work begun in me may be perfected to Thy glory, and to the benefit of Thy poor Church.' When all was over, the crowd withdrew in silence. The curate

of Issoire said, as he returned home, 'May God give me grace to die in the faith of Brugière.'

The following touching incidents occurred a little later. On the night of the 4th September, 1557, an assembly of some three or four hundred Protestants was broken up in Paris; many of them were apprehended, and some were barbarously killed on the spot.

"Among the captives was Philippa de Lunz, a woman of good family, a widow, and only twenty-two years old. She was interrogated several times, but her answers were such as to destroy all hope of pardon. On the 27th of September, 1558, more than a year after her imprisonment, she was led out to death, in company with Nicholas Clinet or Clivet, a schoolmaster, and Taurin Gravelle, an advocate, both elders in the Reformed Church. Before they were placed in the tumbrel that was to carry them to the stake in the Place Maubert, they were to have their tongues cut out, to prevent their praying aloud or addressing the people on the road to death. The two men suffered the cruel mutilation without a groan. Turning to Philippa, the executioner roughly bade her put out her tongue. She did so immediately. Even he was struck by her intrepidity: 'Come, that's well, *truande*,' he said; 'you are not afraid then?' 'As I do not fear for my body,' she replied, 'why should I fear for my tongue?' The knife flashed an instant before her eyes, and her tongue fell to the ground. She was then thrust into the cart at the feet of her two companions, and bound to the same chain. Before leaving the prison she had taken off her widow's weeds, saying, 'Why should I not rejoice? I am going to meet my husband!'

"Around a pile of faggots, in the Place Maubert, there had collected all that was vilest in Paris, dancing and calling out for blood, just as some two hundred years later a similar mob danced round the victims of the guillotine. The king is said to have been a spectator of the horrible scene that followed. It was Philippa's fate to look on while her two companions were burnt to death—to witness their horrible convulsions, and hear the shrieks which the mounting flames extorted from them. But even this did not shake her faith, which found support in earnest prayer. And now her turn had come. The executioners roughly seized her with their strong arms, shamefully tearing her clothes, and held her over the hot ashes until her feet were burnt to the bone. Then with a horrible refinement of cruelty, the savage torturers hung her head downwards in the fire, until the scalp was burnt off and her eyes scorched out. After that she was strangled, and heaven received another saint.

"A few days later, four more of the prisoners suffered death at the same place. One of them, as he opened the shutter of his

cell, on the morning of his execution, that he might behold the sunrise once more, exclaimed, 'How glorious it will be when we are exalted above all this!'"

The following victim was an illustrious one, Du Bourg, one of the chancellors of the realm, who was put to death in the reign of Francis II., on the 23rd of December, 1559. He thus met his end:—

"After sentence of death had been delivered, he said, 'I am sent to the stake because I will not confess that justification, grace, and sanctification are to be found elsewhere than in Christ. This is the cause of my death, that I have embraced the pure doctrine of the Gospel. Extinguish your fires, and return unto the Lord with real newness of heart, that your sins may be blotted out. Let the wicked man forsake his way, and turn unto the Lord. Think upon these things; I am going to my death.' So great were the apprehensions of the court of an attempt at rescue, that the streets were barricaded and lined with armed men, and nearly six hundred soldiers were stationed round the Grève—the French Tyburn of those days. Du Bourg met his fate like a Christian hero. On reaching the place of execution, he said, 'Six feet of earth for my body, and the boundless heaven for my soul, are the only possession I shall soon have.' Then, turning to the spectators, he said, 'I am going to die, not because I am a thief and a murderer, but because I love the Gospel. I rejoice to give my life in so good a cause.' His last words were, 'My God, my God, forsake me not, lest I forsake Thee.' The executioner then adjusted the rope round his neck, and uttered the terrible formula: '*Messire, le roi vous salue*' ('Sir, the king salutes you'), and Du Bourg was a corpse. His lifeless body was afterwards burnt to ashes. The royal historiographer, who rarely spares a heretic, writes, amplifying the words of the centurion at the foot of the cross: 'His execution inspired many persons with the conviction that the faith possessed by so good a man could not be wrong.'

"Florimond de Remond, the historian of heresy, and at that time a young man, was an eye-witness of Du Bourg's death. 'We burst into tears,' he says, 'in our colleges on returning from the execution, and pleaded his cause after his decease, cursing those unrighteous judges who had so unjustly condemned him. His preaching at the gallows did more evil than a hundred ministers could have done.' Chandieu, pastor of the Church at Paris, shows us how it was that these executions made so many converts: 'Most people like what they see hated with such extreme hatred. They think themselves fortunate in knowing what leads others to the gibbet, and return home from the public places edified by the constancy of those whom they have them-

selves reduced to ashes."—"Massacre of St. Bartholomew," by F. H. White.

[Dear reader, our object in inserting the above harrowing details is to deepen in you a wise shrinking from Popery, and from the path that leads to it—Ritualism. The Ritualists are turning the Protestant Church of England into a training-school for Popery, and many of whom better things were expected, are now on the high road to persecuting Rome. "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away."—ED.]

"THIS IS MY BELOVED AND MY FRIEND."

JESUS! oh, sweet, oh, blessed name!
Far more to me than wealth or fame;
What tongue can fully speak of Thee,
Thou sweet incarnate mystery?

Ah! whom have I in heaven beside
Jesus, my Lord, the Crucified?
Nor can this lower world afford
One pleasure equal to my Lord.

And why, my soul, dost thou so prize
This name thou once didst so despise?
How came this mighty change in thee?
Surely 'twas grace divinely free.

Amazing grace! my soul can tell,
When nigh despair I looked for hell,
How Jesus came, my pardon sealed,
And peace, and joy, and heaven revealed.

Oh, height, oh, depth of sovereign grace,
That reached and rescued one so base!
Oh, love of Christ, how great, how free,
To love and save a wretch like me!

And now, my soul, wouldst thou not raise
An endless song of grateful praise
To Jesus and His name extol,
And "crown Him, crown Him Lord of all"?

Ticehurst.

H. F.

How canst thou, O priest, who art but a man, make thy Maker? What! the thing that groweth in the fields, the ear which thou pluckest to-day, shall be God to-morrow? As you cannot make the works which He made, how then shalt thou make Him that made the works? Woe be to them that hear the testimony of the Pope, rather than of the Gospel!—*Wycliffe*.

THE RICHES OF JESUS' GRACE; OR, THE
EXPERIENCE OF THAMAR.

[THE following account was first sent forth in print some sixty years ago by the late Mr. Henry Fowler, under whose ministry the subject of the narrative was brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord. It being now out of print, and several friends having expressed a strong desire to possess it, it has been sent to us by a friend with the request that we would insert it in the SOWER, which, on the ground of its worth, and from love to the honoured servant of Christ who was the spiritual father of this trophy of grace, we gladly consent now to do; and may the Lord bless the reading of it to many who are anxiously seeking after Christ, and also to others who are ignorant of their state, and of the secret of salvation by grace.—ED.]

DEAR SIR,—As it is your desire I should pen down a little of the Lord's gracious dealings with vile, unworthy me, I have at length taken my pen in hand, after many reasonings in my mind about it. The desire of my soul is, to speak to the honour of my dear Redeemer, and no wonder if I feel opposed, for the devil and my own wicked heart are both enemies to Him.

When about sixteen years of age, the Lord was pleased to convince me of my lost estate and condition under your ministry. I had till then been building my hopes on a false foundation, thinking, if I did the best I could, God was merciful and would forgive me the rest; but, when I heard you describe the experience of God's children, I lost all my hopes, for I was firmly persuaded my religion was not like what you described, and that without a better religion I should be lost. All that I could do was to cry to God to teach me (such a sinner I was), and not suffer me to be deceived.

I went on in this way a long time, and used to return from the house of God with my heart full of sorrow. My trouble was because I did not feel that terrible law-work and horrible fear of hell that I thought I must if I was one of God's children; yet still I found old things to be passed away, and all things to become new. I had a different view of the holiness and justice of God, and saw He would be just in sending me to hell. I felt the law in its spirituality; it condemned me in thought, word, and deed. I truly felt I was—

“A lifeless lump of loathsome sin,
Without the power to act or will.”

Sometimes I felt my heart so hard and careless, I was afraid all my fears would wear off, and I should be like those

the woes of God were denounced against; then I should feel full of concern again, and very earnestly did I wrestle with God that He would keep me alive to my danger, and never suffer me to live in a false peace, nor be satisfied with anything short of Himself. I went on a long time mourning because I could not mourn, feeling nothing but darkness, sin, and misery. At times I found encouragement from these words, "I am the Light of the world; he that believeth in Me shall not abide in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

About this time I heard you preach from these words: "The eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear Him, on them that hope in His mercy: to deliver their souls from death, and to keep them alive in famine." You were led to say the poor soul that hoped in His mercy should have it. You entered most sweetly into my feelings, and I felt a little hope spring up. I thought, "Why, these are my very feelings! Who can tell but God may show mercy to me?" I found it that evening good to be there. I well remember the spot; but, before I reached home, I lost my comfort in hearing God's children talk of their deep convictions, and of being shaken over hell; so I concluded I was nothing but a hypocrite, and was afraid to speak, lest I should deceive them. This fear I often laboured under. I dreaded to deceive any of God's children, or to be deceived myself. It was not "a *name to live*" I wanted. I wanted that which would bear me up in the trying hour of death. Once I heard you say, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." "Then," thought I, "I cannot please God, for I have no faith, neither do I know what it is." I opened my hymn-book and read these lines—

"Faith in Christ is simply this—
Trusting in His righteousness;
Glorying in His precious cross;
Giving credit to His Word;
Owning Him the sovereign Lord,
And all besides as dross."

These words opened to me what faith, was a little, and rest and encouragement I found there.

About six months after this I heard you preach from these words: "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love; and I was unto them as they that take off the yoke from their jaws; and I laid meat before them." When you were speaking of the drawing of God's love, I was surprised to hear you describe it in the manner you did, for I thought, "If the Lord had drawn me with the cords of love, I should feel full of love and holiness." But you said, when the Lord drew a poor sinner, instead of finding love and holiness, he found nothing in himself but unholiness,

hatred, and sin. In your description of God's drawing I could go step by step with you. I found the words that dropped from your lips to be spirit and life to my soul, and was enabled to hope I was in the footsteps of the flock. You said, "We know that we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I felt sure, if I had no other evidence, I had this, for I saw more glory and beauty in them, though they begged their bread from door to door, than in the king with all his grandeur and splendour. But I soon met with another thief that robbed and plundered me again, and down I sank. It was suggested that all my comforts and enjoyments were from you, and that you were but a man, and that it was but nature altogether. Oh, sir, how doth Satan fight against God's dear servants, and oppose a coming sinner—

"But God is above men, devils, and sin,
And Jesus's love the battle shall win."

I went on doubting and fearing, and could not say I was sure God's work was begun. This was what I wanted. I knew if He had begun it, He would carry it on. For several months after I laboured under this fear, that my religion was all from nature, till one evening I had a little conversation with a dear friend now in glory; and the blessed light and power the Lord was pleased to apply his words with I never shall forget. No; though he is dead, he yet speaketh. It cast such a light on my path that I can from experience say, "Behold, how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Yes; the

"Communion of the saints is sweet,
Who in the name of Jesus meet."

In a short time after, you took your text from these words: "No man can come unto Me except the Father which hath sent Me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." In speaking of the drawing of the Father, you made this remark: "Who brought thee to see such a glory and beauty in Christ, and in the Word of God, and such a glory in God's children; and led thee in secret, when no eye saw thee, to cry out, 'God be merciful to me a sinner'?" This is not nature; these are the drawings of the Father, poor sinner." The blessed unction and sweetness, dear sir, I felt in these words I never shall forget. "*This is not nature, poor sinner,*" came with such power, I felt sure God's work was begun; and this made the place a little heaven to my soul.

Two months after I heard you preach from these words: "The fear of the Lord tendeth to life, and he that hath it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil." Here the Lord was pleased to lead you again into the path I was treading. When

you were speaking of the fear of the Lord, and of the tenderness of the poor sinner's conscience, I could go step by step with you, and a blessed refreshing meal I had, for "I found His words, and did eat them; and they were the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Sure I am, dear sir, you laboured not in vain, neither did you spend your strength for nought; for I was fully persuaded, though I had not felt such deep convictions and terrors of hell as others, that I was in the right way that leads to life eternal. These words at this time were very sweet to me—

"The Gospel how cheering! its accents how sweet!
'Tis the feast heavenly wisdom prepared."

It is a feast indeed when God the Holy Ghost is pleased to spread the feast and say, "Eat, O friends; drink abundantly, O beloved." I often look back and think, if He would but be pleased to feast me once more under the Word with the joy and peace He did then, I should be ready to call on the stones to bless and praise His dear name. "The companions hearken to Thy voice; cause me to hear it," is the language of my disconsolate soul.

"Shall I always mourning go,
Bowling, hanging down my head?"

Seeing the feast spread, and others partaking, but not a morsel for me?

After this I went on about sixteen months—at times very disconsolate on the account of this vile body of sin and death, and because I could not say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His." This was the next point I wanted to come at. It was not enough that God's work was begun; I wanted to be blessed with the Spirit of adoption, to cry, "Abba, Father." But still the Lord was very gracious in feeding me under the Word; it was not then as it is now. Oh, how blessed did I consider those to be who possessed this inestimable blessing; but I was afraid I should never have it, but be all my lifetime subject to bondage. But, blessed be my precious Redeemer, He hath been better than all my fears. "He will fulfil the desires of them that fear Him, of such as hope in His mercy."

About the time mentioned above, the Lord was pleased to give me a little more light in my dwelling, and indulge me with much freedom at a throne of grace, so that I could pour out my soul before Him, and tell Him all my trouble. Oh, that I could feel that spirit of prayer and supplication I then did! But, when I contrast the former with the present, it adds to the load of my grief. I could look back with pleasure and say, "Surely it is the Lord that has taught and brought me thus far." The Word of God was precious, and, instead of prayer being a task and burden, as it

now is at times (to my shame and grief I speak it), it was my delight, and I rejoiced in hope that the Lord would in His own time—

“ Assure my conscience of her part
 In the Redeemer’s blood,
 And bear His witness to my heart
 That I was born of God.”

I had often thought of the faith and love of the martyrs, and felt cast down, comparing their love with mine, for it did not seem as if I had either love or courage to suffer for His dear name; but one day the Lord so overcame me with His love that I had courage and strength too, and I said, “ Thus it was that the martyrs felt; for, if any one was to come now for my life, I could freely lay it down for the honour of His dear name.” Yes, I thought I could do it with the greatest pleasure. My mountain then stood strong; but He hid His face, and then how soon I was troubled, and thought it was all a delusion. In a short time after, one day I was much cast down with these thoughts working in my mind—that, though there are few to be saved, when they are all gathered together, there will be a number that no man could number; and suppose I should be left out? I thought, “ Among so many, such a poor, vile wretch as I may be left out of that blessed number, and this will be awful indeed!” Here, dear sir, I staggered through unbelief; but, blessed be God, He was pleased to send these words home with power—

“ His honour is engaged to save
 The meanest of His sheep;
 All that His heavenly Father gave,
 His hands securely keep.”

Oh, with what sweetness these words darted into my mind! They were precious indeed, for I felt I was one of the meanest of the sheep. But, what was still more precious, I saw it was impossible for one of His sheep to be left behind. Neither their wretchedness nor sin could prevent Him from saving them, because His honour was engaged. Oh, the sweetness I found in the words, “ *His honour is engaged*!” I saw Him, by the eye of faith, riding forth in the chariot of His love, conquering and subduing everything that stood in His way. Blessed be His precious name, it was no matter what stood in His way; His honour was engaged, and that was enough. Sometimes the honour of a man is thought much of; but what is that, when compared with the honour of the King of kings and Lord of lords? Of man it may be said, “ In a moment his breath is gone, and in that very day his thoughts perish.” But His glorious honour “ ever liveth to make intercession ” for His dear elect; and, because He lives, they shall

live also. Oh, sir, how rich the sound, that, because He liveth, *we shall live also!* Here it is I find a firm standing for my faith, in the blessed, complete work of the God-man Mediator—

“Precious Jesus! what a treasure ;
To a poor believing mind!
Solid joys and lasting pleasure
Here and nowhere else I find.”

Then followed these words—

“Satan might then full victory boast ;
The Church might wholly fall ;
If one believer may be lost,
It follows, so may all.”

Here I saw the Church's blessed security in the bond of an everlasting covenant that never can be broken, or else His blessed honour would be marred. Satan would indeed boast then! These words have often been sweet to me—

“What shall break the bond asunder?
Who from Jesus shall divide?”

Why, not all the powers below nor all the powers above; for He is God over all, and all things are under His blessed feet.

One day, about this time, I felt for a moment what I cannot describe; but I believe it was some of the good old wine of the kingdom that I shall drink deep into when I get home to my Father's house, for He has got an ocean that never can be drained dry. Oh, my soul, be not dismayed, though thou canst not get enough to wet thy parched lips within this dreary wilderness! There is a time coming when thou shalt not only drink to the full, but bathe in it! Oh, my God, what hast Thou bestowed upon vile, guilty, unworthy me, in giving me a sure hope of Thy exceeding eternal weight of glory! Oh, that I had a more feeling sense of Thy goodness and mercy towards me! But, Lord, Thou knowest it is the grief of my soul to feel so dead and lifeless, so heart-hardened and so ungrateful; but, Lord, Thou hast said, “Without Me you can do nothing;” and so, dear Lord, I find it. Come, Thou blessed Spirit, and blow upon Thy garden, that the spices may flow out!

But to return. I had no sooner lost my comfort but my vile unbelief would show its face again, and I began to doubt the reality of its coming from God. How trying this is to a poor sinner that is dismayed at every breath! There it was I met with a whole troop of doubters—these God-dishonouring enemies—but yet get rid of them I could not. They beset me behind and before, and hedged up my way, so that I could not find my paths. A throne of grace was hedged up too, and it was suggested that I had never trod one step in the right road; and I was so blinded

by the enemy, unbelief, I could not see clearly that I ever had. In this state I went to the house of God, but I was so tried upon this point, *that I had taken the comfort when it did not belong to me*, and I thought I would try to put it all away. You took your text from these words: "Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines; for our vines have tender grapes." Oh, the goodness of the Lord! I was overcome with tears of joy all the time, and could not put it away; for, though I had been so tempted to think I had never trod one step in the right way, yet, when you were describing the tender grapes, all my enemies fled, and I found them all liars; for I could go step by step with you, and could again say with David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name!" "Lord," I said, "am I one of Thy tender grapes?" But, though my enemies fled at the voice and presence of the Shepherd of the sheep, no sooner was I suffered to ramble upon the dark mountains than they assaulted me again, and especially that monster, infidelity. I was tempted to doubt the being of a God, and the reality of religion! I was so tried, and I thought I would not mind what I suffered if I could say I was sure my comfort came from God. I begged Him to be pleased to make it plain to me, and thought He would, in blessing me more abundantly. But I have often thought of these words since: "By terrible things in righteousness wilt Thou answer us, O God of our salvation;" for I have learned since, by painful experience, that none but God could give me what I then enjoyed. Paul may plant, and Apollos may water; but God alone can give the increase. He brought me into darkness, and not into light, and I sensibly felt my feet made fast in the stocks. Ah! here I was, a poor prisoner, shut up in prison, shut up in reading, shut up in the house of God; no blessing and praising God with all my heart, no sweet meltings of soul when I heard my feelings described, which used to be the case when I was not so particularly blessed, as in the sermons mentioned. But now the scene was changed, and my language was, "Woe is me! my leanness! my leanness!" or words to that effect.

In this way I went on for about six months, when I had a little conversation with you. It was but a few words, but they were "words in season;" and "a word spoken in season how good it is!" You made this remark—that, if I was not reconciled to God, I should not have felt a solid hope and peace in my conscience. This I was firmly persuaded I had experienced, though I was not brought to say, "My Lord and my God." I retired to rest with these words with me, and the next morning they still abode in my mind, and I thought, "Am I reconciled to God? Is it possible? What an exceeding great mercy if I am! This is a treasure rich indeed!" Then came these words, "He

hath made peace by the blood of His cross: and hath broken down the middle wall of partition, hath spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly." Here, dear sir, I saw the way in which poor sinners were reconciled to God the Father, through the precious blood of God the Son, and not by the works and righteousness of vile, sinful worms. No; it is the blood of the Lamb; and "*without shedding of blood there is no remission.*" Not a soul can be saved without this precious blood. Well may it be called precious, for it is able to cleanse the most filthy. What! is my sin of too deep a dye for this precious blood to cleanse? Cast not dishonour on the dear Redeemer by rejecting it, for "*the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.*" Oh, the rich virtue of this precious blood! "It takes out all stain whenever applied." "*The middle wall of partition*" I thought was sin, that was built up when Adam fell, and separated between God and all mankind, but that Christ for His dear elect had broken it down. Now, though I often feel a wall of sin that separates me from the enjoyment of Him, bless His precious name, I am firmly persuaded it is impossible for a wall to be built up to separate me eternally from Him—

"Whom once He loves He never leaves,
But loves them to the end."

This alone keeps me from despair—the eternal, unshaken, fixed love of God. Were it possible for sin to build up the wall again, of all creatures I should be the most miserable; for, as you once said, "I live to sin against Him." He daily loadeth me with His benefits. Ungrateful wretch that I am, the returns I make are to murmur and fret, and think He deals very hardly with me! But oh, the love of God! "Tis not for good deeds, good tempers, nor frames;" if it were, the earth would open and swallow me up. My wretched temper has caused me many a heartache, many a sigh and tear. I find what Mr. Hart says to be true—

"My own bad heart creates me smart
Which only God can know."

But I must say again, Oh, the love of God

"The vessel of mercy still rides
O'er all the dread billows of sin; |
Though tossed, she in safety abides;
Her God hath in love shut her in."

Ah! it was love indeed that shut such a rebel in as me!

(To be continued.)

A HEART full of graces is better than a head full of notions.—
Dr. Goodwin.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XVII.

MY DEAR MARY,—May mercy and peace rest upon you, enabling you to do with your hands with all your might whatever you find to do as unto the Lord, under whose kind providence I believe you desire to trust. But well I know, from my own experience, that Satan and our wicked hearts are ever in alliance to keep us from being and doing as the Word of God directs—that is, to be content with such things as we have. I still find it a difficult lesson, and I think from the same cause as yourself—I mean for want of time. I cannot as often as I would get to read my Bible, for I have very little opportunity after I leave my room in a morning until evening, and then I am frequently overcome with sleep. But it is a great mercy if we are blessed with health and strength to do our duty in our calling, and at the same time not forget our God; and, my dear girl, the God of all grace has left it on record that, “if they cry at all, He will hear”—yea, even if our hands should be employed at the same time. “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak,” said our blessed Lord, and I hope it is the same with us; but our great mercy is (as it is written) that the Lord’s strength is made perfect in our weakness, for it is when we have no might of our own that *He* will surely appear for us. To bring us into this place we require a daily exercise. The Lord knows what is best for us; though we cannot see this at all times, still we should believe it.

I wish Mr. S—— may be made a blessing to you. I had the privilege of hearing Mr. Abrahams, at Newark, on Sunday last, from the fifty-sixth of Isaiah, seventh verse, and very powerful and encouraging discourses they were, both morning and evening. “*Even them,*” such as feel themselves as dry trees, &c., “poor and of a contrite spirit,” &c., will He bring, and make them joyful in His house of prayer, being accepted in the one Offering, even Jesus Christ. I felt these words very sweet, “I will *accept* thee with thy sweet savour;” that is, our offering of praise and prayer, for our most holy things need to be cleansed in the fountain opened.

But, as you wished me to write by return of post, I must be short, as you know my time is much engaged in the shop, but I doubt not your dear mother will write you. I saw her at N——, and I hope they will come and dine with me next Sabbath day, if all is well, as my dear friend, Mr. Mee, is now with me; who, I am glad to tell you, is in better health, and desires his kind regards to you. I don’t know whether we shall be able to get to T——.

With my best wishes for your welfare, both in body and soul,
 Yours very affectionately,
 B——, September 23rd, 1853. S. E. N.

THE SOWER.

A SERMON BY MR. HULL.

PREACHED AT HASTINGS, APRIL 10TH, 1881.

"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 CORINTHIANS xiii. 12.

THE testimony of God is, "All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass: the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever." But we are told that the kingdom which is received by the saints is "a kingdom which cannot be moved." They receive the immutable Word and grace of God, and His eternal kingdom is set up in their hearts; therefore they are partakers of eternal life, and this eternal life can never die—hence the things they receive can never be destroyed; and yet we do read of some things in the case of the people of God which shall be done away, but that will be by way of consummation. For instance, the time is coming when faith will be done away; what they believe now they will then see. So hope will be done away, for what they expect now they will then realize; so that, in the consummation of faith and hope, these two graces will be done away. They will then be no longer needed by the saints. The Apostle, speaking in this chapter of what we may call the three cardinal graces, says, "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Faith is a blessed grace, and hope is a blessed grace; but charity is the greatest of all, because faith and hope will sink in vision and fruition, but charity, or love, will still remain. This is the consummation the people of God desire and seek, and short of this they cannot rest. They are predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ; and to all them which believe His name is most sweet, His Person glorious; and the more they know of His excellencies and His suitability, the more they love Him as the gift of God to them. But the most that we can know of Christ below is but little compared with that which remains to be revealed; so that in this respect we see but as "through a glass darkly;" we receive but very little of the knowledge of that fulness which is in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apostle, in speaking of these things, seeks to encourage the people of God, and to quicken in them the desire to attain to that perfect knowledge of the Lord to which they aspire. He here tells us that our knowledge of heavenly things is at present

but dim : " For now we see through a glass, darkly ;" and, at the best, we know only in part ; but the time is coming when we shall see " face to face, and know even as also we are known."

Now, in the first place, let us notice what is here declared, namely, that our sight and knowledge of divine things at the present is but partial. But what a mercy it is if we see anything in the light of Christ, because, unless we see things in His light, we see nothing rightly ; and, though our sight may be but partial while we are here below, yet it is our mercy if we see things truly. Now, there is no seeing truly but by the light of the Spirit, and there is no knowing things truly apart from the teaching of the Spirit. Then, if we see anything in Christ's light, it is because we have been enlightened by the Spirit of God ; and, if we know anything rightly, it is because we have been instructed by the same blessed Spirit. " When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He shall guide you into all truth," says Christ ; and the Apostle, writing to the Colossians, says, " Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of God's dear Son." All the people of God were in that darkness until the Lord set up His light within them. We see light only in God's light. Look at the first work of grace. How was it that you found out you were a sinner, and were brought to prove the great distance at which sin had placed you from a holy God ? How was it that you began to be in trouble about sin, and as to how matters stood betwixt God and your soul ? *You* did not begin the trouble ; but most likely you at first tried to get away from it, and you would have done so if you could. But you could not undo God's work—you could not make that straight which He had made crooked. You walked up and down with your burden of sin and guilt, with your heart full of sorrow and your mind deeply distressed. The world could yield you no rest or peace. Go where you might, you found trouble and sorrow. Did you appoint it ? Did you bring it about ? How true is the description of the work of the Spirit which is given us in the third of John : " 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."

Now, I daresay some of you that are here this morning can remember that, when God first began this work of grace in your heart, you were so unhinged and uneasy in your mind that you could not take pleasure in anything. You feared you should die, and you could not think how you could be saved. It may be, when you first came into that sad state, that you wondered why you could not do as you had done, nor enjoy the society you had formerly enjoyed. The reason was this—God had secretly dropped a bitter into that cup, and it has never been pleasant

to you since, nor ever will be again. You perhaps have often feared lest you should sink back into your former position. But you have not ; you have tasted the bitters of the world's cup, and you find it bitter to this day. Could you go back and take your fill of the things you once delighted in ? " Oh, no," say you ; " that is impossible." Ah ! there is the separation God has made, and that separation He still keeps up.

Now, from the time God dropped that bitter into your cup, you have looked upon the world differently from what you did before. Some of you can now say that " this is not your rest, because it is polluted." The Lord has made you feel that it is a polluted world, a very Egypt to you ; and, polluted as you feel your heart to be, yet He will not give you up to the pollutions of the world. Then, as the Lord began to exercise you thus, you began to seek after something better—the better portion. And how did you know there was a better portion ? Why, the Lord, who had taken hold of your heart, had caused a seed of grace from heaven to fall therein, and by means of that treasure there has been a feeling of your need of Christ, and an exercise after God, so that from that time to this you have wanted to know Him, and to enjoy His favour. Thus He allured and drew you on with " the cords of a man and the bands of love," and has brought you through many dark paths, fiery trials, and sore afflictions. And, wherever the Spirit of God takes the work in hand, He perfects it, in spite of earth and hell. The promise is, " Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power." Then thank God for a willing heart. Thus the Spirit of the Lord led you on, and made you willing to bow to and receive the Lord Jesus Christ—ah ! not only willing, but anxious ; and why this anxiety ? Why, the Lord had breathed divine life into your soul, and divine life is also divine light, and the effect of divine life in the sinner's heart is, he feels his ruined state, and the awful distance at which he is placed from God by reason of transgression ; and it also produces in his heart a longing to have matters made right, and to be at peace with God.

The Lord, I know, is a Sovereign, and works in the hearts of His people according to the counsel of His own will ; so perhaps some of you had a great deal of trouble in the first stages of the work of grace in your hearts. Your convictions perhaps were very deep, and you may have walked a considerable time in deep trouble before the Lord appeared for your deliverance. This may have been the case, but, if you have lived many years, and have come some distance in your pilgrimage, still how little you know of yourselves or of Satan's temptations, for you have only been learners hitherto. The light that the Lord set up in your heart was great at the first, and showed you much of the evil of sin ; but you have

had to prove more and more since then the bitter effects of the fall. Thus the Lord has continually been saying to you, "Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these." He has shown you one dark part, and another gloomy, filthy cell, and has again and again taken you from one chamber of imagery to another, and yet such dark things are continually coming to light that all you can say at times is, with Job, "Behold, I am vile." Well, even in these things we see in part only. But, speaking after the manner of men, God has taken pains to instruct a portion of us according to the measure it has pleased Him to impart, and the knowledge He has given us of self and sin makes us glad to hear of the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, my friends, how blessed it is to understand something of that precious truth, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Thus, as the Lord the Spirit instructed you, led you to Christ, and gave you a knowledge and an experience of Him, you found God had provided and laid up mercy for you in His dear and well-beloved Son; and the first time this light dawned in your heart, and you realized that the Lord Jesus Christ was your Friend, that He had suffered in your stead, bore your curse, drank the dregs of the cup of wrath, and by His own blood had made your peace; oh, what sweet feelings rose up in your heart toward Him! At one time you could not believe that He had espoused your cause, and stood in the breach between you and God; it appeared so mysterious. Ah! but, though redemption through His blood is a mystery, it is a very blessed one when thus apprehended by faith.

I visited a person this week who was in great affliction of body, and very anxious about her eternal state, because she had never known sufficient of the love and mercy of God in the Lord Jesus Christ to satisfy her soul of the forgiveness of her sins; and, as I stood by her, I begged of the Lord that He would open her heart to receive the blessed truths contained in a portion of one of Newton's hymns which I quoted to her, and which has been very sweet to my heart from the time I first knew the Lord Jesus Christ even to the present—

"But since my Saviour stands between,
 In garments dyed in blood,
 'Tis He instead of me is seen,
 When I approach to God.

"What wondrous love, what mysteries,
 In this appointment shine!
 My breaches of the law are His,
 And His obedience mine."

Oh, when the eternal Spirit came to you in your trouble, and let a little of this blessed mystery into your heart, as He bade you turn your eyes from Mount Sinai to Calvary, what a springing up of hope, love, and joy there was in your heart! How you rejoiced that Christ should undertake your cause—that God the Father had laid help upon One that is mighty—and, when you saw Him “travelling in the greatness of His strength,” how you could take Him in the arms of faith and say, “My Beloved is white and ruddy, the Chiefest among ten thousand.” “His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. His mouth is most sweet: yea, He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.” Now, from that time to this, has He not had a place in your heart, the throne in your affections? Let you get as low as you may, let you feel as vile as you may and as hopeless as you may, that divine illumination which was granted you at first confirmed you in one thing—the sufficiency of the Lord Jesus Christ. And now where can you go but to Him? Who can give you help but Him? Who can make you blest but Him? There is no good hope but in Him—no peace but in Him—and when you grope like the blind for the wall, the language of your heart is, with Job, “Oh, that I knew where I might find Him! that I might come even to His seat! I would order my cause before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments.”

Now, are there poor sinners here this morning who are feeling after the Lord Jesus Christ in the dark, burdened, oppressed, afflicted, and in despair? And why? Because their hearts are distressed on account of sin, and disconsolate for want of Christ. Why, if there were none such as you in the world, we need not preach the Lord Jesus Christ as the Good Physician for sin-sick souls. If there were no lost sinners, what need would there be of His Gospel? Ah! but it was for such He died, for such He lives, and for such He intercedes; and He has promised to be where His people meet, that He may bless such; and more than that, He has promised to seek such, and search them out of their holes and hiding-places; and, though they are faint and feeble, He does not disdain to put His own hand to the work and deliver them, for He says by the prophet Ezekiel, “Behold, I, even I, will both search My sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered, so will I seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.” One thing let me ask you. Do you feel you cannot do without the Lord? Are you miserable if you cannot find Him? Then, if so, God’s Word warrants me to tell you that you may come boldly to the throne of grace,

that you may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Now, all God-taught souls are made, sooner or later, to feel that they cannot do without the Lord Jesus Christ, because they feel they are sinners indeed; and God, who gives them this knowledge and feeling of their sinnership, does it to draw them to Himself. Thus they are "chastened out of His law, that He may give them rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked."

But, whatever we may know of the Lord and of His truth, it is only a partial knowledge, as the Apostle says, "For now we see through a glass, darkly;" and "now I know in part;" for, though we look at these things by faith, and know them by the Spirit's teaching, yet we only get a glimpse, which is at the best but a faint one. There is always something to obscure the vision, so that we never can see as much of the Lord Jesus Christ and of His truth as to be able to say that we have seen the whole. But when we, at times, have a faith's view of the Lord Jesus, we want a stronger and a clearer one, and such often sing with Hart—

" More frequent let Thy visits be,
Or let them longer last ;
I can do nothing without Thee ;
Make haste, my God, make haste ! "

You want to see Him in a clearer light, to know more of Him, and to walk up and down in the light of His countenance. Now, though you have only seen Him as "through a glass darkly," yet He has won your affections, and they are fixed upon Him. "Oh," says some one, "I do not feel that my heart is fixed. It is such a wandering heart, that I am often obliged to say with the poet—

" "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it ;
Prone to leave the God I love.' "

Well, though your heart does wander, yet, if He has looked upon you, the Lord Jesus Christ is the Centre of your soul's affections; and I can tell you this, friends—if Christ is not everything to you, He is nothing at all. Well, if your heart is fixed on Christ, though you wander to the end of the world, your language will be, "From the end of the earth will I cry unto Thee, when my heart is overwhelmed : lead me to the Rock that is higher than I ;" and all such feel that to have an experience of redeeming grace and dying love is a great mercy. When the Holy Ghost first let that mercy flow into your heart, you knew what it meant. You knew that God loved you ; you knew that the Lord Jesus Christ was all your salvation. And why? Because He took the burden of your sin and guilt all away. He not only spoke to you about forgiveness, but He imparted it to you ; and you

did not then need any one to tell you your sins were forgiven, because you could enter into that blessed portion in the thirty-second Psalm, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile;" and you said, "I know what David meant, for I enjoy the same grace." Then you could sing, "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."

(*To be continued.*)

THE YOKE.

The following lines were sent to a friend in a time of heavy trial and sorrow.

SAVIOUR, beneath the yoke
My wayward heart doth pine;
All unaccustomed to the stroke
Of love divine:

Thy chastisements, my God, are hard to bear;
Thy cross is heavy for frail flesh to wear.

"Perishing child of clay,
Thy sighing I have heard;
Long have I marked thy evil way—
How thou hast erred:

Yet fear not; by My own most holy name
I will shed healing through thy sin-sick frame."

Praise to Thee, gracious Lord!

I fain would be at rest;
Oh, now fulfil Thy faithful Word,
And make me blest!

My soul would lay her heavy burden down,
And take with joyfulness the promised crown.

"Stay, thou short-sighted child!
There is much first to do;
Thy heart so long by sin defiled
I must renew:

Thy will must here be taught to bend to Mine,
Or the sweet peace of heaven can ne'er be thine.'

Yes, Lord, but Thou canst soon
Perfect Thy work in me,
Till, like the pure, calm summer moon,
I shine by Thee:

A moment shine, that I Thy power may trace,
Then pass in stillness to my heavenly place.

“ Oh, coward soul ! confess
 Thou shrinkest from thy cure ;
 Thou tremblest at the sharp distress
 Thou must endure :
 The foes on every hand for war arrayed,
 The thorny path in tribulation laid.

“ The process slow of years,
 The discipline of life—
 Of outward woes and secret tears,
 Sickness, and strife—
 The idols taken from thee one by one,
 Till thou canst dare to live with Me alone.

“ Some gentle souls there are
 Who yield unto My love,
 Whom, ripening fast beneath My care,
 I soon remove :
 But thou stiff-neckèd art and hard to rule ;
 Thou must stay longer in affliction's school.”

My Maker and my King,
 Is this Thy love to me ?
 Oh, that I had the lightning's wing,
 From earth to flee !
 How can I bear the heavy weight of woes
 Thine indignation on Thy creature throws ?

“ Thou canst not, oh, My child,
 So hear My voice again :
 I will bear all thy anguish wild,
 Thy grief, thy pain :
 My arms shall be around thee day by day,
 My smile shall cheer thee on thy heavenward way.

“ In sickness I will be
 Watching beside thy bed ;
 In sorrow thou shalt lean on Me
 Thy aching head :
 In every struggle thou shalt conqueror prove ;
 Nor death itself shall sever from My love.”

Oh, grace beyond compare !
 Oh, love most high and pure !
 Saviour, begin—no longer spare—
 I'd all endure !
 Only vouchsafe Thy grace that I may live
 Unto Thy glory who canst so forgive !

CAN any man promise us anything better than heaven ? or
 can any man threaten us with anything worse than hell ?—*Dr.*
Goodwin.

THE RICHES OF JESUS' GRACE; OR, THE
EXPERIENCE OF THAMAR.*(Concluded from page 313.)*

ON the next evening I took up my Bible, and read these words: "It hath pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." In these words I found everything that a guilty sinner stands in need of. I retired to rest blessing God that it was to His dear Son He looked for perfection, and not to such a vile sinner as me. I never shall forget the blessed view I had of the fulness of the dear Redeemer the next morning. I saw by the eye of faith that, if God's elect had as many sins as millions of worlds and devils, the Father saw such an infinite fulness in His dear Son Jesus that swallowed them all up. Here it was I beheld the king's daughter "all glorious within," and her raiment to be of "wrought gold." Oh, with what peculiar pleasure I beheld the Father smiling upon all the elect! Though they were so full of sin, He could see no spot in them; and, as it were, saying, "Poor souls, what griefs they are in on account of sin! But sin cannot separate them from Me, because I do not look to them for holiness. No; it hath pleased Me that in My dear Son Jesus should all fulness dwell. Oh, My beloved Son, the glories I behold in Thee are surpassing all worth! Yes, Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well-pleased."

Oh, sir, what a mercy for such hell-deserving sinners to have a part in this precious Mediator! Oh, precious Redeemer, what should such a poor wretch as I do, in the midst of such an ocean of corruptions? Why, sink in despair, but for a faith's view of the ocean of Thy glorious fulness, which is—

"Void of bottom, brim, or shore,
And lost in Deity."

Oh, that I could sing of Thy love and talk of Thy power; but, alas! *I am shut up, and cannot come forth*; but, blessed be Thy dear name—

"A few more rolling suns at most
Will land me on fair Caanan's coast;
Then I will sing the song of grace,
And see my glorious Hiding-place."

This is where I often long to be, to see my Jesus as He is, without a cloud between. Well, cheer up, my soul—

"Thy fighting days will soon be o'er—
The sinner that in Him believes,
He'll safely land on Zion's shore."

“Come, time, and wing away,” I am ready to say, “that the blessed hour may approach.” The next day I began to reason like one whose comfort is gone. I reasoned thus: “How soon I am beset with unbelief! How is it, when I have eaten anything in a natural way that is sweet and pleasant to my taste, I do not doubt the reality of my having eaten because I have lost the sweetness? And yet I am such a poor unbelieving mortal! I have no sooner lost my comfort than I begin to call it all in question.”

Thus, dear sir, I got into my old miserable way again—as barren and lifeless as any poor creature could be. But I felt a peculiar sweetness in these words—

“Jesus, immutably the same,
Thou true and living Vine,
Around Thy all-supporting stem
My feeble arms I twine.

“I can do nothing without Thee ;
My strength is wholly Thine ;
Withered and barren should I be
If severed from the Vine.”

I seemed from these words like one led “up from the wilderness leaning on the Beloved,” having no strength of my own. But still, though I seemed in my old way again, my hope felt more firm, for I was persuaded none but God had taught me; and, unless He ceased to be God, it was impossible for me to be lost. Here I found the ground to be firm and good, for I was persuaded He was unchangeable—a God that could not lie. Still, I could not rest satisfied till I was brought to that sweet assurance to say, “My Father!” No; neither can I be satisfied now He hath given me that. No; I cannot be satisfied without the enjoyment of His love; so I must say with the sweet Psalmist, “I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness,” and not till then.

I went on in this way about six months, begging of God to apply some sweet word of promise personally to me, that I might lay hold of it as mine. I saw the blessings contained in them for the elect, and I rejoiced in hope that I was one. And what shall I say when I look back? I would drop my vile head in the dust and say, “Surely goodness and mercy hath followed me all my days;” for, blessed be His dear name, He was pleased to answer my petition. One morning those words caught my attention, “Doth not God see my ways, and count all my steps? Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.” I thought, “Yes, He doth see me, and He is able to bring me out of this dark path, and cause me to rejoice in His precious love;” and these words were much on my mind, “Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, saying, My way is hid from the Lord, and my

judgment is passed over from my God?" which was followed by these words, "God shall arise and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come;" and one passage of Scripture after another came flowing into my mind all the day, and particularly these words, "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions," but not with power. In the evening I felt much cast down, thinking of the many promises that had crossed my mind, and I was not able to claim one as mine. Then these words fastened on my mind, "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." This raised me up a little; for I thought, "I have neither power nor strength to lay hold of a promise now, but I shall in God's time;" and truly, dear sir, I can say, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." But little did I think He would grant me my desire so soon, for, in three or four hours after, these words came with power, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: though I fall, I shall arise; and when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." The blessed unction that came with these words gave me power and strength. I triumphed over the devil, and said, "'Rejoice not against me, O my enemy!' Though I have a long time sat in darkness, the Lord is going to be a light unto me." Then followed these words, "The Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." I thought, "What is it?" and the words came the second time with much power and sweetness. I felt sure they came from God. I saw an everlasting light and glory. How blessed I felt for a few minutes! I was going to say, "It is enough! The Lord is mine, and I am His;" but I was afraid I was going too far; but I burst out, and sang these words—

"Yes, I to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given;
More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven."

But I soon sank into a gloom again, and my mind was all confusion. I thought, "There is no soul like me. I have begged of God for a promise, and, now He hath given me one, I cannot say without fear, 'Christ is mine, and I am His.'" And then Satan sorely beset me with what he had before—blasphemous thoughts—and my language was, like one of old, "The enemy hath smitten my life down to the ground, and made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead." Oh, what a state my mind was in! I never felt the truth of these words as I did then, "The carnal mind is enmity against God." Oh, what a rebellious wretch I felt! I thought of these words, "The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and consumed the com-

pany of Abiram ;” and I thought, “Me, a poor crawling worm of the earth, to rebel thus against the great I AM! Oh, the mercy of God, that the earth doth not open and swallow me up!” But still my heart was as hard as a stone, and go to a throne of grace with freedom I could not, for guilt on my conscience was like a great mountain that kept me from looking up, till these words revived me—

“On Him shall Zion place
Her only hopes of heaven,
And see in His dear, sacred face
Ten thousand sins forgiven.”

I thought, “Blessed be His name, my only hope is placed in Him ; and, among the ‘ten thousand sins,’ there may be the sin of rebellion.” Here a hope sprang up in His mercy. The next evening these words came with sweetness—

“Grace reigns to pardon crimson sins,
And melt the hardest hearts ;
And from the work it once begins,
It never more departs.”

I thought, “If I had never been in this state, I should not have seen the glory and beauty of these words.” I saw that, let sin reign ever so high, the glorious reign of grace reigned and triumphed far above it, and these words came with sweetness—

“Oh, let Thy mercy me supply !
O Lord, increase my faith !”

Although I had read these words no doubt many a time, I did not know where to find them ; but they came so sweetly, and followed me for a fortnight ; and one morning they led me to a throne of grace, for I was sure nothing but the mercy of God could supply such a wretch again, and I felt I wanted my faith increased ; and, blessed be His dear name, He enabled me to plead with Him with freedom, and I could say with David, “Truly I am Thy servant ; Thou hast loosed my bonds.” The next morning I awoke with these words—

“He, my goodness, strength, and God,
In whom I live and move and am,
Paid my ransom with His blood ;
My portion is the Lamb.”

In the evening, going to chapel and feeling revived, I began to reason thus : “Surely it is not presumption, and going too far, to say ‘My God!’ though I labour under such fear that it is. He would not have promised to be my everlasting light and glory if He were not my God, for God is not a liar.” Then those words struck

me forcibly, "God is not a man, that He should lie: neither the son of man, that He should repent; hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" From these words, dear sir, the Lord was pleased to give me such blessed assurance of His love and the Spirit of adoption that all the powers of hell cannot take from me—

"What though the powers of hell engage
'Gainst Jesus' mystic bride?
She'll rise superior to their rage,
For God is on her side."

"Jehovah, our strength and our song,
Will cause us the conquest to gain."

From these words I have sucked much sweetness. I said, "It is enough! The Lord is mine, and I am His." When I returned home, the words I awoke with came flowing in again; also these words—

"Oh, my Jesus, Thou art mine,
With all Thy grace and power!
I am now and shall be Thine
When time shall be no more."

Oh, with what a heavy heart I have heard these words sung, because I could not join; but then I could say without fear, "Oh, my Jesus, Thou art mine." Oh, what a sword I found this blessed, precious promise! It slew the whole troop of doubters. Perhaps you are ready to say, "Have you not had such troops beset you since then?" Oh, yes; I have had many a battle since, but I have not lost my weapon. No, I can still say, "Oh, my Jesus, Thou art mine." Though my path is through great darkness—yes, darkness that may be felt—I am still enabled to hold fast to the skirt of Him who is "the Fairest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely;" and to believe that the word is gone forth out of His mouth, and shall not return unto Him void. I have been much cast down at times because I did not feel that joy and rejoicing God's children seemed to have when they are brought to that blessed point of rest. I have thought, "Oh, that I could bless and praise Thy dear name like some of Thy children!" But these words have been a support, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord." Blessed be His dear name, I am persuaded it was the blessed Spirit that—

"Brought the promise to my view,
And proved to me that God is true."

At another time I was much cast down respecting hearing the Word, and thought, "What would I give if I could but once more rejoice under the Word of the Gospel! but, alas! it is always like

a barren heath to me. I cannot find one that has sat so long in bonds as I, for those that are the most like me do sometimes lift up their heads with joy, but it is winter all the year with me." Then these words came with a blessed unction—

"Jesus is still the sinner's Friend,
Although the billows roll between."

Oh, sir, how sweet I found these words! I was constrained to say, "The Lord is very gracious." I saw the sympathy of Jesus' loving heart—that He was still my Friend, although it was not His will to bless me under the Word. I don't mean to say I never received any benefit under the Word. No; blessed be God, sometimes I felt a little encouragement and support, sometimes reproof and instruction, which are not to be despised as small things. But what I was panting after was, the blessed unction of the Holy Ghost to fill me with not only this, but with joy and liberty to bless and praise Him with joyful lips. Oh, with what a sorrowful heart have I returned from the house of prayer, time after time, thinking the Lord would never appear! For two years I went on in this way. But "Jesus is still the sinner's Friend" would sometimes be a sweet stay; and these words—

"In every condition they stand
Accepted in Jesus—all fair;
And He'll every blessing command,
And make His dear people His care."

And, blessed be His dear name, I have proved indeed since then that He makes me, a poor, ignorant sinner, feel that I am His care. Various have been the billows I have had roll between since then; but such has been the care of my dear Friend Jesus, not one hath overwhelmed me. He hath been with me in six troubles, and in seven He hath not forsaken me. Oh, praise His precious name for His delivering mercy!

At one time particularly I was so dreadfully pressed in spirit, I cried out with Job, "*My soul chooseth strangling rather than life.*" "In my distress I cried unto the Lord, and He heard me, and answered my petition." Yes, blessed be His dear name, He appeared for me as a God of providence as well as a God of grace. On the following Sabbath He was pleased to appear for me once more, and filled me with His love, presence, and power under the Word, so that I by sweet experience found that Satan was a liar; for he had often told me your testimony would never be blessed to me again. I felt His dear name to be as ointment poured forth; and could sweetly sing, "*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercy.*" I felt like one redeemed from destruction.

Oh, dear sir, what a mercy that "*we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities*"! How great the blessing seemed once more to enjoy the unction of the Holy One in the blessed Gospel! I remembered my words when I was in Babylon, and hung my harp on the willows. Now I walked about calling on the stones to bless Him; and, indeed, I was ready to call on the pillars. I had so often thought He never would appear. But His thoughts are not as our thoughts. Bless His dear name, He knows when to bless and when to withhold. But oh, sir, how sweet and refreshing are the visits of Jesus; but, when He withdraws, it is like death. I cry out, "Lord, do take me to Thyself! I cannot bear Thy departure!" Oh, I would for ever hold Him fast if I could, but He withdraws to teach me I am *not to "live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."* Then I begin to reason thus: "Well, my Beloved is withdrawn; but, bless His dear name, He rests in His love. Yes, He is still the same, although He hideth Himself behind the cloud; and, though I am dark, dead, cold, and hard, 'without the power to do or will,' my covenant God and Father views me as complete in His dear Son Jesus as if I was full of blessing and praising."

Perhaps you will say, "It is Jesus that helps you along in the dark, as well as in the light." Oh, yes, dear sir, it is. This precious name, "*The Lord our righteousness,*" supports me all my journey through. Oh, for more precious faith to live upon His great love to us, and not upon our own love to Him! Oh, may the Lord help you still to go on and exalt the dear Redeemer, and lay the sinner low! Oh, that you may hear the voice of your Master behind you, saying, "*This is the way, walk ye in it.*" Do not be discouraged, though the battle is hot. Thou shalt come off more than conqueror through Him that hath loved thee. May He "strengthen your weak hands, and confirm your feeble knees, and say to your fearful heart, Be strong." It is the voice and power of the Shepherd of the sheep that will strengthen you to fight. Never mind, dear sir, if you lose all your limbs in the battle of King Jesus. That blessed voice that declares, "*Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world,*" will make amends for all.

Now, dear sir, I must conclude, hoping you will bear with my ignorance, and pardon what you see amiss, while I remain,

Your unworthy follower, for Jesus' sake,

THAMAR.

LOVE, THE CHRISTIAN'S LIVERY.—As every lord giveth a certain livery to his servants, charity is the very livery of Christ. Our Saviour, who is the Lord above all lords, would have His servants known by their badge, which is love.—*Latimer.*

THE LORD IS A GOD OF JUDGMENT.

GRACE, mercy, and peace be with my very dear and beloved friend. Amen.

I should have written before, but have been in the country four times, so have returned home the latter part of the week to be at chapel on the Sabbath. Being in ill-health, I tried it for change of air and quietness from the storm at home, hoping it might be of some benefit to me. I hope it has in some respects, but I am now very poorly with great cold and much coughing, which makes me weak and tottering. I feel as if constitution and nature are fast giving way. I felt it considerably in the pulpit on the Sabbath. My family are about as when I wrote last—my daughter no better; a heavy trial. Were it not for the mental support I find, my nerves could not bear it. I do admire the goodness of God to me in the trial, particularly when preaching. A courage comes in my mind, and strength in the “inner man;” matter flows in my heart, and I can say, “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” I am influenced with an energy which is not common or natural to me—a support that carries me through—though, after the service is ended, and I return home, it seems almost as a dream that I have been led so to preach. “The hand of the Lord is known toward His servants.” Blessed be the Lord!

The Lord appears to be come out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their wickedness. There are three judgments, namely, “the pestilence, the famine, and the sword,” which the Lord claims to be His own—“My three judgments.” The first is abroad, and hath taken away many; but in these realms it hath been mild in comparison with other nations, and also in comparison with what hath been formerly in this kingdom, particularly if compared with what was called “the black plague,” which swept away a great number of the inhabitants—also with what was called “the sweating sickness,” which took off half the inhabitants of many towns and villages. Surely we may say, “The Lord hath not dealt with us now, as a nation, according to our deserts, nor rewarded us according to our sins.” His judgments have been accompanied with much mercy, long-suffering, and forbearance; but there may be bounds to these favours, and sin and ingratitude may provoke to a reserve of heavier strokes. Oh, that this were the breathing of the nation: “Oh, for a grateful heart to God!” “Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name; forget not all His benefits.”

The second judgment of the Lord is famine. A few years back this, in Ireland, was dreadful. I was led (on a day set

apart for humiliation) to speak on the subject, and to warn the people against sin. I said, "The Lord hath more judgments than one; He hath more rods than one. He may next strike the wheat;" and it is singular how it was stricken. Last year, on many, many farms where they might have expected from three to five quarters, there was not more than one quarter per acre; and on some others not more than one sack per acre throughout the whole farm, so that various parts of the world were searched for corn; and, through the dearth, thousands of families have suffered great privation. In this parish in which I am, the suffering has been great, and the poor rates very high. Suppose the Lord had stricken again this year, the consequence would have been dreadful indeed; but oh, blessed be His name, His undeserved mercy hath rejoiced against deserved judgment. He hath sent an extraordinarily abundant harvest, so that, where four quarters of wheat were counted a fair crop, He hath sent five quarters.* Oh, that gratitude may flow from the hearts of the nation to the God of goodness, for the goodness of God! Oh, that my heart and soul were more warm to Him! Surely ingratitude is a crying sin.

The third judgment of the Lord is the sword—the sword of war, and all that are numbered to it will be taken away by it. It hath been the case years back, that one tyrant ruling hath swept millions from the earth by the sword; and the unrelenting tyranny of the Czar hath caused more than one hundred thousand to be taken from the earth by the present war. It is begun, and in the first battle in the Crimea a large number of our countrymen have been killed or wounded. When, how, or where the war will end we know not, nor how many thousand families in this nation may be plunged into mourning and lamentation by relatives and friends being killed or wounded; nor yet what heavy expenses—and, in many instances, privation—it may entail on the nation.

I trust God will vindicate His own truth, cause, and interest. I trust, also, that His favour to England still continues, blessed be His name! And I trust my beloved friend continues to cleave to Him with purpose of heart. May you enjoy Him! So I desire and pray, who am

Yours affectionately,

Hastings, October 9th, 1854.

D. FENNER.

My writing is almost illegible; my hand shakes so.

NOTIONAL knowledge: it makes a man's head giddy, but it will never make a man's heart holy.—*Dr. Goodwin.*

* The hopes which were at one time raised of a similar favour this year will, we fear, be terribly disappointed, to the saddening of many hearts.—Ed.

NIGHT THOUGHTS BY A WATCHMAN.

FAITH'S OBJECT AND ACT.

THE Christian's faith is not the bare belief of a theory or doctrine. His trust is in a divine Person, whom he knows and loves; but, in connection with the believer's confidence and hope, there is the purest of doctrine and the brightest of example. All that is needful, both for the head and the heart, is found in Christ. He, therefore, who walks by faith is constantly "*looking unto Jesus.*"

1. Looking *back* to Christ on the cross at Calvary—where sin was atoned for and justice satisfied—for pardon and peace. This is not an act of faith done once and for ever, when the spiritual eyes first beheld Jesus dying, "the Just for the unjust," in order to save the guilty soul from hell, but is the daily attitude of the believing heart. There is no rest for the enlightened mind but that which cometh by faith in Christ crucified. God will speak peace to the troubled conscience by no other means. This is His only way of saving and comforting the guilty, trembling soul. Here the first beam of hope takes its rise, and from hence the last ray of comfort springs. Would you have peace in your mind, seek to be weaned from the world, to be strong in faith, and rejoice in God? Turn, then, to and contemplate Christ on the tree. Be often in mind with the poet and the company of the saints, singing—

"To Calvary, Lord, in spirit now
Our weary souls repair,
To dwell upon Thy dying love,
And taste its sweetness there.

"Sweet resting-place of every heart
That knows the plague of sin;
Yet knows that deep, mysterious joy,
The peace of God within."

Yes, it is only by looking back to the burden borne by the suffering Lamb of God, and seeing the curse taken away by Him, that there is rest to the weary soul. Be much in spirit at Calvary, so will you glorify God. May you be full of love to Christ, and learn the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

And not only be looking backward to what He has accomplished on the cross, but—

2. Be looking *up* to Jesus in glory for wisdom and strength. This is most needful. The darkness and blindness of the human mind cannot be told. The great ignorance of the most enlightened saints on the earth causes them often to make very great mistakes, and procures them much trouble and sorrow; they also oft rebel against the light. His felt ignorance caused the Psalmist to cry, "Lead me in Thy truth and teach me." What is most sad is,

that the most ignorant are the most confident. "A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil; but the fool rageth, and is confident." But be not thou like unto him. Harken to good counsel and heaven's call: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God." Consult this Guide at every turning. Move not without His leading. Wait for His call. He is honoured by being asked, and will honour you by His answers. Israel of old was ashamed when they waited not for His counsel, but Hezekiah was delivered when he spread his case before the Lord.

Jesus is exalted to uphold His flock as well as to direct them. He is a strength to the weak as much as eyes to the blind. He is a Rock, and thou art a creeping vine-branch. Thou art a weakly child, and He a nursing Father. His arm is almighty strength, therefore He can support the most helpless. Let Him hear thy voice, saying, "Hold Thou me up!" Oh, the bruised bodies and broken bones of those who have tried to walk without help! Let these teach thee to lean upon the Beloved day by day. If *you* have not thus fallen, be thankful; and be not high-minded, but fear. Hitherto you have not kept yourself up; you have been upheld. What temptation can man resist if left to himself? The fact that many of those nobles mentioned by the Apostle Paul, in the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, *were* tripped up by the foe, or caught in his snare, proves most clearly that those who are preserved are "*kept by the power of God.*" Remember your weakness, and look back to the repeated interpositions and deliverances which you have already received of Him. How many of the tempter's snares have been broken at the right moment of time! How oft has a little help been given just when you were about to sink, being overwhelmed with tribulation and grief! Having thus opened up a way for you and sustained you in the past, how much cause you have still to look to Him who is ever the same! Indeed, it is—

"Sweet to look inward, and attend
The whispers of His love;
Sweet to *look upward*, to the place
Where Jesus pleads above."

For He prayed for Peter that his faith should not fail, and so He has for every one who can say with him, "Thou knowest that I love Thee," or "Thou knowest that I *desire* to love Thee."

Beside thus looking backward and upward, considerable advantage will be gained by looking forward. Encouragement is to be got out of the future, which is bright with a golden hope; therefore—

3. Be looking *onward* for animation and joy. Where Jesus is, there is the home and the rest of all His true followers. He

could not rest without them. Heaven would not be complete without each and all for whom Jesus shed His blood, and ever liveth to plead. Not only is the Lord Himself gone before, but how many beloved ones whom you have known in this vale of tears, with whom you have united in worship in the house of God, and some with whom you have lived in the closest ties for years, are there also! How home-like heaven has become by so many having arrived there a little while before us! Think of their present joy and eternal rest, where there is no more pain, nor crying, and where neither fear nor sorrow can enter; and how striking the contrast, when heaven is contemplated, with its fulness of joy and perfection of holiness, and earth beheld with its redundance of sin and heartrending sorrows! How inspiring to the heart pressed with gloom and sadness is a few moments' believing meditation upon the happiness in the home beyond the grave! It was the look upward and onward that made the martyrs bold. When Stephen looked up and saw the Lord in glory, his face became as it had been the face of an angel, and he cheerfully died, praying for his murderers. No looking at self, at sin, or corruption merely, ever made a martyr. And, although as a sinner you may feel as if you are akin to the devil, yet you are not a devil. You may look up; there is hope for *you*, but not for him. Be "looking for that blessed hope," then, and pressing towards that glorified company—

"Leaning on Jesus all the way,
 Who now and then lets fall a ray
 Of comfort from His throne :
 The shinings of His grace
 Soften my passage through the wilderness,
 And vines and water spring where briars grew ;
 The sweet unveilings of His face
 Make me, at times, near half as blest as you !"

W. B.

WHOEVER overlooks the Person of Christ will never find the true God, and shall only miserably deceive himself (John xiv. 1). Whoever does not find God in Christ will never find Him, let him seek Him where he will; and much less will he ever find, out of Christ, what is the Father's will and pleasure.—*Luther*.

THE present world is a labyrinth of thorns; in every state we meet with something to vex us. You may as well count the waves of the sea when enraged by a tempest, as the troubles to which, in this mortal state, we are exposed. "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble" (Job xiv. 1). A short life and many miseries.—*Bates*.

PRAYER AND SALVATION.

“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”—
ROMANS x. 13.

THE words before us were originally uttered by the Prophet Joel, and they are not only quoted by Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, but also by Peter in his great and effectual sermon on the day of Pentecost. It becomes us, however, to regard them, not as the words of Peter, of Paul, or of Joel, but as the words of God the Holy Ghost, that Eternal Spirit who testified beforehand in the prophets “the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.” To Him, in the name of Jesus, we would humbly look, that He may guide our minds and hearts in meditating on this sweet and solemn portion of His Word.

There are three things expressed or implied in the text, which we will endeavour to consider separately—first, *man's ruin*; second, *God's salvation*; third, *a gracious promise to praying souls*.

1. A godly clergyman in the Church of England, who died about sixty years ago, the author of that hymn, “O Thou whom all goodness flows,” has very wisely said, “Where revelation is express, implicit faith becomes our wisdom.” In other words, when God plainly says in His Word, “Such and such things are so,” it is our wisdom to believe it, although we cannot understand it. If our minds are not sufficiently humbled for this, we cannot be saved; for Christ has said, “Except ye receive the kingdom of God as a little child, ye shall in no wise enter therein.”

One of the truths of revelation that must be thus received is the doctrine of original sin. The question naturally arises in the mind of man, “Why should I be punished for Adam's sin?” Indeed, this question rises to some men's lips, and flows from their pens. They are shut up in unbelief, and ridicule this important truth, a right knowledge of which might almost be said to be essential to salvation. Now, on this point, “revelation is express.” We learn from God's Word that He made man in His image—not merely one man, but all men; for in Adam all men were created. Since the day when Adam was formed out of the dust of the ground, the breath of life breathed into his nostrils, and his fair partner, Eve, fashioned from one of his ribs—since that day men have been born, not created. By the goodness of God, all men were created holy; by the sin of man, all men are born sinners: “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” “In Adam all die.” The Scriptures everywhere teach us, though our natural mind may, through ignorance and prejudice, revolt from the truth, that there is a real moral connection between father and son—

that a man's posterity are partakers in his actions. For instance, in Hebrews vii. 9, 10, we read, "And, so to say, through Abraham even Levi, who receiveth tithes, hath paid tithes; for he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchisedec met him." Hence also God, who cannot but be just, is said to "visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generation." To our corrupted reason this seems unjust; but the Judge of all the earth sees otherwise; and, by the teaching of His good Spirit and faith in His Word, we learn to see otherwise also, and to believe that there is such a vital and mysterious connection between father and son that the sin of Adam is the sin of all mankind. This being cleared, the terrible history of man's ruin is soon told; it is indeed familiar to us all. God made man holy and happy, and gave him one commandment, telling him at the same time what punishment would follow on the breach of it. Man broke the commandment, and the threatened punishment followed, part of it being executed immediately, and part of it deferred to another world. "In the day that thou eatest," said God, "thou shalt surely die;" and so, when man ate of the forbidden fruit, his soul there and then became dead to holiness, dead to all right knowledge of God; there and then the seeds of corporeal death were sown in his body; there and then he fell under the sentence of eternal death, which is everlasting banishment from God, and everlasting destruction under the outpouring of divine wrath. In this three-fold ruin—death spiritual, death corporeal, and death eternal—we are all involved; because, to use a Scriptural expression, we were "yet in the loins of our father," Adam, when he rebelled against his Maker; and this is clearly the meaning of the Apostle Paul when he writes, "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners."

2. We might dwell at length on the awful state to which we have thus fallen. We might show that all the actual and personal transgressions of men spring from the parent sin that was committed in Eden's garden; that all diseases and afflictions are but parts of the just sentence of corporeal death; and that the third and final part of the curse will also be surely carried out in that place where are "weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth; where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched." But it will be more to our present purpose, having shown man's ruin in the first Adam, to pass on and consider *God's salvation* in the Last Adam.

Here, at the outset, we are met with a mystery—a greater mystery than the doctrine of original sin. We might, perhaps, be allowed to call it, by way of comparison, the doctrine of original righteousness. It is beyond the grasp of fallen reason; but in this, as in the former case, "revelation is express, and implicit

faith becomes our wisdom"—a wisdom which is the gift of God. Mankind being ruined in Adam the first, it pleased God, in the unspeakable riches of His grace and love, to send forth His Son, made of a woman. "The Word was made flesh." He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, being truly and properly born of the substance of the Virgin Mary; and thus the human nature which the Son of God took into union with His Deity, so as to form one glorious Christ—this human nature, this real Man, is actually a member of Adam's race, is one of ourselves, if with reverence we may say so. But this is not all; for in this view we see Him merely as a Brother. A Brother He is, it is true, but He is far more. He is emphatically called in Holy Writ the Last Adam, the Second Man. The souls that He saved are called His seed: "He shall see His seed," saith God by the prophet Isaiah. The whole election of grace, all who had been given to Him by His Father, had as real an existence in His sacred Person as mankind had in Adam the first. Such is the standing which the God of grace has given to the Church of Christ; and such is the record thereof in His Word; and this being once perceived by faith, and admitted as divine truth, the whole history of God's salvation flows from it as necessarily as the history of man's ruin flows from the headship of the first Adam. As the Last Adam, Christ had the sins of all His seed reckoned to Him, and bore them—bore their punishment—in His own body on the tree. The sword of divine justice was drawn against Him in body and soul—not as a private Person, but as the Head of His body the Church; and thus, if it had been possible for His sinning Church itself to bear the whole punishment of its own sins, the satisfaction rendered to justice would not have been more real. It was as real as if the vengeance had overtaken the sinners themselves; and, more than that, it was divine, and infinitely worthy. And so with His righteousness—it was the righteousness of the Last Adam. He said on one occasion to His Father, "I do always those things which please Thee;" and these things were done, not simply by a private Person, but by the Head of a body—a Head wherein all the members had a standing; and this standing, though mysterious, was so real that the Father, in being well-pleased with Him, was also well-pleased with them. Hence one of our poets rightly sings—

"For them Thy righteousness avails,
For them Thy blood atones."

We have seen that the ruin which came upon our guilty race in the person of the first man was three-fold—death spiritual, death corporeal, and death eternal. In like manner it is a three

fold salvation that comes, in and through the Person of the Second Man, upon His spiritual seed: it is life spiritual, life corporeal, life eternal.

“The Last Adam,” says Paul, “became a quickening Spirit”—that is, a life-giving Spirit. The Spirit of Christ does in due season take actual possession of the souls of His elect, and creates them anew in Christ Jesus. They are born again, raised from the spiritual death in which they were sunk; and thus, from their Second Head, they derive life spiritual. We cannot here treat at length of the effects and evidences of the new birth. The soul is awakened—and it often seems to be awakened very gradually—to the knowledge of the great and glorious God against whom it has sinned. A new-born soul often has a particularly lively and abiding sense that the eye of God is upon it. It becomes conscious that its thoughts, words, actions—yea, more, the inmost motives and springs of these—are naked and laid open before the eyes of Him with whom it has to do. Bound up with this knowledge of God is the knowledge of self and sin. Self becomes hateful; sin becomes a trouble. The knees are often bent in solemn confession before the Lord. Godly fear takes root in the heart, and thrives there, making the man or woman honest before God and man. By degrees the soul feels more and more clearly its need of Christ, until at last its simple cry is this, “Give me Christ or else I die!” Now, a soul thus dealt with is certainly in vital union with the Second Man, and has received out of His fulness the precious grace of spiritual life.

Again, we said that corporeal life was included in this great salvation. By this we mean deliverance from that death of the body which was the second part of man’s ruin; and, thanks be unto God, there is a two-fold deliverance therefrom. In the first place, we are delivered from it in this world, as may be seen by the following illustration. There is a friend of the writer’s who has been taken in the prime of life with a fatal disease, and is now awaiting his end with the knowledge that it must shortly come. When in health he might have been described as a God-fearing man—not one that could boast of a harrowing law-work and a marvellous deliverance, of consuming terrors and delirious joy, but one who knew himself as a sinner, and Christ as his only hope; one who could cleave to the searching truth of God, and love a minister that faithfully wounded him; one whose religion made him honest, ruling him in his business and in his every-day life. Such are to be envied, for their religion stands when it is most wanted, and endures when a more flashy profession withers up. Well, this man is brought face to face with death. His gracious Redeemer draws near to him, greatly enlarges his shield of faith, and fills his heart with divine love and humble confidence.

He could say to a friend, "If you were to take away the sting of a wasp, you might put the wasp on your hand, play with it, do what you liked with it. That is what death is to me now." Here is indeed deliverance from death in this present world. To those who are the seed of the Second Man, corporeal death is a wasp without a sting.

And then they have deliverance from corporeal death in the world to come; for we read, "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." And thus most completely does union with the Second Man ensure deliverance from corporeal death.

It may be supposed that deliverance from eternal death—from everlasting destruction under sin-avenging wrath—follows as a matter of course; and so indeed it does, for thus Paul argues it: "Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life." When the sentence of eternal death shall be executed upon the impenitent, then the spiritual seed of the Last Adam shall hear from His lips the summons to enter upon eternal life above: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

(*To be continued.*)

OH, the hell of horrors and terrors that attend those souls that have their greatest work to do when they come to die!—*Dr. Goodwin.*

APPROPRIATION OF PROMISES.—All consolation in religion is connected with appropriation. Many will say, "Lord! Lord!" but it is not the privilege of many, as it was Mary's, to say, "My Lord and my God!"—*W. Wilkinson.*

THREE pirates are ever sailing about us: the first, our fallen nature; the next, the world; and lastly, false doctrine. On account of these it is dangerous to be in the world. The third Satan employs by means of men of great abilities, whose words eat like a canker.—*Luther.*

MEMOIR OF THE LATE JOHN CLARK, OF FIVEASHDOWN.

(Continued from page 299.)

How often, after a long and chequered life, the Lord is pleased to favour His people with a respite from toil, and a cessation from sore conflict, so that their last days are their best days; and, like as it was with Job, the Lord blesses the latter end more than the beginning.

Thus we believe it was with the subject of this memoir. About fifteen or sixteen years before his death he had an illness, in which he had a promise from the Lord, like Hezekiah, that He would add to his days fifteen years; and God gave him faith to believe that it would be so, as he once said to a friend in the ministry, "I shall not die yet; no, I don't think the Lord will let me die before I am eighty."

Perhaps the greater part of his later trials arose from being hampered with some building operations. We believe his intention was good, wishing to leave a little to help his dear wife and children. But from various causes, it was a source of much anxiety, and yielded but little profit; yet the Lord so opened the hearts of friends, both far and near, that all his wants were fully supplied.

However, the dear man was much favoured in his soul at times, both in public and in private, which enabled him to "gird up the loins of his mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. i. 13).

We have observed that he complained of not being strong, but he was naturally very active, and, indeed, might have been said to have had a wiry constitution.

However, the time drew near that John Clark must die, and paralysis was the means of bringing him to "the house appointed for all living" (Job xxx. 23). The first serious attack was in December, 1877, in which the Lord drew nigh to him with these words, "It is I; be not afraid;" the effect whereof so penetrated his heart and softened his spirit that he knew it was the Lord. Tears of gratitude flowed down his cheeks; his soul went out in love to the Lord; he blessed and praised His name, and felt he could commit his soul into His blessed hands, knowing that it was redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. Yet after this he preached at Fiveashdown, also at Grantham, Bottesford, and Brighton. Subsequently he had another attack, and in this the Lord spoke to him by these words, "Where I am, there shall My servant be;" also, "So shall we be ever with the Lord;" and thus, although he could not see the end of the trial, he felt he could trust himself in the Lord's hands. The assurance that the

Lord was drawing nigh to him, though in the chariot of affliction, made him to rejoice, for it drew out his soul in love to the Lord for all His wondrous grace and love to him in the past, and brought with it an unclouded hope in the future.

Now he reviewed his whole life as perhaps he had never done before. He remembered how God had borne with his manners in the wilderness. His backslidings contrasted with God's faithfulness. His sins, which he felt to be many, were all manifestly borne away by his precious Redeemer. Now he had a full view, according to the rich measure of faith bestowed upon him, of Christ's inexpressible agonies in Gethsemane and on Calvary's tree. Like Job, he could have said, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." He said it appeared to him that he had previously understood many things only in the letter, which he now apprehended by the copious anointing of the Holy Spirit. Those rich truths that he had longed fully to enter into now so entered his heart that, divinely illuminated, he saw the grandeur of the Church in the glory of Christ, and he himself one of the favoured throng. His happiness seemed complete, and he felt ready to "depart and to be with Christ, which is far better."

Yet he attempted to preach a few times after this, and it was while on a visit to Grantham and Bottesford that he received the fatal blow to his mind and body from which he never recovered, though he was got home, and was able at times to speak to friends who visited him of the Lord's goodness to him. There was a visible decline of his bodily and mental powers, but there was a marked freshness, clearness, and savour when he spoke of the things of God. He looked back and remembered with grief how often he had spoken unadvisedly with his lips, and was broken down at God's long-suffering mercy and great love to him. Now he was in what Bunyan describes as "the land of Beulah." Those who had to do for him felt it a privilege; for that natural irritability which often had caused pain to himself, if not to others, for the most part subsided, and Jesus Christ was his only theme. Now he was entering into peace, and resting in his bed, walking in that gracious uprightness which is known only in those who are made "meet to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light."

A dear friend at Bottesford, who heard him preach his last sermon at Grantham, from Jeremiah xv. 16, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart," says these were the words he uttered at the close of his discourse: "I daresay you, dear friends, at Grantham, may think I am altered in my preaching; but, when

I was afflicted in the winter, the dear Lord manifested Himself to me in such a remarkable way, showing me how He suffered *for me*, that I was filled, and am filled, with the love of God." This friend visited him in his illness, to whom he said, "The Lord has shown me everything I have done wrong, and how He suffered for me to make everything straight. Oh, my dear friend, if I could preach again, I should be closer than ever!"

As the printers are waiting to go to press, we must defer the closing scene to the next number.

(To be concluded in our next.)

ENCOURAGING COUNSEL.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Just a few lines to you ere I retire to rest, and I would commence with the inspired words, "Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus" (Matt. xxviii. 5). If I were to write my own feelings, I might perhaps send you a long list of my doubts and fears, but would it profit either the reader or writer? or would it be to the glory of God? for that should be our chief motive in every undertaking. Whatever may be my feelings, I find it declared in the Word of God that seeking souls shall find, mourning souls shall be comforted, hungering and thirsting souls shall be filled. I would ask, are *you* a mourner, seeking, hungering, and thirsting for Christ Jesus, the crucified One? Then, if so, thou art blessed, and that thou art so, shall one day be proclaimed upon the house-top. Oh, happy state, to dwell in that love the waters of despondency cannot quench, nor the floods of temptation drown! This love is freely bestowed, for it cannot be bought. If a man would give all the substance of his house for this love, it would be utterly contemned; and, my friend, if we ever do get an assurance of our interest in this love, we shall say, "It was true which we heard of others, but the half had not been told us." "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but *now* mine eye seeth Thee," said one of old.

I would further say, "Suffer the word of exhortation," and "pray without ceasing." If you would know your own election—if you value peace of mind, or your soul's well-being—do not neglect private prayer. Let one who has experienced the sad consequences of so doing use her voice to warn others of the darkness, deadness, and distress arising from it. If we grow prayerless, and our visits to the throne lose their frequency, what can we expect but that, as we have forsaken the Fountain of living waters for broken cisterns, so likewise He will forsake us, and leave us to reap the fruit of our folly? I know He will never entirely forsake His own, although He may appear to do so for a time; but who is there, who has in any degree dwelt in the light

of His countenance, who does not dread the thought of being again brought into darkness and bondage, even though they were confident they should be saved at last, which for myself I must say, I am by no means so sure of ?

I must now close, as it is just eleven o'clock, and, if I am not careful, I shall not be in bed before Sunday morning. With the earnest desire that the Lord will bless you with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus,

I am, with Christian love, yours truly,
February 17th, 1866. M. BAKER.

HEART-YEARNINGS.

JESUS, I long to feel Thy love
 Within this sinful heart of mine ;
 I long to know Thy peace and prove
 That, precious Saviour, I am Thine.

If I am Thine, then am I safe
 From all the depths of hell and woe,
 Though Satan tries to make me think
 That Thou wilt fail Thy love to show.

But, dearest Jesus, Thou art still
 The same, and wilt for ever be ;
 Thou wilt not leave me, but fulfil
 The gracious promise made by Thee.

Oh, that my lips could praise Thee more !
 Nor with mere outward form alone,
 But even when my heart is sore,
 Teach me to say, "Thy will be done."

Why does my heart so hard remain ?
 My love so cold to Thee, my God ?
 Should it not melt while I retain
 The thought that Jesus shed His blood ?

Oh, God, still grant me strength and grace
 To battle with the world and sin,
 Until in heaven I take my place,
 And there my song of praise begin !

A. ALLEN.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XVIII.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—I have been thinking about writing to you for several weeks past, but hitherto something has transpired to hinder me, yet not to make me entirely forget you. I hope you are quite well, and still happy in your situation. I have often looked at you when you have been at school, and wished the Lord would appear on your behalf, as I could perceive in you

a genius that was likely, at some future period, to raise you above the menial employment allotted to many, or most of those poor boys who are born in the agricultural districts of this country ; and, by what I can understand of your present situation, I think that the great Ruler of all events has opened to you a way and placed you in such circumstances that, if you prove yourself industrious, honest, and truthful, and, at the same time, obliging, obedient, and thoughtful, it may be a very excellent beginning for you ; and I pray that the Almighty may bless you, and in mercy surround and keep you from the power of every evil temptation, and give you wisdom and fortitude to forsake the company of the vicious, and seek to be in companionship with such as love their Bibles and the house of God.

I saw your dear father the other evening. He looked as well as usual. Your sister tells me that you have the privilege and time in the evening to read and write. I hope you will improve yourself, and embrace every opportunity afforded you. It is no small mercy, my dear boy, for you to be so comfortably situated ; and I hope you will show your gratitude by being kind to those who may be put in authority over you, and ever manifest a true willingness to do as you are bidden, although some little things may not be so pleasing to you as you could wish ; for sure enough, my dear boy, we are in a world of trial, as the Scriptures declare, saying, "Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." Oh, that the Almighty may bless you with grace to look to Him as your Guide, through this world of sin and sorrow, disappointments and trials, and cause you to remember that death is before you, and that true happiness beyond the grave is for those only who are found in Jesus ! Oh, my dear boy, we must die to know what that sea of love and real happiness is ! But, if you are never brought to cry to God for mercy, and to love and serve Him in this life, you will not die to know happiness, but eternal sorrow.

Think of these things, my dear young friend, and ponder over what you read in your Bible from time to time ; and may the God of all grace sanctify it to the leading of you to seek unto Jesus until you find in Him the salvation of your soul, so that it may be made plain that the instruction in the Word of God you have received while young may prove a guide to you as you pass through life, and a comfort to you when you lay down your head to die. Oh, my dear boy, often read your Bible ! That will never hurt you, but, with God's blessing, will do you more good than the possession of all the gold and silver this earth can produce.

My love to your sister and brother when you see them. I now conclude, and believe me to remain,

Your well-wisher and sincere friend,

Milton.

JAMES GARDNER.

THE SOWER.

A SERMON BY MR. HULL.

PREACHED AT HASTINGS, APRIL 10TH, 1881.

“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 CORINTHIANS xiii. 12.

(Concluded from page 321.)

WELL, some of you may be ready to say, “You are going too fast for me this morning. I am but a poor weakling—a poor fearful one—what am I to do?” Ah! what are you to do without Christ? without His precious blood and perfect obedience? What are you to do? I cannot tell you what you are to do without Him, but I can tell you what Christ will do *for* you. He has saved me, the chief of sinners, and I believe He is able and willing to do the same for you, for He says that He “came to seek and save the lost.” He “came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Mary Magdalene, Zacchæus, the dying thief, Saul of Tarsus, and many others found it so; and some of us have found it so. Will you, then, turn away from Him this morning? Will you seek another friend, another love? No; I believe you will say, “I want no other, for to be found in Him is what my soul desires.” Well, then, I am sure there is everything for your encouragement in the Word of God, for it speaks to those that *think* on His name, to those that *hope* in His mercy, to those that *follow* after Him, to those that are *afflicted and distressed* for want of Him. Now, tell me what these things are written for, if they are not written for the encouragement of you that are “following on to know the Lord.” His promise is sure to them that seek Him.

But some poor soul may say, “In days that are past I did hope I knew something of the Lord, though it was but little;” and now, because it appears so little, you fear that you did not know Him rightly, and so the little you know makes you feeble to want to know more of Him. You want these matters made right. Well, the blessed Spirit has not given up His work yet. There are many people in this day that think they can do without the work of the Holy Ghost, but it is our mercy that we cannot. It is *He* that is to testify of Christ; *He* must take of the things of Christ, and show them unto you; and this is what you want—His power, the anointing which is truth and no lie. You want the inward work of the Holy Ghost, that you may know and understand the mystery of Christ and of God. Then I say to

each poor weakling, "Follow on to know the Lord." Well, I hope many of us are following on to know Him, but sometimes we seem to be following at a great distance, and we are such dull scholars, so slow to learn. Why, friends, I have to this very day to pray "that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death." Only this morning I was thinking, "Oh, how little I know of the Lord!" and I sunk down very low with respect to my knowledge of divine things. Oh, how much I feel to need the revivings and renewings of the Holy Ghost! I find I am but a learner in the school of Christ—ah! and a very dull scholar too. I am so stupid, so carnal, so contracted in myself, and so poor in the things of Christ. Sometimes I say to the Lord, "I feel to be quite out of heart with respect to ever knowing Thee as I desire." But there is another thing, friends. What the Lord has taught me I cannot give up, neither do I want to do so. No, I hope the Lord will enable me to hold my confidence firm unto the end, for, though I only see now as "through a glass darkly," I do not wish to cast it away; but with the disciples I would say, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Come, you little ones, are you prepared to give these things up, and to say they are nothing worth? No; I know your poor heart clings to the Lord, to His Gospel, His people, and His ways; and, as you are enabled to look back and trace those things which He has revealed in your soul, you quite hope at times that He has given you a taste of His love, and some experience of His revealed grace and manifested power. But now you want Him to put His hand again to the work, and remove everything that now obscures the light, so that you may be enabled to say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His."

Then, again, in His providences, too, we see the Lord but as "through a glass darkly." Yes, there are many things in providence that we cannot understand. We cannot see how these trials and cross providences belong to the covenant; but they do, although there is so much darkness about them, and they seem to be such a mystery—yea, the very reverse of gracious providences, and so unlike the dealings of a God of loving-kindness; and, if we try to find our case set forth in the Lord's dealings with His people, as recorded in His Word, our path seems quite different from theirs. If we could see that our path compared with that of one of the Lord's saints, we think we should be of good heart; but it seems so opposite to that, and so contrary to what we desire. And then at times the trial produces feelings so contrary to what we would have, and the question is asked, "Would these cross providences try my temper, and stir up

such dreadful evils in my heart, if the love of God was there? Would things be so contrary in providence, would there be so many and such weighty crosses, and would one thing after another be blighted, if I was interested in His covenant love?" Well, the Lord knows best what weights we need; He knows what **and** where we are. He knows our weakness, and the infirmities of the mind as well as those of the body; yea, He knows all about our natural dispositions, and remembers that we are dust. And, friends, if it had not been for some of these trying dispensations and cross providences, I do not know where I should have wandered to. If the Lord had not held me in, I know not where my rebellious heart might have led me; and if He had not afflicted me, overturned my projects, stirred up my nest, and that in a very painful way too, I know not what sad places I might have been content to sit down in. But I have to bless Him for all these things, and with the poet I can often say—

"He sees me often overcome,
And pities my distress,
And bids affliction drive me home,
To anchor on His grace."

For, as I told you a little while back, when I come into suffering, affliction, and trial, I feel to be so desolate unless the Lord is with me. The desolation of my heart at these times is indescribable, for without Him the world is but a void. Then I long for His return, for the tokens of His love, for the smiles of His face, and for a word of grace and peace; and, when He does come to those in such a case, as He has promised, "I will see you again," how the words He speaks are treasured up! They are precious in our eyes and sweet to our heart.

Well, friends, the Lord may be following some of you in His providence with trial upon trial, tribulation upon tribulation, and cross upon cross; and what for? Why, that you may not seek your rest here. The rest you are seeking is not below; and so He follows you up with crosses and losses, cutting dispensations and sore afflictions, that you may seek your all in Him; and in all these things you learn something of the wisdom and goodness of God, yet we only "know in part," because "we see through a glass darkly."

We will now glance at the latter part of the subject—the perfect knowledge promised; for, although we now "see through a glass darkly," and know only in part, the day is coming when, as the text says, "Then shall I know even as also I am known." Even in this life the spiritual knowledge of the saints is an increasing one. Thus, with respect to the Ephesian Church, the Apostle Paul prayed "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by

faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge;" and, if your heart is set upon knowing Christ, you will follow after Him; and the gracious promise concerning those that are following after Christ is, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord;" and all you weaklings in faith that are exercised to know Christ for yourselves will find this promise true. He has set these things before you, and He will be faithful to His Word. You cannot be exercised about these things if your heart is not set upon Him; for, if your heart is not set upon Christ, it will follow after worldly things; but, if you are concerned about the things of Christ—if He is the chief thing with you—then your prayer will be, "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death;" and the Lord the Spirit will answer that prayer. He will impart unto you that knowledge, and He will promote in you that grace, so there will be a growing in grace and an increasing in knowledge and understanding.

But the farther you reach in these things, the greater will be the stretch before you; and the more you realize of "Christ in you the hope of glory," the more will the desire burn in your heart to be like Him, and to "see Him as He is." Have you ever watched the effect of the magnet upon the needle? When it comes near enough to affect it, you will see at first a slight movement of the needle; move it nearer, and the agitation becomes greater; and then, if you put it nearer still, the needle will dart forward and close with the magnet; or, again, it may be observed in the case of any substance falling to the earth, that, as it nears the centre of gravity, so the rapidity of its movement is increased. Just so it is with the sinner that is following after the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Centre to which the soul tends, and the nearer we approach unto Him, the more the heart is drawn, and the more intensely the desire burns; and thus you will find, in the case of some of the dying saints, they are anxious to drop the clay and quit the world, that they may see Him whom here unseen they love, without a veil between; and the nearer they approach unto Him, the more intense is their longing for the hour when the veil will be drawn aside, and they shall be with Him, and "see Him as He is."

Now, what the Lord has set before His people in His Word, and caused them to desire to obtain, that will be surely received by them. Not one good thing which the Lord has promised His people shall fail; not one word on which He has caused them to hope will be unfulfilled. And oh, friends, do we not now

at times realize the Lord's faithfulness when He favours us with an answer to our prayers? Does He not do for us far beyond what we expect? And, when He lifts up upon us the light of His countenance, we find His love to be sweeter than life itself. Well, if it is so while here below, what must it be to be where He is? We may say in the language of Toplady—

“ If such the sweetness of the streams,
What must the Fountain be,
Where saints and angels draw their bliss
Immediately from Thee ? ”

Oh, what a mercy, friends, to have these things set before our faith, to have our hearts set upon that which God has promised to bestow, and to be among the number that are “ following on to know the Lord ” !

Well, though we know the Lord only in part, yet, if He gives us to know that He is leading us aright, that His providences are right, and the way is right, this satisfies us as to the present ; for—

“ The way we walk can not be wrong
If Jesus be but there. ”

And really, friends, the Lord does so satisfy my heart at times that I can bless His name for all ; and, as I trace His hand, I tell Him that He has led me by a right way, and the language of my heart is, “ Choose Thou the way and still lead on. ”

Well, friends, when we get above, and our vision is no more obscured by this mortal coil—when we see as we are seen—I believe we shall see more of the dreadful depths of the fall than ever we have done here below ; not that we shall feel anything of the pain and shame that now arise from a consciousness of the guilt of sin—no, nothing of the kind ; but we shall see more fully than we can do now what we have been saved from, and we shall know Him who has saved us as we cannot know Him now, for we shall know as we are known ; and, by seeing more fully what we have been saved from, we shall sing that sweet song the louder, “ Unto Him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen ; ” and we shall then see more of God's preserving and preventing grace than we can either know or conceive here. Many dangers and deliverances we have not understood here will then be made clear to our view : “ 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. ” Thus the joy of the saints in heaven will, I believe, be enhanced by a clear view of many circumstances which we cannot now enter

into, and we shall see that He who has redeemed us has ordered all things connected with our salvation well. Oh, what wisdom, power, and beauty will there appear in His works and ways, and what praise and adoration will spring forth as the glorious host of the redeemed stand before the throne of God and the Lamb, and acknowledge that "He has *done all things well*"! May you and I thus stand and bow before Him among that blessed number, and He shall bear the glory.

RICH TOWARD GOD.

WHAT trifles are the things of earth
 Compared with Christ, that Pearl of worth!
 That which the richest worldlings prize
 Is trifling in believers' eyes.

Oh, what is gold to Christ my God?
 What, but of earth a yellow clod?
 Those things of which rich worldlings boast
 Are all corruptible at most.

Those who of Christ have had a view,
 Though but a passing glance or two,
 Will to created treasures die,
 Since nothing now can with Him vie.

His precious Person and His grace
 Have in their hearts the chiefest place;
 Other beloveds now they deem,
 Compared with Him, of small esteem.

Is Christ the treasure I desire?
 The lot to which I now aspire?
 Is He the Pearl of price to me?
 Do I in Him all beauties see?

Is He most precious to my soul?
 The only One to make me whole?
 Is He the centre where my heart
 Would fasten, never more to part?

A. H.

ELECTION is eternal as God Himself, and so without variable-ness or shadow of change; and hence it is called an "eternal purpose," and a purpose of God that must stand (Eph. iii. 11; Rom. ix. 11).—*Bunyan*.

LET us not lose the Bible, but with all diligence and in God's fear read and preach the same; for if that remaineth, flourisheth, and be taught, then all is safe. She is the head and empress of all faculties and arts. If divinity falleth, then whatsoever remaineth is nothing worth.—*Luther*.

“ A DAY IN HEAVEN.”

AN INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF FLAVEL.

I HAVE with good assurance this account of a minister, who, being alone in a journey, and willing to make the best improvement he could of that day's solitude, set himself to a close examination of the state of his soul, and then of the life to come, and the manner of its being and living in heaven, in the views of all those things which are now pure objects of faith and hope. After a while he perceived his thoughts begin to fix, and come closer to these great and astonishing things than was usual ; and as his mind settled upon them, his affections began to rise with answerable liveliness and vigour. He therefore (whilst he was yet master of his own thoughts) lifted up his heart to God in a short ejaculation that God would so order it, in His providence, that he might meet with no interruption from company, or any other accident in that journey, which was granted him, for in all that day's journey he neither met, overtook, or was overtaken by any. Thus going on his way, his thoughts began to swell, and rise higher and higher, like the waters in Ezekiel's vision, till at last they became an overflowing flood. Such was the intention of his mind, such the ravishing taste of heavenly joys, and such the full assurance of his interest therein, that he utterly lost a sight and sense of this world, and all the concerns thereof, and for some hours knew no more where he was than if he had been in a deep sleep upon his bed. At last he began to perceive himself very faint, and almost choked with blood, which, running in abundance from his nose, had coloured his clothes and his horse from the shoulder to the hoof. He found himself almost spent, and nature to faint under the pressure of joy unspeakable and insupportable ; and at last, perceiving a spring of water in his way, he with difficulty alighted to cleanse and cool his face and hands, which were drenched in blood, tears, and sweat.

By that spring he sat down and washed, earnestly desiring, if it were the pleasure of God, that it might be his parting-place from this world. He said, death had the most amiable face in his eye that ever he beheld, except the face of Jesus Christ, which made it so ; and that he could not remember (though he believed he should die there) that he had one thought of his dear wife or children or any other earthly concernment.

But, having drunk of that spring, his spirits revived, the blood stanch'd, and he mounted his horse again ; and on he went in the same frame of spirit, till he had finished a journey of near thirty miles, and came at night to his inn, where being come, he greatly admired how he came thither, that his horse without his direction had brought him thither, and that he fell not all that day

which passed not without several trances of considerable continuance.

Being alighted, the innkeeper came to him with some astonishment (being acquainted with him formerly): "Oh, sir," said he, "what is the matter with you? You look like a dead man!" "Friend," replied he, "I was never better in my life. Show me my chamber, cause my cloak to be cleansed, burn me a little wine, and that is all I desire of you for the present." Accordingly it was done, and supper sent up, which he could not touch, but requested of the people that they would not trouble or disturb him for that night. All this night passed without one wink of sleep, though he never had a sweeter night's rest in all his life. Still, still the joy of the Lord overflowed him, and he seemed to be an inhabitant of another world. The next morning being come, he was early on horseback again, fearing the divertisement in the inn might bereave him of his joy, for he said it was now with him as with a man that carries a rich treasure about him, who suspects every *passenger* to be a *thief*; but within a few hours he was sensible of the ebbing of the tide, and before night, though there was a heavenly serenity and sweet peace upon his spirit, which continued long with him, yet the transports of joy were over, and the fine edge of his delight blunted. He many years after called that day one of the days of heaven, and professed he understood more of the light of heaven by it than by all the books he ever read or discourses he ever had entertained about it.

THE HEAVENLY BRIDEGROOM.

THERE is no relation so near or so dear as that which exists between husband and wife, for they are no longer twain, but one flesh. Jesus is spoken of in Scripture as the Husband of His people: "Thy Maker is thy Husband;" "I am married unto you, saith the Lord;" and, as a man leaves father and mother and cleaves unto his wife, so must the Church leave all beside to cleave unto the Lord Jesus. A man seeks to gain the affection of her he loves; he gives his heart, in hope of having a heart in return. So it is with the heavenly Bridegroom. He has given His heart, or Himself, to His people (Eph. v. 2), and says in return, "Give Me thine heart" (Prov. xxiii. 26). How often in Scripture, when God is speaking of the love and service He requires, is "all the heart" mentioned! "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart" (Deut. vi. 5; x. 12; xi. 13; xxx. 6, &c.) How strange it is that we can be so half-hearted towards our dearest Lord! He loves His bride with the deepest and purest love, and yet how cold and lukewarm is our love to

Him! It is the heart He wants, but so often the head, hands, and feet are given without the heart. But this will not do. A true lover wants the affection of the one he loves, for he knows, if he has that, he has all; for how readily and cheerfully we employ our hands, feet, time, or strength for those we love with the heart!

Do we find this warmth of affection in our spiritual service? We may do so sometimes; but often, alas! through the power of indwelling sin, we feel our hearts wandering after other objects. Surely this must grieve the Holy Spirit of God, and almost induce Him to say to us, as to one of old, "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone."

When Moses was commanded to make the tabernacle in the wilderness, only those were allowed to help who were wise-hearted, or whose heart stirred him up; and in Exodus, thirty-fifth chapter, the heart is mentioned nine times in reference to those who brought gifts or did any work for it; and as it was then—if there be first a willing mind (or heart), it was accepted according to that they had—so it is now. But it must be heart-work, and *all* the heart, and we may see from Exodus xxxvi. 5—7, what great things can be done, and how much accomplished, when "the heart stirs us up;" and yet such will be the readiest to acknowledge with David, "Of Thine own have we given to Thee" (1 Chronicles xxix. 14). God looks at the heart, and a sigh or wish from the heart is more acceptable in His sight than a whole round of duties or prayers when the heart, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, is not prompting them.

But, though we should be humbled before the Lord on account of our half-heartedness, yet there is every encouragement in His Word for all who are seeking Him with the heart; and, as God said unto David, when He told him he should not build Him a house, "Thou didst well that it was in thine heart," so He says to every one that is mourning their small attainments, "It is well that thou hast a desire in thine heart after Me." But let none of us be satisfied with serving God with half a heart; for He says, "They shall find Me when they seek for Me with all their heart."

May the Lord pardon and forgive us for His own sake, and enable us to worship Him with all our heart. Oh, Holy and blessed Spirit, create in each of us such longing desires after Jesus Christ and Him crucified that we shall not be content with anything short of Himself, and feelingly exclaim—

"Lord, take my heart, my sinful heart,
And make it *wholly* Thine!"

A READER.

B B

PRAYER AND SALVATION.

"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."—
ROMANS x. 13.

(Concluded from page 339.)

3. Now comes the all-important question, "For whom is this great salvation designed?" We might answer, and the answer would be truthful and Scriptural, "For the election of grace." To such as have grace enough and light enough to see their own election, this would be a comforting answer. But then these are not a numerous class, neither do they stand in so much need of comfort and encouragement as others—at least, as to their eternal salvation. What comfort would such an answer bring to those who only have grace enough to feel their sinfulness, and light enough to see their need of Christ? Very little; so God, in His wisdom and mercy, has furnished us with another answer, more suited to needy, trembling sinners, and apparently more universal, though really it takes in His elect, and them alone. It is this: "*Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*" We have here one of those apparent contradictions in the Word of God which are really jewels of divine grace and wisdom. Some argue from such a text as this that all men have a chance of being saved, and that the final destiny of men does not hang upon the irresistible grace and decree of God, but upon the power of a sinner's will. Others practically turn the Scripture round, and tell us, "Whosoever is saved shall call upon the name of the Lord." But God, in love and grace and wisdom, has so worded the promise that it shall accomplish His ends, carry comfort to the hearts of His needy people, and leave impenitent sinners without excuse.

To "call upon the name of the Lord" implies some knowledge of that name, and some faith in it, as the Apostle tells us in the next verse: "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" There must, therefore, be some knowledge of the name of Jesus, and some faith in His name, where there is true calling upon it. When first convinced of sin, we are apt to call upon our Creator, and ask Him to spare us. Such calling is of no avail. The ear of God, as a Creator merely, is for ever closed to cries for mercy. We are sinners, and, in His character of Creator and Law-giver, God can only condemn us. The calling on His name referred to in the text is a calling upon the name of Jesus. The holy name "Jehovah" is to sinners a name of judgment and of terror. The holy name "Jesus-Jehovah" is to sinners a name of mercy and of peace, and whosoever shall truly call upon it shall be saved.

Let us now see what this calling consists of, and what is its nature. It consists of confession of sin and cries for mercy. At the beginning of spiritual life these two things make up the whole burden of prayer; and as we pass on, year after year, they form a very large part of our prayers, if our souls are healthy. Perhaps the simplest way of describing what it is to "call upon the name of the Lord" will be to take the noiseless wings of a little bird, and follow an honest-hearted sinner into his bed-room or the lonely fields, and there listen to him as he pours out cries and groans intended only for the ear of his God. Look at him! He drops upon his knees, and spreads his very heart before the God of heaven. He cannot utter it, but he lays it before the Lord in all its sin and filth, misery and fear, and cries, "O Lord, Thou knowest!" And is that all? Yes; except that it is perhaps repeated twenty or a hundred times, "O Lord, Thou knowest! Thou knowest!" And it is not a vain repetition, such as the heathen and formalists use. It is all the man's heart. It is confession indeed. But listen again. There is another prayer on his lips, equally comprehensive, and almost equally short: "God be merciful to me a sinner!" This is a cry for mercy; and the two together form a most eloquent prayer, which might be offered up at a prayer-meeting, or even in a pulpit, in far less than twenty minutes, and might be very acceptable to God and very profitable to fellow-worshippers.

Briefly, then, we may say that to "call upon the name of the Lord" is to confess our sins to Him in the name of Jesus—to plead for mercy in the name of Jesus—and, where this takes place in a poor sinner's heart, in secret sincerity, we may be sure that it is the work of the Spirit of Jesus, and that the great and gracious promise before us belongs to that soul: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

But, if salvation is, as we have said, a thing already done—if all the seed of the Last Adam are in His Person once and for ever redeemed and made righteous—why is it said that the praying soul shall be saved, as if, when it began to pray, it were at present unsaved? A praying soul is certainly in one sense a safe soul, for, in the purpose of God and by the work of Christ, he is a saved soul. But there must be a sense in which he is an unsaved soul, else why should a promise of future salvation be made to him? The answer is to be found in the doctrine which Christ Himself preached: "Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you." A sinner awakened to feel his need of salvation cannot be said to have eaten the flesh and drunk the blood of Christ. He has not at the first a spiritual knowledge of the Person and work of Christ; and,

therefore, he cannot have that spiritual reliance upon Christ and His work which is called justifying faith. The promise means, then, that he shall have this. He shall not make it himself, and then bring it to the Lord as a price for salvation; but the praying breath which God has given him shall in due season bring down from heaven the precious gift of justifying faith, and thus, like Paul, "being justified by faith, he shall have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." In happy personal experience he shall have God's salvation in all its branches. The work of sanctification, begun in him by the new birth, shall be carried on to its completion, when his sinful flesh—those "mortal garments" of which John Bunyan speaks—shall be "left in the river" of death. Corporeal death shall be to him a wasp without a sting, and shall, moreover, be swallowed up in victory at the resurrection of the just. The second death on him shall have no power, for, being reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more must he be saved by His life; and the certainty of this glorious salvation for praying souls hangs upon the faithfulness of Him who cannot lie, who has said that "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Among the readers of these lines will doubtless be some who have never "called upon the name of the Lord." Upon you the truth that has been now brought before you has a most awful bearing, for it implies that "whosoever shall not call upon the name of the Lord shall not be saved." If you have been accustomed to hear the doctrines of free-grace, there is no need to tell you that you are helpless sinners. You probably know well that Jesus said, "No man can come to Me except the Father draw him." Remember that the same infallible Preacher said, "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life." You may say, "But, if we cannot, it is foolishness, it is error, to tell us that we will not." And dare you indeed charge the Son of God with foolishness and error? He is incarnate Wisdom and Truth, and those two sayings of His, "Ye cannot," and "Ye will not," are perfectly consistent. Your very will is in bondage to sin, and bent to what is evil. Your helplessness towards all that is truly good and holy is a sinful helplessness: "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Your present condition of helpless impenitence and corruption is the fruit of your apostasy from God in paradise, and cannot be charged upon Him who placed you there in holiness and happiness, and gave you no commandment but what you were able to keep. You are already sunk in death spiritual. You will, if you die in impenitence, feel the sting of death corporeal; and, crushed into the bottomless pit

of woe under the weight of original and personal transgression, you will prove the bitterness of death eternal. May the God of all grace prevent it, and may the Spirit of truth (for He alone can) write upon your conscience, as in letters of flame, an effectual warning to "flee from the wrath to come"!

EPHRAIM.

A HOME.

"For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."—HEBREWS xiii. 14.

A HOME on earth? I quench the thought
That rose unwittingly within;
My soul is large, and life is short—
Too small is this dark world of sin.

I would not alway live below;
Time's fading joys are little worth:
Be mine to realize and know,
"I am a stranger in the earth."

A home on earth? 'Tis but a dream;
Why seek for life among the dead?
No; let me rather follow Him
Who had not where to lay His head.

Arise, my soul, nor further roam
Away from Christ in search of rest:
But seek by faith to find a home
Deep in the shelter of His breast.

Thou Friend of outcast sinners, where
Thy hidden ones abide secure;
One look from Thee my soul would cheer—
One smile would make my calling sure.

Despised and small, I murmur not,
Or would not murmur when I do;
Let crosses be my daily lot,
If I enjoy Thy comforts too.

Be Thou my Refuge when distressed,
My Rock of everlasting strength;
Be Thou on earth the pilgrim's Rest,
And be my home in heaven at length.

W. W.

WERE it not for sin, death had never had a beginning; and were it not for death, sin would never have had an ending.—*Dr. Goodwin.*

MEMOIR OF THE LATE JOHN CLARK, OF
FIVEASHDOWN.*(Concluded from page 342.)*

SOLOMON says, "A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth" (Eccles. vii. 1). This is in the best sense true, and only true in such as are "called to be saints," for of all others it must be said, whatever renown they have gained in this world, it had been good for them that they had never been born.

Looking back to the birth of our friend, we see a babe whose name was not to figure among the great of the earth, but which was to be enrolled with the despised people of God. His natal day inaugurated a long series of "divers temptations." He then entered upon the dangerous voyage of life, to pass those rocks—the follies of childhood and youth, temptations and afflictions, snares in the world and errors in the Church, whereon so many have been wrecked. But, by the grace of God, he weathered every storm, and before his spirit quitted its clay abode, he seemed to have reached his desired haven.

During the last few years of his pilgrimage he was favoured with a great softness of spirit, so that his affections were enlarged and his sympathies deepened towards the whole family of God. He would often say, he loved the Lord's people, and would gladly embrace them all. To some of his old friends with whom he did not see eye to eye in matters of Church government, he felt particularly attached, and would occasionally refer to them with manifest love and tenderness.

Being fond of singing, and having a musical voice, he would sometimes, before his strength failed him, commence singing some of his favourite hymns, such as, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," &c.; and, when he could get his beloved daughter to join him, he would fill in the bass; and, as he came to the last verse, he would usually repeat it—

"Till then I would Thy love proclaim
With every fleeting breath;
And may the music of Thy name
Refresh my soul in death."

Also, "When I can read my title clear," &c.; "There is a fountain filled with blood," &c., and others, were sung by him with a sacred delight.

It was thought advisable to take him for a change to Buxted, as it was higher ground and a clearer atmosphere than at Maresfield, so his dear wife went with him there for a few months, and he seemed to enjoy it. But he had occa-

sional seasons of depression, when clouds hid the light of God's countenance; and, having been so favoured in his soul, he was like a spoilt child, he could not live without the Lord's presence. On one occasion, having missed his precious Friend, his dear wife tried to comfort him, but could not, until at length the Lord shone upon him again, and then he said to his wife, "Now the Lord has visited me, as He did Toplady, that dear man of God. He will soon take me home."

After this he was removed to his old abode, and, as he said, he was going there "to die." He gradually declined in physical and mental energy, but still he was alive to spiritual things, being cheered by the Lord's presence and chilled by His felt absence; but the Lord often visited him, giving him fresh proofs of His love and faithfulness, and, indeed, was ever nigh when he had not the sensible enjoyment of His love. As far as we have been able to gather up his state of experience at this time, it seems to have been well set forth by Mr. Hart—

"If Jesus seems to hide His face,
What anxious fears I feel!
But, if He deign to whisper peace,
I'm happy, all is well."

A dear friend, who visited him about two months before he died, says, "I heard him pray a few times; and, although he was not able to speak properly, yet we could well understand him, and the simplicity, ardour, and life in his few words were beyond my power to express. He often said, both in his prayers and at other times, with the tears streaming down his cheeks, 'Oh, my dear Lord!' 'I shall soon be with my dear Lord.' His words thrilled through me; I scarcely ever heard such expressions."

One morning, about a fortnight before his death, he was overheard communing with the Lord as with his dearest Friend. After this he took to his bed, and nature rapidly failed and life ebbed out, so that few words, if any, were audible. He laid apparently easy, though unconscious. Friends were very kind in sitting up with him, so that he might be constantly watched. He passed away from this vale of tears in a sweet sleep about one o'clock on Lord's day morning, July 6th, 1879, to join the choir in that blissful place—

"Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths never end."

His remains were interred in the ground adjoining the Chapel, Fiveashdown, July 11th, when a numerous and representative company was present, and several ministers officiated upon the occasion. A memorial stone was erected there by friends who loved and esteemed him for his work's sake.

In concluding this memoir, we would briefly state the general character of his preaching. Many men have excelled him in gifts, but none have shown greater godly simplicity, earnestness, and sincerity than he did at times during his fifty years' ministry. What the man was naturally often exhibited itself favourably and otherwise. He was not one that could walk in craftiness, or "handle the Word of God deceitfully." Thoroughly outspoken as he was, and for which some admired him, it perhaps amounted at times to a defect. His ministry was mainly experimental, yet upon points of doctrine he was remarkably clear.

His aim was to comfort the Lord's people, but he did not fail to recognize the fact that he had in his audience some who made no profession of religion, and others who had a form of godliness, but who by their walk denied its power. The writer, who for some years sat under his ministry, well remembers his manner of addressing the unregenerate as the "*careless and unconcerned*," and he can bear witness that to Pharisees and formalists, notionalists and Antinomians, he gave no quarter; but, wherever he could discover the life of real religion in the smallest degree, he was anxious to cherish it. However, all that he was, as a minister of Christ, he was by the grace of God. He now "rests from his labours." May it be our happiness ere long to join him in that upper and better world where perfection is known, love abounds, and God in Christ is "All and in all."

THE people that are gathered to Shiloh are designated "prisoners;" and, if a prisoner be your name and designation, be it ever such a deep, dark, and dreadful prison, here is a door of hope for you (Zech. ix. 12).—*Erskine*.

CHRIST pleads the value and virtue of the price of His blood and sacrifice for us; and admit of this horrible supposition a little, for argument's sake, that, though Christ pleads the worth of what, as Priest, He offereth, yet the soul for whom He so pleads perishes eternally. Now, where lieth the fault? "In sin," you say. True; but it is because there was more virtue in sin to damn, than there was in the blood pleaded by Christ to save. Now, what is the result, but that the Advocate goes down as well as we—we to hell, and He in esteem? Wherefore, I say, He is concerned with us. His credit, His honour, His glory and renown flies all away, if those for whom He pleads as an Advocate perish for want of worth in His sacrifice pleaded. But shall this be ever said of Christ? No, no; His own reputation and honour are concerned; nor will He lose those, for want of pleading for them, concerned in this office.—*Bunyan*.

BRIEF OUTLINES OF A DISCOURSE BY THE LATE
JOHN BERRIDGE.

"Ye are our epistle."—2 CORINTHIANS iii. 2.

THIS was the language of the great Apostle Paul (who, in his own eyes, was "less than the least of all saints") in an address to the Corinthian Church, the members of which had been some of the most abandoned characters; and to whatever place the Apostle went, where letters of recommendation were required of the visiting ministers, he pointed to those conspicuous converts who were living epistles, and so eminent as to be "read and known of all men." The change was so great as to render it evident to every one. The drunkards were become sober, the dishonest just, the miser liberal, the prodigal frugal, the libertine chaste, the proud humble. To these the Apostle appealed for himself and fellow-labourers as letters of commendation, who were living epistles at Corinth, and as lights in the world.

In an epistle there must be paper or parchment, a pen, ink, and writer, and somewhat written.

1. The paper or parchment we may consider in these divine epistles as the human heart, which, some people say, is as clean as a white sheet of paper; but, if it be so on one side, it is as black as sin can make it on the other. It may appear clean, like a whited sepulchre without, but it is full of all uncleanness and defilement within.

2. The pen may be well compared to the ministers of the Gospel, who are used in those living epistles as such; and many of them are willing to acknowledge themselves very bad pens, scarcely fit to write, or be any way employed in so great a work. It seems they have been trying for many years to make good pens at the Universities; but, after all the ingenuity and the pains taken, the pens which are made there are good for nothing till God has nibbed them when they are made. It is well known the best of pens want mending. I find that the poor old one that has been now for a long time in use, and is yet employed in scribbling, needs to be mended two or three times in a sermon.

3. The ink used in these divine epistles I compare to the influences of divine grace on the heart; and this flows freely from the pen when it has a good supply from the Fountain-head, which we constantly stand in need of. But sometimes you perceive the pen is exhausted, and almost dry. Whenever any of you find it so, either at tabernacle, chapel, or elsewhere, and are ready to say, "Oh, what a poor creature this is! I could preach as well myself"—that may be true; but, instead of these sad complaints, lift up your hearts in prayer for the poor pen, and say, "Lord,

give him a little more ink." But, if a pen is made well, and quite fit for use, it cannot move of itself; there must be an agent to put it into motion; and

4. The Writer of these glorious and living epistles is the Lord Jesus Christ. Some people talk about and are very curious in fine writing; but there is something in the penmanship of these epistles that exceeds all that was ever written in the world; for, as the Lord Jesus Christ spake, so He wrote, as never man spake or wrote. One superior excellency in these epistles is, that they are so plain and intelligible as to be "known and read of all men," and the strokes will never be obliterated. As pens cannot move of themselves, so we profess, when we take on us this sacred character, to be moved thereunto by the Holy Spirit; nor can we move to any good purpose without His divine assistance.

5. In all epistles there must be somewhat written. Many things might be said here; but I shall include the divine inscription of these epistles in repentance, faith, and growth in grace. Repentance is written with a broad-nibbed pen, in the old black letter of the law, at the foot of Mount Sinai; faith is written with a crow-quill pen, in fine and gentle strokes, at the foot of Mount Calvary; growth in grace is gradually written, and, when this character is completely inscribed, the epistle is finished and sent to glory.

LUTHER sets the doctrine of justification by the blood of Christ through faith, against all the inventions of men, in these striking terms: "These words—He, the Son of God, 'loved me, and gave Himself for me'—are mighty thunderings and lightnings from heaven against the righteousness of the law, and all the works thereof. What wilt thou do when thou hearest the Apostle say that such an inestimable price was given for thee? Wilt thou bring thy cowl, thy shaven crown, thy chastity, thy obedience, thy poverty, thy works, thy merits? What shall all these do? Yea, what shall the law of Moses avail? What shall the works of all men and all the sufferings of the martyrs profit thee? What is the obedience of all the holy angels in comparison of the Son of God delivered, and that most shamefully, even to the death of the cross, so that His most precious blood was shed for thy sins? If thou couldst rightly consider this incomparable price, thou shouldst hold as accursed all these ceremonies, vows, works, and merits before grace and after, and throw them all down to hell. If I, through works or merits, could have loved the Son of God, and so come unto Him, what needed He to deliver Himself for me?"

REVIEW.

Life and Sermons of Daniel Smart. London: E. Wilmshurst, Warwick Buildings, Paternoster Row; and 4, Spencer Place, Blackheath.

THE publishing of the history of a person's life is commonly suggestive that the hero of the narrative has passed the vale of death. Then, if at any time a desire is felt and a lively interest is exhibited to gather up all the precious reminiscences of the departed one; we like to peruse the hitherto private diary, and read the tale which his ebbcd-out life has told. This is especially the case at the death of a faithful and favourite minister, who has long been enshrined in the hearts of those by whom, for his work's sake, he has been highly esteemed, and the record finds a ready place in the form of a Memoir on the already overcrowded bookshelves.

Many good men who have composed an autobiography have, from the purest motives, chosen to keep the matter as secret as their *Last Will and Testament*, not allowing it to see daylight until their eyes have been closed by the hand of death. Others, like William Huntington, and men of smaller gifts, but possessing the same grace, have published their history in their lifetime, and God has put His seal and approbation upon it. As a rule, however, we are more in favour with the former, for the latter mode too often seems to savour of self-importance, and is not unfrequently a vain and paltry attempt to climb the ladder of fame. We fear when men, especially young men, are so anxious to appear in print, that it is either as a stepping-stone to the pulpit, or an effort to gain a ministerial reputation, or restore a lost one.

Our advice to any who conceive they have "hid treasure" is, to wait until the Lord shall bring it forth to the light (Job xxviii. 11), for "a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment" (Eccles. viii. 5). Time will soon tarnish base metal, and trials will consume it, but pure gold will ever retain its value, and will bring its possessor to honour by passing through the furnace (Zech. xiii. 9; Mal. iii. 3; and 1 Peter i. 7).

However, our good friend, Mr. Smart, whose "Life" is now before us, had no sinister end in view in bringing out this little work. He very rightly sets no value upon man's opinion of him; and, if he did, it would be late in the day to canvass it. But no; his reputation as a minister has long been made, and by the grace of God it has been well maintained. He has no need to ask men to read his book to satisfy themselves about his religion. Were it needful, he could point to many living souls, and say with the Apostle, "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men" (2 Cor. iii. 2), while they could show the

counterpart, in that Daniel Smart has a place in their affections.

But our author is evidently such a lover of peace that, probably fearing lest Satan should make a handle of his book to disturb the minds of any, he was desirous of getting "quietly out of the world" without writing anything about himself. But he has at length yielded to frequent requests to give some account of the Lord's dealings with him; and now he launches his own vessel to battle with the surge of public opinion.

He was born at Devizes, April 27th, 1808. His father, who, he says, feared God, was managing deacon at the old Baptist Chapel in that town. He was early put out into the world, and went to live at Marlborough; but God met with him while a young man, applied His holy law with power to his conscience, convinced him of sin, made him to feel and acknowledge himself to be the very chief of sinners, and brought him in early days to know Christ as a complete Saviour. He relates one blessing that he received under the Word at that time as follows:—

"When an apprentice, I went one Sabbath to my native town to hear Mr. Dymot. It happened to be a baptizing service. The good man took for his text, 'Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?' He spoke of receiving the Holy Ghost as a Spirit of light, life, and faith. He said he had met with a book, written in King Charles's reign, undertaking to relate what true saving faith was; and he said, 'I was half afraid to read it, for fear it should prove my faith a counterfeit one; but I had not read far before the writer declared that "real saving faith was the venture of a poor perishing soul alone upon Christ."' It was the very state my soul was then in, and I was enabled to

" Venture on Him, venture wholly;
Let no other trust intrude;
None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good; "

and peace and mercy flowed into my soul. This was a good day to me."

On Christmas Day, 1829, he was baptized at Wantage. His manner of coming forward in the ministry was somewhat singular. God evidently put the desire into his heart that he might be made useful to His tried people, and He both cherished and quickly brought that desire to an issue. Of this he says:—

"On the 12th of August, 1832, I left my house to go to the chapel, where we were to meet for reading and prayer. I had no thought of what lay before me. When I got about half-way, I felt as if these words came with power out of heaven into my soul: 'Com-

fort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God,' &c. (Isa. xl. 1, 2.) The Apostle said, 'But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.' I said nothing to any one. I knew the verses were in a chapter in Isaiah; I found it to be the fortieth. As I began to read, light shone upon the Word, and I spoke. There was no opposition on the part of the people, for I had a place in their esteem, and they expected what the Lord had designed me to do.

"The first text I took was from Job: 'But He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.' I told them the way I had taken, and the way the Lord took with me; and, as to coming forth as gold, I came forth on the ground of free grace, and there I have been ever since."

What shall we say to such a call as this? Many men—yea, good men—have had years of exercise upon the subject, and opportunities of speaking publicly, who have declined to do so, and have learned later on that God never intended them for the work; while here is one, with little preliminary labour, sent forth and owned by the Lord as His servant. Knowing men may bring their tests, gauges, and criterions, and, after all, see their wisdom baffled. One thing is certain, that, however clear a man's call to the ministry may appear, either to himself or to others, its worth can only be computed as taken in connection with his subsequent ministerial success. Now, if from experience and observation we are bound to admit Mr. Smart's case to be anomalous, yet dare we say it has not the qualification of being perfectly Scriptural?

In looking through the *Life and Sermons*, one cannot but be struck with two points, which all who are acquainted with the author know he has long been well grounded in, namely, a knowledge of himself and a knowledge of his God. It breathes the very air of Gospel liberty.

One of the sweetest visitations from the Lord experienced by him was in 1838, when supplying at Brighton. He had been out for a walk on the Saturday evening, deeply exercised about his work on the coming day, when he was led to meditate upon what Christ was to him. He returned to his lodgings, where the blessing greatly increased. We transcribe his own words:—

"I sat on the sofa, covered my face with my handkerchief, and wept the sweetest tears I have ever shed—tears made by the blood of Christ—and the sweetest joys are mixed with mourning over Christ. I had distinct fellowship and communion with the Three Persons in the Trinity, and this is the best way of being established in that glorious truth—that 'Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to save our souls are all concerned.' I said, in childlike

simplicity, 'Why pass by millions, and set Thy love on me?' I looked on Him whom my sins had pierced, and mourned for Him, as one mourneth for his only son. 'Thou dear Redeemer, why pass by millions, and shed Thy precious blood for me?' I was almost overwhelmed, and swallowed up in love and blood. Any one might have thought me to have been in the deepest grief, though my soul was never more blessedly sanctified than then, weeping at a Saviour's feet; like Mary, loving much, having much forgiven. And then the blessed Spirit, the Comforter, 'Why pass by millions, and bid me live?'"

In Mr. Smart's former days he was often in providential straits, from which he relates many conspicuous deliverances, but upon this we cannot dwell. We must confess that we are disappointed at the brevity of the account, and the meagreness of its detail. The good man preached for four years at Grove Chapel, near Wantage; after that he was for some years settled at Welwyn, Herts; then he went to Lakenheath, and for the last seventeen years he has been preaching at the late Mr. Beeman's chapel, at Cranbrook; and yet we find no record of what led to all these providential removals and ministerial changes. We do not for one moment think that they were made without much prayer and exercise, and confirmation and proof of being divinely led. A relation of these things might have helped many who are often entangled by difficulties, and who are desirous of knowing what the will of the Lord is. At the same time, it would have spread out the narrative, and made it of a more connected character. However, none who read it, and who know the author, will fail to discover his curt style. He appears in his native bluntness and honesty, without any additions or garnishing from the hand of another, which might have made it more acceptable in some quarters.

The hitherto unpublished sermons, which form the greater part of the volume, will make the book very acceptable to such as can no longer get to hear him preach. We should, had our space permitted it, have inserted an extract. Suffice it, then, to say that they are of the same stamp as those hitherto published—a running commentary upon the Word, interwoven with the Spirit's work on the heart. A text heads each, but there is rarely more said upon that than upon the context. We believe Mr. Beeman's preaching was somewhat similar, only he would sometimes take fifteen verses for his text, while others may make many sermons out of one. All this goes to prove that there is a diversity of gifts from the same Spirit.

The little volume is got up in a very creditable manner, at a low price, and is embellished with an excellent and lifelike

portrait and autograph. We wish it an extensive circulation, and would recommend those who have the means, to buy some copies, and distribute them amongst poor, afflicted, and bed-ridden friends, as Christmas presents or New Year's gifts.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XIX.

DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—In trying to pen a few lines to you, I desire to have before my mind a sense of the constant need we have of the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and of what we are in truth before God. This is the groundwork of all saving knowledge, and is a great work that God has to do in us if we are of that number who are the gift of God unto His Son. He will bring us down, by discovering ourselves to ourselves, until we become dead to any hope of help *from* ourselves; and this, whatever false teachers may say to the contrary, is a lesson which, more or less, continues to be learned through a person's whole lifetime—a “crucifying the flesh,” a “dying daily.” I have been looking at that work of Bunyan's, “Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ.” It is full of encouraging words, but only for those who truly want to come to Christ; and, indeed, the soul that longs to come to Him needs encouragement, because the Holy Spirit so convinces and discovers the abominations of our corrupt nature that the adversary can more easily, or perhaps finds it more to his purpose, to blind the mind to the good-will, the almighty power, and the efficacy of the atonement of Jesus Christ, than to the corruptions of our own nature and to our utterly lost and helpless condition; therefore all those encouraging and precious promises are scattered in the Word of God, like handfuls dropped on purpose, for such poor souls as are by the Holy Spirit constrained to glean in the Word of God, if so be they may find some grains of the bread-corn of eternal life; and, while the great work of God is to pull down, in order that He may build up an edifice to His own glory, yet poor foolish sinners (though under the teaching of God) still cleave to their own righteousness, hold on to their false natural props, and would thus destroy themselves if left to themselves. Thus we see how God saves His people from their many destructions, and so fulfils that word, “I *will* be their God, and they shall be My people;” and, “Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power.”

I write thus to you because I believe there is evidence of a work of grace being begun in your heart, and I think I may refer you to the Book of Ruth. That Book is so full of encouragement and teaching to a large class of God's people. In Ruth, who is a type of a seeking soul, there seemed to be very little evidence,

perceptible to men, of anything more than natural affection to her mother-in-law, at the time she arose to go into the land of Israel—no difference, as far as man could see, between her and Orpah. No doubt, both Ruth and Orpah had often heard through Naomi of the things concerning Israel, the blessings God had promised them, and the hopes they had of the Messiah coming to redeem them; but these tidings had entered the *heart* of Ruth, and made her desire to share in the blessing—the love of God to His people Israel. And it is the same now. Do not the children of God's people hear from their parents the account of the love of God to sinners, and this also, in connection with it, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely"? And, if there are many Orpahs on whom this good news takes no effect, yet the Holy Spirit will cause it to sink into the hearts of those Ruths who are foreknown of God, and loved with an everlasting love; and the effect of His influence upon them will be this—they will, like Ruth of old, be constrained to forsake all, and seek, if so be they may find a portion in Christ. Like Moses also, who, in the days of his childhood, learned, through the instructions given him by his mother, the blessings God had promised to Israel, and when he came to years, "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." But, in the case of Ruth, it does not seem that she had any special promise to go with, that she herself should be received into the family of God; but, no doubt, she had learned some truth equivalent to that word, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out;" and though, as to her own feelings, it might seem a venture, yet she was received into the family; and the Psalmist says, "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy;" and, when he says "fear Him," he does not mean to be afraid of Him, as a slave, but in humility desiring to know and love Him, confessing sin, believing His Word, and hoping in the precious blood of the Lamb, all which springs from that teaching of the Holy Spirit which I said before is the root of all true religion.

With love, I am, your affectionate friend,

E. MORGAN.

"BUT we have this treasure in earthen vessels," &c. (2 Cor. iv. 7.) Paul illustrates the meaning of the expression "earthen vessels," and the care which God takes of them, for the sake of the treasure which they hold, by describing the experience of himself and his fellow-labourers.

A CLOSING ADDRESS TO OUR READERS.

DEAR FRIENDS,—We are again brought near to the close of another year. Soon will the fleeting hours of 1881 have passed for ever away, and we shall be another stage nearer eternity. "Thus, like the tide, our minutes roll," and we are borne along with the stream with irresistible power and rapidity. May the solemn thought suggest in the mind of each reader some suitable questions for consideration, with reference to personal matters betwixt God and the soul. Friend, you are hastening on to the goal—a never-ending state of bliss or woe—where time things will be for ever left behind, and things eternal will open to your view. Will death find you sheltered in Christ, or far from God and without hope? Many, we believe, who read these pages have been led to look to the Lamb of God by faith, and to hang their all upon Him whom God the Father hath sealed, believing that He is "able to keep that which they have committed to Him against that day." Nor shall they be disappointed, for He is kind and faithful to the weakest believer that trusts in His name.

Oh, reader, is this God thy God? If so, happy art thou. Or are you still a stranger to the way of mercy, and to the pardon, peace, and love of Christ? There is no safety but in Him, and all who are not found in Him will reap the wages of sin, and drink the cup of the wrath of God. Your dying day will soon come, and you will find your need of mercy then. Judgment will follow, and, if unsaved, you will then prove the full and terrible import of that infallible declaration, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Our desire is, that you may feel the power of the Holy Ghost in your heart, and be brought as a repenting, seeking sinner to the feet of Jesus, where none ever perished who sought His mercy, but where many seekers as vile as you have been favoured with pardoning love, through faith in His blood. Dear seeking one, your sins may burden you, and Satan may accuse and resist you, but Jesus is greater than all the hosts which may rise against you, and it is His glory to deliver those that are bound, and to ransom poor sinners from the hand of their strong enemy. May you thus look to Him in faith for righteousness and redemption, and your expectation shall not be cut off, neither shall you be ashamed of your hope.

And now, dear friends, we desire once more to thank you all for the kind sympathy and help we have received from you through another year; and, although we cannot boast of perfection in our labours, we trust that they have not been without profit to many of our readers, who, we believe, will not only cast a mantle of love over any observed deficiencies, but also seek that divine help may be given us in the work, and that it may be prospered

by the blessing of Him who has said, "My Word shall not return unto Me void." We labour for the good of our readers in general, and are not guided by the personal ideas of any who think their views and methods to be the best adapted of all for the conduct of a magazine. We seek not to please men, but God, and we desire ever to be guided by the Spirit of grace and truth. We are pleased to say that not only is the circulation of the SOWER steadily increasing, but we also receive many encouraging testimonies as to its usefulness, and we hope that another year will find us in a much better position as to our work, financially, than we have hitherto enjoyed. Ministers and Sunday-school teachers may do us much service by making both SOWER and GLEANER well known. They are very cheap, and well adapted for wide distribution; therefore, since the cost is but small, and the circulation of pure literature so desirable, in order that the streams of vice and error may be met by the Word and truth of God, we hope that all who desire the good of souls and the glory of God will try and render us substantial help.

And now, reader, in closing the present volume, we sincerely pray that the blessing of our covenant God may be thy portion and joy for ever.

THE EDITOR.

END OF VOLUME III., NEW SERIES.