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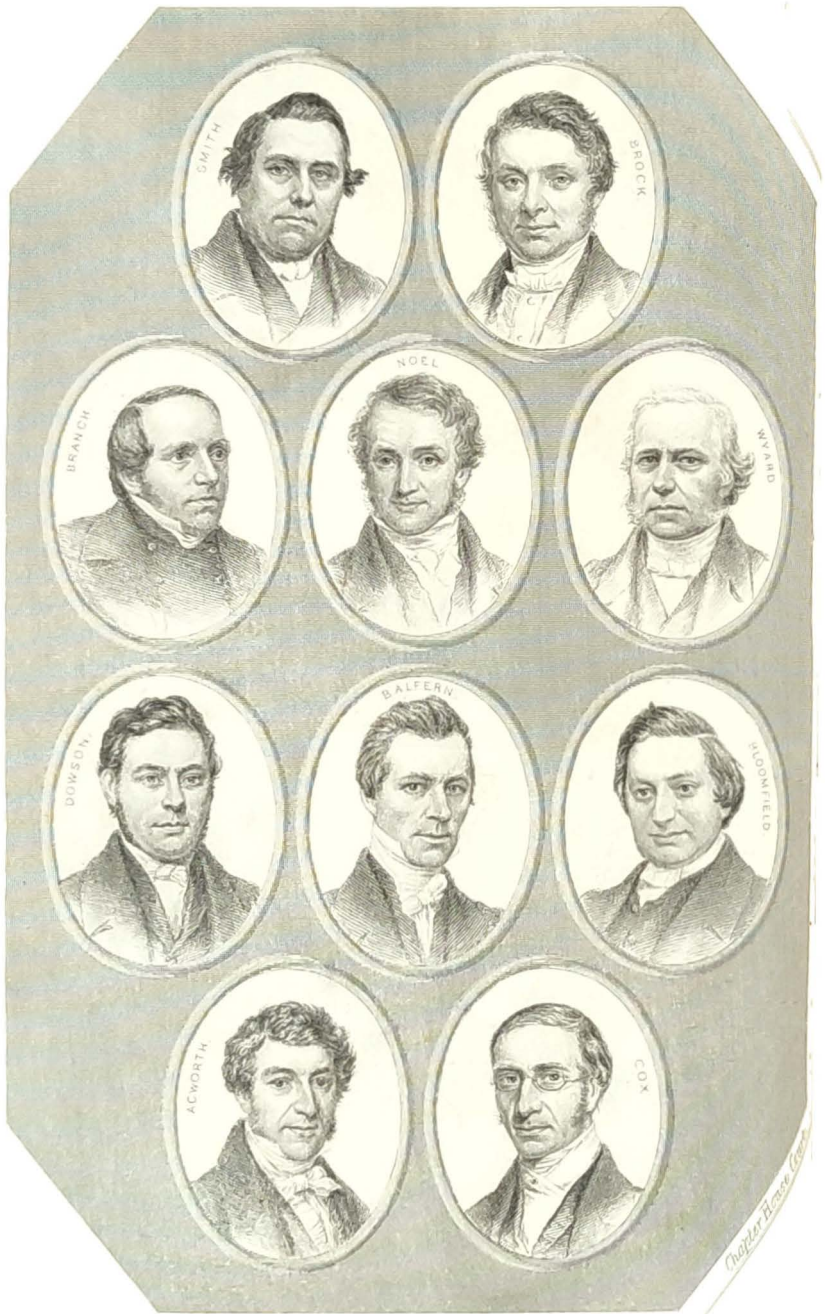
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For

THE
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AN

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AND

CHRONICLE OF THE CHURCHES ;

FROM

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THE
BAPTIST MESSENGER,
ETC.

GRACE FOR THE GUILTY.

BY THE REV. C. E. SPURGEON.

*Minister of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.**

"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee."—ISAIAH xliiv. 22.

THIS declaration was not made to a pious and praying people, who kept near their God, but was spoken to idolatrous Israel—to those who, after having drunk from the fountain of living waters, turned aside to drink the drops that were to be found in broken cisterns. It was spoken to a people who, after that they had tasted the good things of God, and known the high privileges of his great religion, yet turned aside with the nations of the world, forsook the God of Jacob, made unto themselves graven images that were no gods, provoked the Lord to jealousy, and made him wroth against them on account of their sins. These words of wondrous mercy were not spoken to the nation of Israel while living near to God, who notwithstanding would have had sins to mourn over and to be forgiven, but they were addressed to a brutish and a foolish nation, to a harlot people, who had committed wickedness with all the gods of the heathen; to those who had offered incense on their hills to the false gods; who had made their children pass through the fire of the son of Hinnom, and burned them in Tophet; to men who were filled with abominable and loathsome sins—men who had committed the crimes of Sodom, and bowed to worship Ashtaroah, the queen of heaven. This promise was made to those who had wandered far from God; and that not because they repented, and not because they believed, but simply and entirely of the sovereign grace of God; because, having set his affection upon them, he would not turn away from them; because, having sworn unto their father Abraham that he would bless his seed for ever, he still remembered them. He forgot them not, notwithstanding "they had forgotten him days without number," but provided them a Saviour, and now sends them, by the word of his prophet, this comfortable assurance—"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee."

We will take this text as it shall open to us gradually; and, therefore, we will give you the thoughts as they come to us.

The first is, that a man's sins may be really forgiven *long before he knows it*; for it is written, "I have blotted out thy transgressions." Now, if they knew it, there would be no necessity for telling it to them. If they understood it in their hearts that their transgressions were blotted out, what need

* Notes of a Sermon preached in New Park Street Chapel, Nov. 26, 1855.

of a prophet to come and tell them that they were so? Long before a man knows that his transgressions are pardoned, God may have pardoned and blotted them out. I do not say that a man receives actual pardon in his own soul, or a sense of justification, without knowing it. I cannot believe with some, that a man may be born again without being aware of it. I know there never was a natural birth without pangs and pains; and well I am certified that there never will be a spiritual birth without some suffering and some agonies. A man is not to be born again when he is asleep; he is to know it, and know it he will at some time or other in his life—not constantly, it may be, but nevertheless he will know, even it be only for an hour, that he is a child of God. Methinks, he who never had one minute of assurance, never had faith. He who never knew himself to be a child of God, who never could say, "I believe in Jesus," never could see his sins blotted out, methinks such an one does not know what faith is. It may endure for ever so short a time; but if it be real assurance, it springs from true faith, and the man shall be saved. But a man may have his sins blotted out before he knows it; and they may be blotted out when he does not believe that they are, and blotted out when he is full of doubt on the point; yea, they may be pardoned, even when he cannot be persuaded that they actually are. I can tell you of persons whom in my inmost soul I believe to be the subjects of Divine grace; I can see in them the marks of God's power; he has convinced them of sin; they are humble, they are penitent, they are prayerful; they feel their guilt, they confess it; and yet have a kind of haziness about their views of atonement, and from this arises great darkness of spirit. They cannot see the plan of salvation, and because they cannot see the plan they do not therefore get a joyful sense of the thing itself; yet if these persons were to die now, I am well assured that, before they departed this life, God would give them such a glimpse of sunshine that all the clouds would be dissipated, and they would be able to enter heaven, singing, as they waded through the stream of Jordan,

"Christ is with me;
Christ is with me; death is nought."

He is my helper and my stay. Long ere they know it their sins are forgiven. Besides, there is a doctrine very much scandalized by professors, and cast away by many persons, but which I firmly believe in. I mean the doctrine of the eternal and complete justification of all the elect in the person of Christ Jesus. It does seem to me that when the Divine Surety paid our debts, our debts were discharged; that when he took our guilt upon his head, and suffered for us on Calvary, our sins were in that moment blotted out. Some will say, "But the sins were not in existence." No, they were not, except in the foreknowledge of God; but the foreknowing God had all those sins written in the book of his foreknowledge long before they were committed, and by the blood of Christ "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," he did for ever blot out the crimes and sins of all his covenant people; so that every one who shall be saved at last *was* justified in Christ when he died; the sins of every one that shall be saved were atoned for by Christ, though they know nothing of it until God reveals it to them, by his Spirit, in the moment when they come to put their faith on the Lord Jesus Christ. If the debt was paid, then sure enough the receipt was given; if the crime was then laid on Jesus' head, and he was then punished for it, sure then the crime did cease to be. If you say that the crime was not in existence, because it was not committed, on the other hand, I would tell you, Christ died for it before it was committed. Therefore we are quite fair in saying, that it was blotted out before it was committed. I received my pardon when I believed; but it was purchased when Christ died. I was as completely and as truly, in God's sight, justified, as I am now *in the person of Christ*; but I knew it not; it was not revealed to me; I could not rejoice in it; I could not be blessed by it; I could

not be converted by it. The blood-bought pardon could not absolve me till I had a sense of it; the pardon of Christ could not redeem me from the prison of sin, until I knew about it; but yet it was virtually given. When the ransom price was paid the freedom was really secured; though the slave was still scared, and branded, and chained to his oar, he was a purchased man, and would one day receive his liberty. Oh! are not your hearts gladdened, and do not some of your eyes glisten? Though you do not know you are pardoned, it may be true that your sins are blotted out, though you do not know that you have been justified, it may be true that you are "accepted in the beloved." "Oh!" says one, "if I thought there were a hope or even a chance of such a thing for me, I would go to Jesus, though my sins had like a mountain rose. Go, then, poor sinner; and if thou canst not see thy pardon there—if thou canst not see the hand-writing of ordinances that was against thee nailed to his cross, come back and say that I speak not the truth. There have been many sinners who went to Christ full of sin; but there never was one who came back from him as he went. Many have gone to him guilty; but none have been turned away from his door unforgiven. "He blots out like a cloud their transgressions, and like a thick cloud their sins."

A man may have his sins forgiven, then, before he knows it; and, as we now remark, a true Christian, who has come to the Lord Jesus, has his sins blotted out *even when he does not believe they are*. The devil can make you believe anything. No lawyer is equal to him, though some lawyers have most undoubtedly learned a few lessons at his hands; for he can not only make what is half the truth appear the whole truth, but he can take a lie and gild it with truth. And in proof of that, how often does he persuade a truly justified man that he is not justified! It often comes to pass, that when God has pardoned a poor sinner, the devil will come to him, and tell him that he is not pardoned; and so much logic will he use with him, that he will make him believe that he is not pardoned, notwithstanding that he is. Though every crime of that man has been long ago forgiven, though all his iniquities have been cast into the depths of the sea, Satan will agitate his conscience, stir up his soul, bind him with unbelief, cast gravel-stones into his food, cause him to eat bitterness and drink wormwood, as Jeremiah has said, until the man will not only deny that he has ever tasted that the Lord is gracious, but will be in such despair that he will fancy it is not possible that he ever can be saved. Satan will persuade a justified man that he is yet "in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity." Are there not some of you who have had many pleasant days, many sweet hours of fellowship with Christ, but in some dark moment the thought crossed you that you might be a hypocrite, after all; and from that hour you have not been able to come near to him once, and though you have trusted under the *shadow* of his wings, yet you have not seen the *light* of his countenance. Well, but let me tell thee, brother, the pardon is not revoked because it is concealed from view;—the pardon is as good when thou dost not see it as when thou dost see it. A pardon is a pardon; and though the condemned criminal does not see the pardon, it is unrevoked. God takes care of our pardon for us; he does not put it into our hands, for Satan might take it away; he lets us have a copy of it to read—and though Satan steals the copy, he cannot get the original; that is safe enough in the archives of heaven. Up there, in the ark of God, where he keepeth the deeds of the universe—there he preserves the great writings of the pardon of our sins. Ay, though I may doubt whether I am pardoned, if I really am so, I am so; and I ought not so much to depend upon my own frames and feelings as upon this. God hath said to me once, "I have blotted out thy sins;" he hath said it to me twice—I read it in his Word; and though Satan says they are not removed, I believe they are, and I will stand fast by it, because God saith, "I have blotted out thy sins."

Another remark is, that *nothing can so strongly lead a man to come to God as a*

sense of pardoned sin. "I have blotted, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." Enthusiastic divines have thought that men were to be brought to virtue by the hissings of the boiling cauldron; they have imagined that by beating a bell-drum in the ears of men, they should make them believe the Gospel—that by the terrific sights and sounds of Sinai's mountain, they should drive men to Calvary. They have preached perpetually, "Do this, and thou art damned." In their preaching, there preponderates a voice horrible and terrifying; if you listened to them you might think you sat near the mouth of the pit, and heard the "dismal groans and sullen moans," and all the shrieks of the tortured ones in perdition. Men think that by these means sinners will be brought to the Saviour. They, however, in my opinion, think wrongly: men are frightened into hell, but not into heaven. Men are sometimes driven to Sinai by powerful preaching. Far be it from us to condemn the use of the law, for "the law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ;" but if you want to get a man to Christ, the best way is to bring Christ to the man. It is not by preaching law and terrors that men are made to love God.

"Law and terrors do but harden,
All the while they work alone;
But a sense or blood-bought pardon,
Soon dissolves a heart of stone."

I preach sometimes the terrors of the law, because we are told that, "knowing the terrors of the law, we persuade men;" but I do it with another view, viz., to bring them to a sense of their sins. The way to bring men to Jesus, to give them peace, to give them joy, to give them salvation through Christ, is by God the Spirit's assistance to preach Christ—to preach a full, free, perfect pardon. Oh! how little there is of preaching Jesus Christ. We do not preach enough about his glorious name. There are dry doctrines; but there is not the unction of the Holy One revealing the fulness and preciousness of the Lord Jesus. There is plenty of the "Do this and live," but not enough of the "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved!" Oh! sweet Jesus, have not some of thy disciples forgotten thee? Have not some of thy preachers almost lost the sound of thy glorious name, and scarce know its blest pronunciation? Send us once again, we pray thee, the Spirit of love and of a sound mind, that we may preach more fully Jesus Christ our Lord!

But now, my friends, let me ask you earnestly: When did you ever feel, under a sense of sin, the most inclination to come to a Saviour? I think you will reply at once, when you felt that there was hope for you, and that he had blotted out your sins. No man will come to Jesus while he thinks hardly of Jesus; but when he has sweet thoughts of him, then will he come. You have no doubt heard the old figure, borrowed from John Bunyan, of a certain army that was inside a city, and they were attacked by another host. The king outside said, "Give up the city directly, or I'll hang every man of you." "Nay," said they, "we will fight to the death, and we will never give up." "I will burn your city," said he, "and utterly destroy it, and raze it to the ground, and slay your mothers and children, and utterly out off the race and exterminate you." "Ah!" said they, "then we will fight till we die, and shed our blood against you; we will never open the doors." Seeing that threats were of no avail he sent another message: "If you will only open your gates and come out to me, I will let you go away bag and baggage; I will give you all your lives and liberty; and what is more, I will let you have your lands again on a small tribute, and you shall be my servants and friends for ever!" "Straightway," says John Bunyan, "they unbarred the gates, and they came tumbling out to the monarch directly." That is the way by the Spirit's help, to get a sinner to come in penitence to Jesus, to tell him this:—"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." Come along

beloved! Why, are you afraid of Jesus? He says, "Return unto me; I have redeemed thee." Come along, brother, to the Lord Jesus, if thou art a sinner. I speak to that one who feels himself a lost and guilty one. Come with me to Jesus, for he has blotted out thy transgressions as a cloud, and as a thick cloud thy sins; he has redeemed you. "I dare not come in; he will frown." Oh! come and try him. He says he has forgiven you! Come you in at the door, and you will find it true that Christ has forgiven you. Methinks I see you standing and looking at yourself, and saying, "Oh! was I not worse than ten thousand fools to be afraid to come in—to be afraid to trust him, when he had pardoned me beforehand? Was I not worse than ignorant, to stand back from my best friend, as if he had been a lion—to start away from the dear Jesus who had purchased my ransom, as if he were my foe. One would think, dear friends, when you are so loth to come to Christ, that you were coming to receive condemnation instead of coming to be saved. Men come unwillingly to execution; and must they come as unwillingly to Christ as they do to the slaughter? You think him some angry judge. You have bad ideas of my sweet Jesus, or else you would not have us continually crying, "Return unto me," "Return unto me;" but you would so love him and rejoice in him that you would feel the greatest pleasure in the world in coming to him.*

THE TRUE LIGHT.

BY JAMES SMITH, CHELTENHAM.

"A Light to lighten the Gentiles."—LUKE ii. 32.

THE whole world once had the knowledge of God, but as the Gentiles did not like to retain the knowledge of God, God gave them over to a mind void of judgment, and so they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened, Rom. i. 19—32. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and God gave them up. Then they went on in darkness, until at length they sat down in darkness, and in the shadow of death. This was their condition for ages. It was called "the times of their ignorance." They were ignorant of the true nature of God, strangers to the right rule of duty, sold under sin, in captivity to Satan, laden with iniquity, and their abodes were the habitations of cruelty. They personified lust, and worshipped it. They imprisoned truth, and lost it. Ignorance, guilt, misery, and cruelty, were the representatives of their condition. They were without hope, and without God in the world. Being godless, they were hopeless; being hopeless, they were miserable; being miserable, they were cruel. Such was the state of our forefathers, and such would have been our state but for the free, sovereign, and unremitted grace of God. God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did seek after God; but they were all gone out of the way; they were together become abominable; there were none that did good—no, not one. First, he separated the Jews for himself, as his chosen and privileged people. He redeemed them from Egypt, led them through the wilderness, and settled them in the land of Canaan. He adopted them as his children; placed the Shechinah, his glory-cloud, among them; gave them his covenants and his law, the sanctuary and the temple and their services, with his exceeding great and precious promises. One of these promises was, that of a Saviour, a Divine Saviour. One who should be "a light to lighten the Gen-

* Some alarm was here occasioned by the gas-lights suddenly going out. After the temporary confusion had subsided, Mr. Spurgeon proceeded to address the large and excited auditory on a different subject, with a verbatim report of which we have been furnished. This will be given in a future Number.

tiles," while he was "the glory of his people Israel." During all this time, for about the space of fifteen hundred years, "he suffered all nations to walk in their own ways." He left them to themselves to do just as they would, and when the whole world was corrupt before God, when the earth was filled with violence, when human nature was at the very worst, then he sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world, through him, might be saved. When all was darkness, gross darkness, then the Sun of Righteousness arose, with healing in his wings. Then Jesus came, as "a light to lighten the Gentiles;" then the Son of God appeared, and his glory was, that he was "full of grace and truth."

Jesus is the true light. Error is darkness, truth is light, and Jesus is the truth. All saving truth is in Jesus, and proceeds from Jesus. "The light of the knowledge of the glory of God" is in the person of Jesus Christ. His people are lamps, or candles, but he is the grand luminary. They throw a faint light upon a small circle, but he lighteneth the world. The true knowledge of God, the correct state of man, our danger in consequence of sin, the way of escape from the wrath to come, the path of peace, and the medium of acceptance with God, are only revealed by Jesus Christ. In his light alone can we see how God can be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly. In his light alone can we discover how the filthy sinner can be made clean, the guilty pronounced righteous, and the degraded be raised to glory, honour, and immortality. This light shines in every direction, it discovers to us heaven with all its glories, hell with all its horrors, time and the design of its trials, eternity and the results of free grace. May the light of truth shine more and more into my heart, to humble me; on the sacred page, to encourage me; in my trying path, to stimulate me; in my heavenly home, to attract me. In the light of Jesus may I see light, and so rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Jesus is the true light. Darkness is sin and guilt, light is pardon and peace. In the light of Jesus I see the horrid nature of sin, and abhor it; the terrible consequences of guilt, and seek to be delivered from it. When Jesus enlightens my mind, I perceive that God hath forgiven me all trespasses, and delivered me from all condemnation. I feel that I am at peace with God, and that God is at peace with me. Doubt vanishes, slavish fears depart, confidence springs up, and I have joy and peace in believing. Truly this light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is to see God reconciled to us in Jesus, and loving us with an everlasting love. Now, if I look up to heaven, I see it is my Father's house; if I look at death, I see it is my Father's servant, sent to fetch his child home; if I look at the grave, I see it is a quiet resting-place for the poor, diseased, worn-out body, where it will repose until the resurrection morning; if I look forward into eternity, it is the lifetime of my happiness, and that which perfects and perpetuates my soul's joys.

Jesus is the true light. Darkness is impurity, light is holiness and love. Human nature is impure, it is rotten at the heart's core. While in the dark it is not discovered, consequently it is not deplored. But when light, celestial light, shines, we see our defilement, loathe our pollution, and seek freedom from our filthiness; and the light that discovers the disease, reveals the remedy. The light that shows me that I am a sinner, leads me to the Saviour; for Jesus, like nature's sun, is only seen in his own light. Blessed, for ever blessed, be the day, when this light shone into my soul, discovered to me my filthiness, and led me to the open fountain, and became a means of my cleansing. Now I love purity; I enjoy purity; I long for perfect purity; and, blessed be God, I shall enjoy perfect purity too. In the land where this luminary shines in all his splendour, all is pure. There are no spots on this sun, and there are no spots on those on whom this sun in perfection shines; for as the light of nature's sun chases away night's darkness, and introduces perfect day, so will this sun of righteousness; and in a little time all on whom he now shines will be "without fault before the throne of God."

Jesus is the true light. Darkness is enmity and cruelty; light is love and sympathy. Man, by nature, is enmity against God, and cruel to his fellow man. While in our natural condition we are led captive by the devil, who is the personification of enmity, at his will, and are influenced by the prince of the power of the air, the most cruel of all God's creatures, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. But when Jesus shone upon us, our enmity was subdued, and we loved God because he first loved us; the cruelty of our natural disposition was destroyed, and we felt a love to all mankind. Just in proportion as this light shines upon us with strength and clearness do we love and delight in God; and just in the same proportion do we sympathize with and strive to benefit our fellow man. The light that enlightens the Gentiles, always disperses ignorance, guilt, misery, and cruelty; and produces knowledge, peace, purity, and love. Light of life, shine with clearness and power into every reader's heart!

Reader, has Jesus shone upon you at all? Have you discovered your true state and condition, as revealed in God's most holy word? and have you fled for refuge to the cross of the Son of God? Do you hate and abhor sin, because it is filthy and abominable? and do you desire and pant for holiness, because it is pure and beautiful? You were in the dark once, if you are not now. Can you look back and see that you were once in darkness? Can you contrast the past with the present, and so conclude that you are now light in the Lord? Can you say with John, in reference to your own state and experience, "The darkness is past, and the true light now shineth?" Is earth to you a dark place, and do you look upon heaven as the land of light? If so, you daily seek grace to make "you meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light." Blessed, for ever blessed be the Lord, that we ever enjoyed this holy light, and that we have the prospect of a period before us when "the sun shall be no more our light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto us; but the Lord shall be our everlasting light, and our God our glory. Our sun shall no more go down, neither shall our moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be our everlasting light, and the days of our mourning shall be ended."

Dec. 4, 1855.

THE LOT OF MANASSEH.

BY THE REV. J. JENKINSON, OF OAKHAM.

Now to the one half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given possessions in Bashan: but unto the other half thereof gave Joshua among their brethren on this side Jordan westward. And when Joshua sent them away also unto their tents, then he blessed them."—*JOSHUA* xxii. 7.

The predictions of God are always verified by fact; the promises of God are always fulfilled in the experience of his saints. "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward, and eastward and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever" (*Gen. xiii. 14, 15*), was the address of the Most High to Abram, and subsequently to Jacob too (*Gen. xxviii. 4—13*); and though more than four hundred years rolled past ere this promise was fulfilled, at the appointed time it was literally accomplished; for the inspired historian expressly states, that "the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it and dwelt therein. There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel: all came to pass." (*Josh. xxi. 43—45*.)

The varied allotments of the several tribes present to us no small amount of profitable instruction; but, passing by the others, we purpose to restrict ourselves to a special notice of the lot of Manasseh. This, unlike all the rest, was on both sides of the Jordan, Josh. xxii. 7. Reuben and Gad had their portion wholly on the east side of that river; Simeon, Judah, and the others had theirs wholly on the west of it; but the lot of Manasseh was on both sides. And as this arrangement obtained the special sanction and approval of Jehovah, we shall scarcely err in regarding it as typical of the inheritance and experience of the followers of Christ. The world is the wilderness in which, for a time, we are encamping; heaven is the Canaan which we have in prospect; death is the Jordan which we have to cross to reach that land of promise. And our lot, like that of Manasseh, is on both sides of the river.

1. *The Church of Christ is on both sides of the Jordan.*—

“One family we dwell in Him;
 One Church above, beneath;
 Though now divided by the stream,
 The narrow stream of death,
 One army of the living God,
 To His command we bow;
 Part of the host has crossed the flood,
 And part is crossing now.”

And this location of the Church shows the grace and wisdom of its Head. Had all Christians been left on earth until the second advent of their Lord, no trophies of his triumph would have now encircled him in heaven, while here his servants would have had their conflicts and their trials protracted through centuries instead of years. On the other hand, had all been taken to himself as soon as they were born again, none would have been left to preach his Gospel to the perishing, or to raise his standard in the world. But by stationing part on the wilderness side of the Jordan, and part in Canaan, every desirable end is assured and realised.

2. *Our Christian friends are on both sides of the river.*—Many of them have completed their course, and heard the soul-enrapturing “Well done;” and to know that they are now in glory, tends to raise our thoughts and aspirations more frequently above, and to divest death of no small portion of its bitterness. Yet at times we feel their loss so painfully as to forget that not a few whose removal we should perhaps equally deplore, are still left as our associates in the wilderness below.

3. *Our salvation is on both sides of the Jordan.*—Its full realization, its unmingled sweetness, are unquestionably enjoyed only in heaven. It is there alone that we shall be entirely saved from depravity and sin. Yet it is a *present* salvation too. “He *hath* saved us,” (2 Tim. i. 9). “He *hath* delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son” (Col. i. 13). And unless we are thus saved on earth, we have no reason to expect we shall be saved in Heaven; for the salvation of Christ is salvation in both worlds.

4. *Our home is on both sides of the Jordan.*—Our best home, our only fully-happy home is in our Father’s house above. Like patriarchs and prophets we therefore desire that “better country” to which so many of our friends have gone. And when we feel that, to us, “Dying will be but going home,” we are ready to exclaim, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” “Come, Lord Jesus, yea, come quickly!” But we have a home in the wilderness also. None more earnestly longed for heaven than Paul; none more habitually stood prepared to depart to it than he; yet he speaks of being “at home in the body.” (2 Cor. v. 6.) The house of God, and the Church of Christ, are also homes provided for us on the earth. Be it ours to do all we can to render each of these homes a happy and attractive one.

5. *Our affections and desires are on both sides of the Jordan.*—Every Christian has his affection in some measure set on things above; and thither his warmest wishes habitually tend. But, alas! how much of his love, and how many of his desires are “of the earth, earthy.” Yet all the desires and affection we cherish towards things below are not unholy. Desire of life, and health, and reputation, and secular success, when subordinated to the will of God, and concern for his glory, are far from being wrong; while love to the Church of Christ and desire of its prosperity, as well as of our individual steadfastness and spiritual advancement, are unquestionably right.

6. *Our employments are on both sides of the Jordan.*—Heaven is emphatically a world of activity as well as of devotion. The servants of God there “serve him day and night in his temple;” and if we are privileged to join them, we must there serve him too. But we have also our work on earth to do; work which neither angels of light nor glorified spirits can perform. We are now serving our apprenticeship to the best of Masters; and if we are slothful or disobedient servants here, we have no ground to expect that he will raise us to higher employment in the world above.

7. *Our wants are on both sides of the Jordan.*—We want salvation in all its fulness; a perfect, boundless, exhaustless, everlasting good beyond the grave; but previous and preparatory to this we want food and raiment for our bodies, and peace and pardon, grace and guidance, help and deliverance for our souls. And an infinitely wise and ever-loving Father not only knows what we require, but has promised to “supply all our need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” This leads us to observe that,

8. *The promises which God has given us relate to both sides of the Jordan.*—Not only has our gracious Saviour assured us that we shall be eternally with him to behold his glory, and that we shall there obtain fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore; but he has also promised that bread shall be given us, and water shall be sure; that he will guide us with his eye, protect us by his power, and give to us all things pertaining to life and godliness.

9. *Our prospects are on both sides of the river.*—How near we are to the Jordan, or how far distant from it, we cannot ascertain; but whether our future pilgrimage be short or lengthened, it requires not the gift of prophecy to foresee that it will bring us to fresh trials and supports, fresh temptations and deliverances. We shall still find the world no friend to grace; other foes will molest us; other duties will call upon us to discharge them, and other failures fill us with regret. Yet, amidst all this, we have the prospect of the continued presence and grace of him who has said, “I will never fail thee nor forsake thee.” And then, O what bright and glowing prospects beyond the Jordan present themselves to our enraptured gaze! Yet the reality infinitely exceeds the vision: for eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, nor the heart of man ever imagined or anticipated the joys which God has prepared for them that love him.

10. *Our blessedness is on both sides of the river.*—Every believer is entitled to say, “The Lord is the portion of my inheritance,” (Psalm xvi. 5; see also Lamen. iii. 24); and he is their portion in the present world, as well as in that which is to come. Therefore in both they are, and must be blessed. That all are blessed who have entered through the gates into the city none will question. And true religion ensures a present blessedness as really as a future one. “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven.” “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness,” &c., &c., &c.

Let us cherish deep and fervent gratitude for the munificent provision he has made for the supply of our wants on *this* side the Jordan. He has *here* given us Bashan with its plenty (Josh. xvii. 1); Gilcad with its balm; and, above all, Golan (Josh. xx. 8), as a city of refuge from the avenger of blood; a shelter from every storm, and from every foe; for such is Christ to all who have fled to him for safety (Heb. vi. 18). He has brought part of the riches of Canaan to the wilderness side of the Jordan (Josh. xxii. 8); and has ensured to us vic-

tory over all our adversaries (Josh. xvii. 18). Grateful for these blessings, and relying on this assurance, let us be obedient to his will (Josh. xxii. 5); and stand prepared to pass over to rejoin our brethren who have crossed the flood, whenever our wilderness probation shall be ended.

December 5.

FRUITLESS TOIL; OR, A WORD TO THE GAY, THE GUILTY,
AND THE WISE.

BY THE REV. W. P. BALFERN, AUTHOR OF "GLIMPSES OF JESUS."

"I go a fishing, said Peter," &c. &c.—John xxi, 3, 4, 5, 6.

"Alas, for men! who hath no sense
Of gratefulness, or confidence,
But still rejects and raves;
That all God's love can hardly win
One soul from taking pride in sin,
And pleasure over graves."

"What is the dry and miscarrying hope of all them who are not in Christ, hut confusion and wind? Oh, how pitifully and miserably are the children of this world beguiled, whose wine cometh borne to them water, and their gold brass and tin! And what wonder that hopes builded upon sand should fall and sink! It would be good for us all to abandon the forlorn, and blasted and withered hope, which we have had in the creature; and let us henceforth come and drink water out of our own well, even the fountain of living waters, and build our hope upon Christ our Rock. But, alas! that that natural love which we have to this borrowed home that we are born in, and that this clay city, the vain earth, should have the largest share of our heart! Our poor, lean, and empty dreams of confidence in something besides God, are no further excursive than up and down the naughty and feckless creatures. God may say of us as he said (Amos vi. 13), "Ye rejoice in a thing of nought." Surely we spin our spider's web with pain, and build our rotten and tottering house upon a lie, and falsehood and vanity."—RUTHERFORD.

THIS world is a place of fruitless toil; for men are not willing to be instructed. Like the disciples of old, they toil over the sea of life in the dark, fishing for happiness as they go, but generally in vain. Being unwilling to profit by the wisdom of those who have toiled over the sea before them, their net is mostly found on the *wrong* side of the vessel, while they are quite ready to throw the blame of their numerous failures on anything and everybody rather than of themselves. Let us, however, endeavour to gather from the interesting narrative above recorded, those instructions which it is calculated to impart, and which, through the divine blessing, may save us from some of those great mistakes which have transformed the lives of many into one scene of disappointment and sorrow. We will notice the fruitless toil, the divine Teacher, and the miraculous draught.

THE FRUITLESS TOIL. "*I go a fishing,*" said Peter. And, "come," says the jovial man to his boon companions, "Come, let us go and have some sport to-night. Away with melancholy; life is the time to be happy and gay;" and so away they go to fish for happiness upon the sea of worldly pleasure. The night is dark, but their minds are darker; they have heard that this sea has its rocks, and it is liable to storms, and that many a goodly ship has been wrecked there, but what care they; fish they will, and so they toil all night. And when the morning comes, what have they taken? Answer, ye devotees of pleasure; let conscience speak; must not your reply be that of the disciples of old, "We have toiled all night and taken nothing;" or worse, that the dog-fish of weariness and a guilty conscience is your only reward.

And "I go a fishing," says another. "Come, friends." Alas! one sinner makes many. Their destination? the sea of strong drink, and what result? Answer, ye daring voyagers, ye storm-tossed weary labourers who have hitherto escaped its boiling waves; withered and blasted, it is true,—scarce men, yet speak

You will not ; then God *shall* ; hear what he says your toil *shall* bring : the sea can yield no more. " Who hath woe ? who hath sorrow ? who hath contentions ? who hath babblings ? who hath wounds without cause ? who hath redness of eyes ? They that tarry long at the wine ; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red ; when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it *biteth like a serpent* and *stingeth like an adder*." And is it for this serpent you will toil all night ? that it may sting thee to eternal death, and destroy thee in body and soul ? And is it to catch *this*, that wife and child, home and friends, are forsaken ? can it be ? is it possible ? what dreadful infatuation is this ? O, temerous voyager, flee from this dreadful sea ; thy little bark, once upset, thou art lost, for ever lost ! O, open thine eyes, look around thee ; observe how swift the eddying current flows toward yonder rocks—that dread abyss ! See drifting all around thy course the wrecks of many a gallant vessel which, like thy own, once proudly danced o'er the surging waves, buoyant with life, and health, and joy, but now, alas ! no longer seen. O, daring fisherman, take heed ! Call now on God for help ! nor trust thyself upon the waves of this mad sea again.

And who is that with wan, pale face, and anxious look— a burden, too, tied to his back. He sighs, and weeps, and labours on. Anon ! he stops and tries to shake his burden off, then starts afresh ; but all in vain. The sea of error is his goal ; and, see, he has arrived ; and mark how hard he toils to fish up mercy from the secret deeps of that dark, gloomy, ever-heaving sea. How anxiously he strives, all through his dismal night of-sorrow, for pardon and peace of conscience—rest. Alas ! he finds them not. Numbers, with him, cast in their nets. The sea is deep, but yields them naught. Poor man, his constant draught is disappointment. He watches other boats, and follows in their wake ; they are strong and confident, and *seem* to catch all they require ; but he takes naught. Still from his lips the doleful words oft fall, " I've toiled all night and taken nothing." Yet, o'er the waters of that troubled sea, the voice of mercy rolls ; " believe, and peace is yours." It cannot be, he thinks,—believe ! what, leave off my work ; do nothing ! Have all I want for nothing ! what idle words come on the breeze ! And so he bends his burdened back down to his our. " I will have peace, I *must* have peace," he says, while from his eyes the tears roll down. Poor man, the sea of error cannot yield thee aught to feed thy soul.

And mark yon toiling missionary as he stands weeping in the midst of that degraded band of heathens ; why does he weep ? He has laboured these many years, and taken nothing. It has been a long, sad night of toil ; no solitary star of hope has cheered him ; not one of those encompassed by his toil and prayer has bowed to the sceptre of the Prince of Peace, or opened his hard heart to welcome his embrace. And why this failure ? He thought, the people being so depraved, he had better educate them first—create a moral sense—and *then* make known to them the joyful tidings of a Saviour's death ; and hence this disappointment.

How trying to the mind is fruitless toil ; but how needful is it to show us our faults, and prepare us to receive the blessing of the Lord when it comes.

THE DIVINE TEACHER. " *But, when the morning was come, Jesus stood by the shore.*"—It is ever morning when Jesus visita his disciples. However dark the night, when he appears, the light gets through the clouds, and the morning breaks. O what a bright morning broke upon the dark night of human sorrow at the Incarnation, when Jesus robed himself in frailty, and for the first time placed his foot upon the shores of this guilty, wrecked, and storm-tossed world ! And O, what a bright morning will burst upon the vision of the perfected just, when standing upon that sea of glass, which John saw in apocalyptic vision, they beheld their glorified Lord ; when, the full fruition of their hopes being realized, their sun shall no more go down, the days of their sorrow having for ever passed away.

"*He stood upon the shore.*"—He was not far from them. And, ye toiling ones who have long been fishing for happiness upon the troubled sea of worldly gain and pleasure, know that he who can instruct you how to take the prize is not far from you; hear his voice, as he expostulates with you; "wherefore, saith he, do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."

"*But the disciples knew him not.*"—Their greatest friend was unknown to them. And be assured of this ye sons of fruitless toil, although the world may smile upon the labour of your hands, and praise your deeds, and laud your names, as yet your best friend is to you unknown.

But though the disciples knew him not, he knew them. The night was not too dark for him to see them, and mark their toil. And thus, even now, his omniscient eye surveys the sea of life. Each little bark he beholds, in which his disciples ride, and struggle hard with many a sigh and tear to take enough to meet their wants, until the voyage being over they reach the haven of their hopes.

"*And he stood upon the shore, and, he said Children, have ye any meat?*"—And thus from the distant shores of eternity speaks the Great Teacher now, through his truth, and to each anxious labourer on the sea of life he puts this question, "Have ye any meat?" Answer ye, *aged* men who many years have toiled 'mid stormy seas, to fill the ship with this world's merchandize, your only aim; say, have ye any meat? what, has the soul been starved! is there no crumb on board to feed a better hope when storms and tempests come? what must you answer, "no!" O shame! How long shall folly claim thy hoary locks and fruitless toil, hold fast thy withered form, point thoughtless youth to thee his patron, while death stands by to snatch thee from thy oar, and hell impatient waits and opens wide her mouth to take thee in.

To you, *young man*, no less the Saviour speaks. Your boat is gay,—the sea of pleasure bright,—your sails well spread to catch the gale prosperity now sends. And what have you? Come trifer, speak! God puts the question; you will not answer. You *must* some day? better speak now; confess the truth. There is much display; and is that all? what saith the *soul*? Your angling rod, your silver line, and silken nets, have taken naught—have really brought no satisfaction home. The mind still craves for that you cannot take, with all your sails outspread, and nets employed. And so from *you* a negative must come,—"I have no food."

And thou, too, ancient man, with stooping gait and thoughtful mien,—and boat well-laden too with ancient "saws and modern instances,"—must you confess at this late hour, your cargo emptiness,—no meat! a lot of doubts fished from the abysses of scepticism, which now you doubt! rich dainty food, O flourishing condition, wise man! And can it be, O sage philosopher, past now thy threescore years and ten—that with thy nets of metaphysic lore all logically devised, and all thy toil, oft faint and weary, to drag them through the sea of speculation, they bring thee this result—that now the eye is dim—the ears are nearly closed—and o'er the sky dark clouds appear, while in the dim uncertain distance looms the lea-shore death—in answer to the question put by lips infallible if thou hast aught on board to meet thy wants just now, must even *you* reply, "I have no meat; I know not whence I come, or whither I go." Alas! poor man, and is this all that we can write upon thy coffin lid,—hast thou^{so} laboured that if truth wrote thy epitaph it must needs stand thus:

"Here lies a learned fool, who toiled
All through his life to catch a negative,
And have the bliss of dying in the dark."

THE MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT. "*And Jesus said, cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast, therefore, and now they were not*

able to draw it for the multitude of fishes."—See what faith in the words of Christ will do. They had toiled all night in their own way and taken nothing; while a few moments' labour, in accordance with the instructions of Christ, and lo! the net breaks. And when Jesus speaks to the guilty and self-condemned sinner, tells him what to do, and gives him power to do it, O what a change transpires; and how richly is he blessed; and what a shoal of blessings come pouring into the soul, until the man so favoured is compelled to exclaim, Lord, it is enough! and his little bark is liable to be wrecked, not upon the rocks of despair, but of over much joy. Then, indeed, is fulfilled the gracious declaration, "In that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee, though thou wast angry with me; thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me." And the man so favoured exclaims, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels." And, when Jesus teaches his servants how to throw in the gospel-net, how great is their success! And how speedily do those who have laboured for happiness in vain reach the spring-head of bliss when made willing to take him for their guide.

"Then come all ye weary
And ye heavy laden,
Lend a glad ear to your Saviour's call;
Fearing or grieving
Yet humbly believing,
Rest, rest to your souls he'll freely give all.

How easy his yoke is!
How light is his burden!
But what he suffered no language can tell;
His grief in the garden,
To purchase our pardon,
His pangs on the cross to save us from hell."

From the whole we may learn, that all our efforts in reference to this world and that which is to come, without the presence and blessing of Christ, will only issue in disappointment and sorrow; at the same time that our past failures need not unduly discourage us if they do but lead us to look more simply and exclusively to him who is ever ready to instruct and bless his people, and whose word is sufficient to insure the success of every enterprise. And while the fruitless toil of the past may well humble us, it should also admonish us, and lead us not to look to ourselves or our circumstances, not to speculate but obey him who has said, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."

"Return, return!
Poor, long-lost wanderer, home!
With all thy bitter tears,
Thy heavy burdens, come!
As thou art, all sin and pain,
Fear not to implore in vain,
See, the Father comes to meet thee,
Points to mercy's open door,
Words of life and promise greet thee,
Oh, return, and weep no more!

Return, return!
From all thy crooked ways;
Jesus will save the lost,
The fallen he can raise.
Look to him, who beckons thee,
From the cross so lovingly,
See his gracious arms extended,
Fear not to seek shelter there,
Where no grief is unbefriended,
Where no sinner need despair.

Return, return!
From all thy wanderings, home!
From vanity and toil,
To rest and substance, come!
Come to truth from error's night,
Come from darkness unto light,
Come from death to life undying,
From a fallen earth to heaven,—
Now on Jesus's grace relying,
Haste to take what God has given!"

Hammersmith, Dec. 7,

BIBLE APOLOGUES, AND THEIR APPLICATION.

BY THE REV. JOHN COX, LATE OF WOOLWICH.

No. I.—THE MOST ANCIENT AND FRUITFUL FABLE.

APOLOGUES and fables have, in all ages, been a familiar means of instruction. Most persons can look back to childhood and remember Æsop and the well-known pictures in the spelling-book. Some of the morals appended were useful, and may have had a beneficial influence. Others were selfish, and calculated to lead the mind astray. The Bible sanctions this method of instruction, and the apologues, parables, and fables found in God's Word are not only the best as regards their construction, but incomparably the most useful in their application. They teach holiness in *principle*, as well as call for morality of conduct, and base both upon a right foundation.

The most ancient fable in existence is found in Judges ix. 8—15. It was uttered ages before Æsop, or any poets whose writings are now extant were born. The author of this striking apologue was Jotham, the son of Gideon, one of the judges of Israel. There was a sad mixture in Gideon's character, and the consequences of his misconduct brought fearful miseries on his posterity. He was a valiant man, a man of faith and prayer, one whom God honoured and used as an instrument of great good to Israel. But after all his victories and honours he fell into idolatrous practices; all Israel became involved in the sin; and it is added, "which thing became a snare unto Gideon and to his house." Judges viii. 27. Gideon had a numerous family of seventy sons, "for he had many wives." Besides these, he had another son, named Abimelech, the son of a concubine. Gideon died at an advanced age, and his death seems to have been a signal for Israel to plunge into the gross idolatry of Baalim, for which we fear Gideon had prepared the way.

Abimelech now conceived the idea of becoming king. By insidious words and flattering speeches he influenced

some persons to sanction his ambitious projects. Money was given out of the house of Baalberith, wherewith "he hired vain and light persons, who followed him." Assisted by these, and sanctioned by the men of Shechem, "he went to his father's house at Ophrah, and slew his brethren, the sons of Jerubbaal, being threescore and ten persons, upon one stone." Only Jotham, the youngest son, escaped this dreadful massacre. It has been well said, "that ambition turns the heart into steel, and makes it incapable of a conscience." This was fearfully verified in Abimelech. Nothing now seemed to stand between this wholesale fratricide and the object of his ambition; and he was accordingly proclaimed king by the men of Shechem. Thus was it proved, "that flattery, bribes, and blood are the usual stairs of the ambitious." How many, since then, have imitated him, and have

"Climbed to thrones through seas of blood,
And sat in vestures dripping wet with gore."

But amid some pause in the exultation of these murderers, a solitary voice was heard, saying,

"Hearken unto me ye men of Shechem,
that God may hearken unto you,

"The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them, and they said unto the olive tree, 'Reign thou over us.' But the olive tree said unto them, 'Should I leave my fatness, wherewith, by me, they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?'

"And the trees said to the fig tree, 'Come thou and reign over us.' But the fig tree said unto them, 'Should I forsake my sweetness and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?'

"Then said the trees unto the vine, 'Come thou and reign over us. And the vine said unto them, 'Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?'

"Then said all the trees unto the bramble, 'Come thou and reign over us.' And the bramble said unto the trees, 'If, in truth, ye account me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow; and, if not, let fire come out of the bramble and devour the cedars of Lebanon,' &c.

This language is very beautiful; the lessons contained truly valuable. Let us look at the appropriateness of this address, and endeavour to learn the truths contained therein.

The vegetable world is a wondrous proof of the power, wisdom, and goodness of God. "He made all things pleasant to the eyes and good for food." With all their researches, naturalists have, as yet, discovered but few of the beauties and excellent qualities of the inanimate creation. We should therefore welcome all God's descriptions of his own works, and earnestly listen when the language of inspiration personifies any of God's creatures, and makes them speak for themselves. To a well-tuned ear and heaven-taught heart, the heavens declare his glory; the sea roars forth his majesty, the earth sings of his goodness, and the trees murmur forth his praise.

There is something very beautiful in a tree. Its innumerable roots, its sturdy trunk, its wide-spreading branches and rustling leaves, are all worthy of attention, and should excite admiration.

The Scriptures call these noble objects, "the trees of the Lord, which he hath planted." Trees become a still more interesting study to a Christian, when he considers that they are used as emblems or figures. This is done as regards persons and principles, both good and evil, but is more generally applied to the former.

Prominent among trees as regards their beauty, utility, and emblematic application, are the three here mentioned, namely, "the olive, the fig tree, and the vine." The frequency with which these are spoken of in the Scriptures, the various ways in which they are used as illustrations by the sacred writers, and the warnings, consolations, and instructions they afford, commend them as especially worthy of consideration. But as regards the bramble, little can be said in its favour. It cannot, like the olive, furnish oil for anointing; or, like the fig tree, fruit to nourish; or, like the vine, wine to cheer; it can only boast of a *shadow* (of necessity a small one),

and talk about "fire." Yes, the bramble can *burn*, and, burning, set other things on fire, devouring even the cedars of Lebanon.

Such were the beautiful and expressive figures used by Jotham; and what are the facts connected with them? He intended to teach what was indeed true, that the people had anointed a man who was only a bramble, and were crouching under his shadow. What a king! what a kingdom! Thus have many far greater kingdoms since then, founded on rapine and injustice, appeared to the eyes of Celestial watchers. That which is sinful, however vast, cannot be truly sublime, nor really safe. Human ambition, however lofty, is a contemptible thing. A bramble is a bramble and nothing more, however large it may grow. Some lightning flash will strike it ere long, ignite its branches, and leave it a blackened memorial of its own worthlessness and mischievousness.

Now look again at Jotham's application of his fable, and watch the wheel of Providence in its slow, stately, and holy revolutions, fulfilling it to the very letter.

For three years things went on smoothly, and the guilty parties whose consciences it may be had been disturbed by Jotham's words, began to lose their fears, and to conclude that they were only the *wishes* of his own mind, and not the *words* of a retributive Providence. God is long suffering. He lets men try their own schemes for a time, and thus demonstrates their folly. The cruel ruler and his foolish subjects soon began to fall out. "God sent an evil spirit between the men of Shechem and Abimelech." Then follows a tale of treachery and blood which occupies the remainder of the chapter, the substance of which is, that these murderers helped to destroy each other. Special vengeance falls on the guilty city of Shechem; while Abimelech is first mortally wounded by a woman casting a piece of mill-stone on his vain head, and then killed at his own proud request by his armour-bearer. Thus we see the truth of God's threatenings.

We see also how evil grows out of evil; the evil of punishment out of the evil of sin.

"Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity." How terrible is divine retribution! men reap as they sow! "Woe unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him." "Hear, O earth! behold, I will bring evil upon this people, *even the fruit of their own thoughts.*" In the scenes which occurred at Shechem and Thebez we behold a miniature hell upon earth. Doubtless much of future misery will arise from mutual upbraidings, when companions in crime will be companions in misery.

A few more instructions may yet be gathered from this first and fruitful fable.

We see *the ruin which is sure to follow upon self-willedness.* A worse evil cannot befall us than to be left to our own choice; that is, to choose against God, or even without God. How often, in political and social life, do persons act without regarding the authority or counsels of God! Before we make our choice it is safe and wise to consult the oracles of truth; inquire of the Lord; and take advice of the wise and good. If we neglect to act thus, we may choose a bramble, and a burning one.

The wise and humble will shun worldly greatness. The olive, the fig tree, and the vine, refused the offered regal honour. Thus good men see the dangers of greatness, are aware of its responsibilities, and sensible of their own insufficiency. Moses and Gideon shrunk back even when called by God to be leaders of Israel. God's people wish to be good rather than great, and are more ambitious to *shine* long, than to *sparkle* much. If we are useful and fruitful where God has placed us, let us beware of quitting our sphere in order to gain some worldly advantage. To bear "fruit to God" is better than to bear rule over men. Daniel, in his chamber, was greater than Darius on his throne. Better to have the dew of

heaven on our leaf, than the fowls of heaven lodging in our branches.

But the weak and worthless often think themselves worthy to be greater than they are. How vile the moral character of many who have aspired to rule over millions. There can be no greater sign of unfitness to rule than vehement desires after it. Ignorance breeds pride, and wickedness increases evil desires. Men long for dominion, in order to have a large sphere for enjoyment, and full scope for their passions.

Lastly, and best of all, *let us learn to rejoice that God hath chosen a King for us.* He, the scion out of the root of Jesse, is "the branch," "the plant of renown," "the tree of life." He was reckoned but a bramble by wicked and foolish men, and treated as such. Let us consider what God has made him, the testimony that he bears concerning him, and the invitations which he gives to take shelter under him. Happy those who can bear their testimony with the Church, "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." Such shall never have to say what weeping Jeremiah said of good Josiab, "The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord was taken in their pits of whom we said, under his shadow we shall live among the heathen," Lamentations [iv. 20. Our glorious king ever liveth; he died once, but he can die no more. He died, that sinners "might be planted in the likeness of his death and resurrection," and thus, being "rooted in him," become "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." Let all these favoured trees join to sing "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."

THE NEW YEAR.

BY THE REV W. ABBOTT, BLUNHAM, BEDS.

THE arrival of New-Year's Day brings with it new-year's mercies. For the mercies of our indulgent Father are new every morning, and are continued from year to year. The period of the new year is a special season of mercy—of pardoning, sparing, sustaining, supplying, and directing mercy.

"The opening year thy mercy shows,
Let mercy crown it till it close."

Divine mercy is a river whose streams never cease to flow; neither summer's drought nor winter's frost shall hinder its streams; and they will ever flow with refreshing blessedness.

"Streams of mercy never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise."

As the new year brings new mercies, so it elicits new praise. Grateful songs become the new year; a time of mercy should be a time of thankfulness; and renewed and repeated favours require corresponding praise. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not."

It is customary for friends to visit at the opening of the year. As Christians, let us bear in mind to visit our best, our Heavenly Friend. Visit him, and he will not fail to return the visit; he will visit you with his gracious presence, his precious promises, and bountiful supplies. From him you will find favour to cheer, wisdom to guide, mercy to pardon, grace to supply, strength to help, power to defend, love to solace you in the pilgrimage of life, and holiness to meeten you for endless happiness. The royal promise is, "I will give grace and glory," and "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

It is customary for friends to congratulate each other at the opening of

the year, wishing each other a happy new year. But who may expect this, and what can make it so? No doubt but there will be winter's storms as well as summer's sunshine; sorrows as well as joys; cares as well as comforts. But there is that which can give happiness amidst both the prosperities and adversities of life. The Christian is the only happy man. The source of his happiness is in Heaven; the streams thereof are secret, free, precious, gladdening and continuous, ever-flowing and overflowing. He is a son of God, and an heir of glory. There is much blessedness in these gracious provisions, inasmuch as they originate in the everlasting love of God in Jesus Christ; and as a sense of interest in them is conveyed to the heart by the witnessing of the Comforter; and wherever this love is shed abroad, there it makes the happy heart and the happy year. With this love the Christian would be happy in a dungeon; but without it he would be miserable even in a palace.

Such being the case, we may safely leave the events of the year, whether painful or pleasant, bright or gloomy, with our Father, Friend, and Comforter, who hitherto has helped us, and who still says, "As thy day, so shall thy strength be." Let us "acknowledge him in all our ways, and he will direct our steps." And while we seek to please him in the exercise of thankfulness, obedience, patience, and activity in his cause, we shall often have reason to say, "Thy loving-kindness is better than life: therefore my lips shall praise thee." "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and to the patient waiting for Christ."

Dec. 3.

THE LAST HOUR.

"There is hope in thine end." Jer. xxxi. 17.

ONE of the most distressing instances of religious darkness and despondency that I have ever been called to witness, was that of a poor girl, whom I first knew when I was

called upon to visit her in her last sickness. She was not twenty years old, her health had departed, she seemed to be doomed to an early grave. A seated pulmonary affection

deprived her of all hope of recovery, and she had no hope in God. From her earliest childhood she had had excellent religious instruction. Her parents were pious people, and though they were poor, they had carefully educated her. She had been a scholar in the Sabbath school from her childhood, under the weekly instructions of a teacher who loved her, and who had taught her with assiduity, kindness, and skill. But though she had been long the subject of religious impressions, and had carefully studied her Bible, and earnestly prayed to be directed into the path of life, she had never found peace with God.

When I first knew her, none but herself had any special fears that her life was near its end. She was then able to be about the house, and sometimes, in pleasant weather, to walk out into the fields. But she had given up all expectation that she should recover, and she now almost entirely directed her thoughts to the solemn and stern realities of death, to which she looked forward with an indescribable anguish. She regarded it as the commencement of eternal woe.

At first I felt no peculiar discouragement, on account of her religious depression. I regarded her fearful distress of mind, as only the natural accompaniment of a just conviction of sin, and confidently expected that she would soon be led to hope and peace in believing. But it was far otherwise with her. She attained no peace. As week passed after week, she continued in the same despondency, receiving no light, no hope, no comfort. She read, she examined, she wept, she prayed in vain. And as her health declined more and more, her mind became wrought up to an intensity of anguish most distressful to witness. It was enough to melt any one's heart, to hear her cries for mercy. Never did a sinner plead more earnestly to be delivered from going down to perdition. She cried for mercy, as if standing in the very sight of hell! She had not a single gleam of light. Her soul was dark as a double midnight, and seemed plunged into an ocean of horrors. No one, I am sure, could have listened to her dreadful wailings, without feeling a sympathy with her, which would have wrung the heart with anguish.

I visited her often, conversed with her many times, directing her most carefully to all the truths of the Bible, which I supposed could possibly have any tendency to awaken her faith in Christ, and prepare her to meet him; but I never had any evidence to the last, that anything I ever said to her was the means of any benefit.

I wondered at her continued despair. It seemed to be the more remarkable, on account of the clear views which she appeared to have of the character of God, of his holy law, of her condemnation by it, of her wicked heart, of redemption by Christ, and of the faithfulness of God to fulfil all his promises. I often examined her thoughts and feelings on all such points as well I could, in order to detect any error into which she might have fallen, and which might be a hindrance to her faith and peace, and in order to persuade her to trust all her eternal interests to the grace of the great

Redeemer. She had not a doubt about any of these truths. She knew and bewailed her guiltiness and depravity, she fully believed in the love of God towards sinners, and the willingness of Christ to save her, unworthy as she was; she said she hated sin with all her heart; she longed to be holy; she did not believe that she hated God, though she would not say that she loved him; she admired "the kindness and love of God our Saviour" towards sinners; and wanted, above all things, to have an interest in his redemption, and be *sure* that he had accepted her.

Months before her death I believed that she was a child of God. I thought I could discover every evidence of it, except hope, and peace, and the spirit of adoption. She had now come to believe that she had some love to God; "But," says she, "I am afraid God does not love me, and will cast me off for ever, as I deserve."

I strove, in every possible manner, and time after time, to lead her to the peace of faith. By holding directly before her mind the character of God, the redeeming kindness and work of Christ, and especially God's free invitations and firm promises; I strove to lead her to an appropriating faith, which should beguile her into half-forgetfulness of herself, by causing her to delight in God. By teaching her according to the Scriptures what are the evidences of a new heart, and then by taking her own declarations to demonstrate to her that her own exercises of mind and heart were precisely these evidences; I laboured hard to induce her mind to rest upon the "witness within,"—a witness really there (as I believed), if she would only hear and heed its voice: I explained to her what I honestly supposed to be the cause of her darkness, that is, her bodily condition, which prevented her seeing things as they were, by throwing a deceptive and dismal cloud over everything that pertained to herself. At times, when she appeared to me to be coming out of her gloom, and to be standing on the very borders of a light which she could not but see; a single recurring idea about herself would fling her back into all her darkness, and she would weep and wail in despair.

I had been describing heaven to her, and referring to its song of redemption, "who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

"Others will be in heaven," said she, "but I shall be cast out! From the distant region of my doom, I shall behold my companions by the river of life, happy, happy, spirits, perhaps I shall hear their song; but no such home for me!"

"How came they there?" said I. "They were not saved by their goodness. They were no better than you. Jesus Christ saved them by his blood, and he is willing to save you."

"He passes me by, sir. He called them, and they obeyed the call in due time; but he does not call me!"

"He does, my child, he does. He calls you now, 'Come unto me,'"

"If he does, sir, I have no heart to hear him! My day is past! My day is past! I shall be cast off as I deserve! Oh, I wish I had never been born!"

'Your day is not past. 'Now is the day of salvation.'

Her only answer was tears and groans.

Such was her melancholy condition, as she declined more and more. Her strength was now almost gone. She evidently had but few weeks to live, if indeed a few days even remained to be measured by the falling sands of her life.

One day (some weeks before her death), after I had been stating to her the evidences of a regenerated state, and she had clearly described to me her own views and feelings, which seemed to me to accord with these evidences in one particular after another almost throughout the entire chapter, I said to her, with some earnestness—

"Mary Ann, what do you want more, to convince you that you are a child of God? What do you expect? If these things do not convince you, what could? What evidence more do you want? Do you want an angel to come down from heaven here to your bedside, to tell you that you are a Christian, and shall go to heaven as soon as you die?"

"Oh, yes," said she, in a transport of emotion, clasping her death-pale hands, "*that is just what I want—just what I want!*"

"That is just what you cannot have," said I; "God is not going to give you any such kind of evidence."

I then explained to her how she must rest upon spiritual evidences, as all Christians do, and not on any evidences of the senses, or supernatural occurrence outside of her own heart.

As she approached fast her end, and evidently could not survive much longer, I was greatly disappointed and saddened that her mind continued in the same unbroken gloom. I had not expected it. I had looked for a different experience. But it now seemed that her sun must go down in clouds!

One Sabbath morning, just before the time of public service, I was sent for to "see her die." She could still speak in a very clear and intelligible manner, better than weeks before. Her reason was continued to her; all her faculties appeared as unimpaired and bright as ever. All that I could discover of any alteration in her mind, appeared to me to consist simply in this—she now thought of herself less, and of her God and Saviour more. I told her as I was requested to do, that she was now very soon to die. The time had arrived for me to go to the pulpit, and, having prayed with her, commending her to her God, I gave her my hand to bid her farewell.

"Will you come to see me at noon?" says she.

"My dear child, you cannot live till noon. The Doctor says you cannot live half an hour. I will come here as soon as the service is over."

I went to the sanctuary and preached; and as soon as the service closed, I went immediately to her house. She was still alive. One of her friends met me at the door, and hastily told me, that soon after I left the house, an hour and a half before, she avowed her perfect trust in Christ, and her firm confidence that he would "take her home to heaven." "I am full of peace," said she,

"I can trust my God. This is enough. I am happy, happy. I die happy." A little while after, she said she wanted to see me "once more." She was told that she could not live till the sermon was closed. "*I shall live,*" said she firmly. She seemed to refuse to die. She inquired what time the service would close, and being told, she often afterwards inquired what time it was. She watched the hands of the clock, frequently turning her eyes upon them, in the intervals between her prayers and praises and rapturous thanksgivings.

As I entered the room she turned her eyes upon me. "Oh," says she, "I am glad you have come; I have been waiting for you. I wanted to see you once more, and tell you how happy I am. I have found out that a poor sinner has *nothing* to do only to believe. I am not afraid of death now. I am willing to die. God has forgiven me, and I die happy—I am very happy. I wanted to tell you this. I thought I should live long enough to tell you. I thought God would not let me die till I had seen you, and told you of my joy, so as not to have you discouraged when you meet with other persons who have such dark minds as mine was. Tell them to seek the Saviour. Light will come some time, if it is at the last hour. I prayed God to let me see you once more. He has granted my last prayer; and now—now I am ready."

Her voice faltered; she could say no more. I prayed some two or three minutes by her bedside; we rose from our knees, and in less than five minutes more she was dead.

"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

It was pleasant to hear this dying girl affirm her faith, and to witness her joy at the moment of death. But I do not know that this joy amounted to any more real evidence of her effectual calling to Christ by the Holy Spirit than she had presented before. Faith is one thing, and feeling is another. It is the faith that saves. It is the feeling that comforts. But the faith may exist where the feeling is wanting. The principle may exist where its action is wanting.

If this poor girl had died in all her darkness and fears, I should not have despaired of her. Amid all her glooms of guilt, I thought she exhibited proofs of faith. It seemed to me that it was faith which made her attend to the truths of the Bible, with such careful scrutiny and enduring perseverance, at the very moment when she saw no light in it for her;—that it was faith which made her pray so fervently and without faltering, month after month, at the very time when she did not suppose she received any answer;—that it was faith which kept her, in her most gloomy times, perfectly free from any besetting doubt that there is salvation for sinners in Jesus Christ, freely proclaimed to them in the love of God; that it was faith which made her so perfectly assured that peace with God is attainable, and made her long for it as the only thing she cared for; yea, that it was faith which gave to her very glooms their most terrible aspect, creating such a confident and continued conviction that if Christ was not found, everything was lost. Her grief was

not that of an alien and an enemy, but that of an affectionate, but disinherited child. The very point of her anguish consisted in this,—namely, that she believed Christ to be a full and free Saviour, and yet could find no evidence in her heart that she trusted in him. The promises were precious things in her heart's estimation, but they seemed to her to be precious things which she did not embrace. She distrusted herself, but not God. She was afraid to believe that she was a believer. She was so tremblingly afraid of getting wrong, that she dared not think she could possibly be right. On this ground, I was led to believe that Mary Ann was a child of God, long before that memorable light shone on her soul in the hour of death. She was in darkness, not because she had no faith, but because she did not believe she had any. She had a title to heaven, without having eyes to read it.

Her mother, father, and physician (who was a pious man), all her friends, as I suppose, regarded this bright close of her earthly experience very differently from myself. They appeared to look upon it as the commencement of her faith, thinking that God had first appeared for her in that time of her first triumph and joy. Such an idea in similar cases, I suppose to be common,

and I suppose it to be an error, and a very misleading one, especially to many unconverted sinners. Such unconverted sinners hear of instances like this, and, therefore, hope that it may be just so with themselves when they shall be called to die. On the ground of this hope, they speak a deceitful peace to their own hearts. Their secret thought is,—such a one, who always lived without religion, died in peace at last, and why should not I? Delusive thought, and often fatal! These persons never stop to inquire what had been the previous heart-history, the struggles, and prayers of those whose peaceful death they mention. They themselves are not living such a life as their now departed acquaintance did, who died in peace; and, therefore, they have no good reason to think they shall die such a death. Too hastily they say of such a one, "he lived all his life without religion." They say what they do not know, and what is probably false. If any one would hope to die like Mary Ann, let him live like Mary Ann. Her supreme aim, and her agonizing prayer for months, sought the favour of God. To gain this was all her desire, and no discouragement could make her falter or turn her aside. So must thou, reader, if thou wouldst die like Mary Ann.

WORDS FOR THE HEART AND LIFE.

BY THE REV. A. J. MORRIS.

We discern a chaos in the "new year." The word is ambiguous, and we mean a different, when all that should be meant is another, year. We make time a real and influential thing, instead of a condition of things; we give to it a personality and power, instead of regarding it as merely that in which the succession of actions and events takes place. We speak of it as "doing," "bringing," "making" things, often forgetting that it is only in the duration in which they are done, and brought, and made, by God and men.

A new year is like a great lumber-room, in which are stowed away all manner of inconvenient articles; a great scape-goat, bearing a vast variety of sins. History, philosophy, observation, revelation, are all violated in order to uphold the strange delusion. We cannot get rid of the belief that the "new year" will be unlike all the common-place years that we have known as yet, and we persist in the fond and flattering conceit until near enough to its close to entertain it respecting its successor.

To-morrow will be like to-day, and the next day like to-morrow. We have often pitied the coachman, destined to sit on one box, and drive on one road, day after day, and have wondered how he could put up with so monotonous an existence; but, in truth, the most favoured of us are in a similar predicament. What are we but, in a figure, drivers over the same ground of life, with little variety but that of a fine or a wet day, a summer or a winter season, good or bad roads?

The greater part of men have no serious purpose in life. They are like speakers who have nothing in particular to say, or strollers

who have nowhere in particular to go. Their proceedings are without relevancy and point. They are destitute of great and abiding purposes, towards which to direct their energies, and which may give importance and continuity to their existence. Their history is not one united whole, but is made up of scraps; it is not a stream flowing on to one specific point, but so many unconnected pools. Any volume of their lives is complete in itself, and may be had separately.

Be assured that nothing can give zest and vivacity to life but a deep interest in the soul, and that nothing can secure that like the minding of the things of the Spirit.

"Newness of life" must be sought for, not in strangeness of condition, but ever-quickened spirituality of soul.

He who expects to be mended more by time, whatever the nature or measure of his defects, will find himself in as poor a plight as he who should stand by the stream till all the waters have passed along. Time will not change the nature of the seed sown, but only afford opportunity for its growth.

Is not "the lion in the way" an image formed by laziness in the heart?

Christianity is the reason and the rule of all things. We may always, therefore, "sing of mercy and judgment." Whatever happens is a step towards the final and full attainment of the highest, holiest, and most gracious purposes. That which seems to hinder is made to help.

Let us not spend our time and waste our powers in a vain attempt to comprehend or predict events, but let us set about wholesome and unchanging duty. We are not

called to be moral astrologers but moral-handmen, and a miserable thing it would be for us to cast nativities and—die.

Eternity makes life nothing, and yet everything; sinks it to utter insignificance, and yet invests it with inconceivable importance.

The broken speech of our earthly days is the voice of souls. It shows what we are as souls; our principles, habits, estimates, tastes, purposes, associations; what we are in relation to God, law, mediation, man, and heaven. And showing what we are, it shows also what we shall be, what we shall be for ever. And it does more than show what we shall be, it helps to make us it.

The end and essence of all religion is to turn the mind from self to God; to give it absorbing views of the divine beauty and glory; to fill it with divine love and zeal; to make it feel honoured in honouring God, blessed in blessing him.

Everlasting life dates from regeneration, not from death; we cannot have the life immortal if we be not born again.

This evanescent life is big with the fortunes of eternity, and you are deciding what they shall be.

God moves the heart by kindness. In seeking his high ends, he does not beget a crouching spirit, but treats us generously; does not put us into a dungeon but into a family; gives us not a curse but a covenant; and says, "Ye are my friends for whom I

have given a ransom, live in love as I have loved you; ye are my sons and heirs, walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.

Christian churches are societies of friends. Their members are dealt with according to the Gospel, in a spirit of generous confidence. They are made to feel a personal interest in them; a personal responsibility for them; they are trusted; they are called to the exercise of their wisdom and their power.

The best things, when abused, become the worst: there is no devil like a fallen angel; no enemy to the Gospel like an apostate Christian; no hate like the "theological hate;" no war like a religious war; and no corruption like religious corruption.

There are two questions asked consciously or unconsciously by men in relation to religious service: one is, How little may we do? the other is, How much can we do? These questions involve different principles and ends. He who puts the first, thinks only of safety; he who puts the second, thinks only of duty: in the first it is interest that speaks; in the second it is gratitude, love, reverence, and zeal.

We can present nothing to which God has not an inalienable right, nothing which he has not first given to us. The materials of service are his, the power to use them is his; his are the outward instruments, and his the moral faculties.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

SPIRIT-LIFE.

"By these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit," ISAIAH xxxviii. 16.

My Father, can it ever be,
That sighs and tears should only prove
My spirit's life?—Deep mystery!
That by the cross I gauge thy love.

The griefs which overwhelm my heart,
Shall through thy wonder-working skill,
To it sweet peace and rest impart,
And teach me best to bear thy will,—

Then I'll not shun the cross to bear,
Nor yet from pain or duty flee;
It is enough that Thou art near—
All must be well that comes from Thee.

Eynsford, Dec. 1864.

FRANCIS W—

A BIRTH-DAY REVERIE.

I THOUGHT of the past—of the joys that have fled,
Of the sunshiny hours that have passed o'er my head,
Of each fancied good deed I ever had done,
And sought there for peace, but, alas, could find none.
And I thought of the future—made bright with gay dreams—
I hoped to gain peace from its joy-lighted beams;
But despair, like a mist, spread its pall on the whole,
And chilled while it checked the fond hopes of my soul.
My good deeds and resolves, I discovered were dross,
And I tremblingly fell at the foot of the cross;
In the bosom of Jesus, I hid me and wept,
That his loving commands I so feebly had kept.
And the Saviour in accents, so tender and mild,
Spoke pardon and peace to his grief-stricken child;
My spirit's deep yearnings were instantly still,
For the joy-speaking pardon each craving can fill.

Thus sheltered within his sin-pierc'd side,
I asked that for ever I there might abide:
In communion thus blessed my heart soared above,
And was fired and filled with ineffable love.

And the tempest passed by, but I felt not its power;
Earth's cares had not leave to disturb the blest hour;—
All vanished and gone was the darkness of night,
As I sat 'neath his shadow and found great delight.

Farningham, Dec. 17th.

M. A. HEARN.

LITERARY NOTICES.

Short Arguments about the Millennium. By B. C. YOUNG. Houlston & Stoneman, Paternoster Row; J. Heaton & Son. Leeds.

THAT the Church of Christ occupies, and is exhorted to occupy, an *expectant* position in this world—that every professed disciple of Christ is bound to live as though every day, every hour, yea, every moment, might be his last, and usher him into the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords—are truths which have been admitted by the godly in every age,—but the questions often put, as to whether Christ will come *before* the Millennium or *after*?—whether He will reign upon the earth *personally* or *spiritually*?—have provoked much discussion, and called forth varied and contradictory replies. The author of this book advocates the latter view; and while we cannot endorse all he has written in reference to every passage of Scripture which he cites, we give this book our hearty commendation, and would recommend those who are anxious to come to a scriptural and decisive conclusion in reference to the important truths it is intended to elucidate, to purchase it, and give it a serious and prayerful perusal.

Ministering Children. A Tale devoted to Childhood. By the Author of "Visits to the Poor." Fcap. 8vo., pp. 426, 15th thousand. London: Seeley, Jackson, & Halliday.

WE do not wonder at the rapid sale this exquisite volume has obtained; it deserves a world-wide circulation.

A Pictorial Outline of the Rise and Progress of the Bonmahon Industrial Infant and Agricultural Schools. With Illustrations from Photographic pictures. Established by the Rev. D. A. DOUDNEY, Curate of Monksland.

THIS is a prettily illustrated account of the philanthropic efforts of Mr. Doudney, who has been the means of effecting a great moral reformation in that part of Ireland referred to in the title; and to whom the Christian public are indebted for reprints of many valuable books, got up in one of the above industrial establishments, by a number of raw Irish lads.

French in a Fortnight. London: W. H. COLLINGRIDGE. A little sixpenny book, which is adapted to be very useful, as well as likely to become exceedingly popular.

Tropologia. A Key to Open Scripture Metaphors; in four books, to which are prefixed Arguments to prove the Divine Authority of the Holy Bible; together with Types of the Old Testament. By the Rev. BENJAMIN KEACH. Ireland: Printed at the Bonmahon Industrial Printing School, and Published by W. H. Collingridge, City Press, Long Lane, London. Pp. 1006, xxiv.

MR. DOUDNEY has placed our denomination under weighty obligations for his well-executed editions of Dr. Gill's Exposition on the Bible, and Sermons on Solomon's Song; and for Keach's celebrated Key to Open Scripture Metaphors—one thousand copies of which were disposed of in a few months. The volume consists of upwards of a thousand pages royal 8vo., in a readable type, which may be obtained for one-fifth of the price which our own copy of the folio edition cost. To those who have the wisdom to distinguish between things that differ, and grace enough to treat Scripture metaphors reverently, it will be an invaluable treasure; but, alas! for the mere novice in theology who shall adopt all the strange things which the typical Scriptures have been made to speak by empirical teachers, and even by Benjamin Keach.

Words for the Heart and Life. Discourses by the Rev. A. J. MORRIS. 8vo., pp. 244. London: Ward & Co., Paternoster Row.

THIS volume is full of great thoughts; immediately addressed to those convictions and dispositions which are the end of truth and the source of holiness. We need only refer our readers to another page in the present Number of the "Messenger," from which they will be able to judge of the merit of these Discourses—twelve in number—for themselves.

The Pulpit Library. Sermons, &c., by the Rev. C. H. SPURGEON. Large type, 8vo., pp. 192. London: J. Paul, Paternoster Row.

MR. PAUL has here collected about a dozen of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons, and has brought out a splendid volume, neatly bound in cloth, for half-a-crown. To aged persons it will be most acceptable. We might possibly have found occasion to demur, as the publisher, entirely without our knowledge, has inserted two sermons which have appeared in the pages of the "Messenger"; but it so in this instance—the wider the circulation the better we shall be pleased.

Baptist Confession of Faith; with Scripture Proofs, adopted by the Ministers and Messengers of the General Assembly which met in London in 1689; with a Preface by the Rev. C. H. SPURGEON. 12mo., pp. 35. London: Alabaster and Passmore; and J. Paul.

"This ancient document," says Mr. Spurgeon, in his Dedicatory Address to the Church in New Park Street—prefixed to this work—"is a most excellent epitome of the things most surely believed among us; issued as an assistance to you in controversy, a confirmation in faith, and a means of edification in righteousness. Here the younger members of the Church will have a body of divinity in small compass; and, by means of the Scriptural proofs, will be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in them." We only add, that this little volume is neatly printed, and we are not without hope that its republication may be very serviceable to many.

The Little Gleaner. Vol. II. Edited by a Gospel Minister. London: J. Paul, Paternoster Row.

This excellent monthly periodical for children we very warmly recommended on the appearance of its first Number; since then it has gone on improvingly, both in style and

sale, and we anticipate for it yet greater success among that class of persons for whom it is especially designed.

The Mighty Cross. London: J. Paul, Paternoster Row.

This is a little book of verses, by the editor of the above, introduced by an engraving of the "Man of Sorrows"; beneath which is the following

DEDICATION:

"Dear Man of Sorrows, may I dare
To yield these verses to thy care?
Accept them wash'd and purg'd from dross;
Win by them trophies to thy cross."

Gems from the Coral Islands; Western Polynesia—comprising the New Hebrides Group, the Loyalty Group, New Caledonian Group. By the Rev. W. GILL, Rarotonga. Pp. 240. London: Ward & Co.

This volume is itself a gem; it is of the same fascinating character as the late John Williams' "Missionary Enterprises," into whose labours Mr. Gill has entered and successfully supplemented. The work is illustrated with numerous beautiful engravings, and most elegantly got up. It will form a very appropriate and acceptable new-year's gift book.

DENOMINATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.

Willenhall, Staffordshire.—The Rev. S. Couzens has resigned the pastorate of the Baptist Church, Little London, and terminates his labours there on the 25th of February.

Warrington.—Mr. H. Rowson, of Horton College, Bradford, has accepted the invitation of the Baptist Church to become their pastor.

Cardiff.—The Rev. A. G. Fuller has resigned the pastorate of the English Baptist Church, Cardiff. His labours terminate in February.

NEW CHAPELS.

Llanrhaidr, Wales, Nov. 27.—One of the handsomest chapels in the Principality was opened for Divine worship, when the Rev. Messrs. Ellis, Sirhowy; Jones, Llanfair; Pritchard, Denbigh; Pritchard, Llan-golleu; Owens, Pandyr Chapel, and Roberts, of Plasmonium, took part in the services.

RECOGNITION AND JUBILEE SERVICES.

London, Borough Road Chapel.—Services in connection with the fiftieth anniversary of the above chapel, and the settlement of the Rev. C. T. Keon, were held Nov. 18, and three following days. The sermons on the Sabbath by the pastor. On Monday evening a public tea meeting, at which addresses of an impressive character were delivered by the Revs. H. Howieson, H. J. Betts, J. Harcourt, W. P. Tiddy, R. J. Miller, and J. Smith, deacons of Regout

Street, Lambeth, and Messrs. Blenket and Evans engaged in prayer. On Tuesday the Rev. W. Leask, of Kennington, preached; and on Wednesday, a special prayer meeting was held. The collections amounted to £40.

SPECIAL SERVICE.

Hull, George Street.—Services commemorative of the completion of the alterations and building of the school-room, in connection with this place of worship, were held on Dec. 12th, when a sermon was preached by the Rev. Robt. Bowman, of Fish Street (Ind.). On the following day a meeting was held in the large room of the Sailors' Institute, when more than 300 persons sat down to tea; the trays, twenty-four in number, were provided gratuitously. After tea, a public meeting was held, addressed by the Revs. J. Sibree, R. Thomson, R. A. Redford, M.A. (Ind.), J. D. Rome (Presb.), W. M'Conkey, J. Nightingale (Wesleyan), A. Jusos, B.A., Plymouth Brethren; J. Macpherson, D. M. N. Thompson and H. Dowson, Bradford (Baptists). On the 14th, a sermon was preached by the Rev. H. Dowson, of Bradford. The collections amounted to near £500.

PRESENTATION SERVICES.

Upton-on-Severn.—A valedictory service, occasioned by the Rev. A. Pitt retiring from the pastorate of the Baptist Church at this place, and accepting the charge of the Baptist Church, Salem Chapel, Dover, was recently held in the Town Hall, pre-

sided over by Mr. Jukes, of the County Bank. An address, expressive of high appreciation of the character and services of Mr. and Mrs. Pitt, was read by Mr. Drinkwater; and the Chairman presented Mr. Pitt with a purse of gold, as a token of esteem. Mr. Pitt feelingly responded to this address; and the Revs. F. Overbury, of Pershore; T. Wilkinson, of Shrewsbury; T. Sissons, of Stourbridge; W. Bontems, late of Whitchurch; T. R. Hookin (Ind.), and Mr. Taylor, deacon of the Church, addressed the meeting.

Edenbridge, Kent, Dec. 7.—A public tea-meeting was held in the Baptist chapel, when the Rev. J. Swinbourne, the late pastor, who has accepted the co-pastorate with the Rev. E. S. Pryce, of Gravesend, was presented with a chaste and elegant silver cup; a memento of the esteem of the Church and congregation.

BAPTISMS.

Birmingham, Hope Street, Sept. 30.—Three, after a discourse by Mr. Griffiths.

Heneage Street, Nov. 4.—Three by Mr. Taylor.

Crowborough, Sussex, Nov. 4.—Two by Mr. Saxby.

Dartford, Kent, Nov. 22.—Three by Mr. Hosken, of Crayford.

Dry Drayton, Oct. 28.—Four at Elsworth, by the Pastor.

Earby-in-Craven, Yorkshire, Nov. 3.—Four by Mr. Ryland.

Evesham, Oct. 7.—One by Mr. Hookin.

Halifax, Trinity Road Chapel, Oct. 28.—Seven by Mr. Walters.

Pelion Lane, Oct. 4.—Six by Mr. Whitehead.

Helmdon, Northamptonshire, Oct. 21.—Two by Mr. Hedge.

Llanelly, Zion Chapel, Oct. 28.—Five by Mr. Morgan.

Lighton, Lake Street, Sept. 2.—Eight by Mr. Cowdy.

Liverpool, Stanhope Street, Nov. 4.—Two by Mr. Hughes.

London, Mount Zion Chapel, Dorset Square. Six by Mr. Foreman (no date sent).

London, New Park Street, Nov. 26.—Eleven by Mr. Spurgeon.

Regent's Park, Dec. 25.—Fifteen by Mr. Landels.

March, Cambridgeshire, Nov. 4.—Four by Mr. Jones.

Newark, Notts, Nov. 25.—Two by Mr. H. Bayley.

Paisley, Oct. 21.—Five by Mr. Wallace.

Pembroke, Nov. 11.—One by Mr. Walker.

Portsea, Kent Street, Nov. 21.—Two by Mr. Davis.

Retford, Notts, Oct. 7.—Four by Mr. Lee. *Ringstead, Northamptonshire, Oct. 14.*—Two by Mr. Kitchen.

Rushden, Elin Chapel, Dec. 2.—Two by Mr. Tanner.

Tredegar, Monmouthshire, Oct. 21.—One by Mr. Matthews.

Twerton, Bath, Oct. 14.—Five by Mr. Clarke.

Waltham Abbey.—One by Mr. Foreman (no date sent).

Whitstone, near Hereford, Dec. 16.—Four by the Pastor.

DEATHS.

Heath, W. Esq., Dec. 9, at the residence of his son-in-law, the Rev. E. S. Pryce, Gravesend, aged 85.

Bunyan, R. Esq., Nov. 27, at his residence, Cathedral Close, Lincoln, aged 80. Mr. B. was the last lineal descendant of the immortal author of the "Pilgrim's Progress."

Hamlyn, Mrs. Judith, Dec. 18, at Brixham, Devon, aged 94. Mrs. H. was baptized and joined the Baptist Church in that town at the age of 80.

*. Our report of Denominational Intelligence this month is less extended than usual. We cannot make, we only record, instances when they occur. We shall, however, be obliged to all persons interested in these memorabilia, to favour us with reports of Baptisms and other services held in connection with the denomination before the 20th of the month.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

COMMUNICATIONS have been received from the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel, M.A., the Revs. D. Kaiterns, C. H. Spurgeon, C. Stovel, W. P. Balforn, John Cox, London; Octavius Winslow, D.D., Leamington; Jas. Smith, Cheltenham; Thos. Winter, Bristol; Hugh Stowell Brown, Liverpool; B. C. Young, Summerhill, Coseley; J. Jenkinson, Oakham; J. S. Warren, Walton, Suffolk; S. Couzens, Willenhall; J. Flory, Somersham; J. Moore, Whitestone; D. Bailey, Broadlanes; W. Abbott, Blunham. Also from R. Peck, Balderton, to whom we tender grateful acknowledgements for the interest manifested by him in the success of the "Messenger," he having circulated nearly 200 copies. May many during the present year do likewise. J. Stenton, Peterborough (too late); C. Kirby, Stroud; R. Beazly, J. Holworthy, Leicester. C. Craswell, Portsea. E. S., who says, "I am a member of a small country Church. Several of our number have taken the "Messenger" from its commencement; the sales have gradually increased, so that now we take thirty copies monthly and I intend making an effort to obtain additional subscribers for the coming year. From my own experience I am convinced this might be extensively done in other localities." R. Foster, Willenhall. W. Bennett, Colchester; we have forwarded his communication to Mr. Cox. "Daisy," has only given a portion of the name in the Acrostic sent for insertion in the "Messenger." As from her directions she appears to be learned in matters typographical, we advise her to have the design executed according to her fancy, on a daintily embossed card, and forward it to the esteemed individual who is the subject of her musings.

GOOD NEWS FOR THE AGED; OR, NONE ARE TOO OLD
TO BE SAVED.

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,

Minister of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.

"And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle."—*Matt. xx. 6.*

WE have come to the end of another year. Better is the end of a year than the beginning thereof. A year is begun with fear and trembling; it closes with joy and thankfulness. In the beginning of the year we are like the sailor, when he leaves port, puts up his sails, and goes out on the broad sea to a distant clime; at the end of the year we are sometimes like that mariner, when he casts his anchor out and lies still in his haven. We have come to haven now, at the end of the year; and here we rest and gratefully review it.

But, in coming to the end of another year, we have some solemn things to talk about, as well as some on which to congratulate ourselves. We take this for our subject; and may God make it both solemn and profitable for the winding-up of the old year of grace, 1855: "And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle." This is taken from the parable of the householder, who went out early and hired labourers, and went out again at another hour, and another hour, and another; and at last went out at the eleventh hour and did the same; and when the labourers came to be paid, he gave to those who were hired at the eleventh hour just the same reward as to those whom he had hired at the beginning of the day. We shall note in our text two things; first, the sovereignty of Divine grace; secondly, the mercy of God; and afterwards we will endeavour to apply the passage concerning the eleventh hour.

I. First, in our text, we have DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY very prominent. When we say Divine Sovereignty, we mean that God has the same rights which an absolute monarch has; that just as a sovereign under the old Jewish laws, or under the Medes and Persians, had a right to do just as he willed with his subjects, and there were none that could "stay his hand, or say, What doest thou?" even so God, only in an infinitely higher and a more righteous sense, is absolute monarch in this world, and has an absolute right to do with every one of us just whatever he pleases. The apostle Paul has said, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, to make of the same lump one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour?" That doctrine of Divine Sovereignty—alas! too much discarded, must be proclaimed, however men may bite their lips, and however angry they may be, to hear themselves humbled in the dust, and God Jehovah exalted as their Master!

This parable shows the sovereignty of God with regard to the calling of certain persons. The householder went out early in the morning, and called so many; he went out the third hour, and called more; he went out the sixth, the ninth, the eleventh hours, and still he found persons. Did he find them waiting, expecting? No; he found them "standing idle in the market place." They were not working nor doing anything. He found them standing idle; and so, just as he pleased, he said to some of them, "Go and work in my vineyard." There is such a thing as Divine Sovereignty, with regard to the choice of persons. If God saves one man and not another, God is just. If one man is saved and not another, God hath made the difference. If my brother shall enter heaven and I shall be sent to hell, God has a right to save my brother; he would be righteous in my damnation—I deserve it; and if my brother does not deserve to be saved—as he does not—yet God has a right to give salvation to him, and to withhold it from me. My soul sits down in abject submission at his feet; I have no rights when I come before the Almighty; I have no claims on him. I have so sinned and so erred, that if he had sent my soul to hell, I richly deserved it. God has a right to do as he wills with his creatures;

and he exhibits this right in his choice of those who should work in his vineyard.

But again : Divine Sovereignty is exhibited *in the time when the householder called his people*. Some are called early in the morning ; some at the third hour, some at the sixth, some at the ninth, some at the eleventh. The man that was called at the eleventh hour did not grumble and say, " Why did not you call me in the morning ? " The man who was called in the morning, though it is said here that he afterwards murmured because he did not have more, yet, if he had been in his right mind, would have been thankful to the householder that he had given him the honour of working in his vineyard, and had called him so early. It is a mercy to be effectually called by grace ; and we must not demand of God when he will be pleased to give us grace. God exercises his sovereignty, in calling and converting sinners just when he pleases. We have some in our churches who have been Christians ever since they were four or five years of age ; and others who were not converted until sixty or seventy. God calls his people out of the world, and from the service of sin and Satan, at all periods of life ; and thus he exhibits his Divine Sovereignty in saving men just when he pleases. How often have I heard legal preachers assert, that if a man is not saved before he is thirty, it is not likely that he will be saved at all ! And that, if a man has attended the house of God for thirty years, and is not saved, there is just a possibility, but hardly a probability, that he ever will be saved. Ridiculous cant and nonsense ! While God is God, he saves whom he will and when he will. " The wind bloweth where it listeth," and when it pleaseth ; " so is every one that is born of the Spirit." God is as able to convert a man with grey hairs on his head as he is a man of thirty. There is no difference. We all stand sinners before him ; and if he pleases to save a greyheaded man he can do so. Men talk thus in order to stir up the young to seek Christ ; but they little know, that while it has no effect on the young, on the other hand it often depresses the spirits of the old, and makes them think, " Surely, then, my hour of mercy is past and I cannot be saved." And yet with the same breath you will hear these people say—

" Life is the time to serve the Lord,
The time to ensure the great reward,
The day of grace, and mortals may
Secure the blessings of the day ;"

thus contradicting themselves flat to their own faces. Nay, beloved, while there is a man in this world I will preach the Gospel to him ; and if I could find " The Wandering Jew"—if such a being existed—and he were 2000 years of age, I would preach the Gospel to him : for—

" While the lamp holds out to burn,
The vilest sinners that return "

shall find mercy in the bosom of their Lord and Saviour. Divine Sovereignty shows itself in the ages of the persons who are saved.

And once again : there will be Divine Sovereignty *in the ultimate reward*. The householder gave to every man a penny. Your man that was hired at the eleventh hour came in fresh to his work, and just did a little job of hoeing, or something of that sort, and there was a penny for him. In comes a man, who wipes the sweat from his brow and says, " Ah ! I have been at work these twelve hours ;" there was a penny for him ; neither more nor less for one or the other ; the same penny for all who came to work. Now God shows his sovereignty in this. He says, " Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own ? Is thine eye evil, because I am good ? The last shall be first and the first last : for many be called, but few chosen." Those who came last received just as much as those who came first. I am not quite sure whether that doctrine is true, which is called the doctrine of degrees of glory. I have heard it preached very frequently ; but I never yet saw any Scripture warrant to

back it up. The only one that the advocates of this doctrine bring forward is the passage, "One star differeth from another star in glory." But any one who can read English, in turning to that passage, will see that the apostle is not speaking of degrees of glory in heaven; but of different kinds of glories in the *sidereal* heavens; and besides, stars may differ without varying in degree of glory, for one may be red, another green, &c., and yet all alike bright; even so all the saints will differ in personal appearance; but why in degrees of glory?

There may be degrees of glory; but, so far as I can judge by reading Scripture, I cannot see the slightest shadow of a ground for proving the doctrine to be true. What is the glory of a saint? Is it not Christ's righteousness? And shall I, the least of the saints, have less of Christ's righteousness than the greatest? Is not the glory of the saint the love of his Master? And will my Master love a poor old woman, that lived up three pair of stairs, and died without ever having been heard of, less than the most popular minister. Ah! beloved, there are degrees of grace here; but we know not that there will be any degrees of glory. Why should a poor creature lying on a sick bed, who for years has trusted in her Master, have less glory than another, who has been allowed to toil in his service? Why, it is an honour for us to be filled with good works here; and we do not want to be honoured for honour, and because God has given us a little more honour here, to have an eternal difference made between us for ever. No, beloved, every man has a penny. Every saint in heaven will be in heaven; he will be with Christ, and like Christ. How can he be more one with Christ than another? All believers are blood-washed, all are equally justified, all shall be equally sanctified; and as their persons shall be all pure, so do we believe that their heavens will be equal; or, if they be not, Scripture certainly gives no countenance to the idea of degrees of glory. In this God will display his sovereignty. There shall be some old man, who has lived to be ninety, and he was saved the last year of his life; and when he enters heaven he will sit as much beside Christ as one like Timothy, who called in his early youth, preached the Gospel with a long course of usefulness, and died with honours on his head. There shall be a poor wretched sinner like the thief saved when he hung upon the cross; he will sing as sweet, and as loud, and as strong as the apostle Paul, or the apostle Peter: for "there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek," between one man and another, for "the same Lord over all is rich unto all them that call upon him in truth." Thus he displays his sovereignty in choosing the persons, in choosing the time when they shall be saved, and in their ultimate reward at last.

II.—And this brings us to consider **THE GREAT MERCY OF GOD EXHIBITED IN HIS SOVEREIGNTY**. This householder went out to hire men for his vineyard, because he needed them; did he not? Yes; but God does not go to hire men, and bring them into his vineyard, because he wants them. There is not a man in this world that God could not do without. "Oh!" you hear persons say sometimes, "suppose Mr. So-and-so were to die, what would the church do?" Why! do as it did before—live on its God; For

"When all created streams are dry,
His fulness is the same."

And when everything passes away, he can work his purposes as well without us as he does with us. The householder wanted men, but God is altogether independent of them; and herein is the mercy of God, that he goes out to find men to come into his vineyard, when he positively can do without them. Does he want any one of us? What! he who guideth the stars, and ruleth them in their orbits by the motions of his fingers, does he want an insignificant atom like one of ourselves to serve him? What! he whom all the hosts of angels do worship, and before whose throne the mighty cherubim do veil their faces with their wings, does he want a tiny creature like man to give him homage and reverence? If he did need men, he could soon create kings

and princes as he pleased to wait upon him; he would have crowned heads to kiss his footstool, and emperors to conduct him through the world in triumph! But he needs not men; he wants them not. Stars! ye are bright; but ye are not the lamps which light the way of God; God needs ye not. Sun! thou art bright; but thy heat warmeth not Jehovah. Earth! thou art beautiful; but thy beauty doth not gladden his heart: he is glad enough without thee. O ye lightnings! though ye write his name in fire upon the midnight darkness, he needs not your brightness? And thou, wild Ocean! thou art mighty; but though thou hymnest his deep praise in thy solemn chorus, thy storms do not add to his glory? Ye winds! though ye sweep the march of God across the pathless ocean?—ye thunders! though ye utter God's voice in terrible majesty, and track the onward progress of the God of armies, he needs you not. He is great without you, great beyond you, great above you; and, as he needs *you* not, he needs *us* not.

Then look at the mercy of God, to come *after any of us*; to come after me, to come after you, my sister, my brother. Admire his grace. And what is more beautiful still, look at this householder; he cometh early in the morning; then he cometh late in the evening. Ah! God is untiring in his mercy. The householder rose up early to go and find out some men. So does God. How early he goes to some. Blessed be his dear name, there were some of us that were lit to our slumbers, while we were young, by the lamps of the sanctuary. We can recollect when, in our midnight watches, like young Samuel of old, the Lord said, "Samuel! Samuel!" and we said, "Here am I, Lord." Oh! we can remember when our grandmother Lois, and our mother Eunice, taught us in the Scriptures; when we were dandled on the lap of piety, when the breath of sacred song was breathed by us, and an atmosphere laden with the sweets of heaven was always around us, and we inhaled it even from our infancy. Ah! hear this, ye sons of grace, God came to some of you; but, beloved, he does not get tired. He came for some early in the morning, and they would not go; he came after them in the preaching of the Gospel, and they spurned all that the minister said. But when God is determined to save he does not tire, even at the eleventh hour.

And now, grey-headed men, here are some of you whom God has come after. All the comings to God's sanctuary from your earliest days have been of little or no avail; yet now, I beseech you, consider that he cometh to you at this eleventh hour; for mercy is untiring; grace is immutable. Having set its heart upon a man, if he does not come at the first hour, he shall come, some time or other; Divine mercy will dispose him to come. Blessed be the name of our God, there have been some who have come into our churches, who would not have been taken into any army in all the world, for they were made too ricketty by old age. Their eyes had begun to be dim; Father Time had written his name on their brows; their hair had become blanched and whitened, and they came tottering on their staff to tell us about redeeming love. And some of the sweetest tales I have ever heard have been told me by grey-headed sinners, saved in their after days, just when they were tottering on the borders of the grave. Do you not think you see such a scene? The poor old grey-headed sinner is going tottering along; another minute he will be in hell. Hear the voice of God! "Gabriel stop that man; stop him! One more step, and he will be in the pit!" Down Gabriel comes, and he catches him in his arms, and stops him for a minute, while the Holy Ghost whispers, and says to him, "Flee from the wrath to come!" And, starting backward, he looks at the pit where he had almost gone; the gravel beneath his feet falls in, and he hears hollow Time sinking down into eternity; and yet he is saved.

Surely, there will be never a man in heaven who will bless God more than the grey-headed man who is called at the eleventh hour! Blessed be the name of God! such are brought in, decrepit old creatures, past labour and good for nothing—and they are saved. You, even those who have been worn out to the

very bones God will have; the devil's hacks Christ will not cast away; they who have got nothing left that is of any use in the world, Jesus Christ graciously receives at the eleventh hour. He says, "Why stand ye here idle?"

Do you not, beloved, admire the stupendous, amazing, astonishing grace of God, which thus reclaims men at the eleventh hour? Suppose now that you were to live as long as Methuselah, while everybody else only lived to the ordinary age. There is a young man in early life; you come to him, and say, "Come to my house, and be my servant; you shall be my son too; I will wash you clean; I will give you raiment; I will make you rich." And he turns away, and does despite to you; insults you to your face, laughs at your friends, breaks your holy days, and thoroughly despises you. When you look at him again, he is beginning to enter middle age. You go to him and say, "Will you come?" "No," he says, "I will not." Do you not think that by the time he was forty years old you would be tired enough of him? And suppose it possible that when he was seventy or eighty years of age he should come and knock at your door, would not you go to him and say, "What! *you* have the impudence to come now, whilst these forty, fifty, sixty years you have refused to embrace my invitation! You vile ingrate, I will have nothing to do with you now. Do you think I am going to have you now, when there is nothing left of you? Go where you have been before! Those you have served when you were young you may serve now you are old! You had the pleasures of sin when you were young, go and have them now! A fine thing, making an almshouse of your religion; coming to me to take care of you when you are so old that you cannot take care of yourself. Be off with you!" But that is just what the Lord does not. He not only does not turn a greyheaded old man away, but he goes after him himself, or else he would not come. Though he has sent his servant, and he has rejected him time after time, he says, "The man will not come; I will go myself." And he goes to the poor palsied man, that can be of no service to him, and says, "Come in, come in! Even thee I have loved with an everlasting love, and I will save even thee! Even thou shalt be saved from going down to the pit, thine eyes from tears, and thy feet from falling." There is Divine Sovereignty! There is Divine mercy!

III. And now may God help us while we ENDEAVOUR TO MAKE A SOLEMN APPLICATION OF THIS SUBJECT, more especially, first of all, TO THE OLD.

It were presumption in a young man to speak to the old, if he spoke to them simply as a young man. But as a preacher, I am neither old nor young. I am God's ambassador; and if God send me, no man may despise my youth, nor is it to be considered in the least degree, nor do I consider it myself. I speak with the selfsame authority that the most aged minister can command, for I have the same commission that he has, and he has no better than mine. Old man, come thou here, and let me give thee a solemn address, to warn thee of the wrath to come. Greyheaded man, I beseech thee, first of all *remember how many years thou hast wasted*. Look back upon thy misspent life, and tell thy years over and over again. What saiest thou of thy sixty, seventy, perhaps eighty, years? "Thy harvest is past, thy summer is ended, and thou art not saved." Thy youth, oh, how much thou mightest have done then; thy middle age, oh, how thy vigour might have been spent in doing good to thy fellows; and even some of thy old age, how has it been misspent and misused. Weep, I beseech thee, weep. Let thy old cheeks, furrowed by the ravages of time, feel for a moment the solemn scalding tear of regret, that thou hast wasted all those years. Remember, *thou canst never get them back again*; long as thou livest, thou canst never get one of them back; they have winged their way behind thee; they are with the years beyond the flood; and though thou toilest now, thou never canst call back the time thou hast lost. It is gone beyond the hope of rescue. Couldst thou count at once a kingly ransom for an hour, thou couldst not have it back again. Consider then, old man, how much of thy time has run to waste, and how many years have rolled away, and thou art still unsaved.

Consider next—*suppose you are saved now, what a very little you can do for God!* At the very most you have but a few short years. Death is at your gates; those gates are tottering beneath the battering-ram of age. Death is at your walls; those walls are shaking beneath the devastating engines of decay. You can, in all probability, have not more than ten years to live, and perhaps not those; and in a few years more you must be gone the way of all flesh.

Consider, O man, at this eleventh hour, if thou art put in the vineyard, *how little thou canst do for others.* Thou canst not preach the Gospel now; thine eyes are perhaps too dim to read God's word to others; thy voice is too broken, it has lost its melody; the windows out of which lust once looked have become darkened, and thou canst not hope that the fire of life shall light them up again. Consider how little thou canst do, even if thou art saved now; how much less if thy salvation be still postponed, and thou art not delivered for years to come. Consider what is gone, ye hoary heads.

O aged sinner—*Consider how much trouble has been lost upon you.* It was said of the barren fig tree: "Dig about it and dung it." How hast thou been digged about and dunged? Another 104 sermons during the past year thou hast heard, and yet thou art unsaved. For fifty years, for sixty years, thou hast always been at the sanctuary, yet as oil from a slab of marble, the Word has run off thee. A thousand sermons have left thee as dead as ever; and a myriad warnings have all sunk, as it were, into the sea, like the pebble hurled into it, which is lost and gone. Thou hast made no merchandize in thy Sabbaths—no merchandize for heaven. Thou hast toiled enough for this world; and now where is that which thou hast received? Thou hast put thy treasures into a bag full of holes. Thou hast "sown the wind," and thou shalt "reap the whirlwind."

Consider, once more, old man, *how long and how much thou hast provoked thy God.* Call to remembrance the sins of thy youth. How often hath that hand of thine, which now is quivering with death's touch, grasped the wine-glass of the drunkard in thy youth. Look thou upon thy manhood. Has it not been devoted to Satan, and blackened with enormities? And now, up to this time, thou hast still provoked thy God to smite thee. His long-suffering arm hath long held up, and mercy has kept back the sword of justice. Canst thou expect that much longer? Will God be merciful for ever? Will he be kind throughout eternity? And if mercy fail, will not justice make short work with thy soul?

And yet, if that stir thee not up, consider once more, *if thou shouldst be unsaved, how horrible is the place appointed for thee!* How fearful must be the doom which thou shalt receive! Thou art not a young sinner—he would be damned. Thou art an old sinner—how increasingly awful must be thy doom. Thou art not one who hast sinned because of mere youthful passion; but thou hast sinned when passion had died away, and when prudence had taken possession of thy soul; thou hast sinned when the heart and ebullition of youth had died—thou hast sinned, therefore, worse than a young man. O old man, may a child warn thee? I am sure I love thee with all my heart, and even now my young eyes weep for thee. Hast thou never seen an old man led by his little child when he was blind? It may be, that though thou art blind, a little child may lead thee to the Saviour. It is a child that now speaks to thee. O grey-headed man, would it not be to thee a source of misery that I, a youth, were saved, and thou, who art aged, wert lost? Oh! when you see the young Christian, doth not the tear run down your cheek? When you see a child in grace, doth the penitential sigh never start from your bosom? Methinks if I were old like thee, and saw some young child saved, I would wring my hands in misery, and say, "O Lord, what! such a child a Christian, and I unsaved, I unforgiven, I still unpardoned?" Quake! quake! quake! O aged sinner; be afraid! be afraid! be afraid! O unregenerate old man! Let your knees knock together! let your blood curdle

in your veins; let your heart quiver; let your flesh be jellied at the thought, that you will be lost; and that, as the Lord God liveth, there is but a step betwixt thee and death—between thee and hell!

But there are the **YOUNG**; and they are smiling, and saying—"Ah! that is good for old age. I think it quite right that old people should be religious; but why should I? I have not come to my eleventh hour yet." What did you say? "I said, I had not come to my eleventh hour." What did you say? *Will you repeat that?* No; you dare not, for you do not know when your eleventh hour may be. Does any man know his eleventh hour? Does any one of you know how many more days he may have to live? I do not. Does any one of my friends conceive that his death is a long way off? Nay; beloved, there is such a thing as death in a pew! The angel of death may be coming in that door, and flapping his black wings across this place, to find out some one who is marked for destruction; and ere you shall have entered your house, your soul may have departed, and you may have gone from this stage of existence. Consider then, I say, for ye are all, if ye are uncalled, like the man in the eleventh hour, standing in the market-place; consider, if ye are ever so young, have you not given too much time to Satan and the world already? I do not like the devil well enough to think that he ought to have the first twenty years of a man's life. Consider, young man; has not Satan had enough service from thee? Will not the time past suffice thee to have wrought the will of the Gentiles in serving divers lusts and passions? Once more; dost thou think it will give thee any comfort on thy death bed, to reflect that thou wast many years in sin, and not saved early? And again; dost thou not know, religion is so sweet, that we might well seek it, even for its sweetness, if it were not necessary for our soul's security? Ah! ye men of the eleventh hour, for such ye all are, may our Master come! and if he finds you idle, may he say, 'Go ye also, and work in my vineyard!'

To conclude: A word of encouragement to the oldest man and the oldest woman amongst us. Think not that you are beyond the pale of hope because you are aged. Do not believe Satan when he says to you—"Oh! you are too old a sinner to be saved." Tell him that he is a liar; that he does not know anything about it; for there are none too old to be saved. 'God will have mercy on all those that come to him. He takes no objection to youth; he takes no objection to old age. Hear this, ye aged sinners! If ye are now under a sense of sin, if ye are desirous of being saved, there is mercy in the Lord Jesus, even for you. And oh, beloved friends, one and all of you, are you this night crying out for mercy? Are you desirous of pardon? Do you feel that life is short, and death is sure? Do you know that in a few short days, a few narrow boards shall hold your body, and that your soul shall have gone from it into eternity? Do you want a guide across the trackless deserts, which lead to heaven or to hell? Do you want a conductor to lead you into paradise? Do you require angelic wings to lift you up to the celestial city? Do you seek for blood to pardon, for grace to sanctify? Then there is mercy for you; for all that feel their need of it and ask for it. The vilest wretch, the welcomer here; the worse the character, the more reason he should go to the Lord Jesus! It is grace, grace, grace, free grace! and the vilest, most sinful, oldest, youngest, anybody, who feels his need of a Saviour, is welcome to that Saviour now! The Lord give you grace to seek him! Remember that the least prayer will be heard; the weakest desire, the feeblest groan will be acknowledged in heaven; and little as you may think that you ever shall find mercy, you most assuredly shall, if you seek it through Christ.

Farewell! adieu old man! I know not who thou art; but it was laid on my heart to seek thee, and I have sought thee. O, poor old man! thou art like one who lost himself once in a pine forest. The snow fell thick around him. It was dark, damp, cold. The howling of the wolf was heard in the distance,

and he feared that that night he should be consumed. There remained but one protection for him, and that was that he should light around himself a fire, by which he might warm himself, and frighten away the wild beasts. He gathered together the pine wood and the dry, sere leaves, wherever he could find them; and he sought to find his match box. He found it, and he struck one match, but it was good for nothing. He struck another, and another, and another; and once he thought he had a light, and carefully held it in his fingers, seeking to bring it to the little kindling he had laid beneath his pile of wood. But it died out, and that, too, disappointed him. For some time he struck his matches; carelessly he did so at first; as the number diminished, he struck each one more carefully, till he came to the two last. He struck the last but one; he put it under his pine wood; it flamed a moment, and then a gust of wind blew it out, and now he came to the last. The wolf was howling, the wild wind was whistling, the snow was falling, the night was darkening; he must be there without a fire! Already his stiff joints began to freeze; his fingers were well nigh benumbed. Ah! you may guess how that man cowered himself on the earth, to strike within the circle his frame might make, the last, last match. You may imagine how he put up his prayer to God, that he might succeed the last time! "O heavens! let this last match succeed," said he. And warily, warily, did he look at it time after time, lest that too might fail. He strikes that match. On it depends his life; yet he strikes it; it is his all! Ah, glorious! the flame has caught. It blazes! He sits down and cheers himself. He is saved! He is saved! Or else it dies out, and the wolf devours him. O, there is the greyheaded old man. He has got his last match in the box. He has struck sixty-nine of them all to no effect, and now he has got to the seventieth. O God! if thou dost not strike the seventieth for him he is lost for ever! If thou dost not give him the light from heaven, fire from above, he must perish for ever! God grant that that last match may succeed with you, O old man!

God bless you; a happy new year to every one of you; many of them to those of you who are faithful to heaven; and a new year in heaven to those whom God may take away before another comes.—Adieu!

OUR PROSPECT AND PROVISION.

BY THE REV. JAMES SMITH, CHELTENHAM.

"As thy days, so shall thy strength be."—DEUT. xxxiii. 25.

THIS is part of the blessing of Asher, the descendants of the son of Bilhah. When he was born, Leah considered herself happy, and therefore called him "Asher," or "Happy." But it is now the common property of all the Lord's people, who are happy in state, whatever may be their experience; for, "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, and whose hope the Lord is." Jacob's God is the help of all Jacob's spiritual seed, and the hope of every believer in Jesus, therefore they are happy. Are they corrected? "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth." Are they reproached for the name of Christ? "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." Do they trust in the Lord? "Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he." Of the whole church of Jesus, however poor, tried, tempted, or troubled they may be, we may exclaim with Moses: "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." Let us now consider the text as the property of every true believer in the Lord Jesus. Here is—

First, THE PROSPECT SET BEFORE US, trying days, which will require strength, and such strength as only God can supply. We shall have days of trouble, for we are born to trouble, and our Lord has very graciously informed us, that "in the world we shall have tribulation." Our troubles may be external, or internal, or both. We may have trouble in the business, in the family, or in the church. The winds of trouble may come down suddenly upon us, as the storm on the lake. So they came on Job: one day, the greatest man in the east; the next, a poor, afflicted, forsaken one, sitting in ashes. Some of our troubles come directly from sin, our own sin or the sin of others. One rogue often brings trouble on many honest men; or, anon, may bring us into trouble by entering the church or the family, or entangling our own unwary minds. Or changes in the dispensations of Divine Providence may plunge us in difficulty or sorrow. Or death may bereave us; the wife may lose her husband, or the husband the desire of his eyes; the parents may lose their children, or children may be bereaved of their parents. The staff of the aged may be suddenly broken, or the adviser of youth may be silenced for ever. Days of bereavement are days of trouble. We may have to pass through much darkness. "Remember," said Solomon, "the days of darkness, for they shall be many." Many of the Lord's people have to walk in darkness, and have no light. Then they cannot read their evidences, trace their path, see their Father's face, or enjoy holy fellowship with spiritual brethren. The consolations of God are small with them. The streams of comfort run very low. It is a day of darkness and gloominess; they cannot sing in the ways of the Lord, for they see not the glory of the Lord. We shall be sure to have conflicts. The world is no friend to grace, and if you act in character, opposition will be manifested. Satan is a roaring lion still, and the enemy of all righteousness. He hates us perfectly, he watches us intently, in order to injure us if possible. He will oppose us, and just in proportion to our zeal in God's cause, and devotedness to the Saviour's praise. The law in the members will war against the law of the mind, and at times will bring us into captivity to the law of sin that is in our members. The opposite principles within will struggle, oppose each other, and make us feel with Paul, that the good that we would, we do not; but the evil that we would not, that we do; so that at times we shall be ready to cry out: "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" As Pharaoh said to Israel, "Evil is before us." The days will come, for the years draw nigh in which we shall say, "I have no pleasure in them." Even days of prosperity are days of trial, and often present a severer test to our principles and profession than adversity itself. Happy is the man who can heartily pray, "Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." Our immediate prospect, then, is not the most pleasant, but here lies our comfort—that let our trouble come from what quarter it may, the Lord says—"Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Turn we now to notice—

Secondly, THE PROVISION MADE FOR US; "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." God foresees, because he appoints our days. The nature and the number of our days are in God's decree. Therefore said Job: "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me, and many such things are with him." His eye has surveyed the whole path, fixed the route we are to take, and arranged all the toils, troubles, and trials we are to meet with. It is a sweet thought, that all comes according to our Father's arrangement.

"If light attends the course I run,
'Tis he provides those rays;
And 'tis his hand that hides my sun,
If darkness cloud my days."

Having appointed our days, the Lord provides for them. We are not left

to chance, nor thrown upon our own resources. But Jehovah-jireh has made provision for every moment, and for every step of our journey. The Lord our God goes before us, prepares for us, and furnishes all our supplies. The word *strength* includes all we can need, and he promises us strength. Strength proportioned to the day. Is it a long, wearying, searching, summer's day? Our strength is proportioned to it. Or is it a gold, dark, piercing winter's day? Our strength is in exact proportion to our wants. Our strength is suited to our day; strength of intellect, strength of hand, or strength of heart. Strength to carry the burden, to bear the reproaches, to endure the trial, and to overcome the foe. Our strength is certain, for God is true, his word is plain, and his faithfulness is great. We shall feel our need of it. We must prayerfully seek it; then we shall certainly receive it. Let us then expect trials, for we shall have them; but let us also expect reasonable and sufficient strength to bear them. Let us believe the word of promise, and be confident of its fulfilment, let what will take place. Remember, God is faithful, he cannot deny his word, or dishonour his character.

"Bound by his word we will display
A strength proportion'd to our day;
And when *united trials* meet,
Will show a path of safe retreat."

The promise is absolute: it is not if you feel *so*, or if you do *this*, but "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." It is as simple as it is positive; made up of nine monosyllables, as if intended for an infant's mind. We cannot mistake its meaning, we ought not to doubt its fulfilment. It always has been made good in the experience of believers, and it always will. Our case will not be an exception to the general rule. No, no! We shall find in the future, as we have found in the past, that as our day so will be our strength. The strength comes with the day, not before it. The strength is regulated by the day, not by our fears or hopes. As therefore in looking back we can say,

"Thus far we prove that promise good,
Which Jesus ratified with blood."

So in looking forward let us sing,

"O, yes, in the strength he has given,
And pledged his own word to bestow,
I'll fight through my passage to heaven,
And sing of his love as I go."

January 3.

JESUS AMONG THE PEOPLE; OR, PERSONAL EFFORT AND NO PROXY RELIGION.

BY THE REV. W. P. BALFERN, OF BOW.

Author of "Glimpses of Jesus."

"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people."—MATT. iv. 23.

"O sleep not thou as others do;
Awake, be vigilant, be brave;
The coward, and the sluggard too,
Must wear the fetters of the slave."

"No: let a careless world repose,
And slumber on through life's short day,
While Israel to the conflict goes,
And bears the glorious prize away."

WHEN Jehovah, remembering his promise made with his servant Abraham, put forth his hand and smote Egypt, and with signs and wonders brought forth his chosen people from the house of their bondage and sorrow; and when that people so miraculously delivered, listening only to the distant thunder of

Pharaoh's chariots and the shoutings of his captains, forgot what they had witnessed in the land of Ham, and stood trembling by the margin of the Red Sea, with the language of despondency and rebellion on their lips; then was it that Moses rose nobly to the occasion, and the strength of the meek man appeared in the words of encouragement which he uttered; while the long-suffering of the God of Israel was again displayed, in that so far from casting them away as a faithless generation, he commanded his servant to exhort them "TO GO FORWARD." We have thought that, as the year is still young, these words might be of service to us as a motto for the new period of time upon which we have entered. But in order that we may really go forward with promise, purpose, and intelligence, we must keep in view *more* than words, and the eye of faith must constantly view him whom the Evangelist brings before us as healing the sick, and preaching to the multitudes which thronged around him in the regions of Galilee.

What a beautiful and instructive picture for the zealous Christian to keep before him, to hang up in the chambers of his heart, and study from day to day! Here we see how Jesus "bore our griefs and carried our sorrows." From his conflict with Satan in the wilderness, and solitary discipline amid caves and wild beasts, he comes forth to his public work to preach the Gospel, to plant the standard of the cross upon the fortress of sin, to storm the munitions of hell, and to heal the sick both in body and mind.

Numbers during the past year have isolated themselves from the community in general, under the influence of very different motives from those which actuated Christ, when led forth under the influence of God's Spirit to grapple with the principalities and powers of hell on behalf of his people. They have reduced themselves for a time to the capacity and functions of a mere *word* machine, and have appeared before their fellows in a cloud of verbal greatness—a greatness which has not its seat in the affections, the understanding, or conscience, but in the memory; and which greatness is frequently very correctly symbolized by the enigmatical letters appended to their names. Many of such, it is to be feared, have but laboured to carry themselves to a distance from their fellow-creatures; and have toiled to make themselves *light* upon the consciences of their fellow-men. Christian, see to it, that the commencement of thy course of public labour does not originate in mere intellectual pride, or love of verbal renown, lest God's Spirit being grieved, should leave thee to mourn over the failure of thy hopes, and thy heart should be transformed into a wilderness, where the weeds of egotism and conceit, envy and pride, constantly grow, and entwine around those, who not having thought it either their duty, or their wisdom to emulate thy course, stand fruitful in the garden of God.

And see to it, believer, that thy secret discipline and conflicts carry thee, even as they did Christ, into personal contact with perishing men, to pour into their empty hearts if possible, the precious truth thou hast received, and to comfort those who mourn with a godly sorrow. Attempt not to buy off from personal effort, for God will not accept of proxy religion. It is easier for some to give a ten pound note to a society than to visit the sick, or to enter those abodes where poverty weeps, and vice displays her loathsome form. But Christ will not accept of our gold, when given under the influence of such a motive. He will not permit us to purchase immunity from labour in his cause, as we buy a coat or a carriage. Personal effort, personal effort is the want of the age. Help, help Christian! cry the perishing multitudes from our courts and alleys, our crowded streets and damp cellars, our jails and workshops, our dens of infamy, desolate homes, beds of pining sickness, and hopeless death. Yes, and Help, help! echoes back the prurient press, with its vain fictions; covert infidelity, poetical enmity, and eloquent hatred of the truth.

What can be done, Christian? Hast thou no little pebble of effort thou canst throw in to break the mighty stream of sparkling vice as it flows on,

mocking the parched lips of myriads? Hast thou no word, no pen? The age cries not for brilliant thoughts, philosophy; of these it has enough. The tale of Jesus' love is simple, plain, and sweet, and potent on the heart, and *this* is what all need. Hast thou no scene of labour, then—no ear which thou canst gain? Is there no drooping heart which thou couldst cheer? none you perchance could lead up to the house of God? Not one! No man, or woman, or child? The world must be a desert place indeed to thee; but hast thou tried? What saith our Lord? "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." Yes, and woe be to us if we pass not *through it* to labour for his cause. Is it not written that "faith without works is dead;" and if we employ our money to buy off work, what is the character of our faith? Look at Christ in the midst of the multitude. He did not look at them from a distance, or delegate his disciples to visit them, or form an ecclesiastical sanhedrim to do so—but he went himself. O ecclesiastical dignity! if thy status is too high, thy robes too fine for personal effort for Christ; if thou wilt shirk his cross, thy dobm is sealed. And can we be too great to serve the Lord; and is it a cross to labour for his name? Tell us, ye healthy, joyful spirits in the march of love, has not your toil dispelled your cloud of doubts, given eloquence to the stammering tongue, and fervour to your prayers, and made the palsied hand of faith grow strong? Has it not given oil to the head, brightness to the eye, colour to the cheek, and so made the face to shine, that some have said, "And is this indeed our friend, who sat so many years in the porches of Bethesda, waiting for a cure?" Believer, wouldst thou see the church arise, ask yourself, "Am I doing what I can to help her?" Members of Christian churches, have you entered into the church as a place of feasting and spiritual enjoyment simply? If so, it will be a barren place to you. Are you, while at ease in Zion, seeking for Gospel consolation? Hear what God saith to you—"Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters: give ear unto my speech. Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless women: for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come." Have ye not read—"Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways"? Let each arouse himself, and ask, "What is there for me to do; what grace am I to exemplify; what work can I perform?" Are we giving to Christ only that which is *convenient*? Had he himself given us nothing more, how much should we possess? But will he accept it? Was it not the sin of God's ancient people that they offered polluted bread upon his altar, and brought the blind, the lame, and the sick for sacrifice? Let us give him that which is *inconvenient*, for Christ will not accept the refuse of our time, strength, intellect, and property. And if this is our spirit, how can we be his disciples, who gave his best, his all,—himself?

Professing Christians, is it not time that we awake out of sleep, and see what we can do by our personal efforts towards helping on the kingdom of Christ? Let us emulate Jesus, who went *among the people*; let us take the Gospel with us wherever we go; let us go forward with this lever in our hand, and the Spirit of God will remove our impediments. Having this key of the human heart in our fingers, well oiled with the love of God's Spirit, the bolts and bars of unbelief will be turned back in many a sinner's heart, and with the eye of faith we shall see Jesus still in the midst of the multitude doing even a greater work than that of opening the blind eye, and unstopping the deaf ear. But let us see to it, that we have the *oil* as well as the key, remembering that truth, communicated under the influence of the intellect, is like the light of the moon—it is, no doubt, of service to the traveller, but while it helps him to pick his steps it freezes him; while truth, uttered under the influence of anger, is like the lightning's flash—it may excite surprise and admiration, but more frequently it destroys that which it is our interest to preserve. But truth, made known under the influence of love, is like the light of the sun, which vivifies while it enlightens, and causes the sap to

ascend, the green bud of promise to appear, and clothes all nature in a mantle of beauty, fruitfulness, and joy. Or, it is like the gentle distilling dew, which, though it may cause the little flower to droop its head, enables it to exhale a celestial perfume. May we "go forward," then, "speaking the truth in love," and God will crown our efforts with success.

"Rest not! life is sweeping by,
Do and ~~DARE~~ before you die;
Something mighty and sublime
Leave behind to conquer time;
Glorious 'tis to live for aye,
When these forms have passed away.

Haste not! rest not! calmly wait,
Conquer self and thou art great;
Duty be thy polar guide,—
Do the right whate'er betide!
Haste not! rest not! conflicts past,
God shall crown thy work at last."

THE LIVING BREAD.

BY THE REV. JOHN BLOOMFIELD.

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"He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever."—JOHN vi. 58.

This part of the sacred volume is replete with heavenly teaching, and with the most solemn warning to the followers of Christ. In the days of his illustrious life, our Lord was frequently followed for temporal gains, or from other earthly motives. This self-seeking was not confined to the age in which the Saviour lived. Many now have Christ on their lips, whose hearts are going after their covetousness. What shall it profit me? is still the cry of many who have no room in their hearts for him who had not where to lay his head. Among those who followed the Saviour when on earth, there were murmurers, doubters, and haters; they did not understand his essential majesty, his mediatorial character, or his merciful mission, John vi. 41. His public teaching was characterized by great originality, simplicity, and impressiveness. At the same time, however, there was no hunting after startling novelties; no pandering to the prejudices and passions of the multitude; no effort or aim to win the applause of dying men. In illustrating the great principles of faith and practice, he employed no outrageous figures. In the teaching of Christ there was an uncompromising fidelity, in some instances approaching to great severity. The truths he taught were by no means pleasant to the carnal mind. His teaching was corrective as well as instructive. He taught his disciples that there were deeper necessities than those which relate to natural life, *viz.*: the necessities of their deathless spirits. The Great Teacher of the divine mysteries warned his hearers against the selfishness, the sensualism, and the asceticisms of the human heart; he invited the hungry to eat that which is good, and to delight themselves in the fatness of Gospel provision; assuring them that whosoever should eat of the living bread that came down from heaven should never die: "For he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever." Observe here three things: provision, participation, and assurance.

I. The PROVISION, "this bread." This bread in distinction from the manna which fell in the wilderness, and by which the Israelites were supported.

1.—It is *living* bread—"the bread of life"—Christ crucified is the children's bread—the bread which came down from God—the sacrificial work of the Mediator is heavenly meat for those who hunger and thirst for the mysteries of the kingdom. It is the staff of their spiritual existence, and the nutriment of their heaven-seeking faith. What is the ministry without this

bread? What food for hungry souls without this bread? There is no food without Christ. Just as the Levitical sacrifices were to the Jews the bread of God, Lev. xxi. 21, so is a crucified Saviour to the New Testament church. Christ is the root of life—the strength of life—the food of life—and the glory of life. This bread gives life, maintains life, and perfects life. It is old bread, and yet ever new; it increases the appetite while it satisfies the soul. Christ is in his sacrifice—righteousness and grace is the ever living, the ever pure and the everlasting bread. The people of God who are poor and needy—who have to do business in deep waters, cannot feed upon either stones or ashes; such are false doctrines, worldly pleasures, and formal worship; nor upon the novelties of men in religion, for they are lies of Satan. They must have Christ in the word, and the word in Christ. The Spirit by Christ, and Christ by the Spirit. The dreams of the human intellect, the schemes of vain philosophy cannot feed them. It is the Gospel of Christ, and the Christ of the Gospel, that constitutes the food of the heaven-born and heaven-bound pilgrim.

2.—It is the “*true bread*,” or the bread of truth. The manna was typical bread. The Son of God, in his immeasurable fulness, in his complete atonement, and in his intrinsic worth and endless merit, is the truth or substance of all the ancient Levitical shadows. The spiritual do not feed upon the types, but upon the meaning or substance of them.

3.—It is *heavenly provision*: “The bread which came down from heaven.” It is heavenly in its origin, in its nature, in its freshness, and in its tendency. It was prepared in heaven; it came from heaven; and it nourishes and strengthens the mind for heaven; it uplifts the soul heavenward; it came like all heaven’s gifts, unmerited and free; it is the sovereign bestowment of the God of heaven; and it is the ordained food of all the heirs of heaven. The natural man feedeth upon natural things, the carnal upon carnal things; but the renewed and spiritual man feedeth only upon God’s provisions in the Gospel of Christ.

4.—It is *divine bread*, for the “bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven.” It is the provision of God’s mercy; it is the gift of sovereign love; the bread he blesses, and the food, by the eating of which his children become healthy, vigorous, and strong.

II. The *PARTICIPATION*: “He that eateth of this bread”—not he that heareth of this bread—not he that looketh upon this bread as exhibited on the Gospel table—but he that *eateth* of this bread, he it is that shall live for ever. What is eating of this *bread*?

1.—It is the mind *appropriating* Christ. The man who believeth with his whole heart in Jesus Christ he it is that shall live for ever. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life,” John vi. 47.

2.—It is the mind *meditating* upon Christ. In prayerful meditation the soul is enlarged, faith is increased, and the Saviour is endeared. What sweet meditations some of God’s people are favoured to enjoy! What abstractedness of soul at times is realized! What profitable and delightful communion with Jehovah Jesus is enjoyed! Like as it was with the Royal Psalmist, our meditation of him is sweet. It is through meditation that the Holy Spirit leads us further and further into the knowledge of the sacred mysteries, and fills our minds with exalted and enrapturing views of the Mediator’s glories. There must, therefore, not only be a reading of the truths of the Gospel, but a pondering them over in our hearts. If you frequent the house of God merely to be seen, or read the Holy Scriptures from a mere habit or custom, if you are strangers to the vitality of real godliness, then you see no importance in these sacred meditations, neither do you desire to be engaged therein. But the man of God loves to have his soul employed in meditating upon Gospel themes. He longs to have his mind absorbed in devout contemplations upon the goings forth, and wondrous manifestations of Jehovah’s endless and ineffable love.

This participation is *spiritual*. It is the soul's life that is nourished by this bread. He lives by faith on the Son of God; from Christ he derives all his strength; in Christ his love centers; in his triumphs he delights, and in his presence and glory he hopes to live. The Saviour's sayings and doings constitute the bread he desires, and upon which he feeds; his personal and mediatorial glories are attractive forces to his soul, and his Gospel and providence the books of his study. It is *frequent*. It is the believer's desire and delight to receive his daily allowance from the King's table. He needs his "daily bread;" every day he has trials, conflicts, and sorrows; and every day he wants that which increases his strength, and feeds his faith. It is *freely enjoyed*; it rejoiceth the heart of all who hunger and thirst after righteousness to know that that bread is provided and bestowed gratuitously; the bread of heaven is free grace bread.

O beloved! thou hast nothing to give, and God does not require anything from thee for this bread. Without money come to Jesus Christ and buy, for thou art "a poor sinner and nothing at all; but Jesus Christ is thy all and in all." Lord, evermore give us this bread.

III. THE ASSURANCE "*he shall live for ever.*" The believer shall live happily, holily; gloriously, eternally. He shall live on the best of provision; he shall live with the best of company; he shall live for the best of purposes; and he shall live for ever. Live for ever! Who shall live for ever? Who shall be saved for ever? He that eateth this bread. But oh, to be lost for ever—to be lost for ever! How terrible the thought! O God, save us by thy mighty and invincible grace! O God, give us to drink of the water of life! Heal us by the fruits of the tree of life; and feed us for ever with the bread of heaven; for he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT.

BY THE REV. J. HAMILTON, D.D.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith."—GAL. v. 22.

LOVE.

WHEREVER there is union to Christ there is LOVE. This is the essential principle. Whatever else there be, if there be not love, it profits nothing, it proves nothing. Love to God and our neighbour is the essence of piety. It is the body, the basis, the staple element; and if the great commandment, and the next greatest be absent, whatever else there be, there is not Christianity. Reader, have you got it? To Christ's question, "Lovest thou me?" is it your answer, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee?" Then, if you love Jesus, you will love him whose express imago Jesus is. To God in Christ your soul will be attached in gratitude, submission, and complacency. You will not wish him less holy, less righteous,

less true. Awed by his glorious majesty, and melted by his ineffable mercy, all that is dust and ashes in you will be humbled, and all that is devout and filial will be kindled into grateful adoration. If nothingness and sin bid you be silent, the sight of your Great Representative gone back to the bosom of his Father, inspires you with a joyful assurance and a humble confidence Godward; and, boldest where you are most abased, beneath the Cross you learn to cry, Abba, Father. You love him who first loved you, and "feeling it sweet to be accepted of God on any grounds, to be accepted in his own beloved Son, you feel is sweeter far."*

JOY.

The essence of love is attachment. Joy is the happiness of love. It is love exulting. It is love aware of its

* Nevins' Remains, p. 27.

own felicity, and rioting in riches which it has no fear of exhausting. It is love taking a view of its treasure, and surrendering itself to bliss without foreboding. "God's promises appear so strong, so solid, so substantial, more so than the rocks and everlasting hills; and his perfections, what shall I say of them? When I think of one, I wish to dwell upon it for ever; but another, and another equally glorious, claims a share of admiration; and when I begin to praise, I wish never to cease, but to find it the commencement of that song which will never end. Very often have I felt as if I could that moment throw off the body, without first going to bid them farewell that are at home in my house. Let who will be rich, or admired, or prosperous, it is enough for me that there is such a God as Jehovah, such a Saviour as Jesus, and that they are infinitely and unchangeably glorious and happy!"* And in a similar frame another felt, "Were the universe destroyed, and I the only being in it besides God, he is fully adequate to my complete happiness; and had I been in an African wood, surrounded by venomous serpents, and devouring beasts, and savage men, in such a frame I should be the subject of perfect peace and exalted joy."†

PEACE.

If joy be love exulting, peace is love reposing. It is love on the green pastures, it is love beside the still waters. It is that great calm which comes over the conscience when it sees the atonement sufficient and the Saviour willing. It is unclouded azure in a lake of glass; it is the soul which Christ has pacified, spread out in serenity and simple faith, and the Lord God, merciful and gracious, smiling over it.

LONG-SUFFERING.

This is love enduring. If the trial come direct from God, it is enough. It is correction. It is his Heavenly Father's hand, and with Luther the disciple cries, "Strike, Lord, strike.

But, oh! do not forsake me." If the trial come from Christian brethren, till it be seven-fold seventy times repeated, love to Jesus demands forgiveness. If it come from worldly men, it is the occasion for that magnanimity which recompenses evil with good. And in every case it is an opportunity for following a Saviour whom sufferings made perfect. That Saviour never loved the Father more intensely than when his Father's face was hid, and when the bitter cup proclaimed his justice terrible, and his truth severe. One apostle denied him, and all the disciples forsook him; but Jesus prayed for Peter, whilst Peter was cursing, and his love followed the rest, even when they were running away. Jerusalem killed him: but in foresight of the guilty deed, it was over Jerusalem that Jesus wept: and when the deed was done, in publishing pardon and the peace of God, it was at Jerusalem that Evangelists were directed to begin.

GENTLENESS.

Gentleness or affectionateness‡ is love in society. It is love holding intercourse with those around it. It is that cordiality of aspect, and that soul of speech, which assure us that kind and earnest hearts may still be met with here below. It is that quiet influence which, like perfumed flame from an alabaster lamp, fills many a home with light and warmth and fragrance all together. It is the carpet, soft and deep, which, whilst it diffuses a look of ample comfort, deadens many a creaking sound. It is the curtain which, from many a beloved form, wards off at once the summer's glow, and the winter's wind. It is the pillow on which sickness lays its head and forgets half its misery, and to which death comes in a balmier dream. It is considerateness. It is tenderness of feeling. It is warmth of affection. It is promptitude of sympathy. It is love in all its depth, and all its delicacy. It is every melting thing included in that matchless grace, "the GENTLENESS of Christ."§

* Payson's Life, chap. 10.

† $\chi\rho\eta\sigma\tau\acute{o}\tau\eta\varsigma$.

† Memoirs of Rev. S. Pearce.

§ 2 Cor. x. 1.

GOODNESS.

Goodness or beneficence is love in action, love with its hand at the plough, love with the burden on its back. It is love carrying medicine to the sick, and food to the famished. It is love reading the Bible to the blind, and explaining the Gospel to the felon in his cell. It is love at the Sunday class or in the Ragged school. It is love at the hovel-door, or sailing far away in the missionary ship. But whatever task it undertakes, it is still the same,—Love following his footsteps, who "went about continually DOING GOOD."

FAITH.

Whether it means trust in God, or fidelity to principle and duty, Faith is love in the battle-field. It is constancy following hard after God, when the world cries "Halt." It is zeal holding fast sound words when fervour is costly and sound words are obnoxious. It is firmness marching through fire and through water to the post where duty calls and the captain waits. It is Elijah before Ahab. It is Stephen before the Sanhedrim. It is Luther at Worms. It is the martyr in the flames. Nay, it is a greater than all,—it is Jesus in the desert.* It is Jesus in Gethsemane. It is Jesus on the cross. And it is whosoever, pursuing the path, or finishing the work which God has given him, like the great Forerunner, does not fear to die.

MEEKNESS.

Meekness is love at school—love at the Saviour's school. It is Christian lowliness. It is the disciple learning to know himself; learning to fear, and distrust, and abhor himself. It is the disciple practising the sweet but self-emptying lesson of putting on the Lord Jesus, and finding all his righteous in that righteous Other. It is the disciple learning the defects of his own character, and taking hints from hostile as well as friendly monitors. It is the disciple praying and watching for the improvement of his talents, the mellowing of his temper, and the amelioration of his character.

It is the loving Christian at the Saviour's feet, learning of him who is meek and lowly, and finding rest for his own soul.

TEMPERANCE.

Temperance is love in the gymnasium, love enduring hardness, love seeking to become healthful and athletic, love striving for the mastery in all things, and bringing the body under. It is superiority to sensual delights, and it is the power of applying resolutely to irksome duties for the Master's sake. It is self-denial and self-control. Fearful lest it should subside to gross carnality, or waste away into shadowy and hectic sentiment, temperance is love alert and timeously astir; sometimes rising before day for prayer, sometimes spending that day on tasks which laziness or daintiness declines. It is love with girt loins, and dusty feet, and hands which work makes horny. It is love with the empty scrip but the glowing check,—love subsisting on pulse and water but grown so healthful and so hardy, that it "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

Reader, if you abide in Jesus,—if his words abide in you, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful. Graces such as these will be in you, and abound. Is it so? The main element of the Christian character, holy love, does it abound in you? And blending with it, tinging it and deriving sweetness from it, can you detect from time to time joy in God, peace of conscience, patience in suffering, and forgiveness of injury, affectionateness, beneficence, trust in God, and trustworthiness in your place and calling, a lowly willingness to learn and a readiness to take up the cross and deny yourself? When Christians live close to Christ his mind is transfused into theirs. "Purity and love shine forth in their character: meekness and truth guide their footsteps. Nay, in the experience of some, so great has been the change, that the very expression of their countenance has altered. Thus was it with Moses and

* Matt. iv. 1-11.

Stephen. These blessed saints were full of God; Christ was in them of a truth; and his likeness was thus by them peculiarly reflected. Nor is it wonderful that such should sometimes be the case with believers; for, when he thus fills their hearts with his presence, when his peace dwells there;

when the calm joy which he felt, when rejoicing in spirit, reigns there, there must needs be gentleness in their manners, and heavenliness in their talk, and meekness in their eye, and angelic serenity and conscious elevation in their whole countenance.*

OBJECTIONS TO MAKING A RELIGIOUS PROFESSION ANSWERED.

BY THE REV. A. J. MORRIS, HOLLOWAY.

WHEN the duty of a formal acknowledgment of Christ, an identification with his people, and the commemoration of his death in his Supper, are urged, the reply for substance is frequently made: "It is not absolutely necessary to join a church: you cannot maintain that only those who belong to religious societies will enter the kingdom of heaven. It may be very good and profitable as a rule, but I am left at liberty to do it or leave it alone as I think proper. You cannot pretend that there is no salvation out of the church." The answer to this is not far to seek. We suppose that there is no fixed and universal rule of necessity in such things. Necessity is not in the subject, but in man. We can conceive of great things not being necessary sometimes, and of very little things being necessary sometimes on this ground. Is it necessary for a man to do, or safe to leave undone, what he knows to be according to the will of God? Is persistence in disobedience compatible with a state of spiritual security? But why talk at all of necessity? necessity in relation to what? your salvation? But, conceding what you assume, is that the only light in which to regard the

Divine will? Is personal profit the only thing that gives that will power over your nature? Do you really mean that you will do only what you are obliged to, that you care nothing for law and love, that you are indifferent to a Maker's pleasure and a Saviour's grace, but that you do want to get to heaven? Is that the offering you make to God, an offering dictated by no sense of his claims and favours, no passion to serve him worthily, but a mere calculation of spiritual profit? A small portion of David's disposition, 2 Sam. xxiv. 24, which would not be content without paying for his sacrifice, would make you reason very differently: you would say, "Does Christ enjoin this mode of acknowledgment? Has he expressed his will that all that love him should show forth his death? Is social fellowship in the Gospel his ordinance? Then, whether necessary or not, I must comply; my soul demands this utterance of its homage; if not indispensable to a future good, it is indispensable to my heart's best affections; if he exact it not as a condition of his favour, I must thus reveal my reverence for his authority, and my gratitude for his redemption.

THE DAWN OF HEAVEN.

SOME years after the death of Mary Ann (an account of whose religious experience was given in the January Number), I was summoned to the sick bed of her sister. She was a younger sister, whom I had never seen since she was a mere child, and of whose religious character I had no knowledge. She had married; and after many trying changes she was now in the city of

— A kind lady, one of my own friends who resided in that city, and who had formerly known something of her family, had accidentally heard of her illness, had called upon her, and now did me the favour to bring me the sick woman's request that I "would go and see her." She told me I should find her in a very destitute condition, very much unbefriended and alone, though

* "Thoughts on Union to Christ," by Southcote. Edin. 1833, p. 236.

she had herself done something for her, to make her a little more comfortable. I received this message in the evening, and early the next morning I made my way to the house to which she had directed me.

I found the sick woman in a lodging-house, among strangers, where nobody knew her except her husband, and manifestly nobody cared for her. She was in the garret, in a little room close under the roof of the house. The scanty furniture, and the whole appearance of the room, showed me at a glance how unenviable was her condition. There was but one chair in the room, and this was used for a table (the only one she had), on which were placed some vials of medicine, a teacup and a saucer, which constituted all the furniture of the room, except her humble bed. But all was neat and clean. If there was scantiness, there was decency.

As I entered the room, I perceived at once her hopeless condition. She was emaciated, pale, tormented with a hollow cough, unable to speak but in a whisper, and her cheek was flushed with that round spot of peculiar red, with which I had become too familiar to mistake it for anything else than the fatal signal. I approached the bed on which she was lying, told her who I was, and offered her my hand.

"I am very happy—to see you," said she (speaking with effort and only in a whisper, and compelled to pause at almost every word). "I did not suppose—you would remember me—at all,—and for a long time—I could not have courage—to send—for you,—or—let you know—that I was here. But I remembered—you visited—my sister,—Mary Ann,—when she died,—and I had—a great desire—to—see you."

"I am very glad," said I, "to be able to see you; but I am sorry to find you so ill. I wish I had known that you were here sooner."

"You are—very kind, sir; but I was—afraid to trouble you. I have not—seen you—before,—since I was—a little child;—and I supposed—you had—forgotten, that—there was such a person. I am very thankful to you—for being so kind—as to come to see me."

"Have you been sick long?"

"Yes, sir,—a good many—months. I have lately—been growing much worse,—and I want now—to get home—to my mother,—this week,—if I can. I think—I should be better there—for a little while,—though I cannot tell."

"Do you think you are well enough to go home?"

"I hope—I could go and live to get there. The—hottest of the summer—is coming on soon,—and our place here—is very uncomfortable; but—most of all—I want to see my mother—once more before I die." And the big tears rolled fast over her fevered cheek.

"I hope," said I, "you may be able to see her; but you do not seem to have much strength just now."

"Indeed, sir,—my strength—is—all gone. I cannot—stand on my feet—any longer. Before I became—so weak—I used to work with my needle—and help my husband—earn something;—and then, we had—a more comfortable place. But I can do nothing—

now—and so we came—to this garret—to save rent."

"Have you much pain?"

"Yes, sir,—I am in—great pain now,—the most—of the time."

"Do you ever expect to get well?"

"Oh, no, sir,—I shall—never get well. I know I am—to die—before long;—the consumption—is—a hopeless disease. This painful cough—will soon end—my days."

"Are you afraid to die?"

"Oh, no, sir," said she with a smile, "Jesus—is my hope. He—will save me."

"Trust him," said I; "you trust eternal truth. He has promised,"—

Interrupting me, she replied,—

"What can anybody want—more than the promises? It seems to me—the promises—are enough—for everybody;—so sweet—they are so full. Why, God—has promised—to make—an everlasting covenant—with us poor sinners!" And tears of joy coursed down her smiling face.

I conversed with her as long as I thought it best for her. All her conversation was in the same happy strain. She appeared very much exhausted, and I had little hope that her desire to "see her mother once more," would ever be gratified. Indeed I did not think she would live till sun-set. I prayed with her, and promising to call again in the afternoon, I left her.

Some little arrangements were made for her comfort, and in the afternoon I called there again. She was evidently worse, but her joy was full. Said she,—

"I bless my God—for all my pain—for the disappointments—of my past life,—and the strange—strange way—in which—he has—led me on. I have had trials—from trials. My husband—did not prosper—as he hoped—to do,—and sometimes—we have been—in distress. But—my trials have—done me good. Now we have few wants. You know I cannot—eat anything now,—and I hope—his wages—will keep him—from suffering. I came—to this—little room—when I could not work—any longer,—on purpose to relieve him. The rent—is cheaper—here—in this—little garret,—and I want to be—as little burdensome—to him—as possible. I used to think—when I first made a profession—of religion—trials would—overcome me;—but God makes me happy—in them. I find—if one—is not worldly—trials are easy—to bear;—and if—we look towards God—and heaven—they are—nothing at all—but mercies."

"And does your husband feel as you do? Is he a pious man?"

She turned her languid head upon her pillow, glancing around the room, to see if the nurse who had been procured for her, had left the room, and perceiving she was not there she, said—

"I suppose—I may speak—freely—to you—about my husband—since—we are alone. He is not—religious,—and that is the trouble—of my heart."

She could say no more: she wept and sobbed aloud. After a little time, becoming more composed, evidently struggling to suppress her emotions, she continued,—

"I must leave that—I can't—speak—of him. Oh, it seems to me—as if the careless,

who neglect—salvation—have never—read—God's promises. If they had—and knew—what they meant—they could not—help trusting—them. I am happier now—than ever—I was before. It is sweet to suffer—this pain;—when Christ—puts such delights—into my soul."

She was now stronger than I had expected to find her. I prayed with her, and promising to see her again the next day, I left her.

I was prevented from calling to see her the next morning, as I had intended; and when I called in the afternoon, I perceived her end was very fast approaching. Her countenance was changed, her pulse more feeble and fluttering, her voice was now perfectly restored, and she could speak with strong, clear articulation. She mentioned her recovered voice as an instance of God's goodness to her, and both she and her husband took it as an evidence that she might live to reach her home. To me it was only an evidence to the contrary. She did not appear to me to be at all aware how near she was to death, and still entertained the hope of starting the next day, "to go home to her mother." I felt very reluctant to crush that hope; but I thought she ought to be made acquainted with the prospect before her. She was still very weak and in some pain, and when I mentioned her sufferings to her, and expressed my sorrow that she had so much to endure, her face lighted up with a glad smile: she said,—

"Oh, it is pleasant to suffer, when we know it is our God that brings us it. He does not afflict me too much. My poor body is weak and almost gone; but my God fills me with the delights of his love. My heart is full of joy. I am perfectly happy. I shall soon be where Christ is, and love him for ever."

"I suppose," said I, "you are aware that you cannot now last but a little while; and are prepared to go, at any moment when God bids."

"I have no desire, sir, to get well. Why should I have? There is nothing in this world for me. You see we have nothing. I have parted with all my little furniture and my clothes; to get bread and pay our debts; and I don't want the world; it is nothing to me now, and I leave it willingly. I am happy. God makes me happy. Christ is enough for me. I love to trust God's promises. I trust him for all I want, and he makes me very happy. Death seems like nothing to me. It is my friend. I welcome it. Dying is only a step, and then I shall be at home, at home;"

and tears of joy coursed down her smiling face. The last word—*home*, which she had uttered, seemed to remind her of her earthly home, and she added,—

"To-morrow, I hope to go home to my mother, and see her and all my other friends once more; perhaps I may."

"I am afraid not, my dear friend. You are very low, and I wish you to be ready to die at any moment."

Turning her death-glazed eyes upon me, she asked—

"Shall I die to-night? If you think so, tell me plainly. Don't weep so for me. I thank you for all your kind sympathy; but I am perfectly happy. God fulfils to me all his promises. I leave all in his hands—gladly, joyfully. But I think I can live to get home. You think I shall die to-night. I thank you for letting me know it; and I am ready if God calls. But if I am alive, may I see you in the morning? God will reward you, I know, for all your kindness to me."

"Yes, my child; you may expect me here in the morning; but if you have anything you wish to say to me, you had better say it now."

"I have no more to say, but to thank you again. Your kind words have done me great good; and it has been sweet to me, very sweet, to join with you in prayer. Help me to praise God for the delights that fill my soul. Don't weep so for me."

I prayed with her, and praised God as she desired, and then bade her farewell. "Do not think I weep because I am sorry," said she, "I weep because I am overcome with joy. Delights fill my happy soul. This is the dawn of heaven. My heaven is begun. Dying is sweet to me. I go to my blessed Lord. I thank you for coming to me. Farewell, farewell."

Early the next morning I returned to that privileged garret. It was empty! Even her corpse was not there! She had died about four hours after I left her; her body had been placed in its coffin, conveyed on board the vessel, and on the very day in which she expected to see her "mother once more," her mother received the lifeless corpse of her child.

It now lies buried in the grave-yard of her native valley. She and Mary Ann sleep side by side. And they shall rise together from the dead, in that coming day when our Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven, "to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe."

THE REV. JOHN BRANCH.

We have the painful duty of recording the demise of our highly esteemed friend and brother, the pastor of the Baptist Church, Church Street, Blackfriars, which transpired on Saturday, January 12, aged 40 years. He has left behind him a widow and six children to deplore his loss. His earthly remains were interred in Abney Park Cemetery, on the following Friday; the funeral procession was met at the grave by a large body of the London City Missionaries, who followed their friend and former

fellow-labourer to the grave. The Rev. John Robinson, one of the Secretaries of the London City Mission, conducted the devotional service, and delivered an impressive address to the son of the deceased, who represented the bereaved family at the grave—to the church, and to the missionaries present. The funeral sermon was preached on Lord's Day Morning, January 20, to an overflowing congregation, from Acts x. 38, by the Rev. Robert Ainslie, who knew and loved him well; who, after speaking of the

Master, made the following touching and truthful reference to Mr. Branch:—

"The circumstance which has occasioned our meeting together this morning, is the death of your esteemed pastor, the Rev. John Branch. When I heard of his death, the words of the text struck me as being singularly true in this case. Of his younger days it is not necessary I should speak. He married early in life, and he leaves behind him a widow whose worth you all know, and six children. Two sons are in Australia, and one son and three daughters are in our midst this morning. You will not forget as a church his bereaved widow, nor lose sight of his children. I first became acquainted with John Branch in the spring of 1839, when he entered himself as a candidate for the office of City Missionary. He was accepted by the committee for the usual probationary period, at the close of which he was confirmed in the appointment. It was at this time that the noble mission was struggling with great difficulties from want of funds; public confidence had not been fully attained, so that in 1841 the number of missionaries was reduced to 42; when Mr. Branch entered the number was 50. There was a great difficulty in obtaining funds; and until it was better known, it did not receive the cordial suffrages of all denominations. About this time Mr. Nasmyth, the founder of the Mission, died. Mr. Branch's first appointment was to Coram-street; afterwards to the vicinities of Covent-garden and Drury Lane theatres. In the 'City Missionary Magazine,' for 1852, is found a very valuable paper written by him on 'Death Bed Scenes.' In addition to his ordinary labours, Mr. Branch took active part in all special works undertaken by the Mission; as, for instance, the abolition of Fairlop Fair, and supplying London with the Holy Scriptures (by which 40,000 copies of the New Testament and Psalter were distributed within a circle of eight miles round St. Paul's). In addition, also, special efforts were made for the restoration of the Jews; for the police and for cabmen; all these greatly interested your late pastor. In September, 1849, he became one of the general superintendents of the Mission, the duties of which he honourably and faithfully discharged. He considered this as one of the most interesting and happy periods of his life. In 1845 he resigned his connection with the London City Mission, and entered upon the pastorate of the Baptist Church in the Waterloo-road, on which occasion I, at the request of himself and friends, delivered to him a few words of counsel and advice. His labours and successes there are too well known to be dwelt upon."

Speaking of Mr. Branch as a minister, Mr. Ainslie said, "He was not a man of erudition or high intellectual powers; but he had a sound mind, common sense, and quick perception of character, and a loving heart, all of which were consecrated to the well-being of his fellow man. In all places where

ever he entered, his natural gifts made a way for him. He was kind and faithful to all good missionaries; and the poor of London never had a warmer friend. Of late years he was much amongst the rich, not to amuse them or feast them—but to plead with them for the interests of the poor and the outcast. No man could ever draw a more graphic sketch of the miseries and privations of the poor than could John Branch; and hundreds and thousands of pounds he has obtained for such objects. He visited in person many abodes of misery and crime. Whenever I have visited him of a morning, I have seen he had numerous personal applications from all classes, seeking advice; and to missionaries, ministers, and Christians of all denominations he gave advice, warning, and encouragement with great discernment. Not a few in the upper classes of life looked to him for advice. He never assumed unreal greatness. He officiated some time as chaplain to a large establishment in St. Paul's Church Yard, (Messrs. Hitchcock and Rogers). He introduced many to situations whereby to obtain an honest livelihood. Whenever he could raise a fellow creature upward and onward, he considered no trouble too great. He was above playing tricks, or making himself an object of wonder to court popularity. The love of his Saviour constrained him to live and labour for the well-being of mankind. Had he not been a Christian, he would still have been a shrewd and a benevolent man. His last engagement was on behalf of the London City Mission. He attended at the Fishmonger's Hall, on Thursday the 10th inst., to plead help for a missionary; he returned home in his usual health; but at six o'clock the same evening he was suddenly seized with an attack; and at mid-day, on Saturday the 12th inst., exactly forty-two hours after the seizure, he expired.

"There are no death-bed sayings to record—there is something better—a life devoted to the well-being of mankind. 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.' What I have to say to the widow and fatherless, I shall say in private. To the church, under this bereavement, I need only say, Look for help and direction to God, who, in his providence, sent him amongst you, and has now removed him. You had not an indolent and faithless pastor. Look for a man of similar sentiments, of like catholicity of spirit, and continue to live in peace and in love. Some of his fellow labourers in the mission are here; many of you I do not know; while there are some familiar faces which I recognise. When I left the mission there were 105 missionaries, now they number 320. What ought you not to effect for this metropolis? A body of 320 men daily going about doing good. May the Lord be with you all.—Amen."

DENOMINATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.

- Boroughbridge, York.*—Rev. W. Wallis from Leigh, Lancaster.
- Bourton-on-the-Water.*—Rev. T. Brookes, from Wrexham.
- Redruth.*—The Rev. Mr. Prisk has accepted the unanymous invitation of the church, at Redruth, to become its pastor, and entered upon his labours, Dec. 30.
- Haworth.*—The Rev. T. Hanson, having resigned the pastorate of the Baptist Church at Hall Green, Haworth, has accepted a unanymous invitation from the Baptist Church at Idle, and enters upon his labours with very encouraging prospects of usefulness.
- Edinburgh, Charlotte Square.*—The Rev. James Martin, B.A., from Stockport.
- Blagna, Monmouthshire.*—The Rev. T. D. Jones, from Pembroke.
- King Stanley, Gloucestershire.*—The Rev. F. G. Scorey has accepted an invitation to the pastorate.
- Ragland, Monmouth.*—The Rev. J. Ewence, from Long Parish, Haunts.
- Wellington, Salop.*—The Rev. Josephus Judson, from Horton College, has accepted the pastorate.
- Rotherham.*—The Rev. A. Dyson, has given notice of his intention to resign the pastorate on March 27.
- Ilfracombe.*—The Rev. J. Merriman, will resign the pastorate on April 8.
- Towcester.*—The Rev. John Jones from Corsham, Wilts.
- Milnabridge, York.*—The Rev. J. Hanson has resigned the pastorate.
- London, Shoreditch, Providence.*—The Rev. C. Smith has resigned the pastorate.

ANNIVERSARY AND OTHER SERVICES TO BE HOLDEN.

- Meard's Court, Soho.*—Fourth Anniversary of Mr. Bloomfield's Pastorate will be holden on Tuesday, Feb. 5. Tea at Five o'clock; Service to commence at Six, when several ministers will address the Meeting, as well as others who will attend on the occasion.
- Shouldham Street Chapel, Edgware Road.* Thursday morning, Feb. 7.—The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon will preach. Service to commence at Eleven.
- Sion Chapel, Whitechapel.*—The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon will preach (D.V.) two sermons at Sion Chapel, Whitechapel, near the Commercial Road, kindly lent for the occasion, on Wednesday, Feb. 27. Morning at 11. Evening at 7 o'clock. Collections in aid of the debt on Hoxton Baptist Tabernacle, High Street.

ASSOCIATION MEETINGS.

- London Baptist Association.*—The annual meetings were held, Jan. 9. In the afternoon, the Rev. Jas. Harcourt, of Regent Street, Lambeth, preached from Acts i. 8. In the evening a public meeting was held, at which letters from the churches were read, and addresses delivered by the

Chairman, the Rev. C. Stovel, the Rev. Joshua Russell, and the Rev. Jonathan George. The letters, which were encouraging, reported a clear increase during the year of 207 members; principally owing to the extraordinary success attending the labours of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon. The Revs. B. Williams, F. Wills, and J. Bowles, conducted the devotional exercises.

RECOGNITION SERVICES.

- Ryde, Isle of Wight.*—Jan. 9. A social meeting was held, to introduce the Rev. S. Cox, late of Southsea, to his newly accepted charge. The meeting, which was numerously attended, was addressed by the new Pastor, and—Standen, Esq., a deacon of the Church at Southsea, Mr. C. Collnutt, formerly deacon of the Independent Church, Ryde, and by Mr. H. Collnutt. We understand that already the place is too small for the congregation.
- Plymouth, Jan. 1,* of the Rev. G. Short, B. A., late of Foulsham, as co-pastor, with the Rev. S. Nicholson, of the Church at George Street, Plymouth. The charge to the pastor was delivered by the Rev. J. Angus, D.D., from 2 Thess. iii. 1, and the address to the Church by the Rev. T. Horton, of Devonport, from Ephe. iii. 11—13. In the morning the Rev. S. Nicholson gave an interesting account of the Lord's gracious dealings with the Church for the thirty-four years of his pastorate, the anniversary of which was that very day. The Rev. Messrs. Noble, Overbury, Jukes, Pyer, and Jones, took part in the services.
- West Bromwich, Bethel Chapel.*—Of the Rev. Jas. Sneath, on which occasion a social tea meeting was held, after which the Revs. W. Cuthbertson, and W. Creed, (Independents) R. Nightingale, (Baptist) and others addressed the meeting.

SPECIAL SERVICES.

- Newark, Notts.*—Special Services of a most interesting and profitable nature were held here on Dec. 30, and the following day. Sermons were preached on the Sabbath by Dr. Acworth, president of the Baptist College, Bradford, and the Rev. Francis Wills, London, when collections were made towards reducing the debt incurred by the late improvements in the chapel. In the afternoon of the same day, the Lord's Supper was administered, in which members of other Christian churches united, Dr. Acworth, Mr. Wills, and Mr. Bayley taking up different parts of the service. On the following day, Rev. R. Bayley, late of Horton College, Bradford, was publicly set apart to the pastoral office, when, after prayer by Rev. J. Hallet, (Ind.) a discussion on the "Nature, Principles, and Officers of a Christian Church," was delivered by Rev. James Edwards, of Nottingham. The usual questions to the church and pastor were then proposed by Rev. G. Pope, of Collingham. After which Dr. Acworth delivered an impressive charge

to the pastor. In the evening, the Rev. F. Wills, Mr. B.'s former pastor, preached to the church and congregation. During the interval of public worship, a public dinner was held at an adjoining Inn, and a delightful tea meeting in the Corn Exchange, when 250 friends of various denominations attended. It is gratifying to be able to add, that the cause presents very cheering aspects.

Gravesend.—On Jan. 3, a public tea meeting was held in the School Room connected with the Baptist Chapel, Windmill Street, to welcome the Rev. J. Swinbourn, late of Edenbridge, as co-pastor with the Rev. E. S. Pryce. About 250 persons sat down to tea, after which addresses were delivered by the Rev. J. Swinbourn, Revs. J. Russell, and J. Hall, of Chatham, and J. Hearnshaw; the Revs. J. Butcher, of Northfleet, and C. H. Hosken, of Crayford, conducted the devotional services.

Bacup, Second Baptist Church, Lancashire.—The members and friends, to the number of 350, partook of tea refreshments on Dec. 25, after which a public meeting was held in the Bacup Mechanics Institution. The meeting was addressed by Mr. Parker (student with the Rev. T. Dawson, of Liverpool), and by several of the members and deacons of the Church, interspersed with appropriate recitations and singing by the children.

Orchard Hill Chapel, Waterbury.—The members and friends of the Baptist Church held their annual meeting, on Monday January 7; about 600 persons sat down to tea, after which the meeting was addressed by the Rev. J. Howe, pastor of the church, and the Rev. E. Franklin, of Golcar. A number of interesting recitations were given, and hymns sung by the young people of the Sunday School.

Woolwich.—A new Baptist Church is about to be formed, consisting of some forty members of the Baptist Church Meeting in Queen Street, Woolwich. The friends of this movement meet in the Lecture Hall, Nelson Street. The Rev. John Cox, who, through ill health, resigned the Pastorate of the Church at Queen Street, supplied on Jan. 6 for them, and administered the ordinance of the Lord's Supper.

PRESENTATION SERVICES.

Paradise Chapel, Chelsea.—On Monday, Jan. 7, a Social Meeting of the church and congregation meeting as above, was held in the chapel to take farewell of their late pastor, the Rev. Thomas J. Cole. The meeting was of a deeply interesting character, and in the course of the evening handsomely bound volumes were presented to Mr. Cole by Mr. Ash, (one of the deacons, and superintendent of the Sabbath school) in the name of the teachers, "as a token of their affectionate remembrance, of their kindly sympathy, and earnest co-operation with them in their work."

Poplar, Jan. 1.—At the members' annual tea meeting the Rev. B. Preece was presented with a purse of twenty sovereigns. The report forwarded of the state of the Church is very gratifying; the past year

having been one of uninterrupted peace, unbroken harmony, and of large success. *Tenbury, Worcestershire, Dec. 25.*—A social tea meeting of the members of the Baptist Church and congregation was held: the proceeds of the tea, which had been provided gratuitously, was presented to the Rev. A. W. Heritage, as a small token of respect from an affectionate people. The meeting was addressed by the pastor, and the Rev. T. Mudge of Fownhope.

Willenhall, Staffordshire, Dec. 25.—A farewell meeting was held in the school room, at which about 200 persons partook of tea refreshments. Mr. Pearson, one of the deacons, presided, who in a plain and hearty manner, bore honourable testimony to Mr. Cozens' labours among them. Mr. Attwood presented Mr. C. with a purse containing a handsome sum of gold, on behalf of the church and congregation, which Mr. C. feelingly acknowledged.

* We are desired to say that all communications are to be addressed to Mr. R. Foster, Registrar of Births and Deaths, Willenhall.

BAPTISMS.

Abertare, English, Nov. 18.—One by Mr. Davies.

—*Mill Street, Nov. 18.*—Two by Mr. Evans.

—*Nov. 25.*—Four in the River Cynon, by Mr. Price.

Abertillery, Monmouthshire, Dec. 9.—One by Mr. Jenkins.

Aylestone, near Leicester, Dec. 16.—One by Mr. Spiers.

Bath, York Street, Dec. 2.—One by Mr. White.

Bedford, Mill Street, Nov. 25.—Three by Mr. Killen.

Birmingham, Hope Street, Nov. 25.—Two, a husband and wife.

—*Heneage Street, Dec. 2.*—Four by Mr. Taylor.

Cardiff, Bala Dock Bethel, Nov. 25.—Two by Mr. Howe, of Warminster.

Eastcombe, Gloucestershire, Dec. 25.—Two by Whitlock. The first addition since he became Pastor.

Exeter, South Street, Jan. 6.—Two, after a powerful discourse, by Mr. Williamson.

Ford, Bucks, Oct. 28.—One; and Dec. 30, two by Mr. Hood.

Gloucester, Nov. 18.—Two by Mr. Godson.

Hull, George Street, Jan. 4.—Two by Rev. R. Hall, B.A.

Husbands Bosworth, Nov. 4.—Four by Mr. Ibborson.

Llandersant, Oct. 14, 1855.—Two by Mr. Bowen.

Llanfuchroth, Jan.—Five, after a sermon by the Pastor, Mr. Bowen.

London, New Park Street, Jan. 3.—Twenty-one by Mr. Spurgeon.

—*Chadwell Street, Clerkenwell, Nov. 25.*—Nine by Mr. Luzloton.

—*Meard's Court, Soho, Nov. 25.*—Six by Mr. Bloomfield.

Loucos, Derbyshire, Jan. 8.—Six by Mr. Stuart, four of them teachers of the Sabbath school.

Manchester, Granby Row, Jan. 6.—One by Mr. Owen.

Newton, Montgomeryshire, Oct. 7.—Three.
 Dec. 2.—Sixteen. Jan. 6.—Twenty by
 Mr. D. Evans.
Presteign, Dec. 24.—One—Mr. Rees, for
 many years a popular preacher among the
 Primitive Methodists by Mr. Davies, after
 an address by the candidate.
Ross, Herefordshire, Dec. 9.—Three Orphan
 Sisters, by Mr. Walker, of Ryeford.
Rhydwn, Jan. 13.—Four by Mr. Jones.
Rushden, Northamptonshire, Old Meeting,
 Dec. 25.—Three by Mr. G. G. Bailey.
 —*Elm*, Jan. 6.—Three by Mr.

Tanner.
Saxmundham, Dec. 2.—Five by Mr. Day.
Stroud, Gloucester, Jan. 3.—Five by Mr.
 Yates, who had just completed the 28th
 year of his pastorate.
Sunnyside, Dec. 1.—One by Mr. Nichols.
Tredgar, Nov. 18.—One by Mr. E. Price.
West Drayton, Nov. 29.—Four. Three of
 one family, a father and two daughters, by
 Mr. Ferratt, of Harrington.
Wardhouse Eaves, near Loughborough, Nov.
 4.—Seven by Mr. Bailey, Missionary
 from Orissa.
Whittlesea, Cambs.—Fifteen baptized during
 the past year by Mr. Ashby.

DEATHS.

Collier, Miss E., Dec. 20, aged 71, at Sharn-
 brook, Beds., regretted by all who knew
 her.
 Conder, Mr. Josiah, late editor of the
 "Patriot," Dec. 27, aged 67. Mr. Conder,
 besides being connected for many years
 with the public press, was a voluminous
 and successful author.
 Head, Mr. R. J., Dec. 21, at Peterborough,
 aged 51.
 Keeble, Mr. Jabez, Dec. 21, aged 50. Mr.

K. was a deacon of the Surrey Tabernacle,
 Baptist Church.
 Branch, Rev. John, pastor of the Baptist
 Church, Church Street, Blackfriars, Jan.
 12, after a short illness, aged 49.

* His funeral sermon, preached by the
 Rev. R. Ainslie, is in the press, and will
 shortly be published for the benefit of the
 widow.

Jackson, Mr. John, Dec. 28, 1855, at Green
 Brow, near Bacup, aged 76. Mr. J. was
 for fourteen years an honourable and con-
 sistent member of the Second Baptist
 Church, at Bacup. His sufferings were
 cheered by a hope full of immortality, and
 at length he gently and sweetly fell asleep
 in Jesus. He exhibited much Christian
 resignation, cheerfulness, and hope. Just
 before his departure he sung with all his
 strength and soul, that beautiful Hymn—
 "when I can read my title clear,
 To mansions in the skies, &c."

Long will he be remembered with affec-
 tionate esteem by sorrowing friends, who
 anticipate with joy the period of reunion
 in a perfect and eternal world.

Charles, Mr. W., Dec. 22, a deacon of the
 Baptist Church, Monmouth, from an
 injury received by a threshing machine.
 Booth, Mrs. G., wife of the Rev. S. H. Booth,
 pastor of the Baptist Church, Falmouth,
 Jan. 15, aged 27.

Edwards, Mrs. Jane, wife of the Rev. Jas.
 Edwards, Baptist Minister, Nottingham;
 and daughter of the late Rev. W. Stead-
 man, D.D., of Bradford, Jan. 16.

Kershaw, Mr., of Bank House, Haworth,
 Dec. 22, aged 79. Mr. K. had been a
 member of the Baptist denomination for
 nearly 60 years.

PROSPECTS OF PEACE.

The news of the unconditional acceptance of the Austrian proposals for peace, by the
 Emperor of Russia, has produced great satisfaction throughout the country. It is, however,
 doubtful whether the preliminaries of peace will be signed if agreed to, before the meeting
 of Parliament. God grant that nothing may arise to prevent the speedy restoration of peace
 to the nations.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

COMMUNICATIONS have been received from the Revs. C. H. Spurgeon, John Cox, W. P.
 Balfour, John Bloomfield, George Wyard, T. J. Cole, B. Preece, Poplar, J. P. Searle, London,
 Rev. James Smith, Cheltenham, G. G. Bailey, Rushden, D. Ashby, Whittlesea, Septimus Sears,
 Clifton, C. Owens, Manchester, W. Bowen, Llanfarcroth. Messrs. R. Foster, Willenhall,
 J. Wates Woodwich, W. Webb, Stroud, M. Tucker, Exeter, D. D. Owen, Penybodfân,
 Newtown, J. J. Stuart, Hull, Ellen E.—, R. Peck, Balderton, C. Kirby, W. J. Coran, Jun.,
 Redruth, J. Sneeby, Wilberton, W. Woodhead, Bradford, Yorks, W. Lamb, J. Freeman,
 Stratford.

A Lover of Truth, D. S. "An Inquirer" is informed that the sermons of Mr. Spurgeon
 published by Mr. Paul in the "Penny Pulpit," are the same as those published under the
 title of the "New Park Street Pulpit," which, by an arrangement with Messrs. Alabaster and
 Passmore, are worked off from the same forms of type; and that all other works of Mr.
 Spurgeon, issued by Mr. Paul, have been published with the sanction of Mr. Spurgeon. We
 need not add that this is also the case with all the articles bearing Mr. Spurgeon's name in
 "The Baptist Messenger."

We have great pleasure in stating that we have received from all parts of the country, most
 encouraging testimonials of the success of our friends in obtaining additional subscribers for
 the "Baptist Messenger;" one reports having obtained one hundred new subscribers, and
 another eighty, and others have succeeded equally well according to the population, so that
 we have begun the year with very encouraging prospects.

We have received notes of a sermon by the Rev. John Bloomfield, of Mead's Court, forwarded
 by "one of his hearers."

Reviews of new publications, with several articles in type, must stand over to our next
 Number.

THE SINGLE-HANDED CONQUEST.

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,

Minister of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.

"I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me."—
ISAIAH liiii. 3.

It is said of some stupendous works of architecture that, although you see them every day, you are struck with wonder and admiration every time you behold them; and that although you should live close to them, and have your eyes perpetually fixed upon them, yet your admiration of them would by no means decrease, for they are so matchless in symmetry, such patterns of art, and such marvellous displays of the skill of man. I know not whether that be true: I believe that the best and grandest achievements of mortals lose their glory when they are too closely examined, and that the frequency of our sight of them very much lessens our wondering admiration. But this thing I know is true concerning Christ Jesus our Lord—you may see him every day, but the oftener you see him the more you will wonder at him, and call him "Wonderful;" you may have communion with him every hour, but the frequency of your converse, and the constancy of your intercourse will be so far from diminishing your awe, your love, your respect, your devout adoration of him, that the more you know him the more your wonder and admiration of him will increase.

Now, who could be expected to know so much about Christ as Christ's own church? And yet, in the opening of this chapter, you find that even she bursts out with such exclamations as this—"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save!" She had often seen him before; she had often viewed him under that aspect; doubtless she had seen him as the Conqueror of mighty heroes, and Master over the princes, and the Lord of the kings of the earth; but at a fresh view of him she was so utterly astonished, that she could not but cry out, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?"

Live near to Jesus, brethren; live with Jesus; live in Jesus; and you will find him a theme of such excellent and such endless contemplation, that, instead of being tired and weary with the subject of your meditation, you will find it more easy to begin again than it was to begin at first; more interesting and more pleasing to consider him in the fiftieth year of your knowledge of him than it was in the first hour that you knew him. Think much of him, and you will have little cause to think lightly of him; constantly meditate on him, and you will the more admire and wonder at his goodness.

We have our Saviour here answering the question of his church, which she, in wonder, had asked of him. "I that speak in righteousness," he says, "Mighty to save." And when again she asks him, "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat?" He replies, "I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me."

Very briefly, as the Spirit shall help us, we shall notice first the interesting figure employed; secondly, the glorious fact stated; thirdly, the solitary Conqueror described; and then, fourthly, we shall offer some sweet and salutary considerations suggested, that we may be refreshed by our meditations. Let our souls be calm and quiet, whilst we contemplate the awfully solemn and sublimely grand spectacle of the Conqueror of men and the Conqueror of hell "treading the wine-press alone."

1.—First, then, here is AN INTERESTING FIGURE EMPLOYED: "I have trodden the wine-press." You must understand the circumstance. This is Jesus speaking *after* his conquest over his foes. Not Jesus before the battle, but

Jesus after it; not Jesus buckling on the harness; not Jesus becoming the babe of Bethlehem, but Jesus after the battle is fought, and the victory won. There were certain enemies who opposed the salvation of God's people; there were numberless foes who stood in the way of the deliverance of his chosen ones: Christ undertook to conquer them; and now, on his return, he not only declares that he has conquered them, but he uses an expressive figure to set out some of the facts in that wondrous feat of conquest—"I have trodden the wine-press."

First, this denotes *the supreme contempt with which the mighty Conqueror regards the enemies whom he had overcome*. It is as if he had said, "I have overcome the divers foes of my people; and I compare my conquest over them to nothing but the treading of the wine-press. Angels sing my praise! the harps of heaven swell the sublime chorus, as in exultant strains they tell how I have broken the dragon's head, and have put down the strength of the oppressor. They tell how mighty kings have been broken in my wrath, and giants in my hot displeasure. But as for me, I say only little about it; I only say I have trodden the wine-press, and I have counted my enemies as easy to conquer as if they had been grapes beneath my feet. My people's crimes may have been tremendous, their enemies mighty; but, coming up with dyed garments from Bozrah, I have crushed their foes and my foes, just as easily as a treader of grapes treads them under foot: I have trodden them as in a wine-press." O ungodly sinner! perhaps thou thinkest it will take God great trouble to destroy thee with an utter destruction, but it will not. It may be, thou thinkest, that God will have need to exert much power to send thy guilty spirit to the loathsome dungeons of hell, but ah! it will require no might from him. If thou shouldst continue his foe, he will tread thee beneath his feet as easily as thou couldst tread grapes beneath thine. What are the berries of the vine beneath the feet of the wine presser? And what shall thy soul and body be, when the feet of Jesus tread upon them? In vain thy ribs of steel; in vain thy sinews of brass; in vain thy bones of adamant,—if such thou hadst. If thy spirit were clothed with scales as Leviathan, yet under the feet of Jesus' thou wouldest be like ripe grapes, the blood whereof floweth out freely. Ay! terrible shall be the meaning of that figure, when Christ shall say at the last day—"I have trodden them down as he that treadeth grapes treadeth out the juice thereof, 'I have trodden the wine-press.'"

But, mark you, there is in the figure *an intimation of toil and labour*; for the fruit of the vine is not bruised without some toil. And so the mighty Conqueror, though, in contempt, he says his foes were as nothing but as the grapes of the vintage to his might; yet, speaking as a man like unto us, he had something to do to overcome his foes, when he fought with them in the garden. Sometimes the wine presser is wearied with his labour; although he takes hold of the strap which is placed above him, and jerking, and dancing, and laughing, and singing all day, he presses out the juice of the vine, yet sometimes he wipes the sweat from his brow, and is wearied with his labour. So our blessed Lord, albeit he could have crushed the enemies of his church like moths beneath his finger, had enough to do to crush them in the garden. It was no little pressing of the foot which was needed, when he crushed the dragon's head in Gethsemane. Then he

"Bore all Incarnate God could bear,
With strength enough, and none to spare."

My soul! meditate thou on this glorious Wine presser. Those sins which would have bruised thee to pieces, he had to tread beneath his feet. How it must have bruised his heel to tread upon those sins! O how powerfully he must have trod on those crimes of thine, breaking them into less than nothing! and how did it force from him not sweat like ours, but drops of blood, when he could say, "I have trodden the wine-press;" and, toil as it was, labour as it might be,

costing him tears and groans, yet he could say, "I have done it; the work is accomplished; it is finished; I have trodden the wine-press alone."

Moreover, in the figure employed, *there is an allusion to the staining of the garments.* We see it is so in the verse before the text, "Wherefore art thou red in thy apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat?" The garments of the wine presser would naturally be sprinkled over with the juice, spirting up from beneath his feet. Ah, my soul! stand here and solemnly contemplate thy Saviour, sprinkled with his blood. Look thou at him! when but eight days old, already shedding blood for thee! And go thou on to the time when he commenced the shedding of the blood again in Gethsemane's garden. Mark thou how, in one gory robe, he is enveloped, not like the kings of the earth dressed in robes of Tyrian-dyed purple, but like the king of misery, dressed in a purple robe of blood! Go thou, and mark the blood as it flows from his temple, when the thorn-crown lacerates his brow. Weep, when the accursed flagellation of the cruel whip is tearing off thongful after thongful of his quivering flesh. Pursue him in his weary *via dolorosa*, as he treads the streets of Jerusalem. Stop thou, and see how each stone on which he treads is covered with his precious blood! Then mark how his hands begin to gush down streams of blood, as the cruel iron tears them asunder! See thou him now, crucified, hung upon the cross, plunged into the depths of misery!

"See from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and blood flow mingling down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown."

Oh, Jesus! from the crown of thy head to the sole of thy foot thou wast sprinkled with the blood of the grape. Thine inward man was stained with blood, and thine outward too—thou wert all over blood—thou glorious Presser of our sins beneath thy foot! We will not ask again, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? Thou that art glorious in thy apparel, travelling in the greatness of thy strength?" We know why thy garments are red; thou hast trodden the wine-press of the wrath of God. Thus have we briefly, as best we could, explained the figure.

II.—And now we come to consider THE GLORIOUS FACT STATED—"I have trodden the wine-press."

Christian! I want thee a moment. Come thou with me, my brother—pot to heaven, nor yet to hell, but to the great wine-press which the Saviour trod. You understand the form of the eastern wine-presses, how they were built up, in order that a great quantity of grapes might be put into them, to be trodden by the foot of the wine-presser. Come thou here, then, and look over the edge of this great wine-press, in which thy Saviour stood and trampled. Look thou down. The first thing that thou wilt see in that wine-press is *thy sins*. Look down attentively. In the middle of the wine-press there are the crimes of thy youth, like unripe grapes lying there in thick clusters. There lie the sins of thy manhood, dark with the black juice of Gomorrah. Dost thou see them like to the grapes from the vine of Sodoma? and seest thou not the full clusters, like the vine of Sibmah? O look thou there, and see the fruits of thy middle age; and there the sins of thy old age too! They are all put into the mighty wine-press. Come then, thou chief of sinners! there lie thy sins and there lie mine, all mingled in one mighty heap. But stay; the Wine-presser enters, and puts his foot on them. Oh! contemplate how he presses them. Dost thou see him in Gethsemane, treading thy sins to pieces? Come, and look again. There lie the husks of thy sins; there lie the skins—the broken skins—of all thy guilt; but there is no guilt there, and there are no crimes there now. They are gone, gone, gone! He says, "I have trodden the wine-press." Look thou back upon those sins, and weep; for they are thy sins still; but, at the same time, weep not with bitter and remorseful anguish, as if thou wouldst be punished for them, for all the black juice and

venom of thy guilt is pressed out, and has ran away. Christ has caught it in his cup of gall, and drained it to its very dregs. I bid thee look down there, for if thou hast eyes of faith thou wilt see all thy sins destroyed. Do try and look; let not the devil put his hands before thy eyes; but look thou, and if some dark crime, unconfessed to man, still rankles in thy bosom, look! it is there! And if some cruel injury to thy neighbour, or some dire crime to thy Maker, still haunts thee, look thou! there, there it is—it is trampled on just as much as the other. Little sins and great sins, too, all are trampled to pieces, nor couldst thou find them, now—

“ Did I search to find my sins,
My sins could ne'er be found.”

They are there, oh, believer! trodden into less than nothing! They are gone, they are gone! “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?” Look thou there, Accuser, into the winepress! Look there, Conscience, into the wine-fat! Look there, Satan! Seest thou the bruised pieces of my sins? They are gone! Sin has ceased to be; “covered is my unrighteousness; from condemnation I am free”; purged clean and white. He has “trodden the wine-press.”

But come thou, believer, and thou wilt see next something in Christ's wine-press which, perhaps, thou didst not expect to see. There is *Satan* lying and with bruised head. How often does he come to afflict you now? How terribly does he sometimes roar in your ears, and tell you that hell must be your portion? How does he seek to keep you from your Saviour's blood? How frequently has he striven to deprive you of peace, although God loves you? I beseech you, tell Satan this night to come with you to the wine-fat of Gethsemane; and when he looks in there, he will see himself. His head is bruised. Ay! take thou Satan, and put him into the wine-fat, and Christ will bruise his head again for thee. But there he is, Christian! Do not fear that he can hurt thee: he may torment, he cannot destroy—he is chained. He may roar, but he cannot bite; he may fright you, he cannot injure; he may startle, he cannot devour. “He goeth about seeking whom he may devour;” but he may not devour you. He may “go about” and “seek,” as long as he likes; but he never will find you, for the Lord has said concerning you, that you never shall be destroyed. Whenever you have a sharp conflict with Satan, tell him about the wine-fat, and rejoice over him; and as Luther said, “Laugh at the devil.” He never loves that. Laugh at him, and tell him to remember Gethsemane's wine-fat. Ask him what he thinks of that, and how he loves the bruising. Ah! it was a desperate tug which he gave our Lord in Gethsemane:—

“ That desperate tug our Lord might feel,
Through bars of brass and bars of steel;”

But it was a greater one that our Lord gave him when he took away his power, extracted his sting, and left him—still an enemy, but a conquered one! For Christ has trampled him in the wine-fat.

Look again! Dost thou see there—just between thy sins and the devil, that lie bruised there—an ugly monster? He is a bony, skeleton-looking thing; but dost thou recognize him? It is thy enemy. “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is DEATH.” Look at him. Do you note that his skull is broken, and his bones are broken, too! Do you mark how death has lost his loathsomeness, and is now a dismantled monarch? There he lies! and yet thou art afraid of him, though he lies there broken, bruised, battered, injured, ruined, destroyed—death, the devil, and thy sins together; an infernal trio! There they are, for ever trampled beneath the Conqueror's feet. “Death! I will be thy plague; grave! I will be thy destruction.” “He hath led captivity captive, and hath ascended up on high;” and henceforth to the wine-fat we will go, whenever these things disturb and afflict us.

What else hast thou to oppose thee, Christian? I do not know what it is;

but it is all here. Whatever thine enemy, and whatever thy foe, go thou, look into the wine-fat, and see it dead there. Giant Despair took the pilgrims to a place, where he showed them the bones of certain pilgrims that he had devoured, and told them it would assuredly be so with them. Do thou, with all thy doubts and fears, just as Despair did with the pilgrims. Take thy doubts and fears, and say, "Doubts and Fears, do you see the bones of my old doubts and fears that have been trampled there? Aye, and in a day or two you shall be with them." Take to-day's sins, and tell them that they shall be just where yesterday's were—drowned in the blood of Jesus, and slain by his blessed sacrifice. And when conscience convicts thee of thy crimes, take him to this wine-press; it will lay any ghost of guilt, if thou takest it there. Oh, then, take thy doubts and fears; tell them that there is a wine-fat for them all, for it is written, "I have trodden the wine-press alone." It is done; it is finished; they are all gone—sins, doubts, fears, hell, death, destruction, and self too—all are trodden beneath the conquering foot of Jesus, the Wine-presser, who hath "trodden the wine-press alone."

III. Now, Christian, come thou to consider THE SOLITARY CONQUEROR DESCRIBED. "I have trodden the wine-press alone." The great lesson God will teach the world is, "I am God, and beside me there is none else;" and especially in redemption, he will have it that the glory shall be all his. Hence Christ never allowed any to share the toil of redemption, nor will he suffer any to share the honours of it. And, moreover, "when he looked there was no man;" and therefore they could not take any part in it, since there was none able to bear so much as an atom of that mountain which pressed his heart, and none able to drink so much as a tythe of a drop of that cup which he had to drink to the very dregs. He did it all alone. Come, now, and look at the lonely Jesus. How lonely he was in this world, during the few short years of his ministry! I think there never was such a lonely man living amongst so many, as the Lord Jesus Christ was. He stood in the crowd, and the congregation listened to his preaching; and though many listened with joy, there was no one who could give such sympathy as he needed. He went to a solitary place and talked with his disciples; but they could not sympathize with him. John did a little, for he laid his head on his bosom; but oh, it was poor sympathy that even John could give. Jesus must have been to a very great extent always a very lonely man; he loved loneliness, too, for cold mountains often saw him bend in prayer. Who so pure, that they could match his unsullied purity? who so perfect, that they could talk with immaculate perfection? who so wise as to talk with the wonderful Counsellor? who so far seeing as to be able to talk with the Prophet of ages? who so benevolent as to speak with the gracious Jesus; and who so sorrowful as to be a fit companion for the "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief?" He was a lonely man; and his loneliness increased just as sorrows came upon him. Then when he was in the garden of Gethsemane, he trod the wine-press, all alone. I think I see our Saviour still, like a kind man as he was, clinging a little to his fellows: he says, "Peter, James, and John; the other eight may go away; Judas has already gone; they may rest there, at that end of the garden; you come to me; I am about to be exceedingly sorrowful." He takes them with him. Ah! but he feels that it would not do to have them with him while he struggles, for they would die if they were to see the face of Jesus. His was so terrific a countenance when his body was racked with pain, that they must inevitably have been stricken with death if they had looked upon that face of sorrow. What heavy drops of bloody sweat flowed there! Still he clung to them as if he wanted some companionship. But oh! how sorrowful it was to him, when he came back, to see them all sleeping. Do you not think you see Jesus looking on his three sleeping disciples? There they lie! He goes to them three times, as if he sought some help from man; as if he had hoped that they would condescend

with him, for that was all they could do in his grief. Thrice he goes to them, and the third time reproves them, as he did before, and says, "Sleep on now, and take your rest;" "He that betrayeth me is at hand." Surely, now they will rally round him. They do for a moment, for Peter smites off the ear of Malchus with his sword; but when it came to a hand-to-hand encounter, his disciples forsook him and fled. He is taken along by the men with torches and with staves. Has he no friend? Oh, earth, has he no friend? Heavens! have ye no friend for Jesus? Where is Peter? He said, "Though all men should forsake thee, yet will not I." Where is John? Ah! he, too, has fled; he has left his garment. When they laid hold on him he fled away naked. There is none to be with him; none to help him. They take him before the council, but there is none to declare his innocence; he stands up in the hall, but there is none with him. Yes, there is one; but that one, hark at him! He says, "I tell you, I know not that man." Peter is cursing and swearing about his Master, before his Master's face! There is none with him. And now he goes up to Calvary, and still there is none with him, until, when he is hanging on the cross, those blessed women come to lift their sorrowful eyes up to their beloved Lord, and catch the bloody drops as they fall from his brow, and melt their hearts away in tears. He stood alone. And when the darkness gathered around, so that he could see none, he was alone, alone, alone, in thick, impenetrable gloom, hear him cry, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Then he could cry: "I am treading the wine-press alone, and of the people there is none with me." And so, nobody slept in the grave with his; no other corpse slept in his tomb; no other started from the same grave on the resurrection morning. He "trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him." Ah, Christian! never associate any one else with thy Jesus; but bethink thee well that this stands forth the great and cardinal truth, that Jesus has trodden the wine-press—but he has done it alone—and, therefore, he is *ALL IN ALL*.

IV.—And now this brings us, having briefly passed over the other things, to SOME SWEET AND SALUTARY CONSIDERATIONS SUGGESTED by this most blessed and sacred subject.

The first inference is, *there is no wine-press of divine wrath for thee, O believer, to tread*. If he trod the wine-press, and trod it alone, thou shalt never have to tread it. What mistakes Christians often make in this matter; you will hear one say, that such and such a good man was punished for his sins, and I have known good people think that their afflictions were punishments sent from God on account of their sins. The thing is impossible; God has punished us, who are his people, once for all in Christ, and he never will punish again. He cannot do it, seeing he is a just God. Afflictions are chastisements from a Father's hand, but they are *not* punishments at all; he has trodden the wine-press, and he has trodden it alone; we cannot tread it any more. How often have you thought that God would make you feel the weight of some of your sins, that he would make you suffer for some of your guilt? Ah, no! "I have trodden the wine-press;" and if you had to tread it, if you had to suffer the smallest pang of punishment for your iniquities, Christ could no more say, "I have trodden the wine-press alone." He has done it completely, and there is no punishment reserved for you. For you there are no flames of hell, for you no punishment, for you no rack; you are fully acquitted, you are fully discharged, nor can you ever be again condemned. Christ, once for all, hath trodden your sins beneath his feet, therefore, you never, never can be punished for them again. What say you to this, some of you seekers after truth? It may be, you have heard a doctrine taught that Christ was punished for the sins of everybody, and yet that many people are punished for their own sins. Go, hear that again, but mark, you will never find peace or comfort in that doctrine; it is so untrue, so unjust to God, so unsafe for man. We are taught from the Holy Scriptures, that God has made his Son our substitute, and "hath laid on him the iniquity of us all;" and not one of "us"

—the people for whom Christ was punished—ever can be punished again. If Jesus did endure their punishment, we stand on this broad ground of unalterable justice, that God cannot, consistently with his nature (and he can do nothing inconsistent with it,) ever punish us any more. O rejoice, Christian brethren, that ours is a solid foundation! The elect—all who are united to Christ by a living faith have been punished in Christ, and now they stand bright, “fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners;” none can lay anything to their charge. “There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.” Glorious God! unto thee be praise, unto us be shame, that we do not better love, and more fully value this inestimable doctrine of substitution, and its necessary consequences of complete justification! “I have trodden the wine-presses alone.”

Another thought for you, O child of God—and it is this: *There are wine-presses of suffering which thou wilt have to tread, although not of punishment.* But I want thee to remember that *thou wilt not have to tread these wine-presses alone.* Tell a little child to go down a lonely lane in a dark night. The child says: “Mother, I will not go—I don’t want to go there, mother.” “I will go with you,” says the mother. “Mother, I will go,” says the child; “I will go anywhere with you.” Ah, Christian! there are many dark lanes for thee to go down; but thou wilt not have to go there alone! There are many wine-presses for thee to tread—not of God’s wrath, but of his chastening hand: but thou wilt not have to tread them alone! Oh, is not that a truth that might ravish us for ever? We shall never tread the wine-press alone. Minister, you go to your pulpit, but if God send you, you will never go alone; your Master’s feet are behind you, and your Master’s self stands by you. Deacons, you have to steer the Church sometimes in troublous waters; you need all wisdom, but there is an Archdeacon with you, you shall not go to your labours alone. Sunday-school Teacher, you go to your class with earnestness, and you think you teach alone. Ah, no! there is another Teacher sitting by you who can teach better than you can; for he teaches hearts, while you teach only heads;—he teaches souls, while you only teach bodies. He will teach for you. O, daughter of affliction, thou who liest on thy bed of languishing, thou liest not there alone. It is not an angel there with the bright wing that cools thy brow with its flapping, but it is Jesus that stands and puts his cool hand on thy burning brow. Thou dying saint, thou fearest to die; but thou shalt not die alone. Jesus turns bed-maker to his people; he says. “I will make all their beds in their sickness,”—

“Jesus can make a dying bed,
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there.”

What is your trial, Christian? “Oh, a dark one,” sayest thou. It may be so, but his rod and his staff shall lead thee—his right shall guide thee: What is thy grief, Christian? “Ah, a deep one,” sayest thou. But “when thou passest through the rivers,” One whispers, “I will be with thee, and through the floods, they shall not overflow thee; when thou goest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flames kindle upon thee.” In the old *Pilgrim’s Progress* I used to read in my grandfather’s house, I remember the picture of Hopeful in the river holding Christian up; and the engraver has done it very well. Hopeful has his arm round Christian, and lifts up his hands, and says, “Fear not, brother, I feel the bottom.” That is just what Jesus does in our trials; he puts his arm around us, points up, and says, “Fear not! the water may be deep, but the bottom is good.” And though the cold streams of trouble gush down the river, do not fear; Christ is with thee, passing through the river, and thou wilt not have to pass through it alone. He trod the wine-press—we shall never have to tread it. It would be an ill day for us, beloved,

if we had. Some of God's people have tried to do a little for themselves, and tried to do it alone, but they have made a sorry mess of it. If we seek to do aught in our own strength, it is all over with us: but he who lives with Jesus, and begs him to be with him, shall find him with him in wine-presses, in Gethsemanes, and in Gabbathas; and if it were necessary that we should be crucified on Calvary, we should find a Christ on Calvary crucified with us there. Thou wilt not Christian, have to pass through the river without thy Master. We remember an old tale of our boyhood, that we have not read lately, how a poor fellow, wrecked on a foreign strand, rejoiced when he saw the print of a man's foot. So with the Christian in his trouble. He shall not despair in a desolate land, because there is the foot-print of Christ Jesus on all our temptations and troubles. Go on, Christian, rejoicing; thou art in an inhabited country; thy Jesus is with thee in all thy afflictions and in all thy woes. Thou shalt never "tread the wine-press alone."

But lastly, ye servants of the living God, since your Jesus trod the wine-press alone, I beseech you bear with me while, for my master's sake, I bid you give all things to him. Alone he suffered; will you not love him alone? Alone he trod the wine-press; will you not serve him? Alone he purchased your redemption; will you not be his property, and his alone? Oh, hast thou given half of thyself to the world, and only half to thy Master? Did the world ever serve thee? Did the world redeem thee? Was the world crucified for thee? Did the world tread the wine-press for thee? Oh, then, give not the world a portion of thy heart. Thou hast some dear relative that with all thy soul thou lovest; but take thou heed, O Christian, that still thy heart is set most on thy Lord! Did that friend tread the wine-press for thee? Did that friend drink the gall for thee? Did that friend suffer for thee on the cross? Nay! Then, should Jesus stand first and foremost. Let him sit King upon the throne, and no one else save he. And when thou daily goest forth to labour, take thou good heed and care that thou labourest not for self or pleasure, or worldly object, but that thou labourest for Jesus. If the world says "Come with me, and I will show thee all manner of delight," reply, "O, world! I cannot come; I never saw thy foot in the wine-press." Doth lust invite thee? Cry, "O, lust! I cannot love thee, for thou didst never sweat a drop of blood for me." Yea, if the world's inhabitants should open wide their loving arms, to beseech you to come in and forsake your Lord, answer, "No, no; you did not tread the wine-press, and that is all I care for. He trod the wine-press alone, and I will give myself wholly to him." Half-hearted Christians! Ye who divide yourselves in twain, giving one half to Christ and the other to lust, ye are not the Lord's; "ye cannot serve God and Mammon." There can be only one Master and one Lord, because there was but one Redeemer, one Friend, one Governor, One whom we live on, for whom we would even dare to die; because there is only One that dared to die for us. Never, I beseech you, Christians, and I beseech myself also—for I plead with myself when I plead with you—never forget this, "He trod the wine-press alone;" and always take care that alone you put Christ in your heart.

If you ask me to-night to paint redemption, I shall have to paint only one figure in the picture. We may paint groups when we paint creation, for the morning stars sang together; we may paint groups when we paint the resurrection, for an angel rolled away the stone; but if we paint redemption there can be but one figure, and that figure is "the man Christ Jesus!" So, if thou wouldst have a painting in thy heart, I bid thee paint no groups there; put no frame, and place no tools upon the canvass of thy soul, but ask God's Holy Spirit to paint on it one name, one lovely being, one adorable personage—that person Christ—Christ who trod the wine-press alone! Queen Mary said, that when she died they would find "Calais" written on her heart. Ah, Christian! live thou so, that when thou diest thou wilt find that the word "Jesus" is printed on thy heart, for it is certain that thou art printed on his.

Thy name is deeply cut on his very heart, and on his hands, and on his brow; it is written in precious blood, Oh, do thou give him, not only the best place in thy heart, but all thy heart. Often do thou sing:

"Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it—
Seal it from thy courts above!"

"Farewell, dear friends. Such of you as love the Lord and must depart* oh, may you have communion and fellowship with Jesus, even though you do not sit down at his table. Brethren and sisters, who shall now come into close union with your Lord, may this idea engross your mind, that it is,

"None but Jesus, none but Jesus,
Can do helpless sinners good."

And ye despisers of the cross, O, let me tell you that ye must be as grapes in the vine-press. If ye die ungodly, unaved, unrighteous, unforgiven, ye must be cast into the great wine-vat of the wrath of God, hurled into hell with myriads of your fellows, like grapes fully ripe, cut off by the sickle of the angel; and horrible shall be the day when Christ shall tread on you in his fury and trample upon you in his hot displeasure, till the flame of your torment ascends up for ever and ever. God save you from being put in the wine-vat yourselves; may you be able to cast your sins in there instead, that Christ may trample on them!

I cannot close my sermon without recurring to the happy circumstance that on this day six years ago I found deliverance myself from the bondage of Egypt, and rejoiced in the liberty wherewith Christ made me free. What, and if my master would, by my lips, bring another soul to himself! What sayest thou, poor trembler? Didst thou hear the text of this morning? "Look unto me, and be ye saved all ye ends of the earth † for I am God, and beside me there is none else." Didst thou hear that? then hear it yet again. And hast thou looked? if not, O, look now! Hast thou looked for him? If thou hast not seen him—if so, look still, and thou shalt see him by-and-bye. But look! It is all he asks thee to do, and even that he does bestow upon thee. Look now, poor sinner, look now, for Christ's sake, for thy soul's sake, for heaven's sake, if thou wouldst escape the damnation of hell! Look, and that look shall save you! Catch but one glimpse of that dear head crowned with thorns; get but one look from his sweet eyes, floating with languid pity; oh, catch but one glimpse of that smiling countenance, or, if thou canst not look so high, see but the sole of his most precious foot and thou art saved; for still it is written, "They looked unto him, and were lightened." "Look unto me, and be ye saved all ye ends of the earth."

* The Lord's Supper was administered at the conclusion of the sermon.

† In preaching from those words in the morning, Mr. Spurgeon said, "Six years ago, to-day, as near as possible at this very hour of the day, I was 'in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity,' but, had yet by divine grace, been led to feel the bitterness of that bondage, and to cry out by reason of the soreness of its slavery. Seeking rest, and finding none, I stepped within the house of God, and sat there, afraid to look upward, lest I should be utterly cut off, and lest his fierce wrath should consume me. The minister rose in his pulpit, and, as I have done this morning, read this text—"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth: for I am God, and beside me there is none else." I looked that moment; the grace of faith was vouchsafed to me in the self-same instant; and now I think I can say with truth—

'Ere since by faith I saw the stream
His flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die."

I shall never forget that day while memory holds its place: nor can I help repeating this text, whenever I remember that hour "when first I knew the Lord."

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THE FAITHFUL PROMISER.

BY THE REV. JAMES SMITH, CHELTENHAM.

"There hath not failed one word of all his good promise."—1 Kings viii. 56.

The magnificent temple was now finished. The people were assembled to dedicate it to God; the happy monarch officiated on the occasion; he reviewed the past, he gazed with rapture on the present; he looked at the promises, he recognised their fulfilment; he turned witness for God, and, in the fulness of his heart, exclaimed, "*There hath not failed one word of all his good promise.*" Beloved, let us imitate Solomon. Look back—look around. Compare what God has said with what God has done; examine carefully, closely. What is the fact? You must say, "There hath not failed one word of all his good promise."

HERE IS AN ALLUSION TO A FACT. God had made promises—promises to Abraham, and to his descendants, the people of Israel. And now, after a long series of years, these promises were recognised, acknowledged, and made good. God, also, has made promises to us; great, glorious, precious promises. They are scattered over his Word, they are gathered up into Christ, they are confirmed to us by his death. There are promises that refer to the *soul*; promises of pardon, peace, strength, instruction, deliverance—in a word, of salvation; promises as various as its wants—as vast as its desires—as durable as its existence. Promises which comprise all it can require, and all God can confer. There are promises for the *body*. God has given us his word that he will feed us, clothe us, and at length raise us from the dead in the likeness of the glorious body of his Son. He has not promised luxuries, but he has promised necessities. There are promises to meet all our *circumstances*. Promises for prosperity, and promises for adversity; promises for sickness, and promises for health; promises for life, and promises for death. The promises of God embrace all his people, anticipate all their wants, and provide for all their necessities. Let us now look at the text again—

HERE IS A TESTIMONY BORNE. "There hath not failed one word of all his good promise." God has kept his eye on his promises—he has not lost sight of them for one moment. Man may forget them, God never will; they are as fresh in his memory to-day as if he had only made them this morning. He has regulated his dealings by his promises—precepts are our rule, promises are his. He is every day making good his word. In our darkest seasons, in our most trying times, he is but fulfilling his word. Therefore, in looking back we see with Solomon that he has exactly made good his word. *We have doubted*, and, in so doing, have dishonoured him, for what reason had we to doubt? Did he ever break his word? did he ever fail his people? did he ever violate his promise? Never. "It is impossible for God to lie." Yet our doubts and fears go far to make God a liar. For this he will correct us. Because of this he often frowns upon us, but he will keep his word notwithstanding; hence the Apostle says, "Though we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself." Our doubts are very often our disgrace. We should look upon them as sinful; confess them before God as such, and seek pardon for them, as much as for any crime we commit. *Satan has often suggested* that the promises do not belong to us, and that God will not make them good in our experience; but Satan is a liar, and, therefore, not to be listened to or believed. We are directed to give him no place, but order him out of the house as soon as he comes in. To resist him, steadfast in the faith; steadfastly believing what God has spoken and recorded in his Word, in opposition to all that Satan may suggest or say. Satan is the great enemy of our holiness and happiness; therefore, as God sanctifies us, and makes us happy through his own Word, especially through his precious promises, he does all he can to make us disbelieve them. Sometimes he suggests that they are too great and too good to belong to such poor, mean, and worthless worms as we are; as if any-

thing was too good or too great for God to confer on us, for whom he has delivered up his own Son. *Providence has frowned.* True, providence seems often to work in order to try our faith in the promises. But we may rest assured of this, that the work of God's hand will never run counter to the word of his grace. The promise is the staff on which we are to lean, the compass by which we are to steer, the manna on which we are to live. Providences change, but promises are immutable—providences are intricate, but promises are plain. We cannot tell what a providence means until we get to the end of it, but we can see the meaning of the promise at once. Though we have doubted, though Satan has suggested, though providence has frowned, yet God has kept his word, and there hath not failed one word of all his good promise.

Brother, let us witness for God. He calls to us, and says, "*Ye are my witnesses.*" And are we not? Have we not proved him faithful? Have we not found his promises true? We have been in difficulties and dangers, we have been tempted and tried, we have doubted and feared, we have listened to Satan, and judged by appearances; but, notwithstanding, all the promises have been made good. We must say, with Paul, "Having obtained help of God, we continue unto this day." We have often broken our word, but our God has never broken his. Let us, therefore, not only witness for him, but give thanks unto him. All he asks of us for all the favours he confers on us, is to praise his name. Let us then unite heart and voice in praising and thanking the Lord. Having praised him for the past, let us ask of him more for the future. "He giveth more grace." What he has already given us, is but a pledge of what he will give us; his promises are true this day—never more true. God is willing to make them good in our experience, he never was more willing. We know not what a day may bring forth, but let it bring forth what it will, the grace of Jesus will be sufficient for us, and we have his word that as our day so shall our strength be. Jesus is saying to us at this moment, "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." Let us renew our confidence in God. Never, never had we so many reasons, or so much cause, to be confident in God as now. We have received so much mercy; he has answered so many prayers; he has kept his word during so many years. Oh for confidence, strong confidence in God! May the Holy Spirit work it, both in the writer's and in the reader's heart. Let us, in conclusion, consecrate ourselves afresh to the service of our God; he never has failed us, he never will; he has used us, he will use us still. Let us, then, seek grace that we may afresh consecrate our persons and powers, our time and our talents, all we have, all we are, and all we can do, entirely and for ever to the service of our God. If we think, let us think for God; if we eat, let us eat for God; if we give, let us give to God; if we speak, let us speak for God. Never were we under such powerful obligations as at present, to dedicate ourselves, and our all, to the service and praise of God. Witness for us then, ye angels of God, ye servants of Jesus, that we bear our testimony for God, that "there hath not failed," in our experience, "one word of all his good promise," and that from a sense of his great love to us, and unquestionable right in us, we dedicate ourselves body, soul, and spirit, to his service and praise for ever.

THE ASTONISHING ANNOUNCEMENT.

BY THE REV. JOHN COX, LATE OF WOOLWICH.

"Lo! I come."—PSALM XL. 7.

AND who is this that claims universal attention to the fact of his coming; and what is the nature of that coming to which he attaches such immense im-

portance? The Person speaking is the ALL-GLORIOUS ONE, and the design of his coming is most gracious. The Son of God, the Son of Man, the Saviour of sinners, is the speaker. In his face the glory of God shines, by his mission the grace of God is manifested. In him we may behold infinite glory beaming, and by him we may receive all suited blessings from the exhaustless stores of divine grace.

“I!” How sublime is this personal pronoun, as it sounds from the lips of the Saviour of men. You may put whatever you can conceive of greatness and goodness after it. Here exaggeration is impossible. Adoration cannot be excessive, nor expectation too large when the Saviour is rightly thought upon. He possesses all divine perfections, is the foundation of all divine purposes, the chief subject of all heavenly predictions, the storehouse of all the exceeding great and precious promises, and the reality of all types and shadows. He is the SELF-EXISTENT ONE, the SELF-SUFFICIENT ONE, the ALL-SUFFICIENT ONE; and he comes from the bosom of infinite love, from the throne of supreme authority, to a world of enmity, a rebel province. His coming is not an affair of state, but an errand of mercy; not a display of greatness merely, but an exhibition of goodness; it is no grand pageant such as earthly monarchs delight in, but a gracious visit to accomplish a sublime and beneficent design. We may be sure if such a person comes to our world, that he has an object in view corresponding with his own greatness. But who shall describe the deep mystery of his incarnation, or set forth the moral magnificence of his mission? There is a mystery of love in the fact of his incarnation, a mystery of wisdom in the method, and a mystery of condescension and grace in the manner. “Great is the mystery of godliness—God was manifest in the flesh.” “A body,” he says, “hast thou prepared me.” His human nature was the product of the Holy Ghost, it was “that holy thing;” and he the INCARNATE ONE was “the holy child Jesus.” His human nature was sinless, filled with all grace, and personally united to Deity—“God’s law was in the midst of his heart.” There was ever in him an intense love to holiness; his natural tendencies were all towards God.

Here we see human nature in its true grandeur. “Behold the man!” There is no other object so sublime in the universe of God. Here we reach the climax of all perfection. The study of human nature is a most interesting one; painfully so in too many instances. How degraded and sunken in sin are the vast majority; in some there are manifestations of mental and social beauty, in a few, spiritual excellencies may be traced, but even these are all imperfect. Leave we this present sinful world, and soar forward to the “world to come,” where “mortality shall be swallowed up of life;” in the resurrection state; there we find human nature sublimated and sinless, but still limited, and dependent, and capable of progression; but in the person of Christ we see human nature in personal union with Deity, absolutely perfect; and here also we find the cause of all the blessedness and beauty that will ever be realized or displayed by any of the children of men.

In the records of the evangelists we have the outward history of this wondrous Person. There his own words are recorded, his actions are narrated, his death and resurrection largely dwelt upon. But in the Psalms, and prophetic writings, we have the *inner life* of Jesus revealed. We are introduced to the holy sanctuary of his soul, and invited to have fellowship with him in his thoughts and feelings. In these wondrous documents we are told what were his purposes and desires when he took our nature, and also during the period that he dwelt on earth, previous to his manifestation at thirty years of age. “Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine ear hast thou opened, burnt-offerings and sin-offerings hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo! I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God.” In these words the Saviour declares the insufficiency of all sacrifices as an atonement for sin, and the all-sufficiency of HIMSELF. The exporment

had been tried long, and in various ways, whether man could instruct and save himself, but all ended in the triumph of ignorance, guilt, and sensuality. Philosophy had argued, moralists had persuaded, systems innumerable had been tried, and countless victims had bled; but all failed. Even God's own institutions, as revealed on Sinai, had failed, and were declared "weak and unprofitable." "Darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people." The worshippers at God's own altars, even those who had most light and sanctity, were not satisfied; the conscience was not purged; it was deeply felt that there was no correspondence between an animal devoted to bleed as a sacrifice, and the sinning man for whom it was thus appointed a substitute; reason itself said, "Animal blood cannot purge away sin; all creation cannot redeem the soul." Then went forth the groan for deliverance; and all true-hearted ones earnestly cried, "Make haste, my beloved;" and then looking round on human guilt and grief, and, on the triumph of Satan and death, the over-burdened soul cried—

Arise, Almighty Lord!
Gird on thy awful sword,
For sin is ravaging thy fair creation:
Death lifts his haughty head,
Crushing beneath his tread
Thy creatures down—come Lord with thy salvation.

'Twas thus from year to year,
The mourner dropp'd the tear,
And thus to heaven the fervent prayer ascended.
At length "Behold! I come!"
Burst through the deepening gloom,
And lo! upon the earth INCARNATE LOVE descended.

Fairer than blush of morn,
A pure, soft infant form,
Upon a wondering mother's breast reclining;—
Is this the promised ONE?
Can He crush Satan's throne?
He can—for in his face Jehovah's glory's shining.

Yes, arise and crown him, for this is he! It is God's glorious idea and fixed resolution, that in the nature which was triumphed over the conquest shall be achieved; by the nature which sinned an atonement shall be made. Here is an arm that can vindicate the rights of God, and crush the proud oppressor; here is an organ that can sound forth Jehovah's praise, and to which the Holy One will love to listen—a human heart on which he can look with infinite complacency. The glorious Redeemer comes to do God's will, to obey all his precepts, and thus work out an everlasting righteousness, to fulfil all his purposes; and thus bring everlasting glory to his name. He comes to reveal the glory which had been obscured, and to honour that infinite name which had been sinned against. To effect this, on the altar of his divine nature, he presents a spotless human sacrifice, which sacrifice is thus exalted to the level of the divine glory. "Behold the Lamb of God!" he comes to honour the law, covering it over with his perfect obedience. He comes to make an end of sin, to put it away by the sacrifice of himself. He comes to conquer Satan, and abolish death. All this, and much more, he does as the friend of man, to raise him from sin, shame, and sorrow, to holiness, honour, and happiness.

Well, then, might he challenge universal attention to his glorious coming; and worthy is he to be the object of every eye, the subject of every tongue, and the beloved of every heart.

But it was not so when he first came, nor is it so now. Hence he asks the question, "Wherefore when I came was there no man, when I called was there none to answer?" "He came unto his own, and his own received him

not." He came forth from his Father: he stood and cried, "I am come, a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness, but have the light of life." "I come not to judge the world, but to save the world." And yet though his Person was so wonderful, his works so benevolent, his words so gracious, he was "despised and rejected of men." He said, "I am come to you *with* life, come you to me *for* life." "I am come to give rest; come to me, and I will give *you* rest." But men scoffed at his words, and scorned his blessings. Here and there a heart echoed his own words, and wondering at the new life which it felt stirring within, cried out, "Lo! I come." Thus were Peter, John, Nathaniel, and many others drawn to Christ: and even the sinner of Sychar, and "the woman who was a sinner," exclaimed each with the deepest wonder "Lo! I come;" and ever since, from age to age, echoes from various parts of the earth have been heard,—

"Lo! glad I come, and thou blest Lamb,
Shalt take me to thee as I am;
Nothing but sin to thee I give,
Nothing but love shall I receive."

Reader, has there been an echo from *your heart* to the Saviour's words? Are you come to Jesus? Are you even coming, or willing to come? Remember, he says, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Try him, trust him, and soon you will find what cause you have to triumph in him. Jesus has come from God to man, on purpose that man might go from Satan to God. He came from heaven to earth, that sinners might rise from hell to heaven.

For any thus invited to say to him who invites them, "Depart, I desire not the knowledge of thy ways," is to imitate the evil spirits of darkness, and is the certain way to the participation of their misery. Why should it be so? Why should you pass by Calvary with all its infinite attractions and blessings, to that gulf of woe from whence there is no redemption? Come then to Jesus, while he pleads with you, and welcome him to your heart, whom angels once welcomed to our world, when he said, "Lo! I COME."

Pimlico.

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST.

BY THE REV. J. S. WARREN, WALTON, SUFFOLK.

Who shall estimate the preciousness of Christ's blood? God alone knows its value. Neither men nor angels can conceive its worth. It is not to be valued with gold or silver, or precious stones. Not all the estimable things of the whole world can represent its merit in procuring the salvation of a single soul. The experience of the Christian fails to realize its worth. The nearest approximation that can be made is that of Peter, "precious blood." With the blood of Christ the church is redeemed, she is purchased; but what is the amount of the purchase-money? "Ye are bought with a *price*" is the answer, and the most exact reply which can be put into human language, except, indeed, it be added, that price was the blood—the "precious blood" of the Son of God.

It is no wonder then that this blood is esteemed so highly by the saved. It is no wonder such are anxious about the continued possession of a salvation so rare and so much to be prized; or that we hear them exclaim,—

"All the vain things that charm me most
I sacrifice them to his blood."

The distinctive mark of the Christian is the blood of Christ; and, sprinkled

on his conscience, it is the source of his present peace and the assurance of his future glory. It is identified with all his hopes and expectations of eternal blessedness. Does he value eternal life? Can he tell you how much,—at what price he rates it? No! he can only look round on the world, and as he surveys it, tell you he would not part with his *hope* for all that world. If he can only look up to the heavens, and as he gazes, assure you that not the offer of all he beholds should bribe him to part with his hope,—much less with eternal life itself. He looks within, and he tells you that that mark of blood upon his conscience is to him of all things the most precious; it is to him the mark, the seal, the assurance of eternal life. For what consideration can we suppose an Israelite, on the eventful passover night, would have allowed the blood on the lintel and door-posts of his house to be sponged off? The blood was his only protection from death. We can easily conceive how every offer would have been spurned that the priceless blood might still remain to guard the life of all within.

How pleasing to God the Father must be the high estimation in which the blood of his dear Son is held by his followers! How grateful to the Son himself, who shed that blood for guilty man, and who pleads that blood in all his mediation on behalf of the guilty, the vile, and the wretched! How much in accordance with the mind of the Holy Spirit, who in the exercise of his appointed work, takes of the things of Christ and shows them to his children, must be the affectionate and grateful trust with which the subject of his grace regards the blood sprinkled by that Spirit upon his conscience!

How little can we be surprised at the awful denunciation of Holy Writ, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the *blood of the covenant* wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" Oh! let me not be among the despisers and the infatuated mortals upon whom the force of these terrible words shall descend! And oh! thou Spirit of the living God, sprinkle afresh my soul with blood—the precious blood of Christ—and let it be especially visible in me in that day when the *second death* shall receive commission to pass over none but those who are marked with the blood of the Lamb.

THE UNCHANGING LOVE OF CHRIST.

BY THE REV. W. ABBOTT, OF BLUNHAM, BEDS.

"Having loved his own, who were in the world, He loved them unto the end."—JOHN XIII. 1.

THIS is the beautiful preface to the report of the Redeemer's last meeting with his disciples before his death. It was written with the pen of the beloved John, and agrees well with his loving heart. There is not an interview that the Redeemer had with his disciples that did not elicit some important truth, or some wise lesson. They had no fruitless seasons with him.

Never did the distinguished friendship of Christ appear to more advantage, or its continuance seem more desirable, than now. How distressing to the disciples must have been the thought that it was now about to cease—to cease as to his personal presence, although not as to existence, influence, and blessedness, in a more spiritual sense. Observe—

I. *The Redeemer has a people denominated his "own."* They are his by the donation, by the gracious gift of the Father. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." They are his by his love and choice of them, and further, by the great price of his life, which he paid for their redemption. They are his as partakers of his grace, and as heirs of his glory. They are his as they receive his Gospel, obey his commands, wear his name, follow in his steps, and seek his glory.

II. This people *are existing in the world*. They are distinguished from the world by calling and separating grace; they are men of other habits, motives, principles, and prospects. They are not conformed to the world, but are transformed by the renewing of their minds. They are continued in the world for their profit, and for the Saviour's pleasure. It is to them a *scene of danger*—danger in many senses, from many sources, influences, and enticements; from their propensities, connexions, engagements; from themselves, their friends, and foes. It is a *sphere of usefulness*. By the grace of the Saviour they will be preserved from evil, and be helped to do good. By acting out their religious principles, exemplifying Christian character, by diffusing the Gospel of Christ, they will be the means of much good in the midst of much evil. It is a *school of trial*. One in which our principles, motives, spirit, graces, and consistency are tested. One in which many very different, but ever profitable lessons present themselves; and for which much wisdom, faith, patience, and grace, are needed to read, learn, and suitably improve them.

III. This people are the *objects of the Redeemer's special and perpetual love*. "Having loved them, he loves them unto the end." He did not leave them because he ceased to love them. He left them because the purposes of his love might be more fully accomplished thereby. That he loved them unto the end we have many palpable and demonstrative proofs. His farewell discourses were words of love, his valedictory blessing was a declaration of love, his closing example a lesson of love, and his parting promise a benediction of love, the fulfilment of which should be the means of diffusing in the wide world the news of his love. Nor must we overlook the pledge of his love—the Holy Supper—emblematical of his last great sacrifice of love: "Do this," saith his loving word, "in remembrance of me."

The Redeemer still loves his people who are in the world, strangers and sojourners as their fathers were, and who have been favoured to enter upon another year of their pilgrimage. In reviewing the past, they can remember many pleasing instances of his loving-kindness, for which they are grateful, and which lead them still to confide in his promises of continued friendship; that having loved them, he will love them to the end. May we be thankful to God for such a Friend, one so great, so kind, so faithful; and for such precious consolation and blessed hopes.

January, 7.

BIBLICAL CRITICISMS.

BY MR. JOHN FREEMAN.

NO. IV.—THE IMPORT OF THE NAME "ADAM."

As the year 1856 advances, it is the writer's intention to speak of God's glorious names Jehovah, Jah, &c.; but in the present paper the name Adam may not be uninteresting; for some of Adam's race seem to have been so far away from the Babel-builders as to preserve his name from extinction, and thus to give scope for its use to the present day. Thus *Adam*, pronounced *Ahdahm*, with the accent on the latter syllable, is a word the Turks use for *man*; their phrase "*Boo Ahdahm*" meaning *that man*.

The first narrative of creation is that commencing with Gen. i. 1, and

terminating with Gen. ii. 3; and in this account the Hebrew word *Adam* means not Adam only, but Adam and Eve, or all that was human at the time specified. Thus in Gen. i. 26, 27, we have first the Hebrew word "*Adam*," meaning a *human pair*, and then the Hebrew phrase "*Ha-Adam*," signifying *the human pair*; in short, the language of that passage is, "And God said, Let us make a human pair in our own image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that

creepeth upon the earth. So God created the human pair in his own image, in the image of God created he it, a male and a female created he them."

In the second account of creation, the Hebrew word *Adam* signifies all that was human at the time referred to. But inasmuch as that time was prior to the formation of Eve, the Hebrew word *Adam* without the article in Gen. ii. 5, means a human being; while with the article in Gen. ii. 7, the Hebrew means the human being. Thus, in Gen. ii. 5, we read, "There was not a human being to till the ground," while in the 7th verse we read, "The Lord God formed the human being of dust from the ground." Moreover, Adam alone is thus called "the human being" throughout the second narrative; while in Gen. v. 2, we read, "a male and a female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam in the day when they were created."

In the very next verse, however, a name that had been common to both our first parents, lost its article and its reference to Eve, and thus became a proper name of "the first man Adam;" "the latter Adam," being "the Lord from heaven."

As to the Messiah's appellation given in 1 Cor. xv. 45, he is Adam there in the sense in which he is David in Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24; while, without a figure, he is Adam's son according to the Hebrew of Ps. viii. 4-6, where we read, "What is man that thou shouldst remember him? and Adam's son, that thou shouldst visit him? For thou hast made him

for a little while lower than angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou hast set him over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet."

As to the word Adam signifying what is human when a human race was comprised, neither that race, nor any mere man of it, has been crowned with glory and honour, and has had all things put under his feet, as asserted in the eighth Psalm. "But," as the apostle says in Heb. ii. 9, "We see Jesus, who, for a little while, was made lower than angels in order to suffer death, crowned with glory and honour, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every one."

Death, in its full extent on man, comprises the death-pangs of time and eternity; while God's people only taste as much of death as is experienced in the milder form of temporal dissolution, and amidst support from on high. But, in the Saviour's case, he having to suffer the eternally prolonged death of millions in his own person, must have required as many millions of eternities to have accomplished his work, if he had been a mere man. But, inasmuch as his godhead comprised an infinite dignity of person, that dignity gave to six hours' suffering on the cross the value of millions of eternities. So that his work was to taste death, and nothing more, and thus to be able to say to the penitent thief, "Verily, I say unto thee, to-day thou shalt be with me in paradise."

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THE TRUE "SISTER OF MERCY."

BY THE REV. W. P. DALFERN, AUTHOR OF "GLIMPSES OF JESUS."

"Tis but an attempt—a sketch,
At best, imperfect—faint."

She was not what the world would term an interesting woman; she had not "decidedly a beautiful face on which the lines of sorrow were deeply traced;" but she had a homely, English-looking countenance, full and fair, motherly, open and ingenuous;

her mild eye beamed affection, and some said it ever seemed to swim in the tear of sensibility. Wornly feeling, frankness, and intelligence were its prevailing features, and you felt sure, while speaking to her, that she might be trusted with your sorrow, and

was possessed of a heart that would sympathise with your trouble.

Her neighbours, too, had discovered this, and generally made her the repository of their griefs, as well as their guide, in times of perplexity. She was wise in counsel, and, though she seemed to be quite unconscious of the possession of wisdom, and made no pretension to learning, yet her sound common sense, and, above all, her rich experience in the things of God, and close acquaintance with the Scriptures, enabled her to speak most acceptably to the poor.

She had the peculiar art, too, of quieting people down when excited by sickness or trouble: and, notwithstanding her deep feeling, wonderfully maintained her firmness in time of great trial. Hence, though her rich relations seldom came to see her in their prosperous days, they generally sought her in times of affliction, and her name was with them the synonyme of kindness and consolation.

But though she was thus a sister of mercy to many, there was nothing, as we have said, striking in her appearance. She looked like an ordinary common-place person; she had never been disappointed in love, nor was she romantic. As she walked through the streets, people did not stare at her, for there was nothing peculiar in her gait or dress; she did not make a practice of going from house to house to gather up fragments either for herself or the poor; she gave much away, but observed most scrupulously our Saviour's words, Matt. vi. 3, 4.

She never wore a black cloak with a hood, nor passed along with a band of mendicants at her heels. She had not a dreamy eye, nor downcast look, nor a simpering, sentimental smile; but she looked up, brightly and cheerfully, as she tripped along with something of a bustling gait. If you looked her in the face, she would look at you again, and if you laughed or smiled at her, it was generally returned in kind again. She was neither young nor single, but married and in the prime of life. Her husband was an industrious tradesman, and she had several children. Her house was a very pattern of cleanliness and order; there appeared to be a place for everything, and everything was in its place. Some said the very stairs were so clean that you might have eaten your food off them. A nameless air of cheerfulness and peace pervaded the little dwelling, and so communicated itself to all who entered it, that they invariably felt happy and at home. There was, too, a sacredness about the cheerfulness, so that the mind almost unconsciously to itself came to the conclusion that the occupants of this house are a privileged and favoured people—there is an influence at work in this dwelling, and of that character which does not exist everywhere.

Our sister of mercy was indeed what the neighbours termed a "good woman." And the origin of her goodness as they termed it was simply this: in her young days, through the Gospel, she had been brought to a knowledge of herself as a sinner, and after having passed through a lengthened period of mental distress and trouble, she was at length led by the Spirit of God, through the

same Gospel, to Christ, as a great and all-sufficient Saviour. Beneath the shelter of his cross she found pardon and peace, and experienced the virtue of his blood to cleanse from all sin, and to afford rest to the troubled conscience. By precious faith she received his righteousness, and had her heart filled with love and joy in believing. Having thus experienced the unmerited mercy of Christ, she became merciful, and having tasted of his divine compassion, she became compassionate. The grace which conquered her made her conquer herself; and, overcome by the love of her Lord in seeking her when she was at a distance, his love manifested towards her in her lost estate, she was led to imitate him, and to labour to save others even as she had been saved. Devoted she was to the service of the poor and the miserable, while in all that she did, she moved with the unconscious grace of the true aristocracy of heaven.

From these features of her history, it will be seen that she did not get her inspiration from a peculiar institution or dress, from pulpit eloquence or poetry, from a cathedral or a church, from any bishop or curate, from puseyite refinements or papistical performances, from high church romance or low church influence. Her life was one scene of labour, but the love of Christ was the root from whence all her efforts sprang. Every hour she could get, and every shilling she could spare, were freely and cheerfully devoted to the service of those who needed help. She never asked who or what they were, it was enough for her that they were children of suffering and sorrow.

The Sabbath was to her a day of delight, and the house of God a Bethel to her soul. No music so sweet to her as the sound of the Gospel. How regularly she filled her place, and what deep feeling and heavenly intelligence beamed from her face as she listened to the glad tidings of a Saviour's love. She said, but little in general, and was not a woman of many words. A sweet humility characterised, however, all she *did* say, and her pastor was wont to say of her, that she was like the dove ever seen in her place, but seldom heard. She paid but little attention to the weather when intent upon the house of God, or any mission of mercy. It must have been a severe day which kept her in-doors when duty declared she ought to be out. Her Sabbath afternoons were generally devoted to the sick, by whom her voice was frequently heard in reading God's Word and prayer.

She was called suddenly home. Having missed her for some time, we made inquiries after her, and were pointed to her lowly grave in a little quiet burial ground, near the chapel where she had so frequently worshipped God. A small head-stone recorded her name, her age, the day of her death, and also informed the reader that she died in the Lord, relying upon his merits, and in hope of a glorious immortality. The green grass covered the lowly mound where she slept, and we observed some of the flowers, which in life she loved to tend, blooming above her grave, sweet emblems of her pure and saintly life, and of the fragrant memorial she had left in the experience of numbers. The

hands of her pious children did well thus to let nature celebrate her virtues, who was so fair and beautiful a sample of divine workmanship, whose character was so unsophisticated, so meek, and yet so strong and true.

Few it may be will ever mark the spot where she lies; but when the archangels' blast the elect of God shall gather home; and from each nook and cranny of this vast universe, its hills and dales, its deserts vast and cheerless solitudes, its frozen steppes and burning sands, the merciful shall come and gather round the fount from whence all mercy springs; then, from this lowly grave, a sister true shall rise, in robes of light and immortality, and blushing find her deeds were more than fame. The lips of him, who never errs, who saved her by his grace, shall welcome her and say, "Come in, ye blessed of the Lord;" while she, astonished at his grace, shall lowly bow, and with adoring gratitude, shall blend her voice with myriads round the throne. Sisters of mercy from each tribe and tongue, their birth, their parentage, their work, their heaven now one. Aloud they sing, in sweet and lofty strains they sing, and shall for ever sing, "Unto him that 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."

Sweet scene of bliss! Sisters of mercy, all hail! Exalted your position now before the throne of God. No more the pinching winds of tribulation blow upon your path; no tear of sorrow now bedews your cheek. The days of your adversity are passed—for ever passed—and you're at home. No more the outcast child of sin and shame shall hear your voice seeking to lure

him from the paths of vice, and guide him safely through the tangled wilderness of life; no more your hand shall gently raise the aching head, or minister to those who cry for bread. Into the bleeding wounds of conscious guilt ye will not pour again the healing balm, nor sigh o'er suffering ye could not remove. The days of sorrow now are passed away. Redeemed by blood divine, 'tis yours to gather round the throne of him who stooped from heaven to save the lost, and taught you by his grace to follow in his steps until at last you now behold his face, and shall for ever sing his praise.

The character we have but attempted to depict, ever has been and ever will be found where the Gospel is preached and is accompanied by the power of God's Spirit. Such sisters of mercy have been, and are now, the glory of England, and the true source of her dignity and strength. Next to the Gospel of Christ, our hope of England's future rests upon her *Christian mothers*. No incipient monastic institutions are required to produce nurses let it be said so explicitly. Monastic institutions of every shape and form are alien to the genius and feelings of the British people, and will not be tolerated by them, whatever fine things may be written about them by interested theologians. Priests and Puseyites can only repeat themselves, and we have no wish that their images should be multiplied either in picture-frames or living automaton in the streets; nor shall we ever admit that the Christian Church ever has been, or will be, indebted to them for the formation of the character we have attempted to describe, as the true sister of mercy.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

BY MR. J. BUTTFIELD,

Author of the "Three-fold Cord," and other Poems.

"Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me. The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands."—Ps. cxxxviii.8.

Oh, what a history of love,
Of care, and faithfulness, and power,
In paths that lead to bliss above,
Through tribulations of an hour,
Is the display of God's right hand
To pilgrims through this hostile land!

How wonderfully he appeared
To ancient saints who moved along
Through hosts of enemies unfeared,
By heaven accoutred, valiant, strong!
And the review will cheer us on
Through every hindrance to the crown.

Nor dens of lions, flames of fire,
Nor racks nor tortures will dismay,
But nobler confidence inspire,
And make more glorious the way:
The victory is grander for
The difficulties of the war!

And if we our own path review,
The days of trouble we have known,
Our witness is that God is true,
"The years of his right hand" we own;
And by the past we can foretell
"It shall be with the righteous well."

And, with a confidence divine,
We may look up to heaven and cry,
"Though deepest troubles may be mine,
The smile of tender love is nigh;
Thy right hand still my guard will be
From every mighty enemy!

The Lord will perfect my concerns,
His mercy evermore endures;"
His faithfulness my spirit learns
In every providence, and pours
Its strengthened prayer, as fixed it stands,
"Leave not the work of thine own hands:"

And hope, and peace, and joy, and love,
Spring from the clouds the storm hath riven,
And blooming fragrantly they prove
The earnest of the fruits of heaven.
O blessed hand that strikes each foe,
And heals me if I feel the blow!

LITERARY NOTICES.

New Park Street Pulpit, Vol. I., containing the whole of the Morning Sermons preached by the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, during the past year, 1855, with a Preface by Mr. Spurgeon, and a fine tinted Engraving of the Birth-place of Mr. Spurgeon. London: Albaster & Passmore, 34, Wilson Street, Finsbury; and J. Paul, 1, Chapter House Court.

It is unnecessary for us to do more than to introduce this volume to the notice of our readers who may not have possessed themselves of these unique and impressive discourses. Its contents may be regarded as fair specimens of Mr. Spurgeon's style of preaching, both as to matter and manner. We had marked several striking and beautiful passages for insertion, but our limits this month forbid our doing this.

Instead of extracting at present from the volume before us, or of extending our own remarks thereon—considering the kind interest manifested by Mr. S. in the success of the "Baptist Messenger," and lest, on this account, we may have imputed to us a selfish partiality—we prefer inserting the following critique from a distinguished contemporary.*

"About twelve months ago, when Mr. Spurgeon was preaching in Exeter Hall to the most densely crowded audiences that ever assembled within the walls of that spacious place, we called especial attention to his qualities as a preacher and as a theologian. We pointed out freely, but in the spirit of sincere friendship, what we conceived to be his faults, and expressed not only a hope but a belief that, as he was so young a man—not having then reached his majority—he would, with the lapse of time, which generally matures the judgment, as well as mellows the mind,—get rid, in a great measure, if not wholly, of what we then specified as defects. It gives us great gratification to say, that having heard him recently, in his own chapel, in New Park-street, Southwark, we discern a decided improvement, both as regards his matter and manner. Not that there is any change in Mr. Spurgeon's doctrinal views, or in his mode of illustrating, enforcing, and applying them, but that there is less of the pugnacious quality about him, when grappling with the views of those from whom he differs. He does not speak so often with asperity of other preachers of the gospel, whom he conceives—and we must say, in the main, rightly—to be unfaithful to their high calling. There is, too, a marked and gratifying improvement in Mr. Spurgeon, as regards the manner of his pulpit-appearance. He was always profoundly earnest in his appeals to the consciences of the unconverted; and spoke with an emphasis which showed how deeply he felt, when dwelling on the joys and sorrows, the hopes and fears of believers. And yet, strange to

say, there was at times associated with this seemingly irreverence which, we know, frequently caused much pain to some of his greatest friends and admirers. In this respect also, we are happy to say, we can discern a decided amendment.

Still, truth compels us to add, that there is room for yet greater improvement, both in his matter and manner. We see something of a spirit which we cannot commend in the preface to this volume. There is a lack, too, of good taste in many parts of the volume itself. More charity of feeling and gentleness of expression are yet wanting, and may be attained without any deficiency in the faithfulness with which he advocates and enforces the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel. It were well, too, that he should be especially careful to avoid the very semblance of irreverence, when engaged in the most solemn and responsible work which a human being was ever delegated to perform, namely, the proclamation of mercy from heaven to fallen man, regarded in conjunction with the awful consequences to those who reject the message. We would, with great earnestness, urge on Mr. Spurgeon the propriety of studiously avoiding the use of expressions calculated to excite a smile, or to make hearers think lightly of the purpose for which they are met together. There is no inconsiderable number of such expressions in the volume before us, which, to the eyes of all who have right views of the sacred mission of the pulpit, must be exceedingly painful to witness.

We point out these defects in the preaching of Mr. Spurgeon, with all the greater freedom, because he is, in various respects an uncommon man. Never, since the days of George Whitfield, has any minister of religion acquired so great a reputation as this Baptist preacher, in so short a time. Here is a mere youth—a perfect stripling, only twenty-one years of age—incomparably the most popular preacher of the day. There is no man within her Majesty's dominions, who could draw such immense audiences; and none who, in his happier efforts, can so completely enthrall the attention, and delight the minds of his hearers. Some of his appeals to the conscience, some of his remonstrances with the careless, constitute specimens of a very high order of oratorical power. When pronouncing the doom of those who live and die in a state of impenitence, he makes hundreds of his immense congregation quail and quake in their seats. He places their awful destiny in such vivid colours before their eyes, that they almost imagine they are already in the regions of darkness and despair. In his preface, he tells us, that such has been the impression produced by some of his sermons, that he has ascertained upwards of twenty cases of conversion as the result of one

* "Morning Advertiser," Feb. 18, edited by James Grant Esq., author of the "Metropolitan Pulpit," "Great Metropolis," &c., &c.

discourse; to say nothing of those instances of a saving change wrought on his hearers, which will be unknown until the world to come has made its important and unexpected revelations.

When this able and eloquent preacher first made his appearance in the horizon of the religious world, and dazzled the masses in the metropolis by his brilliancy, we were afraid that he either might get intoxicated by the large draughts of popularity which he had daily to drink, or that he would not be able, owing to the want of variety, to sustain the reputation he had so suddenly acquired. Neither result has happened. Whatever may be his defects, either as a man or as a preacher of the Gospel, it is due to him to state that he has not been spoiled by popular applause. Constitutionally he has no small amount of self-esteem; but so far from its growing with his daily extending fame, he appears to be more humble and more subdued than when he first burst on our astonished gaze.

With regard, again, to our other fear that his excellence as a preacher would not be sustained, the event has, we rejoice to say, no less agreeably proved the groundlessness of our apprehensions; here is no falling off whatever. On the contrary, he is, in some respects, improving with the lapse of time. We fancy we can see his striking originality to greater advantage than at first. There is no sameness in his sermons. The variety of his matter—not of course as regards his doctrines, but as relates to his expositions, illustrations, and applications of divine truth—is as great as ever.

The volume, whose title stands at the head of this review, will, in these latter respects, bear out all that we have said. Mr. Spurgeon's sermons possess the rare merit of being equally excellent, whether in hearing them from the pulpit, or in reading them in the seclusion of retirement.

The volume is singularly cheap. It is got up in a superior manner, considering the price at which it is sold. It is certain to have an immense sale; and, from its circulation in every corner of the world where the English language is read, there is every reason to hope and believe that it will be productive of great good."

The Life of Luther, Written by Himself; with Additions and Illustrations collected and arranged by M. Michelet, with Portrait. London: W. H. COLLINGRIDGE. 8vo., pp. 108.

THIS is a work of surpassing interest, and, considering the mass of information it contains, a marvel of cheapness (One Shilling).

The Believer's Position and Prospects or Thoughts on Union to Christ. By the Rev. John Cox, author of "Our Great High Priest." Fcp., pp. 84. London: Ward & Co.

THIS precious little treatise is highly characteristic of its esteemed author. The subject on which it treats is of vast and vital importance. "Union to Christ is God's great remedy for all man's maladies and miseries." We hope it may meet with a circulation as

wide as its merits deserve. It is but right to add that while Mr. Cox here states that his views and practice on the communion question have undergone a change, yet, "as regards Christian doctrine," he says, "I can from my heart say that more fully than ever I subscribe to the great and emphatic declarations and desires of Paul, 'By grace are ye saved,' 'Christ is all and in all.' 'That I may know him,' and last not least, 'Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.'"

Select Series of Christian Tracts and Books. London: Wertheim & Macintosh.

No lover of Gospel truth will regret spending a shilling to possess themselves of these tracts and books, which are full of Christ and his cross; powerfully written and beautifully printed. For private reading and general distribution, they are invaluable.

Weekly Tracts—published by the Weekly Tract Society, Rowland Eliot, 62, Paternoster Row.

ANOTHER packet of excellent tracts, written expressly for different classes.

Saving Truths. By the Rev. J. CUMMING, D.D. "In Christ."—"To whom shall we go?" Each pp. 32. London: J. F. Shaw, Southampton Row and Paternoster Row.

THIS is a companion series to Dr. Cumming's *Urgent Questions*, which cannot be too warmly recommended. Dr. C. is never so efficient or useful as a writer as in works like these, in which he has scarcely an equal.

Are you thinking of Getting Married; or, Words to the Thoughtless and the Thinking, the Foolish and the Wise. By Old Chatty Cheerful, Fellow of the Happy Home Society. London: Jarrold & Son, 47, St. Paul's Church Yard.

The Worth of Fresh Air. No. I. of "Deposits in the Saving's Bank of Wisdom." London: Jarrold & Son.

"It is one thing to be married, and another thing to be happy," says Old Chatty Cheerful; and whoever are wise enough to avail themselves of her counsels in this interesting affair will not regret our having introduced them to the cheerful old dame. The other tract is also likely to be very useful.

Christ is All; or the Touchstone of Piety. By the Rev. C. H. SPURGEON. With a neat Ornamental Wrapper, Price Two-pence. London: J. Paul, 1, Chapter House Court.

THIS above was preached in the open air during the summer of last year, and is one of Mr. Spurgeon's plainest and most pointed addresses. It is well adapted for presents and for general distribution.

The Homilist. Edited by the Rev. David Thomas. A bi-monthly periodical, No. 27, price One Shilling. London: Ward & Co.

THIS, in our opinion, is the most talented serial of the present time. We have read every previous number, and, with some few exceptions, with an interest far greater than we remember to have done any work of this description.

The Evangelical Preacher; or, Studies for the Pulpit. Nos. IV. to VIII. London: Sangster & Fletcher, Paternoster Row.

THIS periodical, which is of the same character as the "Homilist," is conducted with considerable ability. These several numbers contain many outlines and sketches of sermons of no ordinary merit; and to preachers who have taste and talent enough to avail themselves of such aid, they will on fitting occasions be of no small service.

The Witness of the Spirit; or Evidences of Interest in Christ. Intended for Young Christians and Anxious Inquirers. By the Rev. W. P. BALFERN, author of "Glimpses of Jesus." London: J. F. Shaw.

IF our readers know of any who are "enquiring the way to Zion with their faces thitherward," but who, not being possessed of an assured hope of interest in Christ, are ready to halt, they will, under God's blessing, be doing them most essential service, by putting into their hands Mr. Balfern's little book. Our readers need no further introduction from us to the writer of "Glimpses of Jesus." They have for many months past been privileged to read the excellent papers which have emanated from this source, and by which our pages have been greatly enriched.

MONTHLY SUMMARY.

THE religious public of all denominations have achieved a great victory on the Lord's day question. The House of Commons, numbering 424 members, on the evening of February 21, have negatived, by a majority of THREE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHT VOTES, Sir J. Walsley's motion for Opening the British Museum and the National Galleries on Sundays. If Christian men of all sections of the Church would unite their energies, and systematically exert themselves on all great questions, no foe could successfully oppose their might, no evil could long remain unredressed. We have more to fear from our own supineness than from the power of our enemies. Let us not forget that union is strength.

The Peace Conferences are now being holden at Paris. At present the auguries are favorable to the cause of progress and humanity; an armistice until the 31st inst., having been signed by the representatives of the belligerent powers. The American quarrel, we hope, will soon be amicably adjusted.

DENOMINATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.

Lessness Heath, Kent.—Rev. J. Pearce has resigned the pastorate.

Ramsay.—The Rev. P. H. Cornford resigns the pastorate this month.

Great Sampford, Essex.—The Rev. W. C. Ellis, from Mildenhall, Suffolk.

Subden.—Rev. Mr. Kitching, from Eyre.

Salford, Manchester.—Mr. L. B. Brown, of Horton College, has accepted the pastorate.

Gransden, Cambs.—The Rev. G. G. Bailey, from Old Meeting, Rushden, Northamptonshire.

Tring (New Mill), Herts.—The Rev. J. Statham has accepted the unanimous invitation to become the pastor.

Tunbridge Wells, Hanoer Chapl.—The Rev. J. Jones, from Leighton Buzzard, Beds.

Haddenham, Cambs.—Mr. J. Mostyn, of Horton College, has accepted a unanimous invitation to the pastorate.

Huddersfield.—The Rev. J. Hanson, from Milnsbridge.

NEW CHAPELS.

London, Ebenezer Chapel, Artillery Lane.—This chapel, which has been fitted up for

the use of the Church and congregation under the pastoral care of the Rev. T. J. Messer, was opened for public worship on Feb. 10. The opening Sermons were preached by the Revs. J. B. Barker, Dr. Burns, and the pastor. On Monday evening a congregational tea meeting was held, presided over by the pastor, suitable addresses were delivered by the Revs. D. F. Sunderland, C. W. Banks, J. B. Barker, W. H. Payne, Esq., and J. W. Green, Esq. On the 17th inst., sermons were preached by the Revs. T. J. Messer, J. B. M'Faulane, and J. Doxsey. A debt of £180 still remains on the chapel.

Hollywell Lake, near Wellington, Somerset. Feb. 9. The foundation stone of a Baptist Chapel was laid by H. W. Elworthy, Esq. The building is to be the donation of a friend.

Bristol, Thrissel Street.—The Baptist Chapel in this place was destroyed by fire last year. A new chapel has been erected, which was opened for divine worship, Jan. 23. The proceedings of the day were commenced by a breakfast, after which addresses were delivered by the Revs. H. Clark, A. M., minister of the place, S. Hiebstitch, J. Latroue, and H. Craik. Prayer was offered by the Revs. S. Nichol-

son, and J. Pratt. The company then adjourned into the Chapel, when, after reading the Scriptures and prayer, by the Rev. T. Crisp, the Rev. S. Luke preached. In the evening the Rev. T. Winter preached. The total expenses of rebuilding, &c., amount to £370, the greater part of which is secured by insurance.

Shoreditch, London Providence Hall.—The Rev. C. Smith having resigned the pastorate of the Baptist Church meeting at Providence Chapel, Shoreditch, and many of his former charge, sympathising with him, hired the above place, which was opened for Divine worship on Jan. 27; on which occasion sermons were preached by the Revs. W. Palmer, Homerton G. Moyle, Peckham; and S. Milner, Kepple Street. On the following Tuesday a strict Baptist Church was formed in the above place, consisting of sixty-six members, formerly under Mr. Smith's charge, who received their dismission for the purpose, and five others. Mr. Austin, of Deptford, stated the nature of Church; Mr. Ball, of Wandsworth, read the articles of faith; Mr. Foreman, of Dorset Square, addressed the Church; Mr. Milner implored a blessing on the pastor and people; and Mr. J. A. Jones, of Jireh Chapel, Brick Lane, administered the Lord's Supper to the newly formed Church.

RECOGNITION SERVICES.

Abingdon, Jan. 17.—Of the Rev. S. Edger, B.A., as pastor of the Baptist Church. After an address to the Church on their mutual position, by Mr. Edger; the Rev. E. S. Pryce, B.A., of Gravesend, their former pastor, gave an address on the same subject, and the Rev. J. Aldis of Reading, on "The Influence of God's Truth in the World." The Rev. R. H. Marten, B.A., the late pastor; and the Rev. S. Lepine (Ind.) of Abingdon; V. Lewis, and G. Best, of Drayton, took part in the service.

Bridgend, Glamorganshire, Feb. 13.—Of the Rev. T. Cole, as co-pastor with the Rev. Mr. Williams. The introductory discourse was delivered by the Rev. J. H. Hill, of Swansea. The Rev. C. Short, A.M., of Swansea, proposed the usual questions, and offered the recognition prayer. The charge to the minister was delivered by the Rev. T. Davies, of Myrthyr, and the sermon to the people by the Rev. C. Short, A.M.

Doer (Salem) Jan. 23.—A public tea meeting to welcome the Rev. A. Pitt, late of Upton-on-Severn, as pastor, was held in the above chapel, George Flackman, in the chair. After a statement by Mr. Hill one of the deacons; the Rev. A. Pitt delivered an explanatory address. Other addresses were delivered by the Revs. G. Grigsby (Ind.), H. Tison (Wesleyan), J. Jones, Folkestone, Mr. Ashdown, and Mr. Hart, town Missionary.

SPECIAL SERVICES.

Ilington, Cross Street Baptist Chapel.—A meeting was held in the above place for the purposes of removing the debt of £500 on the Chapel, and of raising an additional

£500 for the erection of a school-room. After an address by the pastor, the Rev. A. C. Thomas, the Revs. J. Weir, of the Scotch Free Church, River Terrace, and A. M. Stalker, late of Leeds, it was announced that promises of £500 had been received, and that the ladies intended holding a bazaar in the month of June next.

PRESENTATION SERVICES.

New Park Street Sunday School.—On Monday, February 11, the Teachers of New Park Street Sunday School invited the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon to take tea with them in their New School-room. The object of the meeting was, to afford the teachers an opportunity of expressing their Christian love to their esteemed pastor, who, notwithstanding his many other public and pastoral duties, has, from the commencement of his labours in the Church, manifested a warm interest in the prosperity of the Sabbath school. The tables were decorated with the finest green-house plants of the season. It was strictly a teachers' meeting, and no pains were spared to give their kind pastor and his beloved partner a hearty welcome. In all respects, it was a season of joy that has never been surpassed in the history of New Park Street Sunday School. After tea, Mr. Cutler, the Superintendent of the school, presented to the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon the celebrated picture of Liberty of Conscience, representing the Assembly of Divines at Westminster in the time of Cromwell. It was a proof impression, and most elegantly framed. The handsome present was most feelingly acknowledged by Mr. Spurgeon, who, in a felicitous address, stated how fully he appreciated this spontaneous expression of affection of the teachers, by whom exclusively the cost of this magnificent present had been contributed. Mr. Cutler was followed by Mr. G. Kimber, the Secretary of the School; Mr. Thomas Olney; Mr. G. Horwood; Mr. Francis Passmore; Mr. Catchpole, and Mr. Evans, who delivered very appropriate addresses on this interesting occasion. After the Presentation Service had concluded, the teachers adjourned to the chapel, where several hundreds were already assembled for prayer. The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon requested that the prayer meeting should be especially on the behalf of the congregation retired into the school-room, and expressed their admiration of the teachers' gift to their pastor. On a tablet attached to the frame was the following inscription:—"Presented to the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon by the Teachers of New Park Street Sabbath School, as a token of their Christian Love and Esteem February 11, 1856."

Eynsford, Kent.—At the annual meeting of the members of the Church, held Feb. 18, the pastor was presented by one of the deacons, in behalf of the Church and congregation, with a handsome sum in gold. This is the third presentation made by the Church and congregation to the

Rev. J. Whittemore, during the four years of his ministry among them.

Norwich.—Jan 20. A public tea meeting, in connexion with the Baptists and Independents, took place in the Lecture Hall, Norwich, the object of which was to present the Rev. T. A. Wheeler with a handsome silver inkstand, and a purse of 100 guineas; a portrait of Mr. Wheeler was at the same time presented to Mrs. Wheeler. The Rev. J. Alexander presided; the Rev. Mr. Wigner, of Lynn, and other gentlemen, addressed the meeting.

Leicester.—The teachers connected with the General Baptist Chapel, Friar Lane, Leicester, presented to their highly esteemed and beloved pastor, the Rev. S. Wigg, two beautifully bound volumes of Dr. Kitto's Bible.

ASSOCIATION SERVICES.

Font-y-Pridd, Glamorganshire.—Glamorgan shire Baptist Association. Meetings in connection with this Association were held on Feb. 6th and 7th. The preachers were the Revs. J. Evans (Abercarnid), J. Jones (Zion), N. Thomas (Cardiff), J. Lloyd (Ebenezer), J. Rowland (Gwmalon), J. W. Hughes (Liverpool), D. Davies (Overypark), R. Roberts (Tabernaole), and T. Jones (Neath).

ANNIVERSARIES TO BE HELD.

Exeter.—The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon is to preach the Anniversary Sermons at South Street, in April. The church and congregation, as well as the inhabitants of this loyal city are looking forward with much pleasure to hear this young and talented preacher.

Mr. Spurgeon has engaged to preach, afternoon and evening at each of the following places—April 1, at Needingworth, Hunts; April 2, at Aldreth; April 3, at Willingham, Cambs., at 2 and 6 o'clock.

Poplar, Cotton Street.—The 45th anniversary of the Baptist Chapel, Cotton Street, Poplar. The Rev. George Smith, of Trinity Chapel, has kindly engaged to preach the anniversary sermon on Easter Monday. The service to commence at half-past six o'clock, after which a collection will be made for the benefit of the former pastor of the Church, the Rev. James Upton.

BAPTISMS.

Aberdare, Dec. 22.—Ten, in the river Cynon, by Mr. Price, in the presence of 3,000 persons.

English, Jan. 13.—Six by Mr. Price.

Abersychan, English, Jan. 6.—Four by Mr. Price.

Aylesbury, Bucks, Jan. 27.—Two.

Bedford, Mill Street.—Jan. 27, one; Feb. 3, two by Mr. Killen.

Berkhamstead Common, Jan. 6.—Three by Mr. Moore.

Beulah, Dec. 23.—In the river Ebbw, twelve by Mr. James.

Bourton-on-the-Water, Jan. 22.—Five by Mr. Brooks.

Brecon, Dec. 2.—Two by Mr. Evans.

Broseley, Dec. 30.—Five by Mr. Yale.

Bury, Ebenezer, Nov. 3.—Four (three of one family. Jan. 27.—Six, one of whom was an old man aged 80, by Mr. Ashworth.

Fownhope, Herefordshire, Dec. 23.—Three by Mr. Mudge.

Gravesend, Jan. 30.—Six by Mr. Stringer.

Greenwich, Lewisham Road, Jan. 7.—Four by Mr. Russell: one aged 78.

Haddenham, Bucks, Dec. 25.—Three by the pastor.

Holyhead, Jan. 6.—One by Mr. Morgan.

Horsham, Dec. 30.—Two by Mr. Mote.

Hull, George Street, Jan. 1.—After an address by the Rev. G. Bullock, A.B., two sisters, the daughters of a deceased Baptist minister, by Mr. Hall.

Idle, York, Feb. 24.—Seven by Mr. T. Han-son.

Ipswich, Turret Green, Jan. 3.—Four by Mr. Lord.

Llanilleth, Monmouthshire, Dec. 9.—Two;

and Jan. 6, two by Mr. Lloyd.

London, New Park Street, Jan. 31.—Twenty-three, one a lad of ten years, the son of one of the deacons, by Mr. Spurgeon;

— **Hill Street, Dorset Square, Jan. 27.**

—Nineteen by Mr. Foreman.

Newark, Notts, Jan. 27.—Two by Mr. Bayley; one, the brother of one of our deacons; the other a female belonging to the Wesleyans in this town.

Penuel (Rock), Pembrokeshire, Dec. 30.—

One by Mr. Griffiths.

Shottley Bridge, Durham, Feb. 17.—Two; and Feb. 19, two by Mr. Whitehead.

DEATHS.

Black, Mr. T., Senior Pastor of the Scotch Baptist Church, Feb. 5, at Ford Forge, Bowser, Miss Emma, Feb. 6, of Trinity Square, Minorities.

Davis, Rev. Stephen, late Travelling Secretary to the Baptist Irish Society, Feb. 3, at Peckham, aged 73.

Errington, Mrs. M., Feb. 6, at Tawlaw, Durham, aged 75.

Felkin, Mrs., wife of the Rev. J. Felkin, of Harlands, Sevenoaks, Dec. 31st, after a short but severe illness; her end was true calmness and sweet peace; her last words were, "Father, into thy hands I commit!"—and then expired, leaving the sentence unfinished.

Phillips, J. L. Esq. Justice of the Peace Jan. 31, at Melksham, Wilts, aged 67. Mr. P. had been for many years Superintendent of the Sunday School, and Deacon of the Baptist Church in that town.

Richards, Mrs., wife of the Rev. James Richards, Baptist Minister, Feb. 10th, aged 53.

Smith Miss, Feb. 18, at the residence of the Rev. I. Davies, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

In Memoriam.

MISS E. F. LIVERSIDGE,

Who fell asleep in Jesus, April 30th, 1855,

AGED 10.

"He shall gather the Lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young;"—Is. xl. 11.

"Yes, 'tis a glorious place!"—thus spake the child,
And nestled down to rest;
As folds the little bird its weary wings
Within its downy nest;
In quietness and peace to seek repose,
Free from all fear, and far from all its foes.

It was no dream that made the child so calm,
But grace which reigned within;
And taught her how on his dear breast to lean,
Whose merit purged her sin;
To conquer death and look beyond the tomb,
To that bright land where joys immortal bloom.

W. P. BALYSEN

THE FAULTLESS ASSEMBLY.

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,

*Minister of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.**

"They are without fault before the throne of God."—REV. xiv. 5.

It is well, beloved, sometimes to get aside from the worry of business to have a little conversation concerning that future world to which we are tending. We will therefore, beloved, indulge in a brief contemplation of heaven, and will speak concerning those things which, if we are the Lord's people, we are soon to realize when we shall be—

"Far from a world of grief and sin.
With God eternally shut in,"

to live with him for ever.

There are three things in these words; first, the character of the people in heaven—"they are without *fault*;" secondly, who they are—"they are without fault;" and then, thirdly, where they are—"they are without fault *before the throne of God*."

I. THE PEOPLE IN HEAVEN ARE DESCRIBED BY A CERTAIN PECULIAR CHARACTER—"without fault." I have never discovered such creatures living upon earth, and don't suppose I ever shall. I might travel many a weary journey before I could find a man in the three kingdoms that would be "without fault;" yea, if an angel were to be sent round the world for this purpose, he might fly round it many a time, till his wings were weary, without finding a man "without fault." I knew a man who once told me that he was perfect; but he soon got very cross when I began to speak, and I saw that he was perfect only in one thing—he was perfect in weakness—that was the only perfection he had. It is only now and then that you meet with a man who has the impudence to tell you that he is perfect; but you can soon see from the very look of him that he is not perfect, for at any rate he is not perfect in humility; he seems to glory in his perfection, and all the while his very mouth betrayeth him. That eye of pride, that lip of lust with which he speaks, as he lusteth for the praise of men, tell you that he is far from being perfect. A faultless creature! where is there such a being on earth? Fly, Gabriel, fly! enter thou the loftiest palace, and then go to the humblest cottage, go to the most remote realm, to the most civilized, polite, and educated people, and thou shalt find no perfect being; nay, go into the church, go into the pulpit, thou wilt ne'er find a perfect man nor a perfect minister. Imperfection is stamped upon all things; and, save the completeness that is in Christ Jesus, and the perfection we have in him, perfection is nowhere to be found beneath the skies; nor in heaven itself could it be found unless God were there, for he alone can make a creature perfect. But there, beloved, is perfection; despite the faults of men on earth, when they shall have been fitted for the skies by God's most precious grace, they shall stand before God without fault. Wo will, for a minute, look at our own faults, and then admire those glorious beings above, and the grace of God in them, that they are "without fault."

I think there are three great faults in the church of God at large, as a body, from which those who are in heaven are entirely free. Those three are: a want of love to one another; a want of love to souls; and a want of love to Jesus Christ.

We need not go far without seeing that there is among Christians a *want of love to one another*. There is not too much love in our churches; certainly we have none to give away. We have heard that—

"Whatever brawls disturb the street,
There should be peace at home;"

* Printed from notes of a sermon taken in short-hand by an eminent reporter, and revised by Mr. Spurgeon.

but it is not always as it "should be." We have known churches where the members can scarcely sit down at the Lord's table unless there is some disagreement. There are people who are always finding fault with the minister, and there are ministers finding fault with the people; there is among them "a spirit that lusteth to envy," and "where envy and strife is, there is every evil work." We have met with people among whom it would be misery to place ourselves, because we love not war; we love peace and charity. Alas! how continually do we hear accounts of disputings and variance in churches. O, beloved! there is too little love in the churches. If Jesus were to come amongst us, might he not say to us: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another; and how have you kept it when you have been always finding fault with one another? and how ready you have been to turn your sword against your brother." But, beloved, "they are without fault before the throne of God." Those who on earth could not agree, are sure to agree when they get to heaven. There are some who have crossed swords on earth, but who have held the faith and been numbered amongst the saints in glory everlasting. There is no fighting amongst them now; "they are without fault before the throne of God." There are many who would never sit at the same table with each other when they were upon earth, though they were the children of God; while now, side by side they are standing and singing to the same tune—"Glory be to God and to the Lamb!" We discover by reading the records of distinguished men, that there has scarcely been one eminent man who could walk side by side with his fellow. Like great mountains they touch at their foundations; certainly, they unite nowhere else. But in heaven all stand side by side, and there is no dislike amongst them. We know that in many Churches some of the richer members will scarcely notice the poorer; but it will not be so there, there is true love there. We hear of Church members who have been sick for months, yet no brother or sister member has ministered to them; but in heaven it is not so; there is no neglect there. They cannot suffer there; but if it were possible that they could suffer, so sweet would be the love displayed towards each other, that suffering would be removed in a moment. Ask the cherubim if they ever knew a jar in Christ's glorified Church above; and they would say, nay. And if you could make all the blessed ones pass in review, and ask them if they love one another? "Yes," they would say, "with a pure heart, 'fervently;' and though we had brawls and disputings on earth, they are all forgotten now, for the blood of Christ that covers a multitude of sins has covered all our disagreements; and that holy mantle of a Saviour's love that he casts over all our faults has ended all our wars with one another. We are all one in Christ Jesus; would to God we had seen more of this oneness when below!" They are "without fault" in that respect, beloved, above. There is no harshness there; there is no ill humour there; there is no bitterness there, there is no envy, no evil speaking, no spite, no uncharitableness, there; "they are without fault before the throne of God." Oh! how my wearied spirit longs to be there. I wish not to live with men of strife; the lion's den is not for me, nor the house of leopards. Give me the quiet place where the oil runneth from the head even to the skirts of the garments. Let me live in peace with all Christ's Church; let me not find fault with any one. Sooner will I allow them to sheath their daggers in my heart than I would draw mine in angry contest. Thank God! there are some of us who can say, "There is not a man living with whom we are at arm's length any more than the infant that is just born." There are some of us who can give our hand very readily to any one in whom we see anything that is agreeable to the Spirit of God; but when we see anything that is contrary to the Spirit we say, "Oh! that I had wings—not like an eagle to fly at my brother—oh! that I had wings like a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest." That happy time shall soon come, beloved, when we, like those above, shall be "without fault before the throne of God."

2. But a second fault is, that *there is a great want of love to souls.* Where John Bunyan gives a portrait of a man whom God intended to be a guide to heaven, have you ever noticed how beautiful that portrait is? He has a crown of life over his head, he has the earth beneath his feet, he stands as if he pleads with men, and has the best of books in his hand. Oh! I would that I were, for one moment, like that pattern preacher; that I could plead with men as John Bunyan describeth. We are all of us ambassadors of Christ, and we are told, that as ambassadors, we are to beseech men as though he besought them by us. How I do love to see a tearful preacher! How I love to see the man who can weep over sinners; whose soul stoops down over the ungodly, as if he would by any means, and by all means bring him to the Lord Jesus Christ. I cannot understand a man who stands up and delivers a discourse in a cold indifferent manner, as if he cared not for the souls of his hearers. I think the true Gospel minister will have a real yearning after souls, something like Rachel when she cried, "Give me children, or I die;" so will he cry to God that he might have his elect born and brought home to him; and, methinks, every true Christian should be exceedingly earnest in prayer concerning the souls of the ungodly, and when they are so, how abundantly God blesses them, and how the Church prospers! But, beloved, souls may be damned, and how few of you care about it. Sinners may sink into the gulf of perdition, and how few tears fall. The whole world may be swept away as a torrent down the precipice of woe, and yet how few really cry to God on its behalf. How few men say "mine eyes run down with tears, because of the slain of the daughter of my people." We do not lament before God the loss of men's souls, as it well becomes a Christian to do. Ah, but in heaven they love souls. Angels rejoice over one sinner that repenteth. As a good Puritan said, "Whenever a prodigal comes back, they set all heaven's bells ringing, because there is another sinner come in." O beloved, when you get a convert to bring to the church, you see some of the members look at him through their spectacles, as if they would frighten the poor timid one. Many do not, like angels, rejoice over him, but they look at him as if they were afraid he was an hypocrite. The poor soul stands trembling before the Church, the hand of the Lord is mighty upon him; but they sit by as coldly as if they were on a judgment seat, and have neither love nor mercy for him. I know that when a Church increases, there should be judgment and discretion shown, and I would rather have too much of what I am speaking against, than too little of it; but sometimes the members look at the converts and say, "It cannot be possible, how should they be gathered in." And when there is an addition to their numbers, they even go home with a heavy heart, as if the Church were likely to come to harm by admitting them. Give me a Church-meeting where they weep over those who come in, and say, "bless the Lord, there is another poor soul rescued from the world." I think it is a sort of mark of the sheep, that they love to see the lambs; I think it is a feature of the Lord's family, that they love to see another child born. When you see one brought to the Lord under your minister, do you not bless God for it? When you hear that such an one has received grace and mercy, do you not bless God for it? No, not half so much as you ought; we are not half thankful enough to our Father for it. But, up there, beloved, they are without fault in that matter, "they are without fault before the throne of God;" and they do rejoice, every one of them, when they see souls brought in. Methinks your pious mother, young man, will rejoice when God brings you to his feet; and those friends of yours shall lit up their notes high to heaven, when they see those dear to them on earth, united to the Church of God on high. Blessed be God's name for them, they are "without fault before the throne;" and in this matter, especially, because they love souls.

3. But the other fault I mentioned was, *want of love to Jesus Christ.* Yes,

how little there is among us of love to Jesus Christ! When I think of myself, sometimes, and think of the Lord Jesus, it does appear as if I did not love him at all; when I think of that "love so amazing, so divine," which led him to give himself for me; when I remember that in me was no good thing, yet he loved me when I was dead in trespasses and sins; loved me when I hated, loved me when I spurned him, loved me when I despised and rejected him, and hid, as it were, my face from him. "He was despised and rejected of men—he was despised—and we esteemed him not;" when I think of all this, I cannot but wonder in myself that I do not consecrate myself more entirely to him. Oh, if we did but love that sweet Lord Jesus with more ardour and devotedness! He has love enough to us, but how little is our love to him! Methinks there is nothing over which a Christian should groan so much as the littleness of his love to the Saviour. When our faith is small we often lament; but we should recollect that love is the flower of faith, and springs from faith; and when that is feeble it is a sign that faith is feeble also. Rutherford somewhere beautifully says, "O Lord Jesus! let me love thee, and that will be heaven enough for me; for I find such sweetness in loving thee, that, if it were possible that thou didst not love me, thou canst not be so cruel as to prevent me loving thee; and if thou wouldest but let me have the presumption to love thee, I think it would be heaven enough." Rutherford felt it was so sweet to love his Lord, he found it was so delightful to have his heart go out to the Saviour, that so long as the Lord would let him love him he would be thankful for it, even though his Lord did not love him. Beloved, there is nought like the love of Jesus to make us happy! I love the doctrines of grace as well as any mortal living, but I love Jesus better; I love Christ's people as much as any one, but I love Christ best. Oh, his sweet, glorious, exalted person! that is the object of our love; we look upon all else as the clothes of Jesus, as the crown of Jesus. And we love the Lord Jesus for his own blessed name's sake—we love him for what we know of him—still the fault is that we do not know him enough—we do not love him enough. But, up there, beloved, they are without fault before the throne of God. Ask those bright spirits whether they know Jesus, and how would they answer you? Spirit, bright, immortal! dost thou love Jesus? Hear his answer! He stops not to tell you, but he repeats his song once more from his immortal lips—"Glory and honour, dominion and power, be unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Ask him whether he loves Christ, he does not stop to tell you, but sends his fingers across the silvery strings, and again strikes his golden chords, and lifts up his thrice-glorious voice at the name of Jesus.

"Jesus! my Lord!" their harps employ:

"Jesus! my love!" they sing:

"Jesus! the life of both our joys!"

Sound sweet from every string.

If there were nothing else to expect in heaven but that we should love Christ, more, to love him, wholly to be

Plung'd in the Godhead's deepest sea,
And lost in his immensity;

to put our hands upon his gory bosom, to grasp his nail-pierced hands, to gaze on his benignant face, to look on those compassionate eyes, which once were cold and glazed in the tomb; to know him, to love him perfectly—that were sweet enough; and that shall be so, for they are "without fault before the throne," and so shall we be.

We have thus described, beloved, the people in heaven without fault before the throne. We have been necessarily brief, or we might have enlarged considerably, by observing how they are without fault in *the opinion of others*, and in *their own opinion*, for now they cannot see any fault in themselves. But, best of all, they are without fault in *God's opinion*, for even the scrutinizing eye of Jehovah sees no fault in them. He looks upon them, and beholds not the shadow of a stain. That God who sees every little insect in

the sea, and every creeping thing at the bottom, can see nothing wrong in his people in heaven; no, nor even here, when he considers them in Christ; for even here we can sing—

“ Great God! I'm clean!
Through Jesus' blood I'm clean!”

But more especially then, when we shall be completely sanctified by the Spirit; there shall be no indwelling corruption, no original sin, all that is sinful in us shall be gone; and God himself upon his throne shall say, “They are without fault” before me.

II.—Now, let us inquire, WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE THAT ARE WITHOUT FAULT? “Oh,” says one, “they are the apostles. Certainly they are without fault.” Another says, “They are some eminent saints such as Noah, Elijah, and Daniel.” No; not them exclusively, beloved. Some other says, “They are some faithful ministers who preach the truth very boldly; therefore they are without fault before the throne.” No; they are not. I will tell you who they are. “I looked, and lo! a lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him an hundred and forty-four thousand, having his Father's name written on their foreheads.” These are the people; chosen ones of God; the elect; these are they who have the Father's name written on their foreheads; the chosen number of those whom God selected out of the world to show forth his praise; the hundred and forty-four thousand, the number which no man can number, redeemed from among men. It does not matter whether they have been great or little sinners, they are all without fault before the throne now; it matters not whether they have been swearers, drunkards, whore-mongers, or what not, they are without fault before the throne if they are but amongst the number whom God hath chosen and sanctified. It matters not what they were; it matters not whether men despised them or found fault with them; we care not whether they have been put in the pillory of scorn, and hooted and hissed at by mankind, all the elect are without fault in the person of Jesus Christ; and they all shall be at the same bright and glorious day before the throne in person without fault in themselves, when God shall gather home his people, and glorify his ransomed ones. *They* are without fault; *they* are without fault before the throne; they are with those whom God hath chosen, and with those who had their Father's name on their foreheads.

By reading the earlier part of this chapter, you will see that they were all redeemed persons. Ah, “a hundred and forty and four thousand,” which were redeemed *from the earth*. These were redeemed *from among men*, being the firstfruits unto God and the Lamb, all who were redeemed. These shall stand before God, without speck or blemish. We will not go into the doctrinal part of this subject, but simply make it a matter of experience. “They are without fault.” Then do you say, beloved, Am I one of the redeemed? Canst thou say that the blood of the Lamb has been sprinkled upon thy lintel, and thy door-post? Hast thou, by faith, sat down and fed on that Paschal Lamb? Is he thy rod, thy stay, thy soul, thy existence? Can thy faith lay her hand on that dear head of his, and there confess thy sin? Canst thou see traces of his blood on thy conscience? Hast thou marks of blood on thy soul? Art thou blood washed? Hast thou felt that Jesus Christ is thine? Canst thou say

“ I am nothing at all,
And Jesus Christ is all in all?”

Canst thou see the purchase price given for thee? Canst thou sing—

“ O! how sweet to have the flowing,
Of his soul-redeeming blood;
With divine assurance knowing
That he made my peace with God?”

Well then, though thou mayest be loaded with sin; conscience may condemn thee; Satan may be bringing all thy faults before thee; thou mayest have

been a black and gross sinner ; thou mayest have been a great backslider ; thou mayest have been horribly wicked, almost as bad as the devil himself ; thou mayest have had risings of corruption, so horrible, thou durst not reveal them to thy fellow man ; thou mayest be the subject of insinuations so vile and black, that thou puttest thy hand to thy mouth, to prevent their finding utterance ; flesh may be struggling against the spirit, that thou dost scarcely know which shall have the predominance ; and thou art crying, "if it be so, why am I thus?" it may be thou art lying down, self-condemned, and law-condemned, fearing that the sword of Justice will smite thy head from thy shoulders ; and yet, with all this, beloved, thou shalt one day be "without fault before the throne of God," for thou hast been redeemed by Christ's atoning blood. Oh, beloved, when I look back upon my past life, I am horrified with the thought of what I should have come to if God had left me to work out my own righteousness. I was the subject of black thoughts and sad crimes ; sins against early warnings and pious training, against God, against my own soul and body ; sins of all sorts ; and yet I know, that with all these sins, I shall one day be "without fault before the throne of God." Possibly I may be addressing some man who has been notoriously guilty of swearing and drunkenness, and every filthy vice, yet he has come to be a believer in Christ ; or perhaps he is saying, "I am condemned, there is nothing but hell for me ; I know I cannot be pardoned." Nay, poor sinner, if thou art condemned, God's law cannot condemn twice. If God's law has condemned, God's grace absolves thee, if thou tremblest at God's word, and sayest, "I am a sinner." Recollect, it is "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief ;" as if Paul would extend the doctrine and make it go further. Come, what sayest thou to this, O drunkard ? One day, the Lord having mercy on thee, thou shalt stand, white as driven snow, before the Majesty on high. What sayest thou to this, O thou whose mouth has been stained with black oaths ? If thou hast fled to Jesus to be saved, one day, unblemished and complete, thou shalt join in the hallelujahs of the glorified before the throne of God. O youth, though thou hast gone into the very kennel of sin, and raked up all that is vile and base ; though thou hast gone down, down, down, till it seemed impossible for thee to take another step into the hell of sin, even thou shalt stand without fault before the throne of God, if thou art a believer, trusting in the blood of Jesus, and hast that blood laid to thy soul. And thou, O woman, outcast, lost, ruined ; though thou dost hide thy face, ashamed to bear the gaze of man, thou wanderest with stealthy steps to God's house, ashamed to be seen ; thou knowest what thou hast seen ; ay, but a woman that was a sinner, once washed the Saviour's feet with her tears, and why ? Because he had washed her heart with blood. And, O thou poor, guilty, Magdalene, there is blood that can wash even thee, though thou hast stains as black as hell upon thee, Christ's blood can wash them out. That precious blood can take away all stains. His blood availed for me, and having availed for me, where shall I find another whose guilt shall go beyond the merit of his sacrifice, whose crimes shall exceed his power to save ? Never shall I find such a one. Christ has boundless grace. I always loved that phrase of Hart's :

"A sinner is a sacred thing,
The Holy Ghost has made him so."

Ah ! let me know that I am addressing such a sinner ! I will preach the Gospel to real, *bona fide*, actual, positive sinners ; and no flesh and blood shall stop me for evermore in all my sermons, as long as God gives me life and breath, preaching to those real sinners. As for your sham sinners, good sort of people, who will talk very daintily of their being sinners, I have no opinion of them. John Berridge said he kept a rod for shant beggars, and so I will for these pretenders. I love to see one who feels himself to be a real sinner ; not the one who says he is a sinner by way of compliment, who can read the

ten commandments all through and say he has not broken one of them; it is the real sinner—the downright guilty man, the man who is a thorough sinner—that is the case I like to pick out and preach the Gospel to. Oh, sinner! you! you!! you!!! if you trust in his name, and if that blood has been sprinkled on your conscience, shall yet stand before the throne of God without fault. Or, as the good man said in Yorkshire, when he was dying; some one told him he had been a great sinner: “Ah!” said he, “I have been a great sinner, but there is a crown in heaven which Gabriel cannot wear: it will fit no head but mine; and I shall wear it, too, for I am bought and paid for by the blood of Christ; and I shall be with him soon.” Bought and paid for by the blood of Christ, thou shalt be without fault before the throne.

Beloved, there is one thought that will suggest itself to some of you, and that is, there are some of your relatives that are before the throne of God. There is a dear, pious mother, on whose knees you sat in childhood, over whose grave you wept: and she is without fault before the throne. Though you loved her, when you look back you see that there was a little fault of some kind upon her; perhaps she loved her children too much, or there was some fault or other that she had: but she has no fault now. And there, husband, is your beloved wife, who cheered you on your way; you look back, and almost faultless as you in your fondness deemed her, yet you feel that she was not quite free from some little error: but she is without fault before the throne now. If you could see her now, you would see her come up so fair from the washing that, as John Bunyan saith with regard to those who had been washed, that “they did scarce know each other, and wondered to see how bright they were.” Mother! there is your daughter; and there are our brothers and sisters who have crossed the flood. Methinks when speaking on this subject of union with my departed friends, methinks I can say—

“E'en now, by faith, we join our hands
With those that went before;
And greet the blood besprinkled bands,
On the eternal shore!”

Oh! “they are without fault before the throne of God.” The members of our Churches have ascended up to our Father and to their Father, and to Christ's Father, and now they are without fault:—

“O that the happy word were given—
Loose me and let me rise to heaven,
And wrap myself in God.”

Oh, to be “without fault!” If I might ask one thing of God, if it were not sinful to ask such a thing, methinks I would ask, Let me die now, that I may go and be without fault before his throne! But why are we afraid to die? What are the pains, the groans, the dying struggle? It is the paying of a penny for a pound to go through them, that so we may get to heaven—

“Oh! if my Lord would come and meet
My soul would stretch her wings in haste,
Fly fearless through death's iron gate,
Nor feel the terrors as she passed.”

“They are without fault before the throne of God.” Yes, they are there; and we shall be in a few days perhaps—I am no prophet, nor the son of a prophet—but it shall be perhaps that one of us who loves the Lord will be with him before another month. It may be so. But whether it be so or not, which ever one of us is to depart, we know it is to be “without fault.” So we are not afraid which ever it may be; if we are of the Lord's family, we shall be “without fault before the throne.”

III.—We can only very briefly explain the third part of the subject, which is to show WHERE THEY ARE WHO ARE WITHOUT FAULT.” “They are without fault before the throne of God.” “Before the throne.” We know what it is to lie beneath the throne; for we sing—

“We would no longer lie
Like slaves beneath the throne.”

We know what it is sometimes to be *far off from* the throne. Satan stands blocking up the way to the throne. It is as much as we can do to knock him off, and get a word from the Master. And have you not sometimes thought that you were behind the throne, and that God could not look at you? that God could look at all his servants but not at you, for you were behind the throne? Then, there is the proud infidel who wants to get on the throne. But even if it were possible for him to be in heaven, he could not do that, for he would neither be beneath the throne, nor on the throne, but would stand before it to be condemned. But the saints of God are all before the throne. Why? Because they can then always look at God, and God can always look at them. They stand before the throne. That is all I want: to stand before the throne here. If I could always be before it, if I could always see the light of his countenance, always feel the comforting assurance, always feel safe in Jesus, always taste his love, always receive all grace, that were enough. And if that is sweet here, how much sweeter shall it be to bow before the throne hereafter, and "unceasing sing his love!" At times here, we are so far off that we can scarce tell where the throne is; and if it were not a glorious high throne, being so far off, we should never be able to see it. But it is a glorious high throne, one that you can see a long way off; and there "they are" immediately "before the throne," drinking in bliss with their eyes and ears, with their whole soul lost in Jesus, standing perpetually before the throne! That part of the verse needs so much illustration to explain it, that I am afraid, more briefly, to venture on it. I, therefore, must, for the present, leave it. "They are without fault before the throne."

Now, beloved there is one serious question which I shall put to you, and that is, Shall we be without fault before the throne hereafter? The answer rests here; are we without fault before the throne of God now, through the justifying blood and righteousness of Christ? Are we able to say,

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

If so, the Christian cannot change his position in God's sight. He is now justified, and shall be so hereafter; there is now no condemnation, and he never can be condemned. "Ah," says another, "I cannot say as much as that." Well, then, are you full of fault in your own eyes? Hath God the Spirit shown you your sin? Next to being shown the righteousness of Christ, one of the best evidences is being aware of our own sinfulness. Do you, then, see your own sinfulness? Have you been brought down till all that nature has set upon the throne has been cast in the dust, and that garment which you gloried in has been torn away, and you stand naked and worse than naked; filthy, worse than filthy; diseased, worse than diseased; polluted in heart, worse than dead; worse than lying among the slain; like those that go down to the pit, those that have been long since dead? nay, if possible, worse than that. Can you feel as if you have been brought down, down, down, till desperation seized you, and you had nothing to rest in? Can you feel that you have been stripped to the lowest degree, and all that you possessed and gloried in scattered to the winds? And can you now say, "Out of the depths I have cried to thee, O Lord?" Well, if you have plenty of faults here, and have known them, and been taught them, and feel that you cannot overcome them of yourself, you shall be "without fault before the throne of God" by and bye, for the Lord will not bring you to that state of soul-distress, and self-despair, without bringing you also to peace and liberty. O sinner, is not this glorious news to thee? Thou knowest thy sinnership, thou canst understand thou art a sinner, that is all thou needest. We sometimes sing,

"All the fitness he requireth,
Is to feel your need of him."

But I love that next part,

"This he gives you."

If you have got the former he has given it you.

“This he gives you,
‘Tis his Spirit’s rising beam.”

Good old Martin Luther used to say, “The devil comes to me and says, ‘Martin, thou art an exceeding sinner.’” “I know that very well,” said Martin, “and I’ll cut thy head off with thine own sword; for Christ died for sinners, and the more I feel I am a sinner the more evidence I have that Christ died for me.” Oh! to know our sinnership! to recognize it in our inmost soul!—that is blessed! And there is only one more step, and that God shall lead us to—to put us in Christ Jesus in our own feelings; for we are already in him in eternal covenant, if so be we are out of ourselves. Ah! trust him, *trust him*, TRUST HIM, TRUST HIM! he is a good Christ and a great Christ. Ah, great sinner! hang thou on his blood and righteousness; and thou, even thou, the filthiest, the vilest, the off-cast, the undeserving, the ill-deserving and hell-deserving sinner—even thou shalt yet wear a blood-washed robe, spotless and white; even thou shalt sing the perfect song and be perfect thyself, for thou shalt be “without fault before the throne of God.”

THE POSITION AND PRACTICE OF THE BRIDE.

BY THE REV. JAMES SMITH, CHELTENHAM.

“The Bride saith, Come.”—Rev. xxii. 17.

THE Church of God, quickened and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, is the Bride of Christ. It is of his Church, and every individual member of that Church, he speaks, when he says, “I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. Yea, I will betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord.” By nature we are far from him, strangers to him, and at enmity with him. The very last thing we should think of, desire, or seek, would be union to Christ. But he sends his servants, as Abraham did Eliezer, to take a wife for him. They come and proclaim his love, commend his person, exhibit his portrait, and invite us to him. The Spirit of God attends them in their work, crowns their efforts, and union with Christ is the result. We feel our need of him, our affections are raised and go out after him; we heartily and earnestly seek him, we are introduced to him; we give utterance to our desires before him, and at length he gives us his hand, and pronounces us his for ever. So far, the minister’s work is done, but his wish is, to present those who thus give themselves to Christ by his means, blameless and spotless before him at the last; hence the apostle wrote to his Corinthian converts: “I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”

Every believer should realize that he stands in the relation, and is under the obligation, of the Bride of Jesus. His are the privileges, his the honours, and his the duties of the Lamb’s wife. Espoused to him through the Gospel, we have pledged ourselves to be his; secretly at the mercy-seat, and publicly in our baptism. We have said, “I will be for thee, and not for another.” We, made a full, entire, and eternal surrender of ourselves, and all we have, to him. So that we are not our own; it is not lawful for us primarily to seek our own pleasure; our object should be, in all we do to please Jesus. As the virtuous woman is a crown to her husband, so should we aim, and strive, and seek, to be a crown to Jesus. As his bride, he employs us in his house; we have always something to do, and to do for him. While he is absent, we should

be preparing for him, that everything may be in order when he comes. It is our duty, and should be our aim, to be conformed to his will in all things; to walk worthy of our relation; to live and act always, and in everything, so as to honour him. The bride of Jesus should be the most lovely and inviting object in creation, that our attention may be arrested, admiration excited, and the enquiry be heard, "Who is this that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

We will now look at the bride as represented by John. She is associated with the holy and ever blessed Spirit; the Spirit invites sinners to Jesus, the Bride echoes his call, and the hearer is directed to echo hers, "The Bride saith, COME."

She stands beside the cross, and seeing sinners in the distance, wandering, wretched and undone, she lovingly calls them to come. She has found peace at that cross; she has found rest and pleasure there. She knows that there is no repose for the soul, healing for the broken heart, or balm for the bleeding conscience, but there. She knows the crucified One well. She loves him who died on the tree to save sinners. She sympathizes with him, in his mercy and compassion for lost souls, and she sympathizes with them in their misery and danger; and, therefore, with loving heart, and clear and distinct voice, she cries "COME." Come to Jesus, ye poor restless wanderers. Come to the cross, ye poor lost sinners. Come just as you are. Come without hesitation; come without delay. Come, and be pardoned freely. Come, and be justified completely; come, and enjoy peace instantly. Come, and be saved eternally. Come, though poor and wretched. Come, though vile and guilty. Come, though polluted and filthily. Come though sick and sorrowful. Come, for the road is clear. Come, for you are all welcome. Come, nor shall one be rejected or sent back. The bride is careful not to stand *before* the cross, lest she should conceal it. Nor does she hold up a crucifix, lest the soul should rest short of it; but standing by its side, with uplifted hand she points to it, and cries, "Come, COME, COME!"

She stands at the door of her house, and to the timid, nervous, fearful, doubting believer, she says, "COME." "She hath killed her beasts, mingled her wine, and furnished her table." She has room, refreshments, enjoyments, and employments, and wishes all the friends of her Bride-groom to partake of them. She removes every obstacle, answers every objection, and presses every houseless, homeless, lover of her Lord, to come in. Like Laban of old to Eliezer, she cries, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, why standest thou without." Clothed in the bridal robe, wrought for her by her beloved Lord, washed clean in his atoning blood, made happy in his precious love, with beaming countenance, with sparkling eye, and with sweetest voice, she cries to every young believer, "Come in, and find a home. Come in, and enjoy a feast. Come in, and be merry with your friends. Come in, and go no more out." And if she sees a poor backslider, one who has wandered from his resting-place, wounded his loving Lord, and grieved his Holy Spirit; as the tear starts in his eye, as the sigh escapes from his breast, and the blush of shame clothes his countenance, she cries in gentlest tones, "COME." She calls to the wanderer to return; she invites the ungrateful one to come in. Nor is she over more pleased than when she hears him say, "I will go and return to my first husband, for then it was better with me than now."

She stands on this poor world, and surrounded by all the marks of the curse, treading upon thorns and briars, listening to the sighs of the saints, and the groans of creation at large, she looks up to where her Lord is, and cries, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Come, and work in sinners, bringing them to penitence, faith, and union with thyself. Come, and work in saints bringing them into close fellowship with thyself, and into closer union with each other. Come, and work in thy visible Church, making it the home of harmony, love, and peace." "Come, Lord Jesus; come, and claim thy pur-

chase; thou hast dearly bought thy people, come and claim them; thou hast bought this field, in which the pearl of price was found by thee, come and claim it for thy own." "Come, Lord Jesus; come and reign on the earth. Let the world that was once the witness of thy sorrows, agonies, and death, witness thy joy, thy glory, and thy everlasting triumphs. Make this earth, which was once the theatre of thy humiliation, the theatre of thy glory. O come, and let the earth be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea! Come, let the whole earth be filled with thy glory. Come, and take the crown of the whole earth, the sceptre of the world's government; and reign upon Mount Zion, and before thine ancients gloriously."

My Christian brother, is this thy position? Is this thy practise? Dost thou stand by the cross of Jesus, and invite poor sinners to it? Dost thou speak to them from thy own experience of the power of that cross, telling them, that "it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth?" Dost thou bear witness of the rest, peace, and joy to be obtained there? Pity O pity poor sinners, and try and bring them to Calvary! Speak, O speak for Jesus, and endeavour to lead sinners to his precious blood, that he may "see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied!" Try, try, to induce some to share with thee in the blessings and benefits of his death! Dost thou stand at the door of Christ's Church, and endeavour to induce seekers to come in? There are many in these days without the Church, who ought to be within it; and they would be, if there was more love in our hearts, more holiness in our lives, and more life in our meetings. If the Lord's people, lovingly, heartily, and persuasively, cried to them, "COME." Dost thou stand on God's footstool, and looking up to his throne where Jesus sitteth at his right hand, cry, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly?" Wouldst thou not see thy Lord? Wouldst thou not have the groans of Creation silenced, and the desires of the Church granted? Canst thou not pray that it would please the Lord "shortly to accomplish the number of his elect, and hasten his kingdom?" O that we may be looking for and hasting of the coming of the day of God!

Sinner, there is for thee no rest, no satisfaction, no solid happiness, until thou dost come to Jesus. If thou wouldst be happy now, if thou wouldst be peaceful in death, if thou wouldst be safe for ever, thou must come to Jesus. In the name of the Bride, and as one of her servants, I cry unto thee most heartily, come to Jesus, and find pardon, peace, and everlasting life. Come thou to the Cross, COME; come without delay. Then come to the Church, and come without fear. Then join with us in looking up to heaven, and unite with us in the cry, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

Cheltenham, March 5th.

JESUS AND THE BLIND MAN; OR, A GUIDE FOR THE PERPLEXED.

BY THE REV. W. P. DALFERN, OF BOW, AUTHOR OF "GLIMPSES OF JESUS."

"And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town."—Mark viii. 23.

As the lover of art, when passing through those galleries which are filled with the works of the great masters, frequently has his attention excited and his admiration called forth by the discovery of some new beauty springing forth from that force and freshness which ever mark the productions of genius, so the believer, as in meditation he passes through the gallery of Divine Revelation, frequently meets with pictures so full of grace, and pregnant with spiritual instruction, that with the poet he is compelled to exclaim—

"Father of mercies! in thy word
What endless glory shines!
For ever be thy name adored,
For these celestial lines."

Among the choicest gems of the Cabinet of Truth, perhaps none is more attractive than that presented by the Divine historian above,—Jesus leading the blind man forth from the town of Bethesda.

How marvellous the grouping; how striking the contrast! Here we see mercy and misery, darkness and light, health and disease, omnipotence and frailty, locked hand in hand, and walking through the streets together. Hundreds of years before, this interesting scene had filled the prophetic eye of the seaphic Isaiah, when he wrote thus of the Shiloh of his people: "He shall lead the blind by a way that they know not, and in paths which they have not known." There we have the seed, here the flower in full bloom; there the prophetic sketch, here the picture completed and filled in by the hand of the Master himself; and should it not be prized by us, especially as it so richly portrays his dealings with ourselves. Believing that the life of Christ illustrated his doctrine, and not only embodies the substance of his teaching, but is its most vivid exponent, let us look at our Lord as he traverses the streets of Bethesda. May the Holy Spirit instruct us, as we follow him in his pilgrimage of mercy, and may our hearts be deeply affected by our contemplations.

"*And he took the blind man by the hand.*" Let us look at this poor man awhile; he claimed the attention of Christ, why should he not have ours; he cannot see, but he may exhibit ourselves. He is in the midst of the town, and surrounded with objects, but he sees them not; art may exhibit her stores, and nature her charms, but they affect him not. Spring throws her flowers beneath his feet, Summer spreads her varied glories, and Autumn her richest tints, but he heeds them not; all around him rejoices with an exuberance of joy, but he rejoices not. The sun falls upon his path, but nature is ever clothed in sackcloth to him; the ebon curtains of a perpetual night unfold him in their embrace without one solitary star to relieve the gloom. He sleeps, but it is night; he awakes, but there is no morning. Sad condition,—still sadder that of which it is but a faint type: "*Ye were darkness,*" says the *Apostle*;—not *in* the dark, but darkness. We were in the midst of light, but it reached not the mind; the cataract of sin permitted no single ray to pass; and so deep was the darkness, that though we stood in the midst of this fair creation, yet we perceived not its great Author, or, if we perceived him, our language was, "*depart from us for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.*" We sometimes, too, went to the field of Divine Revelation, but beheld not its chief glory; or, when our eye fell upon him to whom all the prophets gave witness, we declared him to be "a root out of a dry ground, having no form nor comeliness that we should desire him."

Of this poor blind man we observe: *He was exposed to great danger*,—he was in the midst of a town, liable at any moment to be injured or destroyed. And how great is our danger as blinded by sin;—foes within us and foes without us, yet insensible to our condition; encompassed by the snares of hell, exposed to the curse of God, and liable at any moment to be struck down by death and hurried to the bar of God.

He was past human help. His friends took him to Jesus; they had, no doubt, exhausted all their skill, and this was their last resource. Possibly they belonged to the literati of their country; were educated and polite; philosophical as well as kind; but they could not restore his sight, they could not give eyes to the blind. And who can break in upon the gloom and darkness of the sin-imprisoned mind; who can cast into its deep recesses that vivid ray which dispels the dark night of prejudice, ignorance, and enmity, so that Jesus is seen as he is? Philosophy here is toiled; education labours in vain; science and art pour forth their gentle humanizing radiance in vain; clothed in more than Cimmerian darkness, the soul still toils on in the midst of its desolation, and God still remains unloved, because unknown. "God, who commandeth the light to shine out of darkness, must shine into our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the love of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

"*He took him by the hand.*" Did he forget he was the Son of God? Oh, no! nor was it needful he should; for never are the great so exalted as when they stoop to the help of misery, and endeavour to raise those who but for their aid must be for ever fallen. He was not ashamed to do good, or too great to be useful. Are we ashamed to grasp the hand of honest poverty, or to be seen identified with misery? If so, let us not call ourselves the disciples of him who led the blind man through the town of Bethsaida; but let us seek to have this scene painted upon the walls of our memory, and engraven upon our hearts, until constrained by the love of Jesus, and following his example, we are declared to be one in spirit with him who said, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."

"*He took him by the hand.*" He was sufficiently familiar to be useful. Oh, say the rich, we wish we could serve the poor; then do not visit them in state: say the educated, we desire to instruct the ignorant; then address them in their own language.

"*Jesus took him by the hand.*" He did not say, "Do you take hold of my hand," or "Keep by my side, and I will conduct you out of the city." No; but "*He took him by the hand.*" Neither does Jesus say to the dark, the guilty, and the self-condemned, "Now, do you do such and such things, and then I will help you; get you so much light and then I will shine upon you; make yourselves so far righteous, and I will supply that which you lack." No; but he shines upon the soul freely, reveals his glory, and gives faith to the soul, while he exclaims, "Believe, and live."

"*He took him by the hand.*" Yes, though the blind man saw him not, and and knew not the character of him who led him through the town. And what knew we of Jesus when he first visited us? Little thought we that the truths which so deeply affected our minds at first, and from the influence of which we could not escape, were but the Omnipotent fingers of Jesus, grasping our immortal spirits, and seeking to draw us to himself. Had he consulted us ere he thus led us, we should, it may be, have repelled his advances; but he drew us with the cords of love and the bands of a man, and thus fulfilled his own declaration: "I taught Ephraim also to go, leading them by their arms; and they knew not that I healed them."

"*He led him.*" The blind man was willing to be led—most blind men are; and when men are conscious of their own ignorance and liability to err, to mistake the way which leads to hell for the path which leads to heaven, they are glad to take Christ for their guide. While men vainly deem their own wit and wisdom sufficient to conduct them safely through the mazes of life, and to the home of the blest, they will never seek the direction of him, who has promised "to guide his people with his eye, and to counsel them in the way they should go."

"*He led him;*" he did not forget he was a blind man; he accommodated his pace to the condition of his patient. Had he moved too quickly, the man might have fallen. Some are too quick of understanding to be of much service to others; their minds move too rapidly for the multitude to follow them. Observe yonder young man in the city of error, he is bewildered and astonished with its numberless streets and multitudinous turnings—some this way and some that. A palace now attracts his attention; "What a magnificent pile of architecture!" he exclaims. "Nonsense!" replies a person hastily passing by; and, seeking to drag him after him, as he hurries on. "What, admire that?" "Yes, I do," exclaims the young man, resisting the attempt to move him; "I never saw a building more worthy of admiration." Another person arrives, like unto Him who led the blind man through the town of Bethsaida, and, gently taking him by the hand, kindly asks him to accompany him into the interior; and, as they gaze upon the inmates, the young man grasps the hand of his guide more closely, and follows Him slowly to other parts of the town. From the gay thoroughfares and brilliant streets, he is

led into the dark allies and squalid courts. Still more tightly does he grasp the friendly hand which guides him, until at last, and step by step, he is conducted beyond the precincts of that which he once deemed to be an illustrious city. Is not the moral plain? Through how many mental mazes, streets of error, and dark alleys of moral death, has not Jesus guided our often faltering and undecided feet, nor left us until brought safely into the fields of revealed truth, and clear sunshine of divine favour. How has he cleared up our skies again and again; removed our perplexities, and said to us, "*This is the way, walk ye in it.*" When we could not see our way either to pardon or peace, how kindly did he show it. He took us by the hand when no one else did, or could; when we must have perished, he came to our rescue; "when no eye did pity, and when no arm could save, then it was that his eye pitied and his arm saved."

"O for such love! let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break;
And all harmonious human tongues
The Saviour's praises speak."

"*He led him out of the town.*" Jesus always leads *from* danger. O what numberless dangers we should escape if we were always willing for him to lead us.

"*Out of the town.*" He meant to cure him; but he did not want fame—the applause of the multitude. His object was simply to open his eyes; hence he conducted him into privacy. Be assured of this, dear reader, that if Jesus opens the eyes of your mind, he will draw you away *from* the world.

"*And when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw aught.*" Very unlikely instrumentality, many would have thought, to open the eyes; but thus it is that Jesus is pleased to work that he may have the glory due to his name, for God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are."

"*And he looked up.*" Whenever Jesus savingly enlightens the mind, the character is sure to be elevated. No matter how debased we may have been, our affections will no longer cleave to the earth. It will no longer be true of us that we resemble him of whom it is written, that when in heaven his eyes were fixed more upon its golden pavement than upon him who sat on the throne.

"*And he said I see men as trees walking.*" A misty morning has frequently ushered in a glorious day; and as in nature so in grace. Where light from Jesus breaks in upon us, we see many objects but none clearly; let not, therefore, the perplexed seeker after truth be discouraged, but wait upon the Lord, who will ever bring his own work to a happy completion.

"*After that he put his hands again upon his eyes.*" What a mercy Jesus puts his hands upon our eyes again and again, and does not despise us on account of our ignorance and slowness to learn. He could have opened the poor man's eyes at once had it pleased him, but he did not; and he could bring all his people into the light and liberty of the Gospel at once were it his will to do so; but he is pleased rather to lead many of them progressively, step by step, teaching them here a little and there a little, as they are able to bear it. Let us praise him for his grace, and take heed of limiting the operations of his Spirit.

"*And he was restored, and saw every man clearly.*" He who begins a good work in us will carry it on until it is perfected above. However dubious our perceptions of the truth may be at first, if we are willing and anxious to be taught, Jesus will scatter our darkness, nor leave us until our hearts are established in those truths which are essential to our safety and peace. "*The*

path of the just is as the morning light, which increaseth until the perfect day."

Perhaps some who have perused these thoughts may be much distressed in reference to their path. Be encouraged, dear reader, to trust your way in the hands of him who led the poor blind man through the town of Bethsaida; or is the reader perplexed as to what is the truth? If so, seek the teaching of him who opened the blind man's eyes, and he will guide you to establishment and rest.

Are we troubled by those whom we have often sought to lead in the right way—but in vain—and who seem intent on their own destruction? Let us take them to him who took the blind man by the hand, and who is able to preserve them from the dangers which surround them. Are we conscious that the Lord has opened our eyes? What humility and gratitude become us! How unseemly it would have been for the blind man to *boast* of his sight! How offensive to the Lord must spiritual pride be in those who are indebted to him, for both their knowledge and faith. Let us cultivate deep self-abasement of spirit, and strive to imitate Jesus in seeking to lead the ignorant from danger to the paths of purity and peace.

Does the reader imagine he has sufficient wisdom to guide himself safely through life, and even to the kingdom of glory above? Hear the Word of God: "It is *not* in man to direct his steps." The fact that God has promised to guide his people with his eye, is sufficient to prove that they cannot guide themselves. Be assured of this, dear reader, that if you do not seek the guidance of him who, in the days of his flesh, took the blind man by the hand to lead him from the Town of Bethsaida, Satan, his great adversary, will ensnare your soul, and finally drag you down to eternal perdition. Wilt thou not therefore from this time cry to the Lord, and say, "My Father, be thou the guide of my youth."

Hammersmith, March 6th.

THE DOOR'S AJAR.

BY THE REV. J. JENKINSON, OF OAKHAM.

"When my guide went up he left,
The pearly gates ajar."

THUS sang a pious songstress in reference to the death of her husband, the world-renowned Dr. Judson. And is not the metaphor a beautiful and appropriate one? Often have we observed Christians, on reaching the house of prayer, look back to see if others were approaching, and, on perceiving they were so, leaving the door ajar for their admittance. Nor is it an incredible conjecture, that, on entering the "house not made with hands," the ransomed spirit may, as it were, leave the door ajar for the entrance of those whom he has reason to believe will ere long follow him to that blest abode.

But if this be true of the redeemed, how much more emphatically true is it of their illustrious Lord. Nor is the door of heaven the only one which he has left unclosed.

The door of our prison-house is ajar. We are all by nature prisoners; divine justice holds us in thrall; the law of God sanctions and demands our detention, till the last farthing of our debt be liquidated. Satan, too, exerts his utmost energy to hold us captives still. Yet our case, though deplorable, is not desperate. Though prisoners, we are "prisoners of hope;" Christ has come "to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." And he has triumphantly fulfilled this important purpose of his mission; he has satisfied the claims of justice on our behalf; honoured the law which held us in bondage, and paralyzed the power of our great adversary. He has, in fact entered our prison-house, and "left the door ajar" for our escape. Nay, more, he has come in the power of his Spirit "to

open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison" into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

The door of mercy is left ajar. Mercy is what all men need; without mercy all must perish. Yet, indispensable though it be, it is, apart from Christ, wholly unattainable. The door of mercy was bolted against us, until he unbarred it. But now—

"The door of his mercy stands open all day,
To the poor and the needy who knock by the way;
No sinner shall ever be empty sent back,
Who comes seeking mercy for Jesus's sake."

The door of hope is left ajar. Hope is the solace of the human soul; the antidote to human woe. Without well-founded hope of future and eternal good no man can find present solid joy and lasting peace. Yet this door too, was barred against us, until Christ opened it. But now this door of hope, in the valley of Achor, is unfastened; not merely unbolted, but unlatched. Therefore, fellow sinner, do not despair. Look unto Jesus, press towards him, plead his merits, trust his grace, and you will assuredly find that the door of hope is open for your entrance into the enjoyment of the privileges of his saints.

The door of his Church is ajar. "Thy gates shall be open continually, they shall not be shut day nor night," is the language of God to his Zion; yet how many truly gracious souls have trembled with fear that they should never obtain admittance there. But why should they be afraid? The language of every consistent member of the Church is, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without?" Therefore, fearing and hesitating saint, fear and hesitate no longer. Tell the Lord's people what he has done for your soul; let your daily deportment, and your desire to follow him in his ordinances, evidence the sincerity of your profession; and assuredly, if the church which you assay to join, be indeed a church of Christ, the gate which leads into the city, will open to you of its own accord.

The door of usefulness is left ajar. "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day, the night cometh wherein no man can work," was the maxim of our Lord. And though we have not, as he had, to make atonement for sin, or to bring in everlasting righteousness, we also have our work to do. To some *ten* talents may have been entrusted; to others *five*; to others only *one*, but to each the command is given, "Occupy till I come." The timid and cold-hearted Christian, often thinks every door of usefulness is closed against him, but this is never true of any one on earth. Let there be but genuine love to Christ, zeal for his glory, faith in his promises, and compassion for the souls of men, then, whatever be our talents, or our circumstances, we shall find an open door which no man can shut; a door which will introduce us to a field of usefulness, in which all our energies may find ample and continual scope for exercise.

The door of the grave has been left ajar. "If I wait, the grave is my house." "I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living." "Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets." But though our *long* home, it will not be the final, the eternal resting place, even of our bodies. Our omnipotent Redeemer has

"Entered the iron gates of death,
And torn the bars away."

The door of death is therefore now unfastened. All who are sleeping in the tomb, and all who will hereafter be laid to slumber there, are but awaiting the trumpet blast which will summon them from that dark abode, to stand before the tribunal of their Judge. That summons all will hear, and instantly obey. (John v. 28, 29). The gates of the grave will everywhere be thrown open for their egress. The wicked will come forth with terror and dismay,

whilst the righteous will exultingly exclaim, "O grave where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Above all, *the door of heaven is left ajar*. To be saved from hell were much; to have all our sins forgiven were more; and to have the special favour of our Maker conferred upon us in the present world were a higher blessing still; but all this would not fully satisfy the longings of the newborn soul. We want to see our Saviour as he is, to be made like him in holiness and love, and to dwell with him for ever. And this exalted privilege is insured to us.

"The peaceful gates of heavenly bliss,
Were opened by the Son."

"The Breaker has gone up before us." The Forerunner has entered into heaven for us. The gates of glory have lifted up their heads; the everlasting doors have been opened for his admittance; and not for his admittance only, they are left ajar for our admittance too. The King of glory has passed through them triumphantly, amid the rapturous plaudits of the heavenly host, on account of the work he has accomplished, and the victory he has won. And all his followers, even the feeblest and the most unworthy, will pass through those gates in triumph too. "Though now for a season we are in heaviness, through manifold temptations;" though "without are fightings, and within are fears;" though we find the world to be a wilderness; though the current of depravity is strong within us; though the world and Satan are opposed to us; yet, "in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. We can, even now, at times discern the pearly gates at the end of our pilgrimage; and we hope, ere long, to pass through them, into the immediate presence of our Saviour and our God. Blessed indeed are they, who thus through him acquire a right to the tree of life, and to enter through the gates into the city. There is neither temptation nor trial, sorrow nor sin, for the former things have passed away. And the best of all is—all who enter there will go out no more. Never will they again be distant from their God; never more will they be in danger of offending him.

But let it not be forgotten, that

"Those holy gates for ever bar,
Pollution, sin, and shame;
None can obtain admittance there,
But followers of the Lamb."

The sinner's prison door is now ajar, but if he neglects to avail himself of this opportunity of escaping, he will shortly find himself incarcerated in a dungeon, from which escape will be impossible. Every one who now knocks at mercy's door, will find it opened to him; but to all who refuse to knock that door will soon no longer stand ajar. Heaven's gate is now ajar, but all who neglect to seek through Christ a title to admittance there, and through his Holy Spirit, preparation for that world of purity, will soon, in their own woeful experience, know the fearful import of the short but solemn sentence: "And the door was shut."

Oakham, March 1st.

THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST.

BY THE REV. JOHN BLOOMFIELD,

Minister of Salem Chapel, Meard's Court, Dean Street, Soho.

THE Priestly office of the Son of God is one of momentous concern to the Church of Christ. The Aaronic priesthood, although chosen of God to offer gifts and sacrifices, was only a faint shadow, a figure and symbol of the everlasting Priesthood. The *Priests*, the *Altars*, and the *Sacrifices* of the Jewish ceremony, were typical of Jesus, the great High Priest of our profession. The

Priests were men, Jesus is God-man; they were sinful, he is sinless; they presented sacrifices for themselves, Jesus needed none; he gave himself a sacrifice for the sins of his people; their sacrifices were figures of his sacrifice; his sacrifice, like Aaron's rod, which budded, swallowed up all other sacrifices. The one oblation on Calvary superseded for ever the necessity of the sacrifices of the Jewish dispensation, which did their work, fulfilled the divine purpose, and then passed away. In the Old Testament, Jesus, the true Priest, was veiled by types and ceremonies; in the New Testament, he is the unveiled and glorious Priest. He is the High Priest, supreme in dignity, in qualification, and in every excellence. He is a peculiar Priest; *too ancient to have one before him, too glorious to have an equal, too strong to have a partner, and too perfect to have a successor.* The Jewish High Priest passed on the great day of atonement, through the courts of the earthly sanctuary, into the holiest of all; into this place he entered with his priestly robes, accompanied by no mortal; there he sprinkled the blood of typical expiations, presented incense, and prayed for his people. There he saw the ark of the covenant, the golden mercy-seat, and the Cherubim of glory. The great High Priest over the house of God, having offered his own blood, by which he made a *real* and perfect atonement, is passed into the true holy of holies, which is in heaven; "for Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." He is gone to heaven; he is gone as the great High Priest, to appear in the presence of God for his people.

He is there as the *Representative of his people.* The Priest was God's representative to the people, and the *people's representative to God.* He there presents the prayers of his church mingled with the incense of his meritorious work. He is there as the great *Medium* of all communication from and to God; every mercy comes by the merit of his blood, and heaven is only accessible in his name. He is there as the *everlasting Priest*—he is a Priest for ever—a Priest after the power of an endless life; he is there in all the splendour of his personal majesty, and in all the triumph of his priestly and sacrificial work. In him, the seeker of divine forgiveness finds the Priest, the altar, and the sacrifice; in him he finds the ark of the covenant, the mercy seat, and the altar of incense. The sinner, conscious of his sins before Almighty God, cannot do without the Priesthood of Christ; he cannot do without the sacrifice and the true mercy seat. Through the Priesthood and sacrifice of Christ, the blessings of the new covenant are received and enjoyed. It is the Priest that blesses the people and imparts to them the knowledge of God, and his great salvation. The great High Priest of the church of God, though passed into the heavens, is still mindful of, and merciful to sinners, who, by his Spirit, are seeking his help and blessing. "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession," Heb. iv. 14.

15, College Street, Camden Town, March 14th.

BIBLE APOLOGUES, AND THEIR APPLICATION.

BY THE REV. JOHN COX, LATE OF WOOLWICH.

No. II.—A TALE FOR THE CONSCIENCE.

2 SAMUEL XIII.

How anxious many persons are to get, and to keep, the good opinion of others, and to stand fair before the eyes of their fellow-creatures. The desire often becomes more intense when questionable things have been

done, and a wrong course has been entered on. Then come various contrivances to keep up an excitement, in the dim of which God's voice is little heeded, and the remonstrances of conscience nearly drowned. Often, too,

when there are egregious failures in some things, there is an extra zeal displayed in other directions; thus conscience is bribed, and God tempted. But the end is gained for a time; lookers on admire, conscience is stilled by the opiate, and vain hopes are cherished. This sad state of things cannot last long as regards the people of God; discovery, rebuke, failure, come at last; conscience must be restored to power, sin condemned, and God justified. How solemn and weighty are the words of John: "If our heart (conscience) condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God," 1 John iii. 20, 21. What says conscience? and is conscience in fellowship with God? Such should be our questions as regards our actions, and not, What do my erring fellow-creatures think or say?

David had sinned grievously, he tried to hide one sin by committing another; and, having added sin to sin, he then talks very calmly about God's *providence*; making it, as many have done, a scape-goat for his own wickedness (2 Sam. xi. 25). He also parades his love of justice, and must needs act the severe judge respecting a very inferior transgressor. But all will not do, the mask must be torn away, his sin must find him out, other sinners must be warned against encouraging themselves in an evil way, and penitent souls be helped back to God and holiness.

The king of Israel was sitting one morning in his palace; his heart was sad, for his conscience was loaded with guilt; and, for many months, he had not realised any communion with God, or with his people. He mused on the past, and how bright did it appear in contrast with his present circumstances and feelings. One of his attendants entered, and announced that the prophet Nathan desired an audience with his sovereign. Slowly and reluctantly the king rose to receive his distinguished visitor, for his heart misgave him as to the purport of the visit. Perhaps, he hoped that it was some

affair of state which had brought Nathan to the palace, and that the minister of God would not be so unmannerly as to interfere with his *private* concerns. When the prophet began speaking, it seemed as if this really was the case. Thus ran his communication—"There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up; and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his-own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock, and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him."

The guilty auditor felt relieved, and even became interested in the prophet's statements; his indignation was roused by this tale of oppression and violence, and he hastily pronounced a heavy sentence on the offender. A short pause ensued. The calm prophet looked steadily on the flushed countenance of the royal judge, and then slowly and solemnly said—"THOU ART THE MAN!" Thou art that oppressor and murderer whom I have described, and whom thou hast condemned. The awful words—awful in their truthfulness—rolled like thunder tones through all the chambers of David's soul. There was a short conflict. What should he do? He could not deny the charge. Should he brave it out? should he resent the interference as an insult? How could he? It was God's voice that he had heard. His conscience had immediately said, "Amen" to it. No excuse could he frame, no apology durst he utter; he stood convicted and confounded. Then a soft voice whispered, "Confess all, without reserve; this must be done some time, the sooner the better; *do it now!*" He felt that he had held his peace till "his bones had waxed old," and he at once discharged his oppressed soul in the penitent acknowledg-

ment, "I have sinned against the Lord." The few fervent words afterwards were expanded into the fifty-first Psalm, that most precious compendium of penitence, by means of which so many broken hearts have been "poured out like water before the face of the Lord."

David had been no ordinary saint; not only had he possessed an eminent degree of personal holiness, but he had been anointed, and set apart to holy and noble offices. He had struck the prophetic lyre, and wielded the kingly sceptre. He had been permitted to know God's secrets, to declare his purposes, to look into futurity, and see Messiah's day; to lead the devotions of Israel, and to prepare a psalmody, suited to all ages of the Church; yet, with all these favours upon him, he fell. The providence of God had lifted him from a sheep-cote to a throne, and put the care of millions into his hands; every eye was upon him; his influence was great, his example must tell on others; yet, with all these responsibilities resting on him, he fell. His fall was that of a cedar. When he sank down, a standard-bearer fainted. The great enemy ever aims to ensnare those who sustain high offices, or who possess shining talents; and those especially who have professed much attachment to the Lord. There is no security in any station, or from any endowments; nor can past experience preserve in the fearful hour of temptation. We must have "present help" for "the time of need," fetched in by earnest, watchful prayer.

David had not watched; he had entered into temptation, he had robbed his poor neighbour, to gratify his base passions. Next, by mean deception, he tried to hide his sin; and, failing here, he passed on from adultery and lying to murder. He then wiped his mouth, and uttered sage sentences, as if God had done it. But he who did all this, confessed it all. Did that God against whom he had sinned heed his confession, and hearken to his cry for mercy? Listen to, and wonder at

what follows: in God's name, the prophet declares — "THE LORD ALSO HATH PUT AWAY THY SIN; THOU SHALT NOT DIE."

"The absolver saw the mighty grief,
And hastened with relief;
The Lord forgives; thou shalt not die—
T'was gently-spoke, yet heard on high,
And all the band of angels, used to sing
In heaven, accordant to his raptured string,
Who many a mouth had turned away
With veiled eyes, nor owned his lay,—

"News spread their wings, and throng around,
To the glad mournful sound,
And welcome, with bright open face,
The broken heart to love's embrace.
The rock is smitten, and, to future years,
Springs ever fresh the tide of holy tears;
And holy music, whispering peace,
Till time and sin together cease."

Truly, "the Lord is good, and ready to forgive; and rich in mercy to all that call upon him."

This beautiful parable teaches us how to administer reproof. To do this well is very difficult, and success is not very common. God's word furnishes commands, directions, promises, and examples; and we do well to study them. We are told, "not to suffer sin upon our brother;" "to go to him, and tell him his fault;" we are cheered by the hope of saving his soul (James v. 20), and presented with instances of wise and successful rebuke. Nathan furnishes one. He did his work well, and wisely; he loved David's soul, and mourned over his fall; he thought about the case before he went, and prepared himself with suitable words, and apt illustrations; his tones were kind, his manner gentle; yet was he firm and faithful, as well as gentle and wise. When the fitting moment came, he discharged his arrow right at the centre of David's conscience; he struck his mark, and "gained his brother."

We must sometimes be personal, if we would be practical, and waive all ceremony in order to rescue a brother's soul. We must not, indeed, indulge in rudeness in personal intercourse, nor in invective in preaching; but endeavour, "by manifestation of the truth, to commend ourselves to every

'man's conscience, as in the sight of God."

Conscience, when in a bad state, loves *generalities*; is pleased with smooth things, desires bare doctrine, and eschews practical preaching; but if we would consult the soul's health, we must not pander to such morbid cravings after comfort and excitement.

We are taught also *how to receive reproof*. We should hear the reprover out, hear him patiently. If we know that the reproof comes from God, let us take it home; we must not compare ourselves with others, or divert attention by investigating the motives of the reprover, or weaken impressions by palliating what we know is wrong; but look at the case in the light of the Lord, and in relation to HIM.

"I have sinned *against the Lord*," says David; and to this he especially refers in the fifty-first Psalm: against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil *in thy sight*." By thus acting, passion and resentment will be banished, excuses will be swept away, sin will appear inexcusable, and repentance will be deep and practical. Then God will look away from the sun, and look with pity on the soul which accepts his reproof, and turns towards Himself. He will say of such, as of Ephraim, "I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord," Jer. xxxi. 18—20.

Then the prayer, "Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities," will be answered; and the soul, comforted and cleansed, shall realize the wondrous fact—"the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

Still, we should not fail to learn also, "that it is an evil and a bitter thing to depart from the living God." Sinning is a base robbery; it robs God of his glory, the soul of its beauty, the Church of its power and influence, families of happiness, and the world of its beacon lights. How many things, precious and lovely as "the poor man's lamb," have even Chris-

tians robbed each other of, and sacrificed them to some *vagrant passion*. "One sinner destroyeth much good;" and this is sometimes done by professors and saints, and even by those who, like David, have done much good. Such conduct will not pass unnoticed by God. "Thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance on their inventions," Ps. xcix. 8.

Thus it was with David. Nathan reproved him; David repented. But still God *rebuked* him. Sore, and long-continued was the chastisement. The child is smitten, and, while the heart-broken father is on his knees, it dies. God draws his sword now, and stroke after stroke descends on the royal house. Who, with the sad history which follows before him, and with David's mournful sighs and complaints resounding in his ears, will say, that God thinks light of sin? Who will dare to continue in sin, or to palliate it, because God forgave David, and has overruled his repentance for the good of others.

Great "SON OF DAVID!" thou alone art perfect, and thou art worthy of all blessing and praise: "Thou restorest that thou didst not take away:" Thou didst "give thyself for us"; yea, "give thyself *for our sins*." Those who were types and shadows of thy glory and grace, needed, as much as any, thy most precious blood to wash them; and that blood still cleanseth all who trust it, from all sin.

Glorious High Priest! we bless thee for that opened fountain, and for thy prevailing intercession. King of Glory! we submit to thy righteous sceptre, and rejoice in thy almighty protection (Ps. lxxii). Faithful and wise prophet! we would tremble at thy holy reproofs, trust thy precious promises, and obey thy holy precepts. Oh, let communion with thyself preserve us from sinning, and strengthen us for service, till we see thee as thou art, and become like thee, "filled with all the fulness of God!"

Pimlico, March 5th.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

HEAVEN.

There's a *home* of happy meetings,
Meetings never more to part;
Where the sounds of joyous greetings
Thrill through every bounding heart:
Where lost friends will find each other,
Catch the love-lit glance again;
Clasp the hand of father, mother,
And in perfect love remain.

There are *streams*, where pilgrims weary,
Stay and lave their dusty feet;
Grateful that the path, though dreary,
Brought them to an end so sweet:
Where the drooping hearts recover,
Nestling in the Saviour's breast;
While around them angels hover,
And they all are truly blest.

There are *shrines* where spirits glorious
Lay the relics of their strife;
And on warrior's brows victorious,
Gleam the fadeless "crowns of life:"

Furningham,
March 14th, 1856.

Where no trace of earth-dust lingers,
On the trophies which they bring;
And where fair untrembling fingers
Take the palm-branch from the King.

There are *altars*. In devotion
Seraphs fold their radiant wings,
And the pure with deep emotion
Bow, and breathe of holy things:
And in one long strain of blessing
Lips that are from faltering free:
Faultless harpists gold-lyres pressing
Join the holy minstrelsy.

Father! when life's shadows lengthen,
And its-sunset gilds the dome,
Give us light and hope to strengthen
Longings for our better home.
Cheer us when our hearts are fainting,
With the music of the blest;
Show us of that world a painting,
Then, oh, take us to thy rest.

MARY ANNE HEARN.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

BY MR. J. BUTTFIELD, AUTHOR OF THE "THREEFOLD CORD."

"Blessed is the man whom thou choosest."—Ps. lxx. 4.

Soon as the soul can realize
The favour of its Father God,
O, what a power of blessedness
Is shed abroad!

Forgiven, justified, renewed,
His grace possessed, and glory seen
By *faith* through the dividing cloud,
The veil within.

Hope, like the breath of morning fills
The heart with strength and ardour new,
And heavenly grace on it distils,
Like early dew.

Peace, like a river, smooth and deep,
Flows on, and calmly bears the soul
Where storms the surface never sweep,
Nor tempests roll.

Comforts, in every hour of gloom,
Like lovely rainbows paint the sky,
And lift above the dreary tomb
Their arches high.

Joy smiles in happy sunshine o'er
Life's path, and sets but to arise
Where never clouds shall darken more,
In yonder skies.

Such is the blessedness he knows
Who Father God can say, while *here*;
But who the blessedness disclose,
What shape appear?

The hope that maketh not ashamed
Shall in perpetual vision cease;
The conflict passed, the haven gained,
Of perfect peace.

The *path of life* securely trod,
The *fabrics* of immortal bliss
Before the *presence* of his God,
For ever his!

MONTHLY SUMMARY.

SIN WM. CLAY'S Church-rate Bill has passed, by a considerable majority, the first reading in the House of Commons. It is, however, to be altered in Committee, so that we fear it will be worse than useless; if so, we hope it may be altogether withdrawn. Lord John Russell who, true to his instincts, in opposing the Church-rate Bill has given notice of proposing, on the 16th instant, a series of Resolutions on the Education Question which, if adopted, will give rise to local dissensions, party conflicts, and a hateful espionage. We trust therefore the friends of popular education will forward petitions against their adoption to the House of Commons, and confer thereon with their representatives without delay.

PEACE WITH RUSSIA is likely to be speedily and we hope also permanently secured.

DENOMINATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.

- Sutton-in-Ashwell, Notts.*—The Rev. C. Nutt has intimated his intention of resigning the pastorate.
- Weymouth.*—The Rev. J. Price has resigned the pastorate.
- Baunds, Northamptonshire.*—The Rev. Rob. Abbott, from Over, Cambs.
- Dorchester.*—The Rev. G. Kerry has proposed himself for the mission in India.
- Stockport, Greek Street.*—The Rev. Joseph Pywell, from Greyfriar's Street chapel, Northampton.
- Longford, near Coventry.*—The Rev. G. Yeals, late of Mepal, Isle of Ely, has accepted the unanimous invitation to the pastorate in this place.
- Berwick.*—The Rev. J. Cole has accepted the invitation to the pastorate.
- Upton-on-Severn.*—The Rev. J. Green, from Darlington.
- Bishop Burton.*—The Rev. C. C. Catterall, from Boroughbridge.
- Romey.*—The Rev. T. M. Morris, of Horton College and Edinburgh University, has accepted the unanimous invitation to the pastorate.
- Paddington, Praed Street.*—The Rev. J. J. Owen, from Bolton.
- Hunslet, Leeds.*—Rev. A. Bowden, from Horton College, has accepted the invitation to the pastorate.

NEW CHAPELS.

- Desborough, Northamptonshire.*—A new chapel, connected with the Northampton County Baptist Missionary Society, was opened on Wednesday, Feb. 20th. The Rev. W. Robinson, of Cambridge, preached in the morning, and the Rev. I. New, of Birmingham, in the evening. The Revs. R. Jessop, jun., of Rothwell, and T. T. Gough, of Cluptone, preached on the following Sabbath. The Church was formed ten years ago, and it is hoped the Christian public will respond to the personal appeals of the minister that the infant Church may be freed from the remaining debt of £100.

RECOGNITION SERVICES.

- Woolwich, Queen Street, Feb. 26.*—Of the Rev. C. Hawson, late of Stepney College, as pastor of the Baptist Church. The introductory discourse was delivered by Rev. W. B. Bowes. The Rev. S. Lillycrop, of Windsor, offered the recognition prayer. The Rev. C. Hawson delivered the charge to his son from the words, "Make full proof of thy ministry." The Revs. C. Box, W. M. Thompson, and W. Woodlands conducted the devotional services. After tea refreshments, of which nearly 600 persons partook, an interesting service was held in the chapel. The Rev. W. Norton, of Egham, presented Mr. Hawson with a superbly-bound copy of Baxter's comprehensive Bible, the gift of the Church and congregation, and a Commentary, the gift of some friends at Staines to which Mr. Hawson briefly responded. Addresses were delivered by W. Franks, Esq., of Norwood, and by the Rev. Messrs. Hanks, Jones, Hoskon, J. A. Spurgeon, and others.

Cambridge, Zion Chapel, Feb. 27.—Of the Rev. F. Johnstone, late Classical and Theological Tutor of the Baptist College, Edinburgh. The Rev. J. H. Millard, B. A., of Huntingdon, delivered the introductory discourse. The Rev. J. Flood, of Melbourne, offered the recognition prayer; the Rev. Jabez Burns, D.D., delivered the charge to the minister from 1 Cor. xvi. 10. After tea, a public meeting was held, presided over by R. Foster, Esq. Addresses were delivered by the Revs. J. Flood, R. Blinkborn, W. Robinson, W. Tritton, Dr. Burns, J. H. Millard, and J. Davies.

Truro, Cornwall, Dec. 26.—The Rev. H. Lawrence was recognized as pastor of the Baptist Church in this town. The morning service was of a devotional character, at which the Rev. S. H. Booth, of Falmouth, gave an address. In the afternoon, the Rev. R. Feungilly, of Penzance, formerly of Newcastle, delivered the charge to the minister from 1 Tim. iv. 16. In the evening, the Rev. C. Wilson, of Helston, addressed the Church and congregation from Col. iv. 31. The Rev. Messrs. Parks, — Wilshaw, — Tabb, — Jenkins, of Penzance, — Slade, of Grampound, and — Friske, of Redruth, conducted the devotional services.

Warrington, March 21.—Of the Rev. Henry Rowson. In the morning, the Rev. J. Burton, of St. Ives, delivered the introductory address, on the "Constitution of a Christian Church." The Rev. W. F. Burchell, of Rochdale, proposed the usual questions, and offered the recognition prayer. The Rev. J. Acworth, L.L.D., of Horton College, delivered the charge to the minister. In the evening, the Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown, of Liverpool, addressed the Church. Other ministers took part in the devotional exercises.

Salford, Great George Street, Mar. 3.—A highly interesting Church and congregational tea meeting, to welcome the Rev. L. B. Brown, late of Horton College. The meeting was presided over by C. Wardley, Esq. Mr. Wiley, the senior deacon, introduced Mr. Brown to the Church. The meeting was subsequently addressed by Mr. W. Snape, of Darwen, a former deacon; the Rev. Messrs. Cheney, of Manchester; — Barker, of Blackburn; — Rowson, of Warrington; — Barker, of Lockwood; — Dyson, of Rishworth; and by Messrs. P. Berry, — R. Perry, J. Johnson, and by the Rev. L. B. Brown. A copy of Scott's Commentary, 6 vols., was presented to Mr. Wiley, on his leaving Salford.

Cardiff, Tabernacle, Welsh Baptist, Mar. 6-8.—Of the Rev. N. Thomas, late of Carmarthen, as pastor. The Rev. J. Jones, of Merthyr; D. D. Evans, Pontrhydryn; D. C. Jones, Tongwynlas, and T. Thomas, of Pontypool College, officiated in Welsh and English. Messrs. Owen, of Canton, Thomas, of St. Mellons, Davies, of Croesy-park, and Davies of Waunderdan took part in the devotional exercises.

SPECIAL SERVICES.

Liverpool, Soho Street.—A valedictory service and tea meeting was held at the Particular Baptist Church, Soho Street, Liverpool,

on Tuesday, 19th Feb. 1856, occasioned by the Rev. Samuel Jones, late pastor of that Church, leaving England for America. The tea meeting was numerously attended. After tea the Rev. Thos. Dawson, of Byron Street Church, and several others, engaged in prayer; after which, Mr. Wm. H. Lockhart, a member, delivered a short and suitable address to Mr. Jones, and landed him a purse of money, stating, although the contents were small, it would obtain a few comforts for the voyage. Mr. Jones expressed his great satisfaction to the Church and congregation for their energy and kindness during his stay amongst them. The service, which was deeply affecting, broke up at 10 o'clock.

PRESENTATION SERVICE.

Hatch, near Taunton, Feb. 21.—An interesting service was held in the Baptist chapel, presided over by A. Shanks, Esq., of Chard; previous to which nearly 300 persons partook of tea refreshments. The pastor, the Rev. J. Teall was presented with a magnificent time-piece, as a token of grateful esteem, as well as for the valuable service rendered by him in the exchange of a minister's house connected with the chapel. The meeting was addressed by the Revs. K. Green, J. H. May, of Taunton; E. Edwards, of Chard, W. Denslaw, of Chard; J. Price, Montacute; Morston, of Langport; J. Chappell, Isle Abbots. Mr. Morgan, of Chard, and the Rev. S. Hallett, of Bindmoor, led the devotions of the evening.

BAPTIST UNION.

The Forty-fourth Anniversary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, will be held at the Mission-house, Moorgate Street, April 25, at 10 o'clock. Dr. Acworth will deliver the address on the occasion.

ANNIVERSARIES TO BE HOLDEN.

Trowbridge, Bethesda Chapel, April 7.—The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon will preach afternoon and evening; and on the following morning, Mr. S. will preach at Back Street, the chapel having been kindly lent for the occasion.

BAPTIST MISSIONARY MEETINGS.

April 24, Morning 11.—Special prayer meeting, Mission House, Moorgate Street. The Rev. Jno. Stock will preside.

Lord's Day, April 27.—General collection sermons at the various metropolitan and suburban chapels.

April 29, Morning 10.—Annual Members' Meeting, Mission House.

April 30.—Annual missionary sermons. Morning at 11 o'clock, at Bloomsbury chapel, by the Rev. C. Stovel. Evening at half-past six, at Surrey Chapel, by the Rev. N. Haycroft.

May 1, 11 o'clock.—Annual public meeting of the Society at Exeter Hall, at which the Hon. A. Kinnaird will preside. The Rev. Jas. Allen, from Ceylon; Edward Corderoy, Esq., Rev. W. G. Lewis, jun. Rev. Isaac Lord, and Rev. Jno. Stoughton will speak. In the evening the annual sermon to young men will be preached at the Weigh-house chapel by the Rev. J. P. Chown, of Bradford. Service to commence at eight o'clock.

Baptist Irish Society.—Annual sermon, April 25, at Devonshire Square, Rev. J. Paterson, D.D.

Baptist Home Missionary Society.—Annual meeting at Finsbury Chapel, April 24. Annual Meeting.—Kingsgate Street (late Eagle Street) Chapel, Tuesday evening, April 29.

BAPTISMS.

Angle, Pembrokeshire, Feb. 10.—One in the open air, by Mr. Evans, of Manorbear.

Aberdare, English, Feb. 17.—Eleven by Mr. Price.

Bedford, Mill Street, March 2.—Two; a young man and his wife, by Mr. Killen.

Birmingham, Hope Street, Jan. 27.—Seven.

Blackburn, Dec. 23.—Three by Mr. Barker.

Chelmsford, Essex, Mar. 2.—Five by Mr. Corbitt, minister; four for his own church, and one for a neighbouring church, in the presence of the largest congregation ever seen in the chapel.

Diss, Norfolk, Feb. 27.—Five by the pastor.

Great Grimsby, Jan. 6.—Two by Mr. R. Hogg.

Halifax, Trinity Road, Jan. 27.—Five by Mr. Walters.

Liverpool, Stanhope Street, Jan. 20.—One by Mr. Hughes.

London, New Park Street, Feb. 29.—Twenty-four by Mr. Spurgeon.

—*Blundford Street, Jan. 30.*—Two by Mr. Bowes.

—*Stepney "Cave Adullam,"*—Wednesday, Feb. 20. Twelve, after a sermon by Mr. C. Shipway.

Lowestoft, Jan. 28.—Seven by Mr. J. E. Dovey. Among those baptized were a brother and sister, a father and son, and two cousins, as well as a captain in the Royal navy, 75 years of age.

Lynn, Norfolk, Jan. 6.—Ten by Mr. Wigner.

March, Isle of Ely, Feb. 3.—Three; the children of members.

Milford, near Lynnington, Mar. 2.—Four, and Mar. 18, Two, by Mr. Gill.

Pembroke, Feb. 10.—Three by Mr. Walker.

Swansea, Fork Place, Feb. 3.—Five, by Mr. Hill.

Trowbridge, Bethesda, Mar. 2.—Three by Mr. Webster.

Walton, Suffolk, Mar. 2.—Two by Mr. Warren.

West Bromwich, Feb. 17.—Two by Mr. Sneath.

Wrexham, Jan. 20.—Two by Mr. Roberts.

* * We shall be glad if the pastors or deacons of Churches would supply us early with notices of Baptisms. We will forward, Post Free, a copy of the "Messenger" to whomsoever will send us authenticated accounts of these as they occur.

DEATHS.

Baker, Mr. W., Feb. 26, at Isle Abbots, aged 74. He was baptized 1806; chosen deacon 1808, and for many years preached the Gospel with acceptance in the neighbouring villages.

Cadby, Mr. Philip, aged 60; many years an active member of the Baptist Church, Back Street, Trowbridge, Wilts.

Nicholson, Rev. S. of Plymouth, Mar. 13, aged 65. Mr. Nicholson had been 33 years pastor of the Baptist Church, George Street.

THE POWER OF CHRIST.

BY THE REV. JAMES SMITH, CHELTENHAM.

"He is able even to subdue all things unto himself."—PHIL. iii. 21.

THERE is nothing that we want so much as power. The Lord has been teaching us this for a considerable time. We have plenty of means, but without power they will not accomplish the end at which we aim. We have a tolerable stock of knowledge; but knowledge, without Divine energy, is comparatively powerless. No sinners are converted, no saints are sanctified, no churches are raised, no foes are conquered, simply by knowledge. There is power in the Church, or nothing would be done; there is not much power in the Church, or more would be done. God is working, but we want to see greater things. We look around us often on the masses, and feel discouraged; but when we turn to God's word, we see there is no need for this. Jesus, our Jesus, has all power both in heaven and in earth. He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think. "*He is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*"

Let us carry this thought with us into the *world*. Look at its ignorance, how dense, how wide spread, how dangerous; look at its infidelity, how daring, how boastful, how mischievous; look at its formality, how freezing, how stupefying, how destructive; look at its enmity to God and goodness, how deep-rooted, how active, how powerful; look at its position, in the arms of the wicked one. Is not such a view calculated to paralyze our efforts, and fill us with despondency? Yes, if we look at it from man's stand-point. But look at it from the Christian's stand-point. Go to work in it as God bids you; and if tempted to doubt, if dispirited by the vastness of the work, or cast down by the apparent want of success, remember that your Lord and Master "*is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*" Aided by him, a worm shall thresh the mountains and beat them small. Accompanied by him, the feeblest labourer may face the greatest difficulty, and demand, "Who art thou, O great mountain?" and with confidence exclaim, "Before Zerubbabel, thou shalt become a plain." Yes, yes, "every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed; and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this. Look then, Christian, look upon this poor, ignorant, infidel, formal, and wicked world; then take up the glass of prophecy and look forward, and what a glorious change you see. The wilderness and solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. God hath said it; there can be no doubt about it; for Jesus "*is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*"

Let us carry this thought into the *family*. Believer, thy house may not be with God, as you desire. There may be much sin, much disorder, and many things to pain thy mind. Look at thy wayward son—at thy trifling daughter; how obstinately they persevere in a course that wounds thy heart, and shews their preference of evil, after all thou hast said and done. Thy heart sinks at times. Thou art fearful of the worst. Thou thinkest, if they should die unconverted; if they should perish in their sin; if I should have to witness against them at the bar of God, and testify to their deliberate and oft repeated rejection of Christ and his Gospel. Such thoughts and suppositions distress thee; yet thou hast used all the means thou couldst, and now thou art tempted to give up. Give up! Never: go on ploughing in hope, and sowing in hope. Thou hast sown thy seed in the morning, go on and sow it in the evening, for thou knowest not which shall prosper, this or that, or whether both shall be alike good. Never doubt, droop, or yield to despondency; but remember, however careless, trifling, or bad thy relatives may be, Jesus "*is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*"

Sunday School teacher, carry this thought with you into the *school*. Your children, after all the prayers you have offered, after all the means you have used, after all the hopes you have encouraged, your children are unconverted still. Some of them are indifferent; some are dull and stupid; some are hard and unimpressive. After all you have done, you see no fruit, and are ready to cry out, "I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought and in vain." You are almost ready to throw up your commission, and desert your post, for you conclude that it is really of no use. Of no use! Did not your Saviour say to you, "Go and teach?" Did you not go because he bade you? Do you not teach for him? Is it not his work? Is it not for his glory? Give up; no, no, never do that; but rather seize this strong staff, and say, I lean on this; "*He is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*"

Servant of God! Minister of Jesus Christ! Pastor of the Church! Here is a source of comfort and encouragement for you. Look at the Church of God. What do you see? Among some, jealousies, envyings, and evil speakings. Among others, pride, worldliness, and much sensuality. Among others, selfishness, disunion, and inactivity. In all, something calculated to grieve thy spirit, draw sighs from thy breast, and earnest prayers from thy soul. Such a want of co-operation; such intense worldliness; such self-seeking. These things depress and discourage thee. In addition to which there are so few conversions, so little decision for God, or separating from the world, among the members of thy congregation. Thou hast prayed, laboured, and lived in hope; but hope deferred has made thy heart sick, and thou art yielding to gloom. Yield not, my brother; yield not. Grasp this thought firmly, and carry it with thee into every part of thy work, "*He is able to subdue even all things unto himself.*"

When we look into our *hearts*, let us carry this assurance with us there. For what we discover there at times, shocks us and fills us with alarm. What coldness! What hardness! What carnality! What proneness to wander from all that is good, and to take part in all that is bad! What desperate depravity! What depths of corruption! What unutterable evils we discover there. Often have we been made to cry out, Can ever God dwell here? Can any one with such a heart be the object of the Saviour's love, or be at all the subject of the work of the Holy Spirit? Nothing appears to be so desperately bad, so fearfully wicked, as the human heart. What then are we to do? Doubt? No. Question our interest in Christ? No. Sit down in gloom and sadness? No. Rather, when we see the worst of ourselves, let us hold the promise with a firmer grasp; let us look to Jesus with more intense desire; and let us take encouragement from this glorious fact, "*He is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*" Yes, he can cleanse thy heart, and make it pure. He can purge thy spirit, and make it holy. He can purify thy affections, and fix them all on God. He can sanctify thee wholly, body, soul, and spirit, and present thee faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy.

If human nature is to be transformed; if we who bear the image of the earthly, are to bear the image of the heavenly, Divine agency must be employed. Jesus, and Jesus only, can raise the dead, give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, strength to the weak, holiness to the depraved, and salvation to the lost. The power necessary to subdue the stubborn will, to transform this miserable world, to regulate the disordered school, to sanctify the unholy family, to adorn and beautify the Church, and to purify and elevate the heart, is possessed by Jesus. "*He is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*" Jesus is accessible and yields to prayer. We know where to find him. We know how to approach him. We know what to say to him. We know what will prevail with him. His disciples at Emmaus constrained him, and he went and supped with them. So may we, by fervent, frequent, importunate prayer. He will yield to the hearty, earnest, persevering prayers of his people. Let us

therefore aim and strive to bring the all subduing power of Jesus with us wherever we go. So that, if we go into the world, seeking the conversion and salvation of its poor deluded votaries, we may succeed. For what is sin before the power of the Saviour? What is the resistance of the creature before the omnipotence of the Creator? What is Satan with all his artifice and devices, before the name and energy of the Son of God? If the Lord be with us, we shall be strong and drive him out. If we have Christ's warrant for what we do; if we aim at God's glory in what we do; if we proceed by the rule of God's word in doing; then, never, never, let us succumb, or yield to fear; for greater is he that is with us, than all that can be against us. "Greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the world." O wicked world! thou hast slain God's servants, thou hast rejected Christ's Gospel, thou hast boasted of thy prowess, thou hast gloried in thy shame, thou hast thought thyself to be invulnerable; but there is one who will conquer thee, either by his grace, or majesty; for "*He is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*" Let us set our hearts upon bringing the all subduing power of Jesus to bear upon our families; then will our sons be as plants grown up in their youth, and our daughters will be like the polished corners of the temple. Mother, despair not of thy daughter; she may be haughty, she may treat thy efforts to subdue her proud spirit with contempt; she may wring thy heart, and force tears from thy eyes; but the power of Jesus will subdue even her. Pray, pray; plead, plead; give the Lord no rest until she bows to his sceptre, and succs for pardon. Father, give not up thy son, but try to bring him to Jesus; and if thou canst not, try and bring Jesus to him. He may choose bad companions. He may indulge in vicious practises. He may set at nought all thy counsel, and reject all thy reproofs. He may be sunk low, very low. But Jesus can subdue him. Jesus can bring him up out of the most horrible pit, and extricate him from the miry clay. He can make the proud rebel, a humble, obedient, subject; and the child that had almost broke thy heart, thy chief comfort and joy. Teachers, set your heart upon bringing the all subduing power of Jesus down upon your schools. Never give up a child unless you can find a match for omnipotence. Never yield your point until you gain it; and let that point be the conversion of every child in your class. You may be weak. Your talents may be small. Your advantages may have been but few. Your scholars may be worse than ordinary, the very riff raff of society, the scum of the lowest parts of the town. Never mind; pray, pray; plead, plead; until the Lord shall make bare his arm. "*He is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*" Ministers of Christ, let us set our hearts more than ever upon bringing the all subduing power of Jesus into our churehes and congregations. There is no evil that it cannot rectify. There is no mountain which it cannot level. There is no foe which it cannot subdue. There is no work which it cannot achieve. Do we want more love, more union, more self-denial, more active efforts,—in a word, more holiness, and more usefulness? Well, we do; then let us remember, however rough the materials, however difficult the task, however ungenial the soil, "*He is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*" Or, do we look into our congregations and desire the conversion of the unconverted, the decision of the enquiring, and the entire consecration of all who know the Lord? Or, do we look upon empty seats and long to see them filled; or upon neglectors and despisers of the means of grace around us, and long to see them brought under the word? If so, let us pray, pray; plead, plead; until the Lord upon the windows of heaven and pour us out the blessing. Let us set our hearts upon our work more than ever. Let us consecrate ourselves to our one object more than ever. Let us cry mightily unto God, while we employ all legitimate means; remembering that "*He is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*" And this mighty one is our master. This mighty one loves us. This mighty one is deeply interested in us and our work. This mighty one will get glory by granting us our desires. Let us;

finally, set our hearts upon bringing the all subduing power of Jesus to bear on ourselves. This will subdue our corruptions, correct our tempers, controul our lusts, strengthen our graces, brighten our evidences, beautify our lives, and fill us with the fruits of righteousness to the praise and glory of God. Heart evils can only be subdued by divine power. Satan can only be conquered in the strength of Jesus. Only by the Spirit of Christ can we mortify the deeds of the body, crucify the old man with his deeds, cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord. Let us then, pray, pray; plead, plead; until we are endued with power from on high, and stand forth as living speaking illustrations of the fact, that Jesus

"is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

Cheltenham, April 5, 1856.

FRUITFUL SORROWS.

BY THE REV. JOHN COX, LATE OF WOOLWICH.

"Jesus wept."—JOHN xi. 35.

BETHANY! How sacred and how solemn are its associations! Here we see friendship in its tenderness, ministry in its perfection, devotion in its sublimity, love in its grandeur, omnipotence in its glory, and sorrow in its intensity; for there Jesus the Son of God, and the Son of man, visited, taught, prayed, sympathized, wept, and conquered. The whole of the above-mentioned chapter is full of instruction and consolation, especially to mourners. We are placed by it amidst some of the deepest sorrows of time; we are also brought into connection with some of the brightest glories of eternity. The themes and characters are various, and some of them present striking contrasts. We have death and life, sorrow and joy, unbelief and faith, apparent neglect, and the most real and tender love. But, in the short text before us, what wonders may we trace! Here we have, indeed, brevity and beauty—*"A sea of matter in a drop of language."*

"Jesus wept." This brief sentence contains a *person*, and an *act*. The person is Jesus, the act is weeping. The person most glorious; the act most common (for tears are very plentiful in this our world of woe); yet, as considered with reference to *Him*, it was most wonderful. Doubtless there was some great and gracious design in the action, and in recording the same in this emphatic way. That design, we think, is, the consolation of the sorrowful in this mourning world. We shall, therefore, dwell on three words—*Saviour, sorrow, solace*; thus embracing the *person*, the *act*, and the *design*—the *who*, the *what*, and the *why*; and all wonderful!

"God hath raised up unto Israel a Saviour JESUS." The title is a word of great *sublimity*. "It was given him of his Father by the angel before he was conceived. It sounded over the plains of Bethlehem in melodious numbers; devils confessed it with terror, the guilty clung to it with hope, and the healed repeated it with gratitude. Yet, behold and wonder; we find it, at last, written over a cross on which He who answered to it so fully, and filled it up so gloriously, hung, and expired in agony. A few dreary hours pass away, and angels' voices are again heard pronouncing his glorious name, proclaiming with bounding hearts his resurrection. "Ye seek JESUS; HE is risen." He soon leaves this world, where a name *beneath* every name was given him, and ascends up on high; and while men talk of "one Jesus" contemptuously, Acts xxv. 19, God calls him "*the one Jesus*," the only Saviour, complaisantly; gives him a name *above* every name, that at the "name of Jesus every knee should bow." Surely in that name Jesus we have, as an eloquent writer observes, "*one word, but millions of ideas.*" Its history, its mystery, its might, its majesty, its trophies, its tenderness, are clothed with *sublimity*.

His "goings forth were of old, from everlasting" (Micah v. 2). His entrance, progress, exit, as regards our world, how sublime! The *character* He exhibits, the *claims* he puts forth, the *credentials* he displayed, the *condescension* he manifested, the *conquests* he achieved, and the *crown* which he now wears are all sublime.

In that name we find *sufficiency* also—yea, all sufficiency. One Saviour, "One Mediator," we need, but no more. Here is enough as regards *satisfaction* to God, and *salvation* for man. It meets man's entire nature and wants; saving him and satisfying him. It is sufficient also for saints in all troubles and temptations, however trying, distressing, or gloomy their path may be. Then ought not his name to be to them full of *sweetness*. Should it not be to all believers what one said it was to him, "as music to the ear, as honey in the mouth, and as a jubilee to the heart."

The *sorrows* of this wondrous person may next be noticed. "Jesus was a man of sorrows." He wept often and much (Psalm xxii., Isaiah lii. 13, 14). The deep traces of sorrow were on his countenance, and the furrows of grief might be seen on his lofty brow; but we have only two distinct instances recorded, respecting the time and place of his weeping. Once he wept *over* impenitent sinners, Luke xix. 41; and the other time he wept *with* sorrowful saints. It has been said "that nothing reveals a person's character so much as to see the actings of the passions. The grief, anger, love, hatred of the soul, discovers the moral character of the soul by shewing what it rejoices in, and is grieved about." How perfect and beautiful does the character of Christ appear as tried by this test. He was only angry with sin; He loved the miserable with a love of pity, and only felt complacency in that which was holy. Every acting of his holy soul was full of moral beauty.

"*Jesus wept!*" What glories are mirrored forth in these wondrous tears. As the pearly dew drops of early morn reflect the rays of the newly risen sun, so do the tears of Jesus reflect the rays of the uncreated light; in them we see the glory of God's compassion. Tears are plentiful in this sad world of ours, and they flow from various causes. Some persons weep tears of *despair*, others tears of *regret*, and a few weep tears of *penitence*; but Jesus did not weep *thus*; he was always hopeful and holy; he did nothing over which he could mourn repentingly; why then did he weep, and what manner of tears were his?

Before he wept he took a survey. Mark *where* he wept, and *when*? It was at the grave; the grave of a dear friend. Around that grave there were weeping friends and scowling foes. Mourners had just said to him, "Lord, come and see;" for he had asked "where have ye laid him?" If we would have the sympathy of Christ manifested to us, we must, like them, *lay our sorrows before his eye*, and ask him to "come and see."

Consider what he *saw*. *The grave*. What an object for him who was "*the life*" to contemplate. Did it not conduct his holy thoughts back to the fountain of all our woes, SIN; did it not remind him of what his beloved people in all ages would have to endure, before he should come forth in glory to "swallow up death in victory." Did it not also lead him to think upon his *own* grave, into which he was shortly to descend by agonies unutterable? Was not he, who on former occasions grieved at the hardness of men's hearts, now affected by the consideration of the sad condition of those Jews who were standing around the grave, who remained unaffected by all his tears and miraculous power? Did he not deeply feel for and with his dear friends Mary and Martha? we are assured that he did. Tears draw forth tears, even as joy awakens responsive feelings of pleasure; and as Jesus was a *real* man, he came within the range of this influence of mind on mind. How pure and how powerful was that sympathy. "*Jesus wept!*" We are sure then, *that he is really one with us*, that he hath really taken our nature, and is like us in all things, sin excepted. Let this fact obtain entire possession of our minds, "God was manifest in the flesh." It should also be remembered, that the per-

fection and purity of his nature rendered him capable of the most intense feeling. His nature was so finely strung that it vibrated to the slightest touch :

“His heart is made of tenderness.”

This capability of intense feeling is spoken of principally with regard to others. He feels deeply for his people. He *did* on earth, He *does* in heaven. *How* this is, we cannot define; but when we hear him say, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou *Me* ;” and again, “Though a mother should forget her sucking child, yet will I never forget thee ;” and when we hear it said of him, “that he is touched with a feeling of our infirmities,” we may be sure that his sympathy is as *real* as he was the subject of when he wept at the grave of Lazarus. And as he gave *utterance* to his heart’s feelings when on earth, so he does now : not in audible sobs and visible tears ; but in the loving words of his book ; by the gracious acts of his Spirit ; and through the affectionate though feeble kindness of his people ; who having somewhat of the mind and heart of Christ, learn “to weep with those that weep.”

From these sorrows of the Saviour *solace* flows to his people. If Jesus had never sorrowed, sinners could never have rejoiced. The joy of angels in *some respects* flows from this wondrous sorrow ; and *all* the joy of sinners *must* come from thence. His are indeed fruitful sorrows, and prolific tears. Those crystal drops became the seed of present and eternal happiness. *Jesus wept to sanctify sorrow*. Surely grief is dignified by him, and sanctified to us. This vindicates tenderness of feeling from the charge of weakness of mind ; and teaches us, that as tears flowed down the cheeks of the blessed *ONE*, they may also be the heritage of those who are blessed. *Jesus wept to encourage weeping mourners to bring all their sorrows to him*. If we are weeping for the same reasons which caused Jesus to weep, we may confidently go to him with all our trials, and all the causes of our sorrow. His very tears plead with us to make bold with him and to expect large things from him. *He wept with us that we might rejoice with him for evermore*. Sorrow will soon be gone by, joy will last for ever. He entered completely into our sorrows ; so let us hope to “enter eternally into his joy ;” and even now long for a large earnest of it, ever remembering his words of tenderness, “These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full,” John xv. 11. But the chief solace of our souls arises from the thought of who it was that wept. *He* was almighty who shed those tears ! He wept over the grave ; and he conquered the grave. He did not weep over woes that he could not remedy. He was infinitely *wise* ; he did not weep in perplexity as we sometimes do. He was *rich*, though he became poor ; he was one who had all resources of infinity at his command. And He who was so powerful, wise, and rich, is *unchanging* ; the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. We have his sympathy, and we shall have his succour. How unlike the Saviour then are those who never weep ; who feel no sorrow for their sins, no sympathy with human woe ! How should this scene at the grave of Lazarus win our confidence, excite our wonder, encourage our hopes, and call forth our best affections and most devoted service.

Let us long for more entire sympathy with him, who so feels with us and for us ; hating all which he hates, and loving whatever he loves.

“Ye souls that love the Lord,
If at this sight ye burn ;
See that in thought, in deed, and word,
Ye hate what made him mourn.”

If Jesus wept over his friend’s grave, with what feelings should we contemplate *his*. See *him* in his grave ; wonder at his love, and weep over those sins which caused his death. Behold, his grave is empty ; “come, see the place where the Lord lay ;” think of his resurrection triumphs, his endless life, and joy unspeakable ; then wonder and rejoice.

Lastly. If the Lord Jesus *thus* sorrowed over the grave of one dead friend, how great will his joy be when he comes to raise *all* his friends from the grave; comes to be the destruction of the destroyer and the redeemer of his saints' dust. Then "repentance shall be hid from his eyes," and as the holy myriads of his loved ones come forth to the resurrection of life, adoring angels shall exclaim with deepest rapture, "BEHOLD HOW HE LOVED THEM."

.6, *Somerset Terrace, Pimlico, April 4.*

UNION TO CHRIST.

BY THE REV. J. JENKINSON, OF OAKHAM.

EARTHLY unions not unfrequently entail disappointment, vexation, distress, degradation, or ruin; union to Christ always insures the highest present and perpetual blessedness. Earthly unions, even when they yield, as they sometimes do, honour, power, profit, or delight, are in all respects infinitely inferior to this. No wonder, therefore, that inspired penmen so often, either directly or indirectly, refer to it. No wonder that the great apostle of the Gentiles felt it to be the consummation of his wishes, to "win Christ, and be found in him." Through nearly half of the first chapter of his epistle to the Ephesians, union to Christ, in one or other of its various aspects, is presented to our attention in almost every verse. We are "blessed with all spiritual blessings in him;" "chosen in him;" "accepted in him;" "in him we have redemption;" "gathered together in him;" "in him we obtain the inheritance;" "in him we trust;" "in him we believe;" &c., &c.

The union thus spoken of is from *eternity*. "Chosen in him before the foundation of the world." It is also a *legal* union. Though not a provision of the law, it is fully accordant with it, sanctioned by it, magnifies it, honours it, establishes it, and moreover, involves most momentous legal consequences. If a wealthy man contracts marriage with an insolvent woman he thereby renders himself responsible for the payment of all her debts. The union itself was optional; but having been contracted its consequences are obligatory. Thus our union to Christ rendered him the victim of justice in our stead. There is, moreover, an *actual* union. This is effected in regeneration. In this sense Paul speaks of Andronicus and Junia as having been in Christ earlier than he, Rom. xvi. 7. This is inseparably connected with that *vital* union which is illustrated by the connexion of the members of the body with the head; the branches of a tree with its root, &c. There is also an *external* and *visible* union. Hence we read of being "baptized into Christ." There is too an *experimental* union; or a sensible enjoyment of our interest in him. And, finally, there is an *evidential* union. As the growth of a scion shows its vital union to the stock, and as the legible action of the electric telegraph manifests the union of its connecting wires to be complete; so a humble, holy, consistent deportment evidences the reality of our union to Christ. And wherever this vital sanctifying union exists it will be continuous and everlasting: for the apostle says, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

These various kinds of union, and every analogous distinction which may suggest itself, may all be comprised in the few simple but comprehensive terms, Christ *for* us, *with* us, *in* us, *by* us.

1. *Christ for us.* "He gave himself *for* us;" "he was delivered for our offences;" "wounded for our transgressions; bruised for our iniquities;" &c. He was born for us; lived for us; wrought out a righteousness for us; suffered

for us ; died for us ; rose again for us ; has taken possession of heaven for us ; and ever lives there to intercede for us. This substitution of Christ in our stead results from that legal union betwixt him and us to which we have adverted. It is beyond all others the distinguishing doctrine of the Gospel. It was typified by the ancient sacrifices ; repeatedly foretold by inspired prophets ; directly affirmed by the great teacher himself ; ever primarily insisted upon by his apostles (1 Cor. xv. 3) ; symbolically exhibited in the ordinance of the Lord's supper ; and cordially embraced and rejoiced in by all genuine Christians, whether belonging to the church below or to that which is above.

2. *Christ with us.* How condescending, how important, how precious, how consolatory, how solemnizing is the name of our Redeemer,—“Immanuel,” “God with us.” God with us in human nature. God with us in this fallen, this polluted world. God with us as our Observer to note our character and conduct, our wishes and our wants ; as our Purveyor to supply all our need ; as our Teacher to instruct us to profit ; as our Guide to lead us aright ; as our Guardian to protect us from peril ; and as our Saviour to deliver us from evil. God with us at all times and in all places ; as the soul is with the body wherever we may dwell. With us when most alarmingly tossed by the billows and endangered by the storm. With us in the furnace, even though it be heated seven times more hotly than usual. With us in our devotions ; and with us in the ordinary toils of life. With us in our labours in his service ; and with us in all our sufferings for his sake. With us in our early days ; with us in our riper years ; and with us when passing down the steep of age. With us in life ; with us in death ; and with us for ever. Ife still says, “Fear not, I am with thee.” “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.”

3. *Christ in us.* This constitutes that actual, vital union, to which we previously referred. It is often recognized in the inspired volume. “Christ in you the hope of glory.” “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.” “I in them, and thou in me.” “We know that he dwelleth in us.” “By this we know that we dwell in him, and he in us.” “It pleased God to reveal his son in me.” “Christ liveth in me,” &c., &c. O what amazing grace and condescension do these assurances exhibit ! What forbearance and what love do they bespeak ! What consolation and encouragement do they impart ! What a motive to constant purity of life, and word, and heart, and thought, do they present ! “What concord hath Christ with Belial ? or what agreement hath the temple of God with idols ? For ye are the temple of the living God : as he hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them ; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

4. *Christ by us.* “The Son of God was preached among you by us.” “All the promises in him are Amen to the glory of God by us.” “He maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us.” “The epistle of Christ ministered by us.” “As though God did beseech you by us.” “Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death.” This is what we termed an *evidential union*. As oral language is indicted by the soul but spoken by the tongue ; as books are originated by the soul, but written by the hand ; as a walk is purposed by the soul but accomplished by the feet ; and as these effects demonstrate the union betwixt the body and the soul ; so our honouring Christ by our spirit and deportment evidences our union to him. Christ being thus honoured by us is not the *cause* of our salvation, but it is an *evidence* that he has saved us. It was only by comparatively few of his people that he imparted the knowledge of his will to man, or wrought miracles in attestation of his truth ; nor does he work by all as preachers of his Gospel, but he does require all his people to abstain from the appearance of evil, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world. To each and to all he says “Ye, are not your own ; ye are bought with a price : therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's.” “Ye are the light of the world

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

"Thus shall we best proclaim abroad
The honours of our Saviour God;
When the salvation reigns within,
And grace subdues the power of sin."

Oakham, March 10, 1856.

REFLECTIONS ON THE PRESENT PEACE,

BY THE REV. D. JENNINGS, OF HAMPSTEAD.

"A time of war, and a time of peace."—Eccles. iii. 8.

WE had but just returned from the Sanctuary, a few Sabbaths ago, when the booming of distant cannon announced that the anxiously expected peace was secured; that the negotiations of the Paris conferences were brought to a successful issue; and that war's desolating ravages would, at least for the present, cease to be felt among the nations of Europe. As Christians and as men of peace we must rejoice in this: and we should be sadly wanting in gratitude or, strangely oblivious to the times that are passing over us, if we do not take special notice of an event which ought to be regarded as an answer to the earnest supplications of the children of peace; and which must necessarily affect, in no small degree, the future destiny of Europe; and, to some extent the more remote regions of the earth.

Two years ago the gloomy shadow of coming events was cast over Europe; the peace of nearly half a century was disturbed; England, with her Allies, combined to stem the tide of growing encroachment and ambitious domination. Parents gave up their children to the slaughter of the battle field, and war, in all its fearful realities and brutal ferocities, was permitted to waste and destroy. Solomon, in the words at the head of this paper, speaks of "a time of war and a time of peace:" and now, while passing from the one to the other, let us look at both, and seek to gather instruction from the past, and indulge in anticipation in relation to the future.

I. A time of war.

There never could have been a time of war had there not been a time of sin. "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" The first war was occasioned by the rebellion of the heavenly powers. When the proud son of the morning aimed to be as the Most High; and principalities and powers in heavenly places were found in awful antagonism; from that moment to the present there has been a time of war.

War implies the existence of evil. It is not a natural state of things, nor is it compatible with a state of perfection. It was not in paradise, and shall not be in the perfect future. God will make wars to cease.

Evil cannot exist without war, just as pain is the necessary result of the violation of the laws of sentient existence, and is often symptomatic of the effort which nature makes to right itself; so war is the result of sin, and is often the attempt to counteract the evil. "Mountains of prey," is the appellation by which the Psalmist describes the kingdoms of the world; and it must be confessed, that history generally presents them as vast hunting grounds, in which men of ambition find ample scope for their fearful sport. "Wars and rumours of wars" have always been the staple article of the world's history.

When Christ came to set up his kingdom, another *time of war* commenced. It is true that Jesus is the Prince of Peace; that when he became incarnate, angels sang "peace on earth;" but he came to retake a rebellious province; and planted his standard in the heart of an enemy's country: and though he

did not "strive nor cry," yet he was in constant collision with systems of error; and the powers of darkness were troubled at his presence. His gospel is both pacific and antagonistic, while it secures peace to the sin-burdened conscience; it wages war with error and iniquity in all their forms; and all the evangelistic efforts that have subsequently been put forth, are so many attacks made on the strongholds of the wicked one. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds."

This time of war shall continue until every foe is subjugated, and "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ."

Another time of war is known by every child of God. It commences at conversion, and does not cease till death terminates the conflict. The Christian's heart is the battle field, and a man's enemies are those of his own house. An inspired apostle says "so fight I, not as one that beateth the air;" and exhorts us to "Fight the good fight of faith." And though the believer, when sorely pressed by his spiritual foes, may say, "who shall deliver me?" yet he takes courage, and exclaims, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" And, clothed with the whole armour of God, he hopes to come off more than conqueror, through him that hath loved him. He "deigns in the law of God after the inner man," but finds "a law in his members, warring against the law of his mind." Flesh and spirit, sin and holiness, maintain the conflict; the flesh struggling hard for the mastery, but grace reigns and conquers; and soon, O believer, the great Captain of our salvation shall "slay thy sins and end the strife."

II. A time of peace.

There are some who cry peace! peace! when there is no peace; who dream of peace and safety when sudden destruction shall come upon them. "What hast thou to do with peace?" might be demanded of all who are in rebellion against the Lord's Anointed; and yet how many, alas! are settled down into a false peace, a peace that must be *disturbed*: disturbed now, by the barbed arrows of conviction, which will cause them to flee to the Saviour; or disturbed in the day of the Lord's anger, when the fierce artillery of his wrath will overwhelm them. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

But that is a *time of peace* when a sense of God's pardoning mercy is realized, and the love of God is shed abroad in the heart. When the divine Spirit has recovered his hold upon its alienated affections, pacified its rebellious and tumultuous feelings, and subdued the potent enemies of the soul; a peace of mind which passeth all understanding is then enjoyed. This is secured to us by Him who is our peace. He represented us in the counsels of peace, engaged to fulfil the conditions of peace, ratified with his own blood the treaty of peace. Believers, therefore, have "peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom they have received the atonement."

That will be a *glorious time of peace* when the last enemy shall be destroyed; when every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God shall be cast down; and every thought shall be brought into obedience to Christ. When he shall have put down all rule, and authority, and power, and shall reign in the hearts of a willing people.

"No strife shall vex Messiah's reign."

Then shall the righteous flourish, and "abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth." God's saved Church, walking in the light of the Lord, shall cease from all conflict, and God shall extend peace to her as a river, and glory as a flowing stream.

Ivy Cottage, Hampstead, April 11th, 1856.

THE MAIDEN OF MOAB; OR, TRUE AND FALSE RELIGION.

Intended for the Young.

BY THE REV. W. P. BALFERN, OF BOW.

I. THE JOURNEY.

"And they lifted up their voice and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her."—Ruth i. 14.

THE book of Ruth is but a small link in the chain of Divine truth, while yet it is so important, that it cannot be dispensed with without dislocating the whole. Irrespective of its value in reference to the genealogy of Christ, it is a beautiful exposition or comment upon Divine providence; showing that the most trivial and apparently insignificant circumstances come beneath the supervision of the Most High, are under his especial direction, and are overruled to answer some intelligent end in the mystery of his will, and for the accomplishment of the purposes of his grace in the salvation of his chosen and beloved people.

One of the principal personages which it brings before us is that of Naomi, who is said to be the wife of a man of Bethlehem-Judah, with whom, and accompanied by her two sons, she left her native country during a time of famine, to sojourn awhile in the land of Moab. The history of Naomi is full of instruction to the people of God, and to those who are able to discern spiritual things; from it we may learn that true religion does not exempt its possessors from the ordinary vicissitudes, trials, and sorrows common to man; but that while such continue in the wilderness, they must expect to meet with wilderness difficulties, to be conversant with wilderness sorrows, and be familiar with wilderness foes. The fact of Israel's being the chosen people of God, did not exempt them from the horrors of famine, while yet at the same time idolatrous Moab had enough and to spare. And thus it frequently happens, the proud Moabites of this world have more than enough, while the Lord's people, Lazarus-like, would

fain, from want, eat of the crumbs which fall from their table. The truth is, the Lord is more concerned that his people should partake of the bread that cometh down from heaven, than of that which perisheth; and frequently withholdeth somewhat of the latter, to quicken their appetite for the former.

How far, however, Naomi was justified in leaving her native country, and turning her back upon the altars of her fathers, is doubtful. The Lord, no doubt, could have kept both herself and family alive in her own land, as he did thousands of her fellow-countrymen. The removal of her husband and two sons, she appears to have viewed in the light of a chastisement from the Lord; for in the 20th verse of the same chapter from which the above text is cited, on her return to her native land, she says, addressing her relatives or friends, "Call me not Naomi,* call me Mara,† for the Almighty hath dealt bitterly with me." If, indeed, she fled from the land of Israel from sinful mistrust of the Lord's providence, how bitterly must she have reflected upon her conduct, seeing, that the very affliction from which she sought to escape, by flying to idolatrous Moab, was the very affliction which overtook her there, in a strange land, and far from her friends and her home. Reason told her, perhaps, that because Moab was a land of plenty, therefore they *must* live; but reason made a sad mistake, and not the first time, for in the land of plenty they shall die.

The Lord's people sometimes covet a land of plenty, but how frequently has such a place been to them a house of bondage and toil; a grave-yard, where, for a time, they have buried their faith, and joy, and spiritual

* Pleasant.

† Bitter.

prosperity. Many a plant that has stood well the winter blasts of adversity, has withered, and all but come to nought, beneath the much desired sun of prosperity. How different are God's thoughts from our thoughts, and his ways from our ways! The saints of God often think such and such a situation very desirable as a place of safety; they succeed in arriving at it, at the expense of much labour and anxiety, but find, alas! that it is a place of destruction. They think again; O, what should I do if this or that should overtake me, or I be compelled to dwell there; but like as it was with Job, that which they fear *does* come upon them, and the position so dreaded, they are compelled to occupy; but so far from finding it what they thought it would be, a place where their comfort would fail, and their hope give up the ghost, it is the very place where they receive the sweetest pledge of Jehovah's love and care—a Patmos of glory below.

Thus they prove like Naomi, that both safety and happiness is of the Lord, and depend not upon locality, but him who "fillet all in all." It was not in the cave of Adulham, with his eyes up to the Lord, that David was in danger, although encompassed by foes; but when walking upon the roof of his palace, surrounded by all he could desire, and at ease in Zion. Naomi, her husband and sons, fled to Moab to save their lives, and they lost that which they thought to save. They appear to have forgotten that God could keep them alive in a land of famine: while if he had determined they should die, Moab, with all its plenty, could not keep them alive. Naomi went out full to a heathen land, and came home empty; all that she brought back from Moab, was a heart full of sorrow, and her hands empty; and that which happened to Naomi, has fallen to the lot of hundreds of God's people since. They fix their eye upon some favoured position, as they think, intent alone upon worldly aggrandizement, and the filling of their coffers; they forget to ask if the silver trumpet will greet their ears in the much desired locality

(that which should be the first consideration, is the last, or no consideration at all). O, it has so many advantages, and imagination so fills in the picture, that their present position cannot be endured; they turn their backs upon the house of God, and partly upon God, to seek the elysium of their hopes, but it does not answer their expectations—like the cities of the East, it looked best at a distance—and when they return empty handed, they say with Naomi, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara, for the Lord has dealt bitterly with me;" whereas they have dealt bitterly with themselves. Or, if they succeed in their undertaking, they get a full purse, but a miserably empty soul; so that their language is in substance the same. Abraham, in his day, during a time of famine, went down to Egypt for help, and while there, he stained his garments with a lie; and where is it that the Lord's people generally fall and wound themselves, and dishonour the Lord? Not while they continue in the land of Canaan, resting in the Lord by precious faith; but when they go down to Egypt for help, or, like Naomi, attempt to lean upon the Moab of this world; then it is they pierce themselves through with many sorrows. It was not until Samson had joined affinity with the Philistines, and laid his head in a harlot's lap, that his locks were clipped, and he became weak as other men; nor is it until the Lord's people lay their heads upon the lap of this world that they shew their weakness, and wound their own souls.

Naomi was now, however, broken-hearted, and empty-handed; and now, like the prodigal of old, she thought upon her father's house. "In the time of adversity, consider," says the wise man. "I thought upon my ways, and turned my feet to thy statutes," said David. Happy for us when our thoughts turn our feet the right way. Naomi's fears turned them wrong, but the rod of correction brings them right again, coupled with a good report of the land. The fear of bereavement drove her into the land of Moab, while the taint itself, when

brought upon her, is the very means of driving her back to her best friend. Truly, we are liable to put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter; and mistake friends for foes, and foes for friends. But to come to the text we have cited as a motto for a few observations. On Naomi's arrival at the land of Moab, her two sons married two Moabitish girls, named Ruth and Orpah. Here we see that one bad step leads to another; sins are generally linked together; dwelling in Moab, leads to affinity with Moab. There is first a going into the world, and then connection with it follows; and he who would be kept from the latter must avoid the former. After the death of her two sons, these two girls, it seems, continued with her; and the expression in their presence, of her determination to return to her native land, led to the manifestation of feeling recorded as above, as no doubt the characters of Ruth and Orpah may be viewed as types of true and false religion. To a certain extent there was a mutual agreement, in the manifestation of affection and profession they were one; and, judging from appearances, an observer would have thought that the affection of Orpah was the deeper of the two, while yet the sequel proves the contrary. Orpah could lift up her voice and weep; and how many are there in the professing church of God, who can lift up their voices and weep with the Ruths of God's people, while yet their after conduct proves their hearts were never vitally affected by divine grace. Natural conviction, or dread of death and judgment, often wrings many a tear from the eyes of those whose hearts are still at enmity with God, and destitute of love to Christ, his people, and his ways. How many, again, beneath the touching and pathetic appeals, and flowery sentimentalism of an eloquent preacher will weep—they scarce know why—self-pity, it may be, is moved—the passion excited, and under the influence of such feelings, they are led to think themselves the subjects of genuine repentance; and, by their

friends, are prevailed upon to identify themselves with the professed people of God, while yet they have never really been convinced of their sins, or truly humbled beneath the hand of God. Yea, more, as in the case of Orpah, who not only wept, but kissed her mother-in-law; so, many as above described, not only take upon themselves a profession of religion, but in profession of attachment, appear for a time to surpass the true disciple. But as it was with Orpah and Ruth, there came a period, a crisis in their history, when they were brought to the test; so there is a period in the history of most who profess the name of Christ, when they are brought into some position of temptation or trial, by which their true character is manifested.

Naomi is about to return, which of the two will accompany her? She is a poor lone widow; her prospects are not very inviting; she has neither wealth, nor home, nor sons to tempt them. Now, Orpah, you have wept and kissed Naomi, there has been no lack in the manifestation of affection; but will you accompany her? Now, the idols of Moab, or the God of Israel—the former has her heart, and in Moab she will stay. And as it was with Orpah, so with many above described; profess the name of Christ they will, but when the period arrives in which self must be denied, the cross taken up, the world, sin and their idols be forsaken, then they fail; Satan baits his hook, and catches them again, and they go back to the Moab of this world again, to its idol temples, and places of ease and pleasure, from which, in heart, they were never separated. Thus they prove themselves to belong to those nominal branches in Christ the vine, which, never being vitally united to him by divine grace, the hand of the heavenly husbandman takes away; or, by leaving them awhile to some temptation, or bringing them in contact with those vanities, from which they, in reality, were never parted, they remove themselves. Many will talk about truth, who will not walk in it; many kiss Christ with the

lip of profession, who crucify him in their lives.

But of Ruth, it is said not only that she wept, but it is also added, "But Ruth *clave* unto her;" and what an emphatic "but" is this; what a clear line of demarcation it draws between the two characters, shewing the emptiness of one, and the reality of the other. "*But Ruth clave unto her.*" Now this was practical; real love is ever practical in its manifestations. We read not of Ruth's kissing Naomi, out of that which is much better, she *clave* unto her. The seat of Ruth's love was her heart, and not her lip; she said but little, but her actions spoke louder than her words; she had no kiss, but a hand which *clave*, and, if necessary would *work*. She loved Naomi more than her carnal kinsfolk; saw more in the God of Israel than the idols of Moab; she preferred Naomi with her poverty, to Moab with its wealth and comforts. Her love was deep, ardent, sincere, and disinterested, yea, invincible. "Intreat me not to leave thee," she says, "or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

And as with Ruth, so with the true convert: they do not say much, perhaps, their profession is not *gaudy*; but it has a *root*; their actions speak for them; they talk with their feet, as well as their tongues. The grace of God makes them honest hearted, disinterested, and sincere. Their following Christ is not the effect of man's oratory acting upon their passions, but divine life communicated; and like as Ruth *clave* to Naomi, so they, from sheer necessity of soul, are led to cleave to him; they are

deeply convinced of their lost, guilty, and ruined condition as sinners; and being deeply convinced of their necessity, most earnestly do they follow after and cleave to Christ, who alone can meet them; the life of which they have been made the happy recipients, has its wants, and those wants experimentally felt, like so many strong cords bind their hearts to a crucified Saviour, and being so bound to him, they receive from time to time that grace which enables them to hold on their way; their hearts are well bruised and broken by sin, felt and deplored, while yet perceiving the beauty and glory of Christ, his compassion and grace, they are drawn forth into ardent and constant pursuit of him, and short of him they cannot rest satisfied.

Their movements are thus sincere and lasting, because the movements of life in the pursuit of its own object. It is not so much a party to which they would belong, as to Christ; they do not seek a sumptuous edifice, great orator, or fashionable congregation; but the real benefit and salvation of their souls; their experience is not a systematic, or party experience, but personal and real; their feelings bind their hearts to Christ and his people, while love moves them to cleave to him, and follow him at all costs, let the sacrifice be what it may. Thus the young convert, pressed by necessity, yet drawn by love, Ruth like, cleaves to Jesus, receives that grace from him which separates him from sin and self; the Moab of this world, with its idols and pleasures, and the grace which so separates him, enables him to persevere in spite of all the craft of hell, the opposition of sin, the seductions of the world, and thus he is made manifest as a true disciple according to the words of Christ, "Then shall ye be (manifestly) my disciples, if ye continue in my word."

THE GARDEN INCLOSED.

BY THE REV. J. HAMILTON, D.D.

"A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse,
A paradise of pomegranates are thy productions.
Of delicious fruits, cypress, and spikenard,
Spikenard, and saffron, calamus, and cinnamon,
With all trees of frankincense,
Myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices :"

Sol's. Song iv. 12.

CHRIST has a garden. There are flowers to be found in the wilderness ; but when in the hedge-row or on the mountain-side you find a plant of rare beauty, it is your instant impulse to fetch it home. You want to have it near at hand, where you can see it every day ; and so you transplant it. You take it to your garden, and in the shady nook or on the open parterre, you give it a new home,—the place where it is likely to thrive and blossom best.

And so, there have occasionally existed solitary saints. Like Joseph in Egypt, like Lot in Sodom, there have from time to time flourished in unlikely places trees of righteousness :—such as Thomas à Kempis inditing his "Imitation of Christ" in the midst of course and lazy friars,—or that monk of Mount Ararat whom Henry Martyn found walking with God amidst the superstition and grossness of an Armenian convent. And just as the florist is filled with rapture when in some unexpected region he alights on a specimen superb in its glory, and for the moment deems it quite matchless,—so, when in the dry places of Church History or in the dreary expanse of secular society, we chance to encounter a fervent believer, in the gladness of surprise and in the contrast with all around we feel as if his beauty were peerless, and as if no culture could compete with the freshness and fulness of his free and Heaven-fostered development.

But it is the will of Christ that his people should dwell together ; and for this purpose he has provided that sacred inclosure, the Christian Church. Fenced round, so as to exclude the boar of the forest and the mischievous spoiler,—its generous soil is kept clear of weeds, and in graceful groups and

mutually-sustaining adjustments God plants his people there in families. And if even among thorns the lily was fair,—if even on the open heath the thyme and the myrtle shed exquisite odour,—that lily is lovelier now as it stands amongst gentle companions who do not tarnish or tear it, and the fragrance of these gentle refugees is richer as it comes and goes amidst the blended joy of all the incense-breathing summer.

This garden is fenced. It is a "garden inclosed." Around it is the wall of fire, the Divine protection ; and the more visible wall of human demarcation and ecclesiastical discipline. In every age God has protected and preserved his people ; and even in the days of fiercest persecution—when it looked as if the hedge were entirely broken down and the wild beast might devour it at his pleasure,—even then in some Roman catacomb or Cælosyrian valley or Waldensian fastness, God hid his remnant and kept up a seed to serve him. And for the better conservation of true religion, He has appointed a government in his Church. He has intrusted it to those whose business is to tend it and keep it ; and whilst they do their best to root out immorality and error, they are also to do their utmost to foster weak faith and restore infirmity,—binding up the bruised reed, restraining the extravagant off-shoot, and restoring to its right place the wayward shoot which quits the supporting espalier.

In this garden there is great variety. There are plants famous for their beauty, and others for their medicinal virtues ; some that are prized for their delightful perfume, and others for their "pleasant fruits." Not only is it an orchard of pomegranates, with its

avenues of cypress, but there are spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, trees of frankincense, and all the chief spices. It is man that creates monotony. It is man that fills a garden with a repetition of the self-same vegetation. It is man that clothes entire communities in grey, or drab, or russet, and who tries to reach perfection by making each the facsimile of his fellow. But, like the great Creator, the new-creating Spirit loves variety; and in the Church of Christ there is room for characters as diverse as the rustic Amos and the imperial Solomon, as Moses so meek and much-enduring, and Paul so self-asserting and so spirited, as John so ethereal and contemplative, and James so homely and so practical. And just as we see in a garden a whole plot devoted to a favourite flower, a border where none but carnations or verbenas bloom, so within the great inclosure of Christ's own Church, are many distinct communities,—“churches,” as we call them, but in reality only so many clumps or denominations within the one great Church; and to the eye which is not entirely wedded to a particular tint or pattern, there is a beauty in the groups which bring richly together distinctive attributes;—in Presbyterian order and Wesleyan fervour, in Congregational liberty and Anglican obedience, in Moravian devotedness and Quaker contentment, in the godliness which makes the Lutheran so happy and endearing in the life that now is, and which fixes the Calvinist so sublimely on the life that is to come. And as with communities, so with individual members; there is boundless and beautiful variety. There are flowers so fair that whilst you eye them, you kindle up and become for the moment a brighter, sunnier man; and between the leaves of your bible or memorandum-book you treasure up one blossom of the heath, or the heart's-ease to recall that vision of delight. And there are flowers so fragrant that though you care not to take their picture,—like the myrrh or the spikenard they have no peculiar grace nor any brilliancy of bloom,—you love the spot they haunt,

and as you pass there comes over your spirit a visitation soft and soothing, which you scarcely notice for the moment, but which makes you bless their memory. And so there are lovely characters,—Christians whom it does you good to look upon; whose beauty of holiness beautifies the beholder, so that in their presence he is actually a more generous or unworldly man; and quotable Christians,—men whose good deeds or edifying words you can chronicle, so that long after they are gone you can still open the biographic record and recall in unfaded freshness the trait of goodness or the word in season. And there are fragrant characters. You can scarcely define their excellence; you cannot quote their brilliant sayings, and their deeds do not make anecdotes: and yet such a sweet savour of Christ surrounds them, and with such an atmosphere of love and goodness do they fill their daily sphere, that the nooks to which memory loves to fly back and nestle are the bowers which they gladdened, and the homes which they blessed by the perpetual June of their presence. But besides the beautiful and the fragrant,—the characters which shed over the Church's face its loveliness and which fills its precincts with a heavenly charm, there are the fruitful,—the pomegranates and pleasant fruits,—the men to whose substantial services, to whose thoughtful kindnesses, and generous deeds, and systematic labours, the world is so much indebted:—Gaius mine host, Tryphena and Tryphosa who labour in the Lord,—the evangelists who go everywhere preaching the word,—the teachers who spend and are spent in our week-day and Sunday schools, the Dorcas who makes garments for the poor,—the landed proprietor or the private citizen, who visits from house to house, and who endeavours to elevate in intelligence and moral worth the poor and depressed around him. And although less popular, by no means unimportant, are the bitter herbs, the antidotes and tonics, which also find a place: for there is need for myrrh and aloes as well as roses and lilies. We may not like the sharp

reprover, the stern and uncompromising reformer, so well as the mild and bright-beaming philanthropist; and yet that reprover may be the truest benefactor; and there would be little scope for the philanthropist, if he had not as his pioneer the energetic reformer. It is sad ignorance of the requirements of human nature to disparage men who fulfilled so great a

function as Latimer and Knox, as Cartwright and Melville, as Clarkson and the Haldanes:—men who in their loyalty to Truth forfeited much present popularity, and who kept up the Church's tone by the comforts they renounced and the sacrifices they endured in striving against error and sin.

THE LILY AND ITS LESSONS.

BY MR. RAYMOND BEAZLY.

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow."—MATT. vi. 28.

So the Lord calls us to learn his character, not only from his *word*, but also from his *works*. Of all the flowers that bloom upon the face of the wide earth, we shall find none more fair than the lily. And this fair and majestic flower we are called to "consider."

In the East it is found to grow in the wilderness, or the "field." No human hand rears or tends it; no sheltering roof throws its protection or shade around its beauteous head; it springs spontaneously from the soil in the open uncultivated country. During the bleak winter-time it sleeps beneath the surface of the ground, until revived by the genial breath of summer; and then up it rises from its dark cold bed, looks the sun in the face, and drinks in the froshening dew; the rains moisten its roots, the winds fan it into vigour, the finger of God traces its delicate tints, and its fragrance is borne on the wandering breeze. True, it may frequently "blush unseen, and waste its sweetness on the desert air;" it may, and often does, grow "among thorns;" it may be trampled in the dust by the foot of the wild beast; or "*to-day*," be the ornament and "*glory*" of the landscape, and "*to-morrow*," be cut down; wither, be "cast into the oven" and consumed by the flame; yet are we commanded by the great Teacher to "consider it," and if we heedfully do so, it may teach us precious and profitable lessons.

And one of the most prime and prominent of all is—*The care of God*

over his people. They, like the lily, are found in the "field," or the wilderness, surrounded by thorns and briars, and exposed to the ravages of the roaring lion, who goeth about seeking whom he may devour.

"Their lives thro' various scenes are drawn
And vexed with trifling care."

Like Martha they are "careful and troubled about many things;" entangled, torn, and lacerated by the thorns of the wilderness, which Christ interprets as "cares of this life." "What shall we eat, what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" It is a rough world this in which we live; rugged indeed is the road which many have to travel; and looking at the dangers which beset, and the foes set in battle-array, one's heart is at times ready to faint. How shall I escape? How shall I overcome? I shall one day fall by the hand of the enemy! How many an honest and honourable mind is in frequent or almost perpetual fear and dread with respect to meeting lawful demands. How many ministers, worthy, laborious, and devoted men, are straightened and crippled in their circumstances, and find it next to impossible, certainly exceedingly difficult, to provide things honest in the sight of all men? They feel, frequently, while enforcing lessons upon their hearers upon the necessity of having "faith in God," that none need these lessons more deeply than themselves!

Well, if it beo with us or with others, let us go to the "lily of the field," and

"consider" that in the solitudes of the wilderness it is the object of Almighty and sleepless care. The Lord watches over and protects it; and if he cares for and clothes the "grass," will he not *much more* care for and clothe his children? Is a child forgotten because it is *exposed*? I trow not. Look at that family group. It is a dreary winter's night. The wind roars in the chimney and among the leafless trees. The rain beats against the window-panes. The torrents dash down the hill sides. The poor traveller is drenched to the skin with the pelting storm: and by the fire-side the mother grasps with a double energy the infant in her arms; but where are her thoughts? She has a boy, *one* boy, at sea; and swifter than the *blast* her imagination travels to her absent child: so fully does *he* absorb her thoughts, that she well-nigh forgets all besides. So with our Father who is in heaven. Many of his children are *at home*; they have escaped the "windy storm and tempest;" they have got safely through the "great tribulation." But he has others still *exposed*, and does he forget them? Will he fail them or forsake them? Never! Let us not distress ourselves or dishonour him by suspicions and misgivings so unworthy. When were the righteous forsaken? the helpless abandoned? or the soul that hoped in God's mercy beaten off? A thousand witnesses are ready with their testimony to prove the constancy of the Divine care, and the immutability of the Divine faithfulness: and the "lily of the field" shall be our monitor, to rebuke our fears and encourage our faith.

But may not the lily afford a *type* as well as convey a *lesson*? Certain it is that the lily is "arrayed" by the same hand that garnished the heavens. God clothed it with a glory more magnificent than that of Solomon. And are not the children of God arrayed by the same hand? and arrayed in garments woven in heaven's own loom? Truly he who "clothes the lily" clothes his saints; the former with a corruptible, the latter with an incorruptible attire; the former with a robe of beauteous hues, the latter with a robe of righteousness. I have sometimes watched a number of soldiers on parade, and I have observed the officers go up to the men and closely examine their clothing and accoutrements, and if they have not found them trim and soldierly, a severe rebuke has been given to the indolent offender. No blemish shall be detected in *this* robe, no stain, no spot. Time shall never impair it: moth and rust shall never corrupt it: eternity shall but serve to exhibit its perfection and its glory.

Truly as the "world's grey fathers" valued the "bow in the cloud" both for its beauty and use, even so we of this dispensation will regard the lily; while sensible of its loveliness, we will remember the lessons it teaches; and when tempted to yield to fears and mistrust, we will think of the ceaseless care of our Heavenly Father; who, while he feeds the ravens, and nurtures the flowers, will never, never, never, forsake or forget his own children.

"Fear him, ye saints, and you will then
Have nothing else to fear;
Make you his service your delight,
Your wants shall be his care."

April 3, 1855.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

ALL'S WELL.

By Mr. J. BUTTFIELD, Author of "The Three-fold Cord."

"We know all things work together for good to them who love God," &c.—Rom. viii. 28.

We know—'tis worth a world to know
The interesting truth, "all things"
In the appointed channel flow
(Beyond our last imaginings)
To work the everlasting weal;
Of those who have the heavenly seal!

All things—the painful scenes of life,
As well as all its pleasant pages,
And though the world in bitter strife
(In league with hell) with us engages,
Beneath Jehovah's wise controul
Evolvo the welfare of the soul.

Together work—each circumstance
In the long chain, a link is made,
The little with the great events,
As the All-wise hath purposed;
And faith in the most trying hour
Finds comfort in Almighty power!

For good—for present, future good,
For spiritual, eternal too,
The moral chaos dark and crude,
The purpose of his will shall shew;
Each discord, modulated by
His touch, shall melt in harmony.

Winchester, April 9, 1856.

To them who love God, this the key
That will unlock the precious store,
What now we know not soon to see,
And seeing, even to adore;
For them, and for their good, evolve
Earth's problems for dear heaven to solve.

The called of his purpose, here
The title to the hope we have,
Possessing the assurance clear
We may all earth and hell outbrave,
And to Him all the glory give
Long as Himself shall love and live!

UNIVERSAL RECOGNITION.

PROV. III. 6.

When Spring, with buds and blossoms clad,
Resumes her smiling face,
And matchless wisdom, love, and might,
In every thing you trace,

Acknowledge God.

When Summer comes, 'mid azure skies,
And flowers of varied hue,
As grateful thoughts and feelings rise,
While you the landscape view,

Acknowledge God.

When Autumn, with a solemn gait,
Comes with abundance crown'd,
And ripen'd crops of standing corn
Spread wide the country round,

Acknowledge God.

When Winter 'compass'd with deep gloom,
Puts on her robe of snow,
And Desolation reigns supreme
O'er all the scene below,

Acknowledge God.

When'er Prosperity's bright sun
Sheds gladness on your way,
And blessings, manifold as rich,
Are shar'd from day to day,

Acknowledge God.

Isington, April 2.

When cheerless, keen Adversity
Your blooming hopes destroy,
Friends faithless prove, and foes combine,
To worry and annoy,

Acknowledge God.

Come pain or pleasure, joy or grief,
Whatever be your lot,
'Mid all life's strange vicissitudes
If ask'd, Who changeth not?

Acknowledge God.

When Persecution, like a flood,
Seems rushing to devour,
And sad forebodings gather fast
With still increasing power,

Acknowledge God.

When worldlings scoff and ridicule
Religion's sacred name,
And seek by such assaults to raise
The blush of guilty shame,

Acknowledge God.

So live, and when the envoy, Death,
Shall bid you hence remove,
Then will you, as a ceaseless friend,
Be ever with me,

Acknowledge God.

B. C.

LITERARY NOTICES.

Who and What is the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon?
A Voice from one of the Colleges.
By a Graduate of the London University.
London: J. Paul.

This is a spirited affair, in the form of a discussion between two Collegians. The design of the writer is to shew what a certain class of collegemen think of Mr. S. We need not say that we fully sympathize with the author in his generous and powerful advocacy of one of the most useful ministers of the present age. The price of the pamphlet is only twopenny; we have no doubt therefore that most of our readers will procure it for themselves.

The Controversy on important Theological Questions, between the "Eclectic Review," and the Rev. Messrs. Henry Allon, Thomas Binney, Newman Hall, B.A., and twelve other ministers on the one side; and on the other, Mr. James Grant, Editor of the "Morning Advertiser," (Reprinted with additions, from the "Morning Advertiser.") London: W. H. Colliingridge, City Press, 1, Long Lane.

We honour the piety and courage of Mr. Grant, the Editor of the "Morning Advertiser," in daring to accept battle on such unequal terms, and with men of no ordinary might or standing in the Christian ministry. The following brief statement may help our readers to understand the character of this unhappy controversy. A volume of poetry entitled: "The Rivulet or Hymns for the Heart and Voice," by the Rev. J. T. Lynch, has recently been published. These "hymns" were very highly commended in a recent number of the "Eclectic Review," and subsequently in the "Patriot," and the "Nonconformist." The editor of the "Morning Advertiser," who has in his day done much service to the cause of evangelical truth, also reviewed it, and while referring most respectfully to Mr. Lynch and his poetry, pronounced these "Hymns" to be seriously defective with regard to the essentials of vital Christianity; that while in them there was no distinct recognition of the divinity of Christ, or of the mediatorial work and vicarious sacrifice of the Saviour, or of the personality, office, and work of the Holy Ghost; at the

same time there was an implied denial of the doctrine of innate and total depravity. In proof of this latter charge the following stanzas from one of the hymns in question, were quoted by Mr. Grant—

"Our heart is like a little pool,
Left by the ebbing sea;
Of crystal waters still and cool,
When we rest musically.

"And see what verdure exquisite.

Within it hidden grows;

We never should have had the sight,
But for this brief repose."

"Only imagine," says the editor of the "Morning Advertiser," "this and others such kind of hymns being sung in a place of public worship, or being quoted to or by a person in the near prospect of the world to come." "There is poetry," says Mr. Grant; in the 63rd Hymn, but we look in vain for the least atom of practical religion in it;" adding, "if the materials of the Rev. gentleman's sermon be substantially similar to those of his "Hymns," we should be much surprised were not the instances very rare indeed, of persons crying out in intense agony of soul, under his ministrations, 'What must I do to be saved.'"

In a subsequent notice of the work, the same writer expressed his regret that the "Eclectic Review" should have endorsed this "modified deism" of Mr. Lynch, expressing a hope that the objectionable article had crept into the pages of that Journal unawares. To these animadversions the editor of the "Eclectic" replied, not ingenuously enough to escape further remonstrances from his sturdy opponent, at which the "Eclectic" took great umbrage, and accused Mr. Grant of being guilty of "sordidness and calumny," and of being influenced by "extreme personal prejudice." For ourselves, we have no hesitation in saying, that from all we know of the editor of the "Morning Advertiser," we can testify that he is too much of a Christian and a gentleman to be influenced by mean and unworthy motives. So far from this, Mr. Grant has not been in the least degree backward to acknowledge the literary taste which the volume displayed, and spoke of Mr. Lynch as being both amiable, and highly intellectual. It was his *Theology* only that was condemned.

In the March number of the "Eclectic," the strife was renewed with more than ten-fold vigour. On this occasion, some fifteen of the leading Metropolitan ministers, headed by the Rev. Messrs. Allon, Binney, and Newman Hall, came to the help of the editor of the "Eclectic," and their protégé, the Rev. T. J. Lynch. The literary and devotional merits of these hymns, as well as the orthodoxy of their author, in the form of a protest signed by all the fifteen, they endorsed and commended. The editor of the "Morning Advertiser," nothing daunted by the *status* or talents of his Reverend assailants, meets the combined forces—an imposing phalanx—with a simple interrogatory:—"Can Mr. Newman Hall, Mr. Binney, Mr. Martin, or either of the remainder of the fifteen Reverend protestors reconcile it to his views of right, to give out the 'hymn' we have just quoted in his chapel?" No one of the number will venture to return an

affirmative answer to the question." If this be so, then we ask wherefore do these Rev. gentlemen appear in the field at all? It had been far better for themselves, and for the "Eclectic Review," had they heeded the counsel of the wise man, "Leave off contention before it be meddled with," and had left the criticism and remonstrances of Mr. Grant to their own merits, than for them to have interiered at all in the affair.

We do most deeply deplore the position these fifteen Reverend gentlemen have voluntarily and needlessly taken in this business, inasmuch as we greatly fear it betokens on their part, an evident leaning towards a transcendental theology,—the blighting influences of which, have proved most fatal to many once flourishing churches.

In a series of powerfully written articles, which have appeared in the "Banner," headed, "The Theology of Non-conformity," Dr. Campbell has given the results of his searching analysis of Mr. Lynch's volume, which he pronounces to be as destitute of poetic excellence, as it is of the elementary principles of Christian doctrine; containing hymns which any infidel might compose or use. We thank Mr. Grant for the outspoken truths contained in this pamphlet. Although but a layman, he has in its pages contended nobly and earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; "An effort," to adopt his own words, "which may the Almighty be pleased to crown with eminent success."

"Come ye Children." A Sermon addressed to Sunday school teachers, by the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, of New Park Street Chapel, South-wark. pp. 24. London: Alabaster & Passmore; and J. Paul.

This sermon was preached on behalf of the Western Kent Sunday School Union, and is published at the special request of the superintendents and teachers of the several schools in the Union. We cannot more effectually promote the sale of this exquisitely simple, and very telling discourse, than by furnishing our readers with a brief analysis of it. We would urgently recommend every Sunday school committee throughout the kingdom, to present a copy of the sermon to the teachers in their respective schools. It is printed in a bold type, and neatly got up, at only two-pence. After some prolatory remarks, Mr. Spurgeon proceeds to the illustration of the text in the following order.

"I. First, I shall give you ONE DOCTRINE. 'Come ye children.' The doctrine is, that children are capable of being taught the fear of the Lord. I do hold that there is no doctrine of the word of God which a child, if he be capable of salvation, is not capable of receiving. I would have children taught all the great doctrines of truth without a solitary exception, that they may in their after days hold fast by them. I can bear witness that children can understand the Scriptures, for I am sure that when but a child I have discussed many a knotty point of controversial theology, having heard both sides of the question freely stated among my father's circle of friends. If you wish to know whether children can be taught, I point you to many in our churches, and in pious families; not prodigies, but such as we fre-

quently see; Timothies and Samuels, and little girls too, who have early come to know a Saviour's love. As soon as a child is capable of being damned it is capable of being saved. As soon as a child can sin, that child can, if God's grace assist it, believe and receive the word of God. As soon as children can learn evil, be assured that they are competent, under the teaching of the Holy Ghost, to learn good. Never go to your class with the thought that the children cannot comprehend you; for if you do not make them understand, it is because you do not understand yourselves.

"II. Now, secondly, I will give you two ENCOURAGEMENTS, both of which you will find in the text.

"The first encouragement is that of *pious example*. David said, 'Hearken unto me.' You will not object to follow the example of one who was first eminently holy, and then eminently great. Shall the shepherd boy, the giant slayer, the Psalmsist of Israel, and the monarch, tread in footsteps which you are too proud to follow? If you want, however, a higher example, even than that of David, hear the Son of David, while from his lips the sweet words flow, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'

"The second encouragement I will give is the encouragement of *great success*. David said, not 'perhaps I will teach you the fear of the Lord,' but 'I will teach you.' Mr. S. concludes this head of the discourse with the following eloquent passage on the success of Sabba'h school instruction." "Up yonder where the starry hosts perpetually sing his high praise—up where the white-robed throng continually cast their crowns before his feet—we may behold the success of Sabbath schools. There, too, where infant millions assemble Sabbath after Sabbath, to sing, 'Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,' we see with joy the success of Sabbath schools. And up here, in almost every pulpit of our land, and there in the pews where the deacons sit, and godly members join in worship—there is the success of Sabbath schools. And far away across yonder broad ocean in the islets of the south, in lands where those dwell who bow before blocks of wood and stone, there are missionaries saved by Sabbath schools, whose thousands redeemed by their labours, contribute to swell the mighty stream of the tremendous, unexampled, incalculable, I had almost said infinite success of Sabbath school instruction."

Our limits for this month forbid further extracts from this excellent sermon.

MONTHLY SUMMARY.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL'S education scheme has been strangled at its birth. The affair is likely to prove fatal to the political existence of its noble parent. His Lordship has been strongly advised to retire from his present quarters, where his services in future can only be of a less important character than comports with his patrician pride and senatorial prestige, and take refuge in the Upper House, where he can die with becoming dignity. Verily, the little lord has proved himself a great sham.

As far as education is concerned, the compulsory system has received its death blow. The principle of voluntarism in teaching religion has taken a wide grasp and a firm hold upon our so-called representatives—

This little seed from heaven,
Shall soon become a tree,
This ever blessed leaven
Diffused abroad must be.
Till God the Son shall come again
It must go on, Amen, Amen.

DENOMINATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.

Coventry.—The Rev. W. T. Rosevear has resigned the pastorate of the Baptist Church in this town.

Edinburgh, Waterloo Rooms.—Mr. Thos. J. Wilson, late of the Baptist Theological Institution, Scotland, has accepted the unanimous invitation to the pastorate.

Chenies, Bucks.—The Rev. T. C. Carter, after upwards of seven years' labour, resigns the pastorate. Mr. Carter is anxious to see the church supplied with a pastor before he leaves, and to open a correspondence on the subject.

New Busford, Notts.—The Rev. C. Forth, from Doncaster, commences his pastoral labours on the first Sabbath in May.

Deesbury, Yorks.—The Rev. J. Marriot, from Spratton, Northamptonshire.

Luton, Wellington Sts.—The Rev. J. S. Stanion, of Stepney College, has accepted the invitation to the pastorate.

Briercliffe, near Burnley.—Mr. W. F. Smith, of Camberwell, has entered upon his pastoral engagements in this place.

Upper Norwood.—The Rev. Dr. Wills will resign the pastorate at Westow Hill, the second week in May, and has accepted the pastorate of a new Baptist cause forming in that neighbourhood.

Kimbolton, Hunts.—The Rev. Edward Hull, B.A., late of Stepney, commenced his pastoral labours, April 6th.

NEW CHAPELS.

Oakham.—The additional school room re-

cently erected for the accommodation of the children attending the Sabbath School connected with the Baptist chapel in this town, was, on Friday, March 21, opened by a numerously attended tea meeting; after which addresses were delivered by the Rev. J. Jenkinson (chairman), the Rev. T. Blandford (Independent), Messrs. J. Barlow (superintendent of the school), E. Cave, J. Cave, T. Islip, and G. Royce. In the intervals of the speeches several pieces of sacred music were sung by an effective choir. The donations to the building fund have been so liberal as to leave only about ten pounds of the cost unpaid.

Welshpool.—In consequence of a variety of untoward circumstances the Baptist interest in this town had well nigh become extinct. The chapel had been closed for years, and the congregation dispersed. However, soon after the settlement of the Rev. D. Evans (formerly of York Place, Swansea), in Newtown, measures were taken for the re-opening of the chapel, &c. At first there appeared formidable difficulties in the way, but by zeal and perseverance they have been completely surmounted. On Sunday, the 9th of March, the chapel was re-opened, when sermons were preached to crowded congregations in the morning, afternoon, and evening, by the Rev. D. Evans, Newtown (who, in conjunction with G. Thorne, Esq., one of Her Majesty's General Collectors of the Inland Revenue, recently settled at Welshpool), have mainly incurred the responsibility involved in the undertaking. The day proved favourable, the services interesting, and the collections liberal. There were scores that could gain no admission in consequence of the crowded state of the chapel. The congregation has already become equal in number to any dissenting congregation in the town.

Great Shelford, March 19.—The foundation stone of a new Baptist chapel in this village was laid by R. Foster, Esq. The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon delivered an address at four o'clock. About 500 persons sat down to tea. In the evening the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon preached to about 1000 persons.

Scarboro', March 28th.—The Baptist chapel was re-opened after having been closed nine weeks for alterations, by a special prayer meeting. On the following Sabbath, sermons were preached by the Revs. Dr. Acworth and S. G. Green, B.A., of Horton college; and on Monday evening, a social tea meeting was held. Above £200 have been collected towards liquidating the expenses incurred.

London, Kingsgate Street, Holborn.—This beautiful structure, erected on the site of Eagle Street Chapel, was opened for divine worship April 17th, on which occasion sermons were preached by the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel, A.M., and the Rev. S. Martin, of Westminster. The Revs. D. Martin, of Whitfield chapel, F. Wills, the minister of the place, — Lillycroft, Windsor, and others, conducted the devotional services. After dinner, which was provided in the school room adjoining, a public meeting was held in the chapel, presided over by W. H. Watson, Esq. Addresses

were delivered by the Revs. W. Brock, C. Stovel, R. Overbury, the former pastor of the Church, F. Wills, and Mr. Cartwright. The Rev. Mr. Fishbourne concluded by prayer.

RECOGNITION SERVICES.

Bourton on the Water, April 15th.—Of the Rev. Thos Brooks. After reading and prayer by the Rev. W. Cherry, of Milton, Oxon., two addresses were delivered by the Revs. J. M. Stephens, of Cirencester, and J. Wassall, of Bloxley. In the afternoon, after prayer by the Rev. J. Aeock, of Stowe-on-the-Wold, the Rev. Isaac New, of Birmingham, delivered an impressive discourse on the Duties of Pastor and People.

South Molton, Devon, March 21st.—Of the Rev. J. B. Little (of Bristol College, and formerly of Fownhope, Herefordshire). Thomas Nicholson, Esq. of Lydney, presided on the occasion. After prayer by the Rev. S. Newman, of Barnstaple, and an interesting introductory address from the Chairman, Mr. Little stated the circumstances which led to his acceptance of the call to South Molton, and his intentions with regard to his future ministry. Pastor and people were commended to God in prayer by the Rev. R. May, of Barnstaple. Suitable addresses were delivered by the Rev. W. Cutcliff, of Brayford, Rev. S. Newman, the Rev. R. May, Mr. Yates, of Barnstaple, and Mr. Nicholson; Mr. Little concluded in prayer. The chapel was well filled, and all present were encouraged to hope for better days for South Molton. The tea meeting was numerously attended; the largest that had been seen in the place. The chapel is still encumbered with a debt which it is proposed to clear off in the course of the next twelve months.

Long Preston, Yorkshire, March 21.—Of the Rev. Aaron Spencer, as pastor of the Baptist Church. The introductory discourses by the Rev. H. Dowson, of Bradford. The usual questions were proposed by the Rev. J. Shuttleworth, of Hellifield, and the recognition prayer was offered by the Rev. N. Walton, of Cowling hill. In the evening the Rev. T. Dawson addressed the pastor, and the Rev. T. Bennett, of Barnoldswick, preached to the Church and people.

Ragland, Monmouthshire, March 24.—A tea meeting was held in the Baptist chapel to give a cordial welcome to the Rev. J. Ewence. About 200 persons were present. After tea, a public meeting was held, presided over by the pastor. Addresses were delivered by the Revs. S. Packer, of Monmouth, T. Mudge, Fownhope, J. Lewis, Usk, A. W. Heritage, Tenbury, and J. Jones, of Layhill.

Broomgrove, March 24th.—A similar meeting was held to welcome the Rev. W. Green, late of Nottingham, as pastor of the Church. About 200 persons sat down to tea, after which a public meeting was held, presided over by Mr. T. Scroton. Addresses were delivered by the Chairman, Mr. Parry, Mr. Woodcock, Mr. Nokes, and Mr. Green.

Ebbo Vale, March 30th and 31st.—Of the Rev. E. Oliver, as pastor of the Baptist Church. At two o'clock the first day, the Rev. J. Emlyn Jones, M.A., of Nabo, intro-

daced the services, and the Revs. D. Evans, of Brynhyffryd, and D. Edwards, of Beaufort, preached. At ten o'clock the following morning, the services were introduced by the Rev. J. Davies, of Abercarn; the Rev. J. Rowe, of Pishah, gave a discourse on the nature of a Christian Church; the Rev. J. E. Jones preached on the Duties of the Pastor and his Church; and the Rev. D. Evans to the congregation. At two o'clock, after prayer by Mr. G. Webster, the Revs. J. Davies and J. Rowe preached. At six o'clock the Revs. D. Edwards and D. R. Jones of Rhymney preached.

PRESENTATION SERVICES.

Great Grimsby, Lincolnshire.—The Church and congregation worshipping in Upper Burgess Street Baptist Chapel, have testified their affection and regard for their pastor, the Rev. R. Hogg, by presenting him with a handsome present in money.

Old Meeting, Amersham, March 24th.—After one hundred persons had taken tea together, a meeting was held for the purpose of presenting the Rev. W. Jeffery, Baptist Minister of this town, with the following books:—Holy Bible, royal 8vo. morocco extra; Shakspeare's works, royal 8vo. calf extra; and Dr. Kitto's Biblical Encyclopedia, 2 vols., 8vo. cloth, which was acknowledged by Mr. Jeffery in an appropriate speech. Mr. Spratley and Mr. S. Rutter of London, also addressed the meeting.

Ashton under Lyne, March 21.—On Good Friday evening the members of the Mutual Improvement Society at the Baptist Chapel, Welbeck Street, presented their pastor, the Rev. W. K. Armstrong, B.A., with ten volumes of valuable books, in token of their esteem and gratitude for his labours among them.

Eynsford, Kent, April 6th.—The young people of the Church and congregation presented their pastor, the Rev. J. Whittemore, with a splendid copy of Scott's Commentary on the Bible, in six quarto volumes, embellished with eighty engravings, as a birthday remembrance.

Elgin, Scotland, April 2.—The Rev. S. R. Gray, on leaving for England, was presented with a purse of ten sovereigns as a token of grateful esteem.

Neatishead.—The Rev. W. Spurgeon having been compelled through ill health to resign the pastorate of the Baptist Church in this village, which he has sustained for upwards of 47 years, a valedictory service was held April 6th, when a purse containing £77 12s. 6d., and a very beautifully written memorial, in a handsome maple frame, were presented to him through Mrs. S., the venerable minister not being able to attend in person. The Rev. J. Vennimore, of Ingham, presided, and the Rev. T. Wheeler, of Norwich, in an elegant and affectionate address, presented the gifts to Mrs. S. The meeting was subsequently addressed by Messrs. Glendinning, of Norwich, Dawson, of Bluxton. Durrell and Helleston of Worsted, and Banham of Neati-head.

ANNIVERSARIES TO BE HOLDEN.

Harrow on the Hill.—The forty-fourth Anni-

versary will be held on Tuesday, May 20th, 1856, when the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon will preach in the afternoon and evening. Services to commence at three and six o'clock.

Eaton Bray, Beds, Wednesday, May 21st.—The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon will (p.v.) preach in the afternoon and evening. Tea will be provided.

Rushden, Northamptonshire, June 4th.—The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon will preach at two and six o'clock. Tea will be provided.

ASSOCIATION SERVICES.

The West Norfolk Association Meetings of Baptist Churches were held at Fakenham, on March 20th and 21st. The Rev. W. Symonds, of Downham, read a paper on the Advantages of Confering with Churches. The Rev. W. Wood, of Swaffham, gave an address on the Evidence of successful Prayer; and the Rev. J. T. Wigner, of Lynn, preached from Acts iv. 33. In the afternoon the Lord's Supper was administered, the Rev. T. Wheeler, of Norwich, presided. In the evening a public meeting was held, addressed by the Revs. S. B. Gooch, R. Pyno, J. Cragg, W. Symonds. This association comprises 12 Churches, 929 members. The number received by baptism during the year—55; deaths and exclusions—32.

BAPTISMS.

Bideford, April 20.—Six, by Mr. Arthur. Birmingham, Heneage Street, Feb. 3.—Seven by Mr. Taylor.

Brynmaur, Calvary, March 16.—One, a Sunday school teacher, by Mr. Roberts. Cardiff, Bothany, March 2.—One by Mr. Fuller.

Cheltenham, Cambray, March 23.—Eight by Mr. Smith.

Denesbury, Yorkshire, April 4.—Two by Mr. Marriot.

Dover, Salem, Feb. 24.—Eight by Mr. Pitt. Dunstable, Beds., West Street, April 3.—Two by the Rev. J. Lewis, of Houghton Regis, who officiated in the absence, through ill health of the pastor, Mr. Gould.

Eynsford, Kent, April 30.—Two by Mr. Willoughby, of Orpington.

Eaton Bray, Beds., April 6.—Four by Mr. Wise.

Folkestone, Kent, April 6.—One by Mr. Jones.

Halifax, Pellon Lane, Feb. 23.—Three by Mr. Whitewood.

—*Steep Lane, March 2.*—Three by Mr. Goodman.

Kenninghall, Norfolk, March 17.—Seven by Mr. Sage.

London, Hampstead, April 3.—Five by Mr. Jennings.

—*Dorough Road, Southwark, Jan. 6.*—Fifteen. Feb. 3.—Three. March 30.—Eight by Mr. Keen.

—*Commercial Street, March 30.*—One, formerly an Independent Minister, by Mr. Stevel.

Manorbear, March 2.—Two by Mr. Evans. Mcopham, Kent, April 6.—Five by Mr. Lingley.

Middle Mill, Pembrokeshire, Jan. 13.—After an address by Mr. Lewes.—Four by Mr. Reynolds. March 8.—Seven by Mr. Lewis, co-pastor with Mr. Reynolds.

Newark, Notts., March 30.—Five by Mr. Bayley.

Newtown, Montgomeryshire, Feb. 5.—Twenty. March 2.—Eight. April 6.—Eleven by Mr. D. Evans.

Poplar, March 30.—Seven by Mr. Preece.

Reading, King's Road, Feb. 26.—Four by Mr. Aldis.

Saffron, Walden, Feb. 2.—Six by Mr. Gillson. *Shotley Bridge, Durham*, Feb. 24.—Four, and April 12.—Three by Mr. Whitehead.

Torquay, Devon. Oct. 21, 1855.—Threes. Nov. 22.—One. and March 25.—Two by Mr. King. We have received a Torquay Newspaper, giving an account of a public meeting held in connection with the Baptist cause in this important town. We are glad to learn from this and other sources, the improving aspect of the Baptist cause here.

Usk, Monmouthshire March 30.—Two by Mr. Lewis.

Waterbarn, Orchard Hill, March 23.—Two by Mr. Howe.

Wilton Park, near Bishop Auckland, Feb. 24.—Three in the river Weir by Mr. Davies.

MS. EDITOR: Dear Sir,

As you wish to have reports of baptisms, for the information and encouragement of others, I have sent you the number I have baptized since we have been united as a Church. It may be encouraging to others just to sketch our origin and progress. I was a member of the Rev. John Cox's church, at Woolwich, and, in the providence of God, was removed to Enfield, Middlesex. I soon found that all the dissenting chapels were Independent, and that there was not any Baptist cause nearer than Waltham Abbey, and after having preached for some time in these chapels, a few friends united with me to form a Baptist cause; the Rev. T. Murch, of Waltham Abbey, came with one of his deacons, Mr. Richardson, and formed us into a Church, one of our friends, Mr. Robinson, licensed his house, and we have worshipped there for two years and a half. Persons have been

induced to attend that never went to any place of worship, and the Lord has graciously blessed his Word to many souls. The attendance has been good; we have a good Sunday school, and are now so full that we are obliged to remove to a larger place. I have baptized nineteen persons. We have in all twenty-five members. I baptized six persons out of this number last month, and two in last January, at Mr. Bland's chapel, Cheshunt, kindly lent for the occasion. I have just given a rapid sketch of our progress, it may encourage others to attempt something for the Lord, he will be sure to give his blessing if we set to work in right earnest, depending entirely upon his assistance to bless the instrumentality in operation.

I remain, your's truly,

JOHN BEAVEN.

N.B.—Both myself and friends take in your valuable Magazine; we are looking anxiously for the Portraits.

DEATHS.

Evans, Sarah, wife of Mr. J. Evans, of Broomgrove, and daughter of the late Rev. T. Scropton, March 8th, aged 49.

Kelson, Mrs., wife of Mr. R. Kelson, one of the deacons of Cotton St. Baptist Chapel, Poplar, April 1, aged 63. Mrs. K. was the first member baptized at Cotton Street, of which she continued an honourable and useful member, for a period of 40 years.

Holden, Mrs. F., April 3, at her residence, Islington, Liverpool. She was 53 years a member of a baptist church.

Dight, Mr. M., April 3, at Isle Abbotta, Somersetshire; nearly 29 years a member, and 15 years a deacon of the baptist church.

Stoneman, Mr. John, April 5, after 7 days illness, aged 65. A successful publisher; an eminently useful Sabbath school teacher and superintendent; and an active member of the Committee of the Sunday School Union. His loss to the church, to his family, and to the cause of Sunday schools will be severely felt.

Jackson, the Rev. J., Pastor of the baptist Church, Cote, near Bampton, Oxon, April 7, aged 63 years.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications have been received from the Revs. O. H. Sprague, C. Shipway, C. T. Keen, W. A. Blake, B. Preece, J. Bloomfield, W. P. Balfern, John Cox, D. Jennings, Dr. Steane, J. H. Hinton, A. M., London; J. Smith, Cheltenham; J. Ashworth, Bury; H. V. Gill, Milford; J. Jenkinson, Oakham; R. Turner, Desborough; J. Webster, Trowbridge; R. Tanner, Rushden; W. Abbott, Blunham; J. S. Warren, Walton, Suffolk; T. C. Carter, Chenies; R. Abbott, Raunds; G. Veals, Longford; J. Flory, Somersham; Owen Owen, Manchester; D. Evans, Newtown; H. Killen, Bedford; G. Wyard, Tring; Septimus Sears, Clifton; R. Hogg, Great Grimsby; J. Corbitt, Chelmsford; J. Chappell, Isle Abbotts; Messrs. Raymond Benley; John Closs; T. Dunn; B. Clark, W. Crowhurst, Metas; London; J. Rees, Brynmawr; W. Earle, Houghton-le-Spring; W. H. Lockhart, Liverpool; T. Hardy, Berryedge; R. Swan, Newtown; D. H. Lord, Bacup; T. Clark, Sanbaddok; J. Ashwell, Eaton, Bray; K. Peck, Balderton; M. Tucker, Exeter; J. Buttfield, Winchester; W. A. B. Cambridge; and from E. R. Rogers, Eynsford, and M. A. Hearn, Farningham.

If E. Smith, New Cross, will suggest any plan for realizing her wishes, we will give it our best attention.

Several rhyming communications have been forwarded which we are obliged unhesitatingly to reject; others we stand in doubt of; a few pieces we have laid by for insertion in future Numbers. We cannot give to our correspondents poetic genius; but we do suggest to some of them, that when they attempt writing for the press, they pay some attention to orthography:

FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST.*

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

Minister of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ. The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?—1 Cor. x. 16.

THERE is one great difference between Christ, as the founder of a religion, and all other men who have attempted to found a system of belief. The difference is not this merely, that Christ's was a true religion, and theirs a false one, but there was another distinction: all false prophets have sought to keep their disciples at a distance, and to impress upon them not merely a high estimation of their importance, but also a superstitious reverence of their person, eye, and altogether putting aside the thought of allowing any of their disciples to hold any communion with them. Look at the false prophet, Mahomet; you will see that he kept himself aloof from his disciples. He taught them to regard him as something superior, and the caliphs to this day, and all those who take to themselves the titles of his successors, endeavour to invest themselves with solemn pomp and state. They forbid all to come to them without certain salaams and salutations; they cannot allow their worshippers to hold fellowship with them. It was so with the old Pagan priests. They bade their worshippers fall down before them, but they never bade them come near to them, and hold fellowship with them; they were for driving the people away; and, in fact, the whole system of their religion stood upon the eminence of one who kept himself distinct from every other, and was looked up to as a god, being regarded as a personage above all the rest, with whom they might, on no pretence whatever, hold any communion at all. Look at the Pope, that great antichrist and false prophet. Does he encourage any to stand on friendly terms with him? Is he at all times accessible? Ah, no! He doth garnish himself round with cardinals and bishops; he keepeth himself distinct from others. It must not be expected that a pope is to be seen, nor can it be supposed that he should herd with common men. It is so with the bishops of another church we know of. How they labour to put men away from them with their pomp, their tinsel, their gewgaws, their parade, and their cathedrals! It is their aim to keep the crowd beneath them, to show them that their teachers are above them, and never for a moment to inculcate the doctrine that their hearers are to hold communion with them, come close to them, and make them their friends. Christ, as the great Leader of a new dispensation, brought out this idea; the idea of communion with himself, on the part of every one of his disciples; and, instead of endeavouring to keep them at a distance, he is always striving to bring all his followers near to him. He blames them not for familiarity, but because they are not familiar enough; he does not praise them because they stand at a respectful distance, but he praises Enoch because he walks with God, and he loveth John because he lays his head on the bosom of his Saviour. Christ, our Master, loves to have all his followers live near him; he loves to have them live in sympathy with him; he loves to make them feel, that while he is their superior and their king, he is as their fellow; he is bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh, in ties of blood one with them.

One object of Christ's religion, second to none other is, to bring all his disciples into fellowship with its great Founder, that they may have fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Our present subject then is, the doctrine of fellowship with Christ. We

* Printed from notes of a sermon taken in short-hand by an eminent reporter, and revised by Mr. Spurgeon,

think there are four degrees of fellowship with Christ. The first, is lowest of all, the fellowship of intercourse; the second, the fellowship of sympathy; the third, the fellowship of unity; and the fourth will be, the fellowship of heaven.

I.—The first grade of communion with Christ, is that with which all believers commence, and without which they cannot attain to any other: it is **THE FELLOWSHIP OF INTERCOURSE**. Probably a large proportion of those who love the Saviour here, will not be able to go much farther with me than with regard to the fellowship of intercourse. Let me explain myself. I meet with one or two of you, I talk with you, we discourse with one another; in Scripture phraseology it might be said, we "commune with each other," "we hold communion with one another." So, beloved, there are times when Christ and his people meet; when he talks to them, and they talk to him; and so "commune with him;" that is communion of intercourse.

Let me show you how we do it. We enjoy this kind of communion when, by *faith*, we lay hold of Christ, and when Christ, in honouring faith, lays hold of us; and when, under sorrows and trouble, we go and tell our Master what our sorrows and troubles are. We are talking with him, while he cheers us, reminds us of his promise, speaks to our heart with that sweet voice which lays our fears into their graves, and makes our tears be dry; it is then that we hold with him a fellowship of intercourse—the intercourse of faith. Mark you, this is no mean attainment, to be able to take Christ's arm, to command his ear, to possess his heart, and to feel that when our lips speak to him his lip replies to us; that when we look at him and are lightened, that lightening comes from the fact that he looks at us; and when we are cheered to know that the reason of our cheerfulness is because his right hand is under our head, and his left hand doth embrace us; it is a privilege for which angels might barter their crowns, to be allowed to talk with Christ as faith does, for faith asketh of Christ, and Christ giveth to faith; faith pleadeth promises, and Christ fulfilleth promises; faith lieth wholly upon Christ, and Christ layeth all his honour upon the head of Faith, and is content to let faith wear his own crown; yea, he doth uncrown himself to put his crown upon the head of faith. You, young believers, you know how sweet it is, by holy assurance, to come near your Master. You put your hand into his side, and you say, "My Lord, and my God;" you know what it is to throw your arms around him, and hang upon his breast, and see that gracious smile from him, without which your spirits could not rest. That is the intercourse of faith; the communion which we have by faith in Jesus Christ.

There is, too, a communion in *prayer*, which is called the communion of intercourse: for, in prayer, what do I do? If I pray aright, I talk to God; and if I pray with faith, what doth Christ do, but talk with me? In prayer the heart of man empties itself before God, and then Christ empties his heart out to mix with the heart of his poor believing child; in prayer we tell Christ our wants, he tells his fulness; we tell him our sorrows, he tells us his joys; we tell him our sins, he shows to us his righteousness; we tell him the dangers that lie before us, he tells us of the shield of Omnipotence with which he can guard us. Prayer talks with God, yea, it walks with him; and he who is much in prayer, will hold very much fellowship with Jesus Christ.

Then, again, there is a fellowship of intercourse, which we derive from *meditation*. When we sit down, and view Christ on Golgotha, and hear his death-shriek, startling the darkness; when we see him on Gethsemane, and witness the blood-red drops bedewing the soil; when we look upon him shamed and spit upon, and mocked and buffeted; then our heart goeth out after him, and we love him; and while he holdeth up his hands, and saith, "These were pierced for thee," we hold up our hearts and say, "Here's my heart Lord! take and seal it," 'tis thine, because 'tis bought with blood.

Have you never felt the sweet intercourse of meditation? Many Christians know little about it. They have so much occupation, such a perpetual whirl of business, that they have not half an hour to spend in meditation with God.

Beloved, you will never hold much personal intercourse with the Saviour, unless you have got a place to sit down in, where you can sit, and

"View the flowing,
Of his soul redeeming blood,
With divine assurance knowing,
That he made your peace with God."

You cannot expect to talk much to Christ, unless your mind is freed from the cares of earth. O, 'tis then Christ descends and talks with his children, and gives us sweet intercourse with him, and fellowship in meditation on his sufferings. Children of God, ye know this; all of ye who are his people have had some taste of this communion of intercourse with God, ye know much more of it than I shall tell! Alas! Alas! the great majority of the people of God are far enough from understanding even this first and fairest form of communion with Jesus Christ.

Let us make one or two remarks here, before we pass away from this communion of intercourse. We would not have you despise this, because you have not attained to the rest we are about to mention; but, dear friends, take care that ye do hold intercourse with Christ. There is a ladder between the soul and heaven; O tread its rounds very often! There is a road between man's soul and the celestial city; let the track be hard-beaten with the hoofs of the steeds of prayer! Let the chariots of praise whirl along the pathway to glory! Do not let thy Jesus live a day without a line from thee! And do not be happy if thou livest a day without a word from Him! I marvel at some professors that they can live weeks and months very happily without holding this fellowship with Christ. What! a wife happy if her husband smile not on her? and is not Christ my husband? and shall I be blessed, shall I be easy, if he shuts his mouth and speaks not a word to me? Can I be content if I have not one smile all the day long? Is Christ my brother, and shall I be easy to live, not knowing my brother's love to me? Can I be content to pass a week without knowing that my brother's heart is still beating high with affection towards me? Is he not bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, and could this arm live without the blood circulating from the heart? Verily, Christians, I marvel at you; and angels marvel, too, that ye can be so foolish, so stolid, so stone-like, as to live days without number without holding even this commonest of all communions with our Lord Jesus Christ. Stir yourselves up, beloved, you have got a ticket to the palace—what! not enter it? You have an invitation to the feast: what! not go? You have constant access to the banqueting house: what! not go and banquet yourselves on love divine? There are the "apples of gold in the baskets of silver:" what! not go and take them? There is his heart open, there are his hands open, his eyes open, his ears open; and will you not go to him who stands so ready for you? And you, too, poor sinner, I have sometimes thought that the beautiful description of Christ on the cross would be a fine sermon to illustrate that hymn—

"Come, and welcome, sinner, come!"

Do you not see the Saviour there? He has his arms stretched out, as though He had them wide open to take a big sinner in! There are his hands nailed fast, as if they intended to wait there till you were brought to him! His head is hanging down, as if he had stooped to kiss you; and there are his feet pouring out streams of blood, as if the blood would run after you, if you would not come after it. Verily, if you saw Christ, each bleeding wound and quivering atom of his body would say,

"Come, and welcome, sinner, come!"

Much more so to you, beloved children of God. Come to your Saviour! and hold this fellowship of intercourse with Jesus Christ your Lord.

II.—Now we have done with the lowest grade of communion, and we pass on to another; it is, COMMUNION OF SYMPATHY. Let me tell you what I mean here. I said before, that if we meet two or three friends, and converse together, there is communion. But there was one friend there who had a lofty project in hand. Though I talked to him, I didn't share with him, and I did not wish to see that project accomplished: therefore I did not hold so deep com-

munion with him as I might have done. Another one of my friends was exceedingly sick; but I was not sick with him; so that when he spake of his illness, I could not commune with him in his illness, as I could have wished. There was another—he was upbraided, and scourged, and spit upon: I was not, nor was I prepared to be so, for the same cause: therefore I held only one kind of communion with him, but not the deepest kind. I could not say that I was like him; that I had fellowship with him in his sufferings. Now, Christians, some of you have climbed another step on the heavenly ladder of communion; you have come to this sweet pitch, that you hold communion with Christ in sympathy.

Here I must divide this head of my discourse into two or three points. Some of us have known what it is to hold communion with Christ in sympathy, when we have *suffered just like Christ*. Did you never find a friend fail you, a friend of whom you expected far better things; at whose table you had often sat; who had walked to the house of God with you, and with whom you had held sweet converse? Did you not find him on a sudden, unaccountably lifting up his heel against you, and doing all he could to bring despute and injury to you? Did not you clasp your hand to your burning brow, and say,—“Ah! Christ had his Judas, and now I can hold communion with Christ, because my friend has deserted me, too; and I can sympathize with Christ in the desertion of men?” Did you never find a false report spread about you. Somebody said, you were “a drunken man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners;” someone said, that on such and such a night, you committed such and such an act; or, perhaps, if they could not stain your character with immorality, they said that you were insane; and did not your spirit beat high, perhaps, with passion at first; when you thought you would resent the calumny? But in a moment, you put your hand to your heart, as you said,—“But ah! He was oppressed, and He was afflicted. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb; so he opened not his mouth.” And did not you sit down, and say,—“Now, I can hold fellowship with Christ in his reproaches; now, I can bear a part in the brunt of the battle; now I can feel as he did, when he, too, was oppressed by men.” Sometimes, also, you have been exceedingly poor, you could say,—“I have not a place where to lay my head.” And, looking down on your ragged garments, you may have thought,—“Ah! now I know how he felt when he said—‘Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.’ And so,” you thought, “I am holding the fellowship of intercourse with him in his poverty.”

There was a time, too, when you prayed, and received no answer; your agonized spirit went backward and forward many times, while you cried to God, but no answer came; you could have almost “sweat great drops of blood,” as he did in the intensity of your importunity; but God did not hear you; rising from your knees, you only rose to go down upon them again; and, at last, you clasped your hands in agony, and said,—“O Father! if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; but, nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.” And you started up, for you thought you heard another say the words in tones of deeper woe, and more ghastly agony than you had ever dreamed of, and you said, “Ah! I, in my humble measure, have held fellowship with him whose ‘bloody sweat’ hath made him memorable, and whose agony in Gethsemane hath made him my Saviour. And, perhaps, too, you have known what it is at times to love the sight of the countenance of God; you have said,—“Oh! that I knew where I might find him; that I might come even to his seat.” Your heart melted with agony; it was a hell to you, because God seemed to frown at you; your prayers were rejected; you had no light of his countenance; you had no peace, no light, no love, no joy, no God, and you said,—“My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?” And you did not know it, perhaps, at first; but you remembered that Christ said those words too, and that you were holding communion of sympathy, for you were feeling just as he did; you had entered into his agony; you had drunk some drops of the

awful cup which poisoned his spirit and made him die; you had dived a little into the sea without a bottom, into which Christ plunged; you had the fellowship of sympathy, and suffered with him. That is the most wonderful fellowship in the world, the fellowship of fellow-suffering. Those two holy martyrs that were burned at Oxford—why there remains a link for ever between them, because they were burned in the same fire. They had often quarrelled and disputed before; but O, what sweet fellowship they had, because they were to die together! Nothing makes us love Christ like feeling the same whip on our shoulder which Christ had on his, to be pierced with the same nails, be spit upon by the same mouth and to suffer, though a very humble degree, the sufferings which Christ himself endured. O wondrous grace, that we should be allowed to share with him; to hear in our body the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ!

Some of us are not called to suffer so much as to labour; and we, too, have our *communion with Christ in labour*. See the Sabbath school teacher, he takes the little child on his knee, and as he teaches it, though some laugh, he seems to say—"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." There is the same spirit in the one as in the other; and these are holding communion with Christ in labour. See the earnest evangelist. He is in an open field, and he is preaching to the people with hands uplifted and with an earnestness that makes him eloquent. Look! he has concluded. He feels a sweet stillness in his soul, that he knows not the reason of; but it is because he has been having communion with Christ, and has felt as Christ did. Oh! when we have wept over your poor dying souls; when, on our bended knees, we have asked God for your salvation; when we have groaned and cried to bring you near to God; when with most impassioned supplication, we have wrestled for your souls; then, beloved, we think we have had some communion with Christ. For

"Cold mountains, and the midnight air,
Witnessed the fervour of his prayer."

He, too, wept over Jerusalem, and said—"O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! would that thou hadst known in this thy day, the things that make for thy peace." Labouring Christians have sympathy with Christ; and when they work with might and main, with good intentions, and with upright desires, they can say—"O Lord! I have entered into fellowship with thee."

So, too, we do think we have fellowship with Christ, a heavenly *fellowship of desire*, when we can neither suffer nor work with him, but yet can feel with him. Perhaps you are not often sick; but you often feel a fellowship of compassionate pity and love. You are not persecuted; you almost wish you were; perhaps you have very little talent, and you cannot labour for Christ; but oh! you have sometimes said, as you tread your way to this Chapel—"What would I give to have sinners saved? Oh! I think I would die, if I might save my son, if I might save my daughter." Do you know that just at that moment, you were holding communion with Christ, for you felt just as Christ did, who loves us with a love so pure, and so perfect, that he gave up his body to death that he might redeem us from hell? you have, perhaps, said too, at times:—"O, I have but little that I can give, but

"Had I ten thousand thousand tongues,
Not one should silent be;
Had I ten thousand thousand hearts,
I'd give them all to thee."

Ah! you had fellowship with Christ, then; for you desired to do all that you could for the extension of his kingdom.

I will show how we hold *fellowship with Christ in our designs*. You see two men in a court of justice. One man stands there to be tried. There is every probability that he will be condemned. Do you notice one person in court? He is about to plead, he is a counsellor; but, besides that, he is a friend of the prisoner. Do you mark—the prisoner takes his seat. Do you mark the awful agony in his face? He is tried now for his life. But up

gets his counsellor; and you notice, as the counsellor pleads, that he turns his eye to the poor man who is being tried; and when he sees the tears start from the poor creature's eyes, out comes an eloquent period. There is a sigh just heaved by the poor culprit: see how the counsellor waxes hot. The prisoner begins to weep, to weep excessively, and hide his head: do you notice how the counsellor gets more fiery and more zealous as he proceeds, and how much more pathetic his speech becomes, as his tongue is set at liberty, and he pleads earnestly? Why? Because he is in fellowship with the poor man; he feels for him; he is not talking to him—that would only be the fellowship of intercourse: he is feeling with him, and their hearts are near akin. Even supposing they have not seen each other before, if they feel for one another they are nearer akin than blood relationship could make them. Beloved, when you see a minister pleading as if he were pleading for himself; when you hear him contending for Jesus Christ's divinity as much as if he were contending for his own honour; that minister is holding communion with Christ. And when you see a saint speaking of the Redeemer's dying blood to a poor sinner, and pointing to his wounds, why, every drop of Calvary's blood seems to make the man speak more eloquently; and every groan he thinks he hears makes him urge his plea in more desperate earnestness with men. Then, beloved, you see sympathy with Christ, fellowship with him. That I call a higher grade of communion. I hope some of you have arrived at it. If you have, you will be more useful than those who only understand the fellowship of intercourse. God grant to us all the fellowship of fellow feeling, the fellowship of sympathy!

III.—The third point is this: *We hold fellowship with Christ, not only that of intercourse, and that of sympathy, but that of oneness.* Do you see this hand? Do you see this brow? This hand and this brow are more nearly allied together than my brother's heart and mine, although he loves me with all his heart, and would plead for me even to the death; but this hand and this brow have not only a communion of fellow feeling, they have the same feeling. The members of the body have positively the same feeling; so Christ's mystical members feel the same emotion as he does. You say, "Do Christians ever arrive at this?" Yes, they do. And the supper of the Lord was intended to set forth that highest grade of communion which Christians ever hold with their master here below. It is not a communion with him in his sufferings, it is not a communion with him in his works; but it is a communion with his person. You believers are invited spiritually to eat the flesh of Christ, and spiritually to drink his blood. Now, that is a nearer, dearer, fellowship than any of which we have before spoken, because it brings you into positive unity with him: it makes you feel that you are not only pleading for him as your friend, but that he is yourself, or that you are a part of himself, a member of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. Not a tithe of the hearers of the Gospel understand this. They laugh; perhaps they say it is profanity. Dearly beloved, do you know that Scripture and profanity are within an inch of each other, and are only removed from each other by a solitary step. And so, what would be profane, if it were not scriptural, becomes divine, because it is so. I reckon it would be the very height of profanity for a man to say, "I am one with Christ," if the Scripture did not say so. To call one's self a "friend of God!" why, it would be blasphemous presumption. But then, Scripture says so, and then there is no blasphemy in it. So some may think it is absurd to talk of our being "one with the Saviour;" it is not absurd, because it is Scriptural. We *are* so, and we feel, when we drink the wine, that the blood of the Saviour is in our veins, as well as in his; that we are brethren in ties of blood nearly related. I hope we shall be able to say that we were one with him when he died, one with him when he rose, one with him when he triumphed over the grave, one with him when he ascended up on high, one with him now, and one with him eternally. I do believe that not a few will get so near to Christ, that we shall not only lay our heads on his bosom, but shall do more than that,—we shall put our heart, not against his heart, but right into his heart, and we shall feel as much one with

Christ as the little dew-drop is with the stream into which it falls; I hope we shall be as much a portion of Christ while we sit around the communion table as the particle of flesh is of the body; and shall feel that each pulse he beats throbs through our frame, each motion of the blood of Christ runs through our veins, that each sigh we heave *he* heaves, each groan we utter *he* utters. I hope we shall understand that

I feel at my heart all thy pains and thy groans,
For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones;
In all my distresses my head feels the pain;
They all are most needful, not one is in vain.

Beyond this the Christian cannot go. It is the highest style of communion, till

That happy hour of full discharge
Shall set his ransomed soul at large;
Unbind his soul, and drop his clay,
And speed his wings far, far away—

Up where Christ dwelleth; there, beloved, we shall know communion with Christ in a sense which only folly will labour to depict, for wisdom's self knoweth nothing of it. There at his feet we will sit, and on his breast we will lean; there from his lips will we hear sweet music; from his mouth we will breathe perpetual balm; from his eyes we will draw divinest light; we will press his hand inside these palms; we will kiss, aye, with these very lips; we will put ourselves within his arms; we will lie all day side by side with our beloved; we will talk with him; we will be with him where'er he goeth; while he shall be the shelter from the heat, and shall lead his sheep to "living fountains of waters, and shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

IV.—This fellowship of which we have been speaking, is a stepping-stone to that best, beatified, fellowship, which we shall have in a few more years. O, Christians! do you ever think how sweet it must be to be with your Lord? I sometimes think to myself, oh, how strange it will seem, to have a crown upon this head, to have sandals of gold on these feet, to have a vesture of white on this poor body! Oh! to have rings of everlasting love adorning these fingers; to have a harp, along which our delighted hands shall run, making it discourse in praise of Jesus the sweetest melody; to have a throne, on which to sit to judge the tribes of Israel; to have songs more melodious than music ever evoked, perpetually rolling from our lips; to have hearts brimfull of bliss, and souls baptized in love and glory; to have ourselves not only bathed in bliss, but to swim in its crystal sea. Above, beneath, around, everywhere, within, without, it is heaven; I breathe heaven, I drink heaven, I feel heaven, I think heaven, everything is heaven. Oh! what must it be to be there? because to be there is to be with Christ. Wait but a little while, dearly beloved, and I will promise this thing in my Master's name; "the earthly house of this tabernacle" shall be ere long dissolvod, but I know we have a "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Soon, world, I shall say farewell to thee. Soon, beloved friends, I shall shake hands for the last time with you. Soon this eye shall see its last dim mists; its last tears shall have been wiped away for ever; my last sighs shall have been swept away by the breath of God: and there, ah, there! God knoweth how soon; there—

"Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut in,"

I shall be with him for aye. Do you believe that, my dear Christian brethren? Then, why are you so afraid to die? and why is it you are so often fearing? What! do you believe, men and women, brothers and sisters, do you believe that in a few more days you will be in heaven, and see all you love, and all you live for here below? Do you believe that in a few more months you will clasp your Saviour, and be blessed for ever? Why, beloved, it is enough to make you leap for joy, and clasp your hands for ecstasy! What! you troubled, you desponding? Nay, go your way, eat your bread with joy, be happy all your life long,—for you know that your Redeemer liveth; and "though after your flesh-worms destroy this body, yet in your flesh you shall see God."

CHRISTIAN UNITY;

AN EXPOSITION OF I CORINTHIANS XII. 12—31.

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

V. 12.—“*For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.*” 13.—“*For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free: and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*”

Oh! what a sacred oneness that is which subsists between all the Lord's people. We are not simply brethren, but we are one; we are not allied by affinity, but by actual identity; we are parts of the same body; we are brought into spiritual membership with each other, as real, and as effectual as that membership, which subsists between the various parts of the body. And yet we are not all alike, although we are all of one body; some are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are bond, some are free; and yet in some things we are all alike, for we have all been baptized by one Spirit. And, moreover, we have all been made to drink into one spirit; we have had a spiritual baptism, which is one; and we have had a spiritual drinking, which is one. Would to God that we felt more one, that our hearts beat more in tune with each other; that we had a sympathy with each other in woes and sufferings; that we had a fellow feeling with all who love the Lord; and could at all times weep with those that weep, as well as rejoice with those that rejoice.

V. 14.—“*For the body is not one member, but many.*” 15.—“*If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?*”

Do not get comparing yourself with others, and saying—“Ah! if I were such and such a person, I might then think myself to be part of Christ's body.” No, you might not; if you were just like him, as there are only two members of a sort in a man's body, so by a parity of reasoning, there would not be more than two members alike in the mystical body. We do not imagine that there will be many members of this body of the Church, of one class, or of one character; so that if you are different from others, you are a different part of, and are filling a different office in the body. You may from that, rather draw an inference of comfort, than one of sorrow and despondency. And, even should you say—“Because I am not the eye I am not the body, are you therefore not of the body?” Oh! no; you are of the body still, though you do not think so.

V. 17.—“*If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing?*”

If we were all preachers, if we could all see into, and set forth in a public manner God's truth, where should we have congregations? And, “if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?” There must be different offices.

If we were all so one, that there was no distinction whatever; if we were all of one rank, all of one age, all of one standing.

V. 18.—“*But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.*”

V. 19.—“*And if they were all one member, where were the body?*” 20.—“*But now are they many members, yet but one body.*” 21.—“*And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.*”

Brethren, you sometimes think there are some belonging to the Church whom we could well spare. There is not one superfluous member in the whole

body. If they be truly united to Christ, they have all their offices, all their places. There is not a poor old woman, who has not been able to get up to the house of prayer for several years, who is not of some use to the Church; for she lies upon her bed, and there she intercedes with God. There is not a member of the Church so humble, so illiterate, so uneducated, that he or she may not be of essential service to the whole body. There is some little part, my brother, which you are to take in the great Church; you may not be able always to tell what it may be, but still there is a place for you to fill.

There is a little pin in a chariot; who thinks much about, or thanks that little pin? Indeed, it is so very small and insignificant, who would think it added to the locomotion or speed? The wheels carry it round, but who would suppose that, if that were taken away the wheel would fly off? Perhaps you are like to one of these little linch pins; you may not know what use you are; but you keep the wheel right, and prevent some one else from going aside. Let us keep each in our station, endeavouring, God helping us, to exert the influence which he has given.

V. 21.—“*And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.*” 22.—“*Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary.*”

A moment's thought will tell you, that those parts of our frame which are tenderest are the most necessary parts; and those members of the body which we think to be less honourable, upon these, by clothing them more than other parts, we bestow more abundant honour, and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need, and therefore we leave them exposed.

V. 24.—“*But God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked.*” 25.—“*That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.*”

We have heard this text urged by the Church of England as a proof that we are wrong in departing from it. They tell us there should be no schism; we beg to tell them, that there is no schism in the body that we know of; for we do not belong to their body, and therefore we make no schism in the body. We are quite clean away from them; we have neither stick, nor stone, nor part, nor lot in their state establishment; therefore we do not create a schism in the body. When they divide themselves into Puseyites and Evangelicals, they make a schism in their own body; but as long as we are all united, as long as the members of a church walk together in unity, there is no schism in the body. We are different bodies altogether. They say that a schismatic is one who departs from a Church, and makes a rent from it; by no means: a schismatic is one who makes a rent in it, not from it. We, I say, are not schismatics. Those who are in the Church, and yet do not agree with its fundamental principles and its Articles of Faith; evangelicals, who do not see that the Church is essentially papistical, and do not come out of it—they are schismatics. But we are not. There is no schism in the body.

V. 26.—“*And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it.*”

Is that true of our churches? I am afraid not. The members of the Church have not been brought to that great unity of feeling and sympathy which they ought to have.

V. 26.—“*Or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.*” 27.—“*Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.*” 28.—“*And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.*” 29.—“*Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?*” 30.—“*Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?*”

God intended there should be different offices; let us look on each other as being different: as differing from each other, and yet united in the common faith of Christ. "But covet earnestly the best gifts." I would not desire you brother to repress your aspirations after these. I am most desirous that you earnestly desire and seek to possess a large share of all these spiritual endowments. "And yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." Which is holding the truth in love, and walking in charity one toward another.

A SCOTCH MINISTER'S VISIT TO NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK.—THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

WHEN Mr. Spurgeon was in Glasgow last summer, the fame of his eloquence had reached me in my seclusion here, by the shores of the sounding sea, the noise of whose waves delight me more than the "din of cities," or the tumult of the people. I had heard him "spoken against" by some, but spoken of by others as a preacher of remarkable and, since the days of Whitfield himself, of unprecedented popularity. But being one of those who judge for themselves in the matter of preaching, and whose opinions as to what constitutes good preaching, are somewhat peculiar, I did not attach much, I may almost say any importance whatever to what I heard of Mr. Spurgeon, and his popularity in Glasgow. One of his printed sermons, however, having fallen in my way, I had no sooner read a few paragraphs of it, than I said, "Here at last is a preacher to my mind—one whom not only I, but whom Paul himself, I am persuaded, were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own." I forget what was the subject of the discourse; but I remember well of saying to myself, "I would rather have been the author of that sermon, than of all the sermons, or volumes of sermons, published in my day." I had lately before this, been reading Guthrie and Caird, but here was something entirely different, and to my mind, in all that constitutes a genuine and a good Gospel sermon, infinitely superior.

For sometime after this I heard little, and thought little, about Mr. Spurgeon. Having been, however, in London on the last Sabbath of March, and having been unexpectedly released from an engagement to preach, I thought I could not do better than go and hear for myself, the preacher of whom I had heard so much in my own country. Along with two young friends, see me, then, early on the beautiful morning of that beautiful Sabbath day, when as yet there were few people on the streets, and all the "mighty heart" of that great city was "lying still," on my way from Islington to New Park Street Chapel, Southwark—a distance of nearly four miles. We arrived at the chapel about eleven, but found that the service had commenced a quarter before eleven. The church was filled, and there were crowds of people at the gate, uncertain what to do. Seeing one of the doorkeepers near the great entrance, I went up to him and said, "that I was from Scotland, and that, having come so far, I really *must* get in." He asked me from what "part of Scotland I came." I said, "Glasgow." He asked no more, but said, "Come, follow me; I really *must* get you in," or words to that effect. He led the way into a wing of the building, fitted up and evidently used as a school; and here, where there were many assembled, we found seats; and though, from the crowd which choked the doors and passages, we did not see the preacher very well, we—and this was what we wanted—heard him distinctly. When we entered, he was expounding, as is his custom, a portion of the Scriptures. The passage expounded was Exodus, 14th chapter, which contains an account of the Israelites at the Red Sea—a passage of Scripture peculiarly interesting to me, having stood on its shore and sailed on the very spot where the waters were so wondrously divided. The remarks of the preacher on each of the verses, were very much in the style of Henry, and were rich and racy. His text was from the 106th Psalm, and the subject of the discourse was the same

with that of the chapter he had just expounded—"The Israelites at the Red Sea."

Regarding them as typical of the people of God under the Gospel, he said there were two things which he intended to consider. First, their difficulties; secondly, their resources. Their difficulties, he said, were occasioned by three things—first, the Red Sea before them; second, the Egyptians behind them; and third, the weakness of their faith. These difficulties were in the way, he said, of believers—first, the Red Sea of trials—trials peculiar to them as Christians, and caused by their coming out of Egypt, or their renouncing the world; second, the Egyptians are behind them—sin, Satan, and the world, seeking to recover them to their yoke, and, failing this, to harass and distress them. But the greatest difficulty in the way of both was unbelief. Had they trusted in him that was for them, they would have made little of all them that were *against* them.

Second, their resources. These were three; first, the providence of God. He had brought them to the Red Sea; and he who had brought them *to* it, was able and wise enough to bring them *through* it. Second, his covenant, in virtue of which he was under engagement to do so, and was bound in honour to do so. Third, the intercession of Moses. He prayed for them, when they knew it not. So Christ prays for his people, and him the Father heareth always, and, in answer to his prayers, delivers, and will continue to deliver them out of all their troubles, &c.

Such was the method of one of the richest and ripest sermons, as regards Christian experience, all the more wonderful as being the sermon of so young a man, I ever heard. It was a sermon far in advance of the experience of many of his hearers; and the preacher evidently felt this. But, notwithstanding this, such was the simplicity of his style, the richness and quaintness of his illustrations, his intense earnestness, and the absolute and admirable naturalness of his delivery, it told upon his audience generally, and told powerfully. Many, most of them, were of the "common people," and when I looked upon their plebeian faces, their hands brown with labour, and, in many cases, their faded attire, I could not help remembering him of whom it is said, "And the common people heard him gladly." Yes, Mr. Spurgeon is the minister of the "common people;" he considers himself, I am told, to be such, and well he may. Happy London people, if they but knew their happiness, to have such a minister! But to return to the sermon and its effects on the audience, and those in particular who were seated, or stood rather near to me. I shall not soon forget the varying emotions portrayed in their faces. Oh those faces! How intensely fixed were they on the preacher—how eager to hear every word that he uttered—how fearful lest they should fail to catch the least! Tears were now to be seen trickling down them; and then, again, pale and care-worn though many of them were, they might be seen beaming with light and joy, and brightening into smiles. One man I noticed in particular. He was evidently of humble rank, but had a noble and intelligent countenance; his face was a perfect study; every time the preacher said a striking thing, he looked expressively to me, and I to him. At the close of the service I could have given him a hearty, brotherly shake of the hand, but I lost him in the crowd and did not see him again.

Thus much for the morning. A word or two now about the evening sermon. We were told, that if we wanted to get in, to come early, as the crowd would be greater than in the morning. With two friends, I returned about six, the service was to commence at half-past six. To our dismay, when we arrived, we found crowds already at the door waiting for admission. Those only who had tickets were now permitted to enter; as we had none, we almost despaired of getting in. One of my friends, however, knowing how I had got in in the morning, went up to a police officer, and told him I was a clergyman from Scotland, and was anxious to be admitted. The police officer hearing this, said, very politely, he would allow us to enter the church, but would not promise us seats. This was all we wanted. One of us (a lady) was kindly favoured with a seat; my other friend and myself thought ourselves happy,

like Eutychus of old, in being permitted to sit in "a window," with a dense crowd in the passage at our feet. I asked a man near me if he came regularly, he said, "he did." "Why, then," I asked, "do you not take a seat?" "Seat!" he replied, "such a thing is not to be had for love or money. I got a ticket for leave to stand." The church, I was told, is seated for 1,500; but what with the schoolroom and the passages, which were choke-full, there could not have been fewer in it than 3,000. The service commenced with a hymn, which was sung by the congregation standing. Never did I hear such singing; it was like the "voice of many waters," or the roll of thunder. No need was there of an organ in that congregation; the most powerful organ would not have been heard in the loud swell of so many living human voices. Then came the prayer. Phrenologically speaking, I should say veneration is not largely developed in Mr. Spurgeon, yet that prayer was one of the most remarkable and impressive I ever heard. He prayed first for confirmed believers, then for declining ones, then for sundry other conditions. Then there was a pause; after which he prayed for the unconverted. Some, he said, were present who were in this state, who in all likelihood would never be in that or any other church again—who were that night to hear their last sermon—who, ere next Lord's day, would not be in this world; and where would they be? There was but one place where they would be—in hell! He then said, or rather cried out, "O, God, God! must they perish! wilt thou not save them, and make that sermon the means of their conversion!" The effect was overwhelming; many wept, and I am not ashamed to say, I was one of them. The text was in Psalms cxxvi. 1, 2, "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing." The subject raised from the text was the "joy of the young convert." This sermon, in some respects, was not equal to the one in the morning; but in other respects, and in particular in its suitability to a large and promiscuous audience, was superior.

Some of the sketches, and that in particular of a slave newly emancipated, drunk with joy that he was free, was equal to anything ever drawn by a Dickens, or any of our great masters of fiction. Equally fine was that of the sick man restored to health, and going forth for the first time after his recovery to take his walk in the streets of London. But it would be impossible to mention all the fine touches of nature in that sermon, which made the whole of that vast congregation for the moment "kin." His denunciations of the Sabbath breaker and others were as terrible as his delineations of the penitent were tender and melting. Mr. Spurgeon is equally great in the tender and the terrible. Nor is he without humour. Here many will refuse him their sympathy, and think him censurable. I scarcely think he is. Others will think, and do think differently. His taste, according to others, is bad. It is, I admit, often so. But, then, think of the immaturity of his years. I was told he was conceited. I saw no proofs of it; and if I had, was I on that account to think less of his sermons? I do not say I will not eat good bread, because the maker of it is conceited. His conceit may be a bad thing for himself—his bread is very good for me. I am far from thinking Mr. Spurgeon perfect. In this respect he is not like Whitfield, who from the first was as perfect as an orator as he was at the last. In respect of his power over an audience, and a London one in particular, I should say he is not inferior to Whitfield himself. Mr. Spurgeon is a Calvinist, which few of the dissenting ministers in London now are. He preaches salvation, not of man's *free will*, but of the Lord's *good will*, which few in London, it is to be feared, now do. On all these accounts, we hail the appearance of Mr. Spurgeon with no ordinary delight, and anticipate for him a career of no ordinary usefulness. "Happy are they which stand continually before him, and hear his words of wisdom." As for myself, I shall long remember with delight the day on which I stood among them, and recommend such of my countrymen as may have a Lord's day to spend in London, to spend it as I did in New Park Street Chapel, in hearing Mr. Spurgeon.

Helenburgh, April 14, 1856.

A.

AN EXPOSITION OF EZEKIEL XXXIV. 11—31.

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,

Minister of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.

THE former part of the chapter contains a prophetic denunciation against the evil shepherds; the men who fed not the flocks, but fed themselves; who fouled the waters where the flocks did drink with their filthy feet, and trod upon the soft grass that otherwise might have afforded pasture for the sheep. After pronouncing a malediction on them, the Lord lets them go. And now he gives a precious promise:

V. 11.—“*For thus saith the Lord God; Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out.*”

The shepherds did not do it; they left them to wander; and they were lost upon the mountains; but where men fail God is all-sufficient. My hearer, are you sitting under an unprofitable ministry? then look to the great Shepherd, and not to the man.

V. 11.—“*Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out.*”
12.—“*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.*”

It does not matter where the place is, the Lord will find them out. If it be the Castle of Despair, he will find them there; if it is Doubting Castle's worst dungeon, he will discover them there; they may have wandered upon the mountains of Faint-heart, and Despondency, and Dejection; they may have been lost in the gorges of some dark valley of Desperation, but “I will seek them out saith the Lord.” And mind you, He does not seek without finding, but when he seeks he will find. He discovers them, for he knows where they are. Oh, is not that a “cloudy and dark day” wherein we wander from God, and know not how to return; but clouds and darkness are light before his face.

V. 13.—“*And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country.*” 14.—“*I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be; there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.*” 15.—“*I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God.*”

There is a precious state of rest! God's flock are not only to be fed, but they are to lie down while they feed. You have sometimes noticed a flock at the noontide, when the sun is hot, lie down upon the grass, and feed while they lie; that is what God's people are to do. They are to lie down in tranquillity of spirit; they are to lie down in a state of placid submission to his will; in a state of perfect security; a state not of idleness in the Master's service, but still a state in which they know there is nothing for them to do for their own security, since Christ has accomplished the whole of their salvation. “I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord.” It is not every one of God's people that has attained to this—to be able to lie down.

“Thousands in the fold of Jesus,
This attainment no'er can boast;
To his name eternal praises,
None of these shall o'er be lost!”

Deeply graven on his heart their names remain. If ye are not sheep, if ye

have never come to lie down in peace, if ye cannot say, "I know and am confident," and cannot lie down while you feed; it is still something to feel that all sheep are sheep, whether they are lying down or standing up.

V. 16.—*"I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away."*

Ah, one little thinks, perhaps, that there should be such a thing as a poor sheep driven away; but it is true sometimes. A legal preacher drives away Christ's sheep from Christ. The poor sheep would come, but he is told he must be something, and do something, before he comes to Christ. The poor sinner would trust in Jesus, but he is told first to get such and such a state of heart. He is told, "You are not the man who should be encouraged to come to Christ; you must have some deeper experience before you come to Christ." But, blessed be God, he says, "I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away." And if Satan has driven you away, or a legal preacher has driven you away—

V. 16.—*"I will bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick; but I will destroy the fat and strong; I will feed them with judgment."*

Those who boast of being fat and strong, who glory in themselves, these are the men whom God will destroy; but the poor, weak, sick souls shall be fed with kindness tempered with judgment.

V. 16.—*"I will feed them with judgment."* 17.—*"And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the lamb and the he goats."* 18.—*"Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet!"*

O, how many are there, even of God's sheep, that trouble the waters very much! They come up to God's house, where, perhaps, they get some sweet morsel in the sermon, but there are some things in it with which they do not quite agree. They are walking home with some young Christian, and he is thinking how blessedly he felt under the sermon; while, perhaps, that old professor is grumbling all the while, and stirring up the waters with his feet. If the pasture is not good enough for you, you should let the lambs eat of it, without treading it down; because what others like, you may not; and if you do not like it, you can always leave it, mind that! But what is the use of finding fault with it, and treading it under your feet, and not letting others eat of it. It is a great crime, saith God: "Seemeth it a small thing" to tread it down under your feet, to spoil the spiritual enjoyment of your brethren? It seems to some, of small, yea, of very little consequence, what harm they do to God's weak ones; but it is not; for it is a great sin to tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures. You cavillers and grand critics had better beware.

V. 19.—*"And as for my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet."* 20.—*"Therefore, thus saith the Lord God unto them; Behold I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle."* 21.—*"Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad."*

I wish some people would not thrust with side and shoulder so much in their controversies with their brethren. It would be all very well for a man to be honest and faithful, and push with his horns; but there are some diseased ones who cannot stand rough usage when they are only coming in all simplicity to drink at the fountain of life.

V. 21.—“Ye have pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them.” 22.—“Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle.” 23.—“And I will set up one shepherd.”

There is only one Shepherd now. As for the rest of us, we are only under shepherds. There is only one Shepherd, Jesus Christ: we are only the men he employs to see after his sheep a little; but he is the great Shepherd, and when he shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory.

V. 23.—“And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.” 24.—“And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it.” 25.—“And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.”

Those in the East who have seen the watching of flocks by night, could give you quite a picture of the meaning of this verse. Sometimes the shepherds will sit down in the midst of bushes and briars that may grow at the side of the wood, and taking some of them for firewood, they will light a fire in the night; and when the wolves come around them, the sheep are quite safe. I have read of this sometimes in books of travels; and what a beautiful thing it seems to sit, with the full moon shining down on the forest, and the fires alight, feeling that, notwithstanding all the wolves, the sheep are quite safe, with the shepherds there to protect them. So with God's people. They must always expect while they are in the wood in this world, to have a scratch now and then with the briars and thorns; but then “they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.” God will always take care of his own, for “the Lord knoweth them that are his.”

V. 26.—“And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing.”

My earnest prayer is that that this Church may be a large blessing to all around, and I firmly believe it will be by God's grace.

V. 27.—“And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke; and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them.”

The Jews will know that God is God, when they shall return and come back to their own land. The poor tired man knows that God is God, best of all, when he gets the bands of his neck broken off from him. By nature, we all have bands about our necks; it is only God who takes them off. Pilgrim, you know, lost his burden when he looked at the Cross; it rolled away down to the sepulchre. And if you had asked him then, “Is God, God?” “Yes,” he would have said, “otherwise I should not have had the bands of my neck loosed.” No man who has had the bands taken off his neck, will ever doubt that there is a God. Let him experience that holy calm which springs from the fact of having his bands taken off, and he will say, “This is God! no man, no human comfort could have done it.” Oh, there are times, beloved, when I am ready to doubt the very doctrines I preach; but I can always see them afresh, when I feel my sins afresh. I cannot be an Arminian, when I once begin to feel myself a sinner. I am obliged to come back to this: Lord, I must be saved by sovereign grace, or not at all. A single day's experience is enough to take all the self-conceit out of a Christian, if the Lord should leave him to his own unaided strength. We best know that God is God, when we have the bands broken off our necks. How many are there

sitting with bands on their necks; slaves, wearing the yoke upon their shoulders? They cannot see it, but it is there, nevertheless. How many are there that can say, "My bands are broken from my neck"?

"My sins are drown'd, as in a flood
Of Jesus' pure and matchless blood."

I am finally discharged. The bands are broken off my neck, Verily, God is God.

V. 28.—"And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid." 29.—"And I will raise up for them a plant of renown."

Jesus is "a plant of renown," because you may go to him at all times, and you will always find fruit on him. That is more than you can say of any other plant. You may go to him, and you will always find the sort of fruit you want; is he not a "plant of renown"? You will find healing virtue in his leaves, and satisfying fruits hanging in clusters upon him. He is a "plant of renown," because his Father planted him; because he has food enough for all his saints, and a gracious variety for all their tastes; because he will blossom through eternity; because of the multitude who sit under the shadow and rejoice therein. He is "a plant of renown" to his people, for under his shadow they are begotten and brought forth; the greatest transactions of their lives have taken place beneath the shadow of that old tree, the "plant of renown."

V. 29.—"And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more." 30.—"Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord God."

Thus shall they know it. Do you know it? Has God told it you? Have you the witness of the Spirit within, that you are born of God? My hearers, never be satisfied till you get this; for you will never be comfortable until you know that you are God's people, and until you can say: "My God! my God! thou art my God!"

V. 31.—"And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men."

"Ye are nothing better, however much I may have gifted you, you are only men. I am not a man, I am your God," saith the Lord. And we rest more upon what the God is, than upon what the man is, for "he can do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask, or even think."

LOOK OUT OF SELF.

BY THE REV. JAMES SMITH, CHELTENHAM.

I FIND many persons who are entitled to freedom, still held in bondage. They ought to be happy, but they are dejected and depressed. Confidence should characterise them, but instead of this they are full of doubts and fears. Why is this? Simply because their eye is not fixed on Jesus; and on Jesus alone. There is a looking into self; an attempt to find something in self to warrant confidence in Christ. But this will never be found. The word of God is the only and all-sufficient warrant for our faith. That word says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ." "Run the race set before you, looking unto Jesus." And the Lord Jesus, speaking to us himself, says, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and besides me

there is none else." "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." So, that in looking to Jesus we shall be saved, or have everlasting life. Still, it is very difficult for some minds, to look entirely away from self and all within them; and to rest simply, entirely, and alone upon Christ, without them.

I will illustrate this by a case that came under my own eye. A young person was brought under my ministry many years ago, and under a sermon from these words, "*What wilt thou in the swellings of Jordan?*" was deeply convinced of sin. She began to seek the Lord, but could find no peace or rest for her soul. She passed through many changes outwardly, became a wife and a mother, but was still entangled in the yoke of bondage. She was a stranger to joy and peace in believing. She knew nothing of the liberty wherewith Christ makes his people free. She did not give up, nor would her convictions leave her; yet, she was a stranger to the comforts of a lively hope. In this way she went on for about fourteen years. I had lost sight of her for a very long time, but was at length requested to visit her, as she was on her death bed, suffering from one of the most painful internal complaints which can torture the human frame. Her sufferings were excruciating. Never did I see a poor creature suffer more. But when I entered her chamber, I found her full of joy and peace. She was most happy, though about to leave her children and her husband, she had evidently a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better. After a little introductory conversation, I enquired, "What produced such a change in the state of your mind?" She reminded me of her convictions under the sermon referred to, and of many dreary years of depression and sadness she had passed through, and added, "I continued in that state until I came into this trial. But at the commencement of it, I was reading a letter written by an old minister, in which he said, to one in a similar state to mine, 'You must look out of self—you must look away to Jesus—you must look to Jesus only.' Suddenly, a light shone into my soul, I saw my mistake, I instantly looked to Jesus, and I was happy."

"But," said I, "you have often heard me say the very same thing." "Yes," she said, "but it never struck me before as it did then; I did not think that I was looking into self, or that I was taken up with myself, instead of being taken up with Christ. But now I saw it clearly, I looked away from everything to Jesus, and I had peace, I was pardoned, I was happy." I visited her after that, but she had no doubts, or fears, or darkness, or gloom. Her confidence in Christ was strong and abiding. Peace flowed into her soul like a river. Nor shall I ever forget, on one occasion, when her sufferings were dreadful, with what a look she said to me, "O sir, it is such a comfort, that though my sufferings are so great, I have never once been led to think that the Lord deals hardly with me. No, I never have a hard thought of God, I can give up my children, and my all. Christ is so precious. Yes, I do look to Jesus, I do look out of self, and away from self, to Jesus alone. O, what I suffered for so many years, just because I did not look to Jesus." In this happy state she lingered long, but at length departed full of joy and peace, to see Jesus in his glory, to whom she had looked for life and salvation.

Reader, how is it with you? Have you peace? Do you joy in God? Is the experience of primitive Christians yours? Should I be justified in addressing you, as Peter addressed them, "*Whom having not seen ye love, and in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.*" If not, why is it? The Lord Jesus is the same now, as he was then. You have as clear a warrant to believe in him as they had. Faith in Jesus is as powerful now as then. The simple believer will be as happy as they were. Depend upon it, if you are not happy in Jesus, there is a cause, and that cause is in yourself. It is not in him. It is not in the Gospel. It is in yourself alone. May it not be with you, as it was with my

friend, that you are looking *into* self, instead of looking *out of* yourself? That you are looking *at* yourself, instead of looking *to* Jesus? If so, you never will enjoy peace, you never will walk at liberty, you never can joy in God, until you look entirely away from everything within you, or without you, and look to Christ alone. There was no healing for the bitten Israelites, but by looking away from everything to the brazen serpent on the pole. They might look at their swollen and inflamed limbs, and talk of the fire that was coursing through their veins, until they died, nothing but fixing the eye on the brazen serpent could bring them healing. Just so, you may look at your past life, or at the present state of your heart; you may talk of your feelings, or your actions; but there is no peace, no joy, no salvation for you, but by looking away from everything within you, and everything without you, and fixing the eye on Jesus alone. He is God's ordinance of salvation. Whosoever looketh to him shall live. No matter who the person is, what sort of character he has been, or what his present feelings are, if he looks to Jesus he is saved, and saved for ever. On the other hand, it is no matter what he does, what he believes, what he promises, or what he feels; if he does not look away from all to Jesus, he cannot be happy, he cannot be holy, he cannot be saved. It is to be feared that many are in this state. They do not perceive that all they want is in Christ, and that all they want becomes theirs by the simple exercise of faith in Christ. Only look to Christ, and he is your wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Only look to Christ, and though you are destitute of all that is good, that moment you are complete in him. Only look to Jesus, and though you had all the sins of all the men who have lived from Adam's day to this, charged upon you, that moment you would be justified from all things. Only look to Jesus, and the Holy Spirit will comfort, witness to, and fill your heart with joy. Only look to Jesus, and you will have to sing,

"Soon as my soul I ventured, on Christ's atoning blood;
The Holy Spirit entered, and I had peace with God."

Believer, you have enjoyed peace, you have been happy in Jesus; beware lest anything come between the eye of your mind, and the person of your Saviour. No matter what it is, it will rob you of your peace, and spoil you of your joy. If you look at the state of your heart, and do not speedily look away from it to Jesus, you will be cast down. If you look at your prayers, praises, duties, enjoyments, or experience, or anything else, no matter what, you will soon feel the consequences. There must be nothing between you and your heavenly Father, but Jesus; and between you and Jesus, there must be literally nothing. If you work, it must be looking unto Jesus. If you suffer, it must be looking unto Jesus. If you meet death, or anticipate the judgment, it must be with the eye fixed on Jesus. Reader, whoever you are, whatever you are, you must look out of self, you must look away from self, you must look away from the bad and the good, and look to Jesus only. This is God's way of salvation. Therefore take heed, lest the minister, the ordinances, your own sins, or the hardness, deadness, dullness, or coldness of your own heart comes between you and Jesus. The naked eye, fixed upon the naked Saviour, brings peace to the conscience, joy to the heart, and salvation to the soul; therefore, look, look, look to Jesus! Look *from* all to Jesus, look *for* all to Jesus, and look *under* all to Jesus. Look to Jesus only, always, and for ever.

Cheltenham. May 4th.

THE BELIEVER'S PROPRIETORSHIP IN THE DIVINE PROMISES.

BY THE REV. OCTAVIUS WINSLOW, D.D.

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises."—Pet. ii. 1—4.

THE providences of God often appears to clash with, and to contradict, the promise of God; but in the history of the Church of Christ the providences of

the divine government are not the exponents of the promises of the divine governor. It is not so much by what God *does*, as by what God has *said*, that he is to be judged. How gloomy and portentous are the providences, weaving their sable robe about the person of God's beloved servant, and yet, in all these circumstances, so trying to faith, the unseen hand of the eternal One is moving. They are but the veiling, not the extinguishing clouds, that obscure for a "little moment" the purposes of him who is "wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working," around whose throne clouds and darkness gather; who "giveth no account of any of his matters," and yet who causes all things to work together for good to them that love him. Christian mourner, in the divine promises you have an equal proprietorship. They are "*sure mercies*" of which you are the possessor. These promises are exceedingly great and precious in their nature—they are personal and particular in their application—they are absolute and infallible in their fulfilment. Death may appear to be written upon the promise, and upon all the means leading to its accomplishment, but there is a *life* in the promise that cannot die. See how God wrote the sentence of death upon the promise, as in the case of the age of Abraham—the sterility of Sarah—the abduction of Joseph—the demand for Benjamin—the banishment of David;—and yet in all these instances, the word upon which God caused those waiting souls to hope, was made good to the letter; and the promise that appeared dead rose again with a life all the more vigorous and glorious from its long and gloomy entombment. It is the believer's mercy to know that he has to do with a divine Promiser whose faithfulness has been proved, and with a promise whose power has been tested. There is not a promise with which the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, seeks to succour and console you, but has passed through the crucible, and has been "*tried as silver is tried.*" "*The word of the Lord is tried.*" And if it be a fearful sin to doubt what God has declared, it is a two-fold aggravation of that sin not to believe, when a thousand times over he has made good what he has promised, and when a great cloud of witnesses testify that he has never once falsified his word. And if, tried Christian, others wading, perhaps, through deeper and darker waters than those through which you are now passing, found the promises of God to be "Yea and amen in Christ Jesus," and proved their buoyant and upholding power, bearing them through the flood and in safety to the shore, why should you fear? Are you in *trial*!—the promise is: "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will answer thee, and deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Are you in *sorrow*!—the promise is: "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Are you a *widow*?—the promise is: "Let your widows trust in me." Are you an *orphan*?—the promise is: "In me the fatherless find mercy." Are you *homeless*!—the promise is: "God setteth the solitary in families." Are you *friendless*!—the promise is: "A friend loveth at all times, and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Are you bowed down beneath the *burden of sin*!—the promise is: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." O embrace these precious promises of him that "cannot lie," and give to the winds all your unbelieving fears. Thus will your hand be strengthened in God.

But this truth is too momentous and too precious thus to be dismissed. Fain, dear reader, would I concentrate your whole soul upon its vastness—*ЖЕЛОВАН*, the strength, the consolation, and the hope of his people. There is no case of adversity, of grief, of embarrassment, of peril—peculiar, dark, and desperate as it may be—to which I would not, without the least reservation, and without a solitary misgiving, exclaim, "*Hope thou in God.*" All other hope may now be cut off, every star hidden, every ray extinguished—no hope in friends, no hope in kindred, no hope in saints—least of all, no hope in yourself—yet would I say, there is *hope in God*. Your case cannot exceed his power, his wisdom, his mercy. It may have confounded human wisdom, it may have exceeded human

might, it may have wearied human patience, it may have exhausted human sympathy—yet have faith and hope in God, and you shall yet praise him. Believe that he will help you. Or, if your faith staggers at his willingness, believe that he is *able* to help you. Or, if that is too great a grasp for your faith, believe that it is *possible* that there is help for you in God; and, acting upon the bare possibility, go to him in lowliness, confessing sin, reminding him of his own word, pleading the name of Jesus, and you shall joyfully and gratefully exclaim, "The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him."

THE "END:"

"For surely there is an end."—Prov. xxiii. 18.

God is an Eternal Being—the soul of man is immortal—the glory of heaven is undying, and the torments of hell are everlasting; yet, "Surely there is an end," but that "end" is to

I. Our religious privileges.

Here we have many precious "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord"; many golden opportunities of obtaining more grace, more light, and more love into our hearts; and of sitting under the shadow of the cross, till our hearts are all dissolved in love: here we may sit and drink of that "River, the streams whereof make glad the city of God," and eat of that "Bread which came down from heaven." There we may "come boldly to the throne of grace, and obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in time of need;" in short, we may now hold communion with the Father and with his Son Jesus: Christ. But soon a change will take place. Our Sabbaths will be all gone; our time will have fled; our opportunities will be for ever past; and then shall we know more fully that there is an *end*. But what if we have not used these privileges for our spiritual good? What if we have allowed them to pass by unimproved? Tell me, O ye who forget God, "What shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?" But there surely is an end to

II. Our opportunities of doing good.

"Time speeds away, away, away;" and in a few years at most, time with us will be no more. Now we are surrounded by men who "Fear not God," and have, therefore an opportunity of telling what God has done for our souls. Now, we can find the child who is "left to himself," a Lazarus wanting bread, a school which lacks assistance, a house without a Bible, and a disciple who has no earthly friend in the day of need. But soon we shall be deprived of the pleasure of doing good to our fellowmen; soon our voice will be hushed, and our strength will fail. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith;" being persuaded that there is "No work, nor knowledge, nor device in the grave," whither we are all hastening.

III.—Remember, too, that our *trials* and *afflictions* are to have an end. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous;" but by and by the Lord will deliver him out of them all. Then shall the end come to all our sorrows and pains, temptations and fears. The mortal tenement shall be dissolved, and the blood-washed spirit wing its way to the kingdom of heaven. Blessed thought!—*there is an end*. Oh, ye children of God, think of that as ye wring your hands in grief, think of it as ye tread the thorny wilderness, and battle with the hosts of

"Foes without and fears within."

Think of the *end* when ye thread your way through courts, and alleys and bye-

ways; as ye search for an object of your charity, or drop the tear of sympathy with the bereaved, or over the couch of a beloved one. Remember, to all your sorrows, afflictions, bereavements, and life itself, there will surely be an end.

“Lift your eyes of faith and see”

“The multitude which no man can number,” and remember that

“Out of great distress they came;
Washed their robes by faith below,
In the blood of yonder Lamb—
Blood that washes white as snow.”

Yes; there is an end for both saint and sinner. An end to the broad as well as to the narrow way; to the revilings of the ungodly as well as to the sighs of the righteous; for when God gathers the wheat into his garner, he will bind the tares in bundles and cast them into the unquenchable fire.

Reader, which *end* is likely to be thine?—Eternal life or the second death? The kingdom of God or the pit of Hell?

JOSEPHUS BAILEY.

Bewdley.

COMFORT IN AFFLICTION.

“Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.”—Ps. xxxiv. 19.

THAT “man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upwards,” has been proved in the experience of the children of God in all ages of the world. Could we now soar aloft to the bright regions of peace and love, and enquire whence came the holy and happy spirits of just men there assembled, we should be answered, “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;” and if we glance at the Church militant here on earth, we shall see her members in the furnace of affliction, undergoing purification ere they join the glorious company of saints and angels in the Church triumphant.

But although affliction is the portion, at one time or another, of all those called by divine grace, yet great are its consolations. The world looks upon a believer and wonders to see him endure with such calmness and fortitude the vicissitudes of life, little imagining the grace and joy which religion yields, rendering him happy even in the midst of conflict. The Christian remembers that his home is not here, this is not his rest; therefore, while passing through this “desert world,” as a stranger and a pilgrim, he is neither depressed by its brief sorrows, nor elated by its delusive and fleeting joys. The sweet hope of becoming an inhabitant of “fairer worlds on high,” bears him up, and enables him finally to pass through every trial more than conqueror, through Christ Jesus the Lord.

Affliction may consist of two kinds—spiritual or earthly. The soul is in spiritual sorrow when burdened with the sense of its own sinfulness; but speedily and surely that sorrow will give place to holy gratitude and joy, when the guilty sinner has fled to Jesus as his only hope. But sometimes, even when the sinner has bathed in the “fountain open for sin and for uncleanness,” God may see fit to try him by causing him to walk in darkness, without one ray of light to cheer the midnight gloom. In those dark seasons of spiritual distress, let us always trust God though we may not see him.

To experience sensible joy, and an assurance that we are God’s, is very comforting and cheering, while passing through a world of sorrow; but those feelings are not necessary to salvation. Instead of looking implicitly to Christ, we are

too apt to trust to mere feelings, as if by *them* we were to be saved. We must strive to live on *Jesus*, not on our own frames:—

“Comforts are sweet, a choice-wish'd privilege,
But not essentials that ensure our crown;
Which oft wise love its dearest saint denies.
We count bright days and calms must follow prayer,
Forgetting that in Scripture stands enroll'd,
A mourning Hāman and a tempted Job.”

Often a child of God is borne down with the swift tide of earthly sorrow and trial, and were it not for the sweet hope of rest in the “many mansions” of his Father’s home he would be desolate indeed. Oh! how comforting and delightful in time of distress, to go to that heavenly Friend and pour all our griefs into his sympathising ear. The throne of grace is indeed a sweet retreat to which the afflicted soul may fly and find shelter from the stormy gales of life’s voyage. Oh! for increased faith in our merciful God, faith that will enable us in the dark path of adversity and sorrow to cling to him with steadfast love; and we need never fear what may be our position in this dreary world; but safe and happy beneath the smiles of his countenance, we shall welcome alike affliction or prosperity, knowing all must be well that a wise and kind Father appoints. Adversity is most beneficial, for if everything went on smoothly we should be in danger of setting our affections on earth instead of in heaven; we should be in danger of forgetting God, and all he has done for us, and so God permits affliction to hurl its arrows at us and remind us that we are but sojourners here below, journeying to a happy and eternal home above.

Afflicted believer, cheer up, let not the “tear drop of sorrow” dim thine eye, for such as you are given “exceeding great and precious promises.” If thine all were laid here, ye might be depressed and sad; but for God’s dear children there is “an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away.” Gloom may shroud thy weak vision for a moment, but canst not thou discern, through the darkness that reigns, a little comfort? Look with the eye of faith beyond the sky of azure blue. Canst not thou see Jesus holding a glorious crown? And what are the sweet words flowing as honey from his dear lips? Listen, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

SIMPLEX.

SIN.

LOOK now at sin; pluck off that painted mask, and turn upon her face the lamp of the Bible. We start; it reveals a death’s head. I stay not to quote texts descriptive of sin; it is a debt, a burden, a thief, a sickness, a leprosy, a plague, a poison, a serpent, a sting—everything that man hates it is; a load of evils beneath whose most crushing, intolerable pressure “the whole creation groaneth.” Name me the evil that springs not from this root—the crime that lies not at this door. Who is the hoary sexton that digs man a grave? Who is the painted temptress that steals his virtue? Who is the murderer that destroys his life? Who is the sorceress that first deceives, and then damns his soul? Sin! Who, with icy breath, blights the sweet blossoms of youth? Who breaks the hearts of parents? Who brings grey hairs with sorrow to the grave? Who, by a more hideous metamorphosis than Ovid ever fancied, changes sweet children into vipers, tender mothers into monsters, and their fathers into worse than Herods, the murderers of their own innocents? Sin! Who casts the apple of discord on home hearths? Who lights the torch of war, and carries it over happy lands? Who, by divisions in the church, rends Christ’s seamless robe? Sin! Who is this Delilah that sings the Nazarite asleep, and delivers the strength of God into the hands of the uncircumcised?

Who, with smiles on her face and honied flattery on her tongue, stands in the door to offer the sacred rights of hospitality, and when suspicion sleeps, pierces our temples with a nail? What Siren is this, who, seated on a rock by the deadly pool, smiles to deceive, sings to lure, kisses to betray, and flings her arms around our neck, to leap with us into perdition? Sin! Who petrifies the soft and gentle heart, hurls reason from her throne, and impels sinners, mad as Gandarene swine, down the precipice into the lake of fire? Sin! Who, having brought the criminal to the gullows, persuades him to refuse a pardon, and with his own hand to bar the door against the messenger of mercy? What witch of hell is it that thus bewitches us? Sin! Who nailed the Son of God to that bloody tree? and who, as if it were not a dove descending with the olive, but a vulture swooping down to devour the dying, vexes, grieves, thwarts, repels, drives off the Spirit of God? Who is it that makes man in his heart and habits baser than a beast; and him, who was once but little lower than an angel, but little better than a devil? Sin! Thou art a hateful and horrible thing; that "abominable thing which God hates." And what wonder? Thou hast insulted his Holy Majesty; thou hast crucified the Son of his infinite love; thou hast vexed his gracious Spirit; thou hast defied his power; thou hast despised his grace; and, in the body and blood of Jesus, as if that were a common thing, thou has trodden under feet his matchless mercy. Surely, brethren, the wonder of wonders is, that sin is not that abominable thing which we also hate.

THE WELL WATERED GARDEN.

BY THE REV. J. HAMILTON, D.D.

"A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters,
Streams from Lebanon."

THE plants in Christ's garden, so various and so pleasant, owe their vitality and vigour to the "fountain of gardens"; and this fountain is called both "a well of living waters," and "streams from Lebanon." Even in our own isle, with all its clouds and vapours, there is sometimes danger lest the garden be burnt up; and when the leaves hang flaccid on the newly planted shrub, and when delicate blossoms shrivel up, refusing to open to the scorching beam; as soon as the sun has set, you go to the brook or the fountain and lave the roots with a plentiful libation; and then, when the morrow dawns, the leaves spread out so broad and firm, and the reviving blossoms look up, and thank you with a smile. But in sultrier lands they do not even trust to this. In the gardens of Damascus you may see so many channels digged, and along them all a little rill meandering, and conveying to the foot of each pomegranate or orange tree the

streams from Lebanon; the very river which has melted from the snowy peaks, and which, after refreshing the tall cedars, now comes down to these sultry plains, and converts its dusty expanse into an earthly paradise. These world famed orchards do not depend on any tank or pond; but they drink "living water," and convert into cool shadow and delicious fruits the liquid treasure which the friendly mountain has hoarded since last winter.

The fountain of Christ's garden is the means of grace. A believer droops. In that corner of the garden where he is planted the soil is thin. It is a thirsty land where his lot is cast, a land where Christian society is rare, or where the preaching of the word is vague and vapid. And the good man feels it. His religion shrivels. The men by whose fervour he was wont to be roused or overawed, he now begins to regard as fanatics; and the good objects in which he was

once so hearty—missions to the heathen and reformatory institutions—he begins to call Utopian visions, and a useless waste of money. But still there is a little root of spiritual vitality, and as there comes into the region an earnest ministry, or as there settles in his neighbourhood a large-hearted and much-loving Christian friend, his feelings begin to freshen. There is a shudder through the depths of his being as when death re-awakens into life; and shocked at his backslidings, remembering whence he has fallen, he repents and does the first works. And as he begins to distribute tracts and teach a Sunday class, and take an interest in the surrounding cottagers, people would almost fancy that this was the zeal of a young convert; they would scarcely suppose that it was the revival of an expiring life; a return to first love on the part of an Ephesian backslider.

It is dry and dusty weather. The life which the Christian is constrained to lead is much of it too secular. His business takes him chiefly among worldly men, and at times he cannot help being exceedingly engrossed. Trade is precarious, the times are pressing, or he has set on foot a series of experiments, he has struck out a good idea, or commenced a line of traffic with which his mind is busy day and night. And he can hardly disguise it that the true treasure is dwindling, his soul is declining. But just then he is laid prostrate by sickness, or death enters his dwelling; he falls in with some remarkable book, or hears a rousing sermon; and as he reads, and listens, and ponders, he is amazed at his own languor, and yielding to the providential admonition, he renews his diligence in practical piety. The things unseen come to his spirit in closer contact, his prayers acquire a new fulness, precision, and sincerity, his watchfulness over himself is resumed, and the brightening up of all his pious tokens a secret source of refreshing.

But better than this dependence on such supplies as are brought from the cistern, is the case of the man who is "planted by the rivers of water," whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who makes it his habitual meditation. In other words, that piety is likely to be the most persistent and most progressive, where the appointed means of grace are steadily employed. The Word of God, the day of rest, the house of prayer, reading, meditation, worship, secret and social; these are the chief of the ordinary means. These are the channels along which the streams from Lebanon are conveyed to every tree in the garden;—the truths and thoughts which, born in the calm, pure regions overhead, flow along down the valley of Revelation, and which when filled and penetrated by the Spirit of God, become "living water." By far the most satisfactory Christians, the most abiding and most growthful, are those who are most steadfast in the use of these stated means; who gladly go up to the house of the Lord, who command their household and their children after them to keep his ways, who do not restrain prayer in secret, who are much and mighty in the Scriptures, and who when they meet with those who love the Lord prize the opportunity to speak together and to call upon his name; not only will their leaf not wither, and not only will what they produce come to perfection, but should it please the Lord to send a season of refreshing, they are the likeliest to profit by the plenteous rain.

Such, viewed by the Saviour, is his Church. Such is the combination of beneficence and beauty, of fragrance and fruitfulness, produced by the good Spirit of God, and brought together in the sacred inclosure of the Christian Church. And such is the Saviour's complacency in viewing the varied excellence of this redeemed and regenerate community.

"My bride! my love! In thee perfection meets:
A garden art thou, filled with matchless sweets;
A garden walled, those matchless sweets to shield;
A spring inclosed, a fountain fresh and scaled;

A paradise of plants, where all unite,
 Dear to the smell, the palate, or the sight;
 Of rich pomegranates, that at random blow;
 Cypress and nard in fragrant gales that flow;
 Nard, saffron, cinnamon, the dulcet air—
 Deep through its oases the calamus prepares;
 The scented aloes, and each shrub that showers
 Gums from its veins, and spices from its flowers.
 O pride of gardens! fount of endless sweets!
 Well-spring of all in Lebanon that meets.”*

JESUS IN JORDAN.

BY THE REV. G. A. ROGERS, M.A. †

I. THE TYPES.

WHAT wonders were performed at Jordan! Ere Jesus dipped his hallowed feet in its waters these wonders began. Its streams overflow with historic interest. Let us listen to the voice which rises from its banks.

Jordan rolled its swelling floods between Israel and the land of promise. The redeemed from Egypt are opposed by its deep waters.

But the Lord appears on Israel's behalf. “The priests bare the ark of the covenant to the brink of Jordan, and as soon as the soles of their feet touched the waters, they stood upon a heap. The priests went down, and stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, until all the people were passed clean over.” (See Joshua iii.)

Here was Jesus shadowed forth. Deep, and dark, and swelling too, are the floods which roll between the sinner, and the Canaan of rest and glory. But Jesus came down bearing upon his shoulders the ark of “the everlasting covenant”; stood firm in the midst of these waters, and made a dry pathway to the land of promise for all his people. Israel's safety is the presence of Jesus, upbearing the covenant of life. As long as he “stands firm,” the floods of wrath and destruction roar and threaten in vain. Not one drop of wrath can ever fall upon the least of his followers, whilst he remains, “the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever,” as the Lamb of God, bearing away their sins. All Israel pass over dryshod, under the shadow of his wings.

Because Jesus lives, his people live also.

Again, another wonder appears at Jordan! another figure of better things is recorded. Israel's great prophet smites its waters with his mantle, and instantly they are cleft asunder, and present a dry foot-road to that fiery chariot which carried him up to heaven. That wonder-working mantle fell upon earth, and in Elisha's hands wrought over again the same miracle. (See 2 Kings ii.)

Reader, see you not here a picture of spiritual things? Jesus is the forerunner of his people—with his own robe of righteousness he smote asunder the deep, dark waters of death, and hell, and passed up to his Father's throne in the fiery chariot of redemption's glory. But his all-wondrous mantle is with his believing people. “His righteousness, is unto all, and upon all them that believe.” Wrapped in this mantle they approach the deepest water-floods, which “part hither and thither.” They tread in the footprints of Jesus. They pass over Jordan as he passed over. And behold, a chariot of glory, borne by angel's wings, await to carry them to that mansion which he is gone to prepare for them.

What will *they* do who attempt, without this mantle, to ford the swellings of Jordan! A terrible thing, and awful, it would be, to sink for ever in making the attempt!

A third time in Old Testament story we visit Jordan's banks. Its

* Mason Goode. † Vide “Footsteps of Jesus”—Judd and Glass.

waters now speak another language, and mirror forth other truth. They no longer tell of sin and trouble, affliction and death. Their swelling depths symbolize redeeming love.

Naaman, the proud Syrian captain, comes from far, and at the prophet's bidding, as a leper white as snow, dips seven times in Jordan, and lo! "his flesh came again, like unto the flesh of a little child."

More leprous far are the souls which come to wash in Jesus' blood. But not less wondrous are its health-restoring virtues. All who wash are, made "clean every whit." "He that believeth is justified from all things." Not a "spot" of sin, nor of uncleanness remains. All sin is for ever purged away. There is "now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus": the cause of condemnation is for ever removed, the stain of guilt is wholly washed out. "The flesh of a little child," is but a faint emblem of the purity of the sin-

cleansed soul in the sight of a holy God. Jesus and his people are one. Though never so imperfect in themselves—though in themselves there dwelleth no good thing—they "*are*," nevertheless, "*washed, they are sanctified, they are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God.*" (1 Cor. vi. 11, 12.)

Reader, Naaman knew nought of the efficacy of Jordan's streams till he had *proved* them. He needed none to extol them after he had dipped himself seven times in them. You, too, can learn nothing of the power of Jesus' blood, till you have washed and have become clean. Its virtue must be *realized* to be known. Come and try it. "Dip seven times." Persevere in faith. Prove the remedy. You will find it cleansing, healing, soothing, purifying, and saving. Once applied to the guilty conscience, it will need no other voice to proclaim its wondrous power.

BIBLE APOLOGUES, AND THEIR APPLICATIONS.

BY THE REV. JOHN COX, LATE OF WOOLWICH.

No. III.—A WARNING TO THE UNWATCHFUL.

1 Kings xx.

THIS is a chapter of war, and contains, among several other striking incidents, animated descriptions of two great battles between Syria and Israel, both of which resulted in victory to the latter, though very much the feeblest nation. Benhadad the king of Syria, in the pride of barbaric power, besieged Samaria, and sent an insulting message to Ahab, king of Israel, claiming a right over all that he possessed. This insult was submitted to, which submission only drew forth still more unreasonable demands. These last were respectfully, but firmly declined, upon which the incensed despot mustered his hosts, resolved upon revenge. A fierce war of words was first waged, in which Ahab displayed some wit

and wisdom, but soon other weapons gleamed round the city, which seemed devoted to destruction. In the midst of the din and the danger, a prophet of the Lord appeared, and assured the king of Israel that the mighty hosts of the boasting Syrian should be delivered into his hands. The king sought direction of the prophet, soon God's word was made good, and Syria was overthrown. The prophet now announced that the baffled foe would return again the next year, and warned Ahab to prepare for the conflict.

Events proved the truth of the prediction. The servants of the king of Syria spake unto their master, saying, "The Gods of Israel are Gods of the hills, therefore they were

stronger than we; but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they." Again the hosts were mustered, and again the prophet appears, declaring in the Lord's name, "Because the Syrians have said, the Lord is God of the hills, but he is not God of the vallies, therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into their hand, and ye shall know that I am the Lord." This time the Syrians were completely crushed, and boasting Behadad, with his proud nobles, were obliged to beseech the clemency of Ahab. He was received with affection, and sent away in peace. No counsel was asked of the Lord, nor was the prophet sought out and consulted.

But now another divinely sent messenger appears, whose words and conduct furnish a singular and instructive *apologue*.

"And a certain man of the sons of the prophets said unto his neighbour in the word of the Lord, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man refused to smite him.

"Then said he unto him, Because thou hast not obeyed the voice of the Lord, behold, as soon as thou art departed from me, a lion shall slay thee. And as soon as he was departed from him, a lion found him, and slew him.

"Then he found another man, and said, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man smote him, so that in smiting he wounded him.

"So the prophet departed, and waited for the king by the way, and disguised himself with ashes upon his face.

"And as the king passed by, he cried unto the king: and he said, Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle; and, behold, a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt pay a talent of silver.

"And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone. And the king of Israel said unto him, So shall thy judgment be; thyself hast decided it.

"And he basted, and took the ashes away from his face; and the king of Israel discerned him that he was of the prophets.

"And he said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Because thou hast let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people.

"And the king of Israel went to his house heavy and displeased, and came to Samaria."

From this history we may learn to trace God's interference in human affairs. He is sovereign over all; he rules and over-rules, even where his authority is not recognized, nor his name known. The Lord hath not forsaken the earth. We see, too, with what ease he can overcome his enemies; all means are at his disposal, he can "strengthen the weak against the strong," and cause wars to take strange and unexpected turns, and thus it is proved that "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." This should induce dependence on God, and call forth earnest prayer to him. We learn also how jealous God is of the honor of his name; and that when proud man lifts up himself in vain boasting, the Lord sometimes appears, and crushes the rebel worm. But if he does not act thus, and permits pride and wickedness to triumph for a while, it will not be for long, a time is coming when it will be seen "that there is a God who judgeth in the earth."

The conduct of Ahab, and the comment of the prophet upon it, shews the danger of false humanity, and the consequences of want of sympathy with God. Ahab failed in the same way as Saul had done before him; both spared what God had doomed to destruction. False tenderness is real cruelty. "In private favour, there may be public unmercifulness." Ahab's peace with Behadad was rebellion against God. Let us beware as regards our spiritual foes; we are always in danger of being merciful to our worst enemies; we should seek to have the spirit of Samuel

and David, with reference to our inward and infernal opponents, so as to say in sincerity, "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee, and am I not grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred, I count them mine enemies."

But we turn from a king to a prophet, how singular and how solemn the whole transaction! To require a man to smite him, and then doom him to death for not doing it. How strange! Nor were his words uttered in vain, a lion slew the man who refused to do what had been required of him in the Lord's name. "When God's commands are clearly made known, however singular they may appear, there is no alternative but obedience or punishment." It is a mercy that we are not called to serve and glorify God by destroying men, or being the instruments of divine vengeance. How diligent should we be in our delightful work of mercy, and endeavour by every means to heal the wounded, and bind up the broken.

The smitten man now disguises himself, and puts forth a parable to the triumphant king; he receives a similar hasty decision to that which David returned to Nathan, and as in the case of David his own words condemn himself. He had no sooner uttered this sentence than the disguise was removed, and the suppliant was transformed into a judge. The sentence was brief and terrible. The king felt that these words were like thunderbolts. He had lately realised that the sayings of prophets were true; he was already the heir of several terrible threatenings, and now a new cloud of wrath was suspended over his devoted head. He heard, he became heavy and angry. He rushed to his palace with the prophet's words ringing in his ears. O, how unlike David now, we hear no voice of penitence exclaiming, "I have sinned against the Lord; we hear not the melody of pardoning mercy saying, "the Lord hath put away thy sin." All was silent; but it was the silence

which precedes the storm. The hurricane soon came, and there was no escape. This is unfolded in a following chapter.

Let us try to glean a little more instruction from the apologue; the following words are especially suggestive—"And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone." That which was only a fable, a mere supposition, as regards the prophet, is, we fear, a fact with many, and that as regards much more important things, than holding fast a prisoner of war.

The apologue contains the following points—a charge, neglect, failure, surprize, confession, and consequences. A responsibility consigned and received—want of watchfulness through being busy in other things—and then a confession of failure. We gather from the whole the following observation. *Many persons through being busy here and there, let that go, which entails upon them serious, and in some cases, irreparable loss.*

We might apply this sentiment to the affairs of this life. How many lose health of body, neglect valuable opportunities for the improvement of their minds, and make shipwreck of domestic joys, through undue attention to trifling things, or meddling with matters which do not at all concern them. While busy in trifling, or in taking pleasure, or indulging sinful lusts, health decays, life passes away, opportunities which can never return are lost; and disease of body, ignorance of things useful, and alienation and discord in families, are the sad consequences.

But we would apply our remarks more especially to the care of the soul. Man, with an immortal soul, is travelling on to judgment and eternity; and the one, the chief concern with him should be, that his soul is saved. But, alas, instead of being in right earnest about their soul's salvation, many are like the man in the apologue, busy here and there, till life and opportunity are gone. The Lord Jesus describes God's dealings with man, and man's conduct towards God, to the very life, in the parable of the

marriage supper. It is proclaimed that "all things are ready," and the invitation is, "Come ye to the marriage." But excuses are made; the parties invited are busy here and there; one has bought some oxen, another has purchased some ground, and a third has married a wife; and all these things are done with the words sounding around them; "what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul." "Agonize to enter in at the straight gate, for many I say unto you shall seek to enter in and shall not be able, when once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door." Ah! how will such feel when they stand without, and cry in vain for admittance.

Reader, again I entreat you to ask the question, What am I? What is my great concern, the main object of my life? Are you busy here and there, or intent on *one* thing? Are you chasing a thousand vanities, or earnestly pursuing one verity? What have your convictions resulted in, how do you feel affected towards God's word and prayer? Have you received Christ, and is he precious to you? Can you say with the Apostle, "Yea, doubtless I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord"; or does God's eye see that his well-beloved Son is despised, and not esteemed by you. Oh ye who are busy about earth's shadows, lay to heart God's counsels and claims, and trifle no more! One hath well said, "it is by excessive attention to *lawful* things that the souls of many are ruined." How strikingly is this brought out in the xlix. Psalm. While thus acting; while their plans are succeeding, and their riches increasing; these busy ones "bless their own souls, and men praise them"; yet how dreadful their doom, and how fearful their eternal dwelling-place. Life gone, and what then! "They are like the beasts that perish; like sheep they are laid in the grave, they go to the generation of their fathers, and shall never see light!" Let us mourn over, and be

warned by the sad fact, that the busy life of most ends in disappointment, disgrace, and eternal ruin. While life lasts, let us warn such with all earnestness and affection.

The sentiment before us may be applied to the *service of God*. Here we address the children of God. You, dear brethren, have professed to be on the Lord's side. You have received Christ, and given yourself to Him. You know the value of the one great sacrifice, and you feel that it is your reasonable service "to present yourselves as a living sacrifice." Your hopes are glorious, your privileges are great, your obligations are deep, your foes are many, and your dangers are real. In a word,

"A charge to keep you have,
A God to glory."

And there is a great danger of your neglecting that charge, and failing to honour God, by being busy about things, which after all are not really *your* business. It is a disease of human nature to be busy about *something*; and to neglect the *main thing*. This wrong tendency of our nature cleaves to the regenerate, and manifests itself in a variety of ways. Satan is continually tempting the saints thus to act, and many have fallen into his snare, to their great loss. It may be that the things which God sets before his people as the sphere of their service are apparently little; work out of sight, which can have no plaudits from man; and the heart yearns for something great and public, for which it may be no opportunity is presented; or suitable gifts possessed. While busy here and there, seeking *great* things for *themselves*, the charge is gone. The child grows up untaught and untrained; the neighbour dies and is not spoken too; the opportunity of favourably impressing an enemy of truth by "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," is lost; and the running here and there to reach the distant and the great, results in nothing after all. Let us hear the words of wisdom. " whatsoever thing hand *findeth* to do, do it with thy might." "Whatsoever ye do, do it

heartily as to the Lord and not unto man." Let us beware of our own "here and there," and pay supreme regard to the Lord's "where." Let us watch against forgetfulness, and cherish a spirit of attention to God's claims. Work without prayer and watchfulness will end in failure.

And suppose that there has been failure, and that we are realizing the consequences. If what was a fable as regards the prophet, is a fact with us; still we should not despond, nor imitate Ahab in his sullenness and gloom. His sorrow was of a wrong kind, we should cherish that "godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation," that produces carefulness, fear, and vehement desire, 2 Cor. vii. 9, 10. Let us go and tell our gracious King of all our short comings, faithlessness, and fears. He has never failed in his undertakings, he has in all things come up to God's idea of faithfulness; and yet he is merciful. He can have "compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way." He is a perfect pattern for us, and can freely sympathize with us. He will pass no harsh sentence on the soul that mourns over failure in duty, and desires to be wholly his servant. He will give such an one "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness," Is. lxi. 3. "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" is on his priestly mitre, and he will bear away the iniquity of our holy things. If we seek deeper, richer fellowship with his love, and depend more simply on his precious blood, we shall be more fully devoted to his service. *Looking unto Jesus will keep "the eye single."*

One closing thought. We may learn

from this apologue *to take care of our prisoners*. By these we mean mortified sins and dethroned habits. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." The tyrants which enslaved them are now prisoners; they are not dead, and require careful watching, or they may break loose, go at large, and do much mischief. How often, while "busy here and there," where we really had no business at all, has some evil temper, or mischievous habit broken out, and sad results have followed. We conclude in the earnest language of the excellent Dr. Goodwin's, "Work your hearts to an hatred of sin by the consideration of its being the cause of Christ's death. If a man had killed your friend, or father, or mother, you would not endure the sight of him, but would follow the law upon him, as in the old law they did, if they fled not to the city of refuge. Send out the avenger of blood with a hue and cry after thy sin; bring it before God's judgment seat; arraign it, accuse it, spit on it, condemn it, and thyself for it. Have it to the cross, nail it there; if it cry 'I thirst,' give it vinegar. Stretch the body of sins upon his cross, stretch every vein of it, make the heart-strings crack; and then, when it hangs there, triumph over the dying of it, shew it no pity, laugh at its destruction; say, thou hast been a bloody husband to me, hang there and rot. And when thou art tempted to it, and art very thirsty after the pleasure of it, say of that opportunity to enjoy it, as David said of the water of Bethlehem, 'It is the price of Christ's blood, and pour it upon the ground.'"

THE MAIDEN OF MOAB; OR, TRUE AND FALSE RELIGION.

Intended for the Young.

BY THE REV. W. P. BALFERN, OF BOW.

II. THE APPROACH.

"Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger."—RUTH ii. 10.

IN reading the word of God, there is perhaps nothing more strikes the mind of the Christian, and excites in

him greater admiration, than the peculiar way in which Jehovah has thought well to make known his mind to man.

Viewing with the eye of infallible prescience, and grasping, with invincible pertinacity, each step which his loved Church would have to tread in the wilderness, every foe which would assail her, every item of which her experience would be composed, he could select and separate a people from the nations of the earth, in whose history, as connected with himself as their great King and Lawgiver, a perfect picture should be given of the history and experience of his true and spiritual Church, down to the end of time. To this people he also made many promises, precious, no doubt, to them, and often fulfilled in their experience, containing many earthly blessings; but which promises are so worded by the Holy Ghost, as sweetly to flow into the spiritual wants of a spiritual people, to whom, in a spiritual sense, they are equally as welcome and nourishing as they were literally and naturally to the people to whom originally made. Thus the spiritual eye beholds a people within a people, a path within a path, a history within a history, and a promise within a promise.

The same wonderful feature of God's book may be seen in the history of many of the individuals recorded therein. In the history of David we have his own history, the history of Christ, and that of every saint. Thus we see persons within persons, experience within experience, sorrows within sorrows, joys within joys, truth within truth, in that book which is the infidel's scorn, but the believer's joy. How does this view of God's book enhance the wisdom of God, prove the strength of his foresight, the grandeur of his infinite mind, the depth of his counsels and power of his arm, which thus with ease and facility rolls up history within history, and truth within truth; which makes the hand of providence so move a people, as to set forth the movements of his church, and individuals so to act, and to come into such circumstances as to set forth the path of the saint, and the influence of divine life in the soul, and even throws the visible universe

into such a form as to symbolize spiritual things.

These truths are beautifully shadowed forth in the history of Ruth and Orpah, whom we have already viewed as types of true and false religion. Their conduct towards their mother-in-law, Naomi, when about to return to her native country, clearly sets forth the conduct of the true, nor less that of the false disciple of Immanuel. Orpah would kiss her mother-in-law, and in the manifestation of her affection far exceeded the quiet, but sincere and decided Ruth. But when the period came when something more was required than words, or a kiss, Orpah fails; Moab has her heart, and in Moab she will stay; like many professors of the name of Christ, who will talk but not follow him whom they will talk about. Ruth, however, cleaves to Naomi with a "where thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." A fine picture have we here of the true disciple, whose heart being touched by divine grace, is led to cleave to and follow his Lord through evil and through good report, not being ashamed of his cross.

In the approach of Ruth to Boaz we no less clearly behold the approach of the real convert to the feet of our heavenly Boaz, even Christ. "Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, why have I found grace in thy eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger." So approaches the humble penitent the footstool of mercy, seeking that pardon of which he deeply feels his need, and in fulfilment of the promises made to Christ, as the Mediator of the covenant and great Head of the Church. Isaiah lx. 14.

Conscious guilt or sin felt and deplored will ever bend the knees of the proudest man; and those who have not, like Job, placed their mouth in the dust, or like Ruth, come bending with mingled shame and reverence into the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords, furnish no evidence that they have as yet taken one step

towards the kingdom of God, or the smile of the heavenly Boaz. The nearer Ruth approached to Boaz the lower she bowed herself; and the nearer the seeking sinner gets to Christ, under the light and teaching of the Spirit, the lower he bows himself with conscious humility, overpowered by the effulgent beams of his glory, and the ten thousand beauties he beholds in the face of him whom he once despised; while by the contrast presented he sees his own imperfections, the sight of which prostrates him in the dust at the feet of his Lord, whose pardon he implores, and whose smile he seeks. High thoughts of self cannot live in the presence of Christ; they show their heads at times, and it must be confessed frequently, in the hearts of the sanctified, and from thence travel to their lips, while yet they do not reign except when at a distance from him whom they love. Where they reign to the entire exclusion of Christ, and on account of their swelling importance, no room is found in the heart for the "Man of sorrows," it shews that as yet divine grace has not scattered the dark night of an unregenerate state, and that the happy and becoming position of Ruth is unknown. A sight of the king under the melting influence of the holy and ever blessed Comforter and Revealer of Christ, and prostration of soul, go together in the experience of the saint, Isaiah iv. 1; and the reason this state of soul is unknown to many, is, because the king has never thus been seen.

But Ruth, though she came empty-handed from the land of Moab, and stooped with her face to the ground, had something to say; a sense of her condition pressed words from her lips, and though few, how impressive. "Why," she exclaims, "have I found grace in thine eyes?" Here was a confession of her low origin, blended with adoring gratitude and admiration at the treatment she received. So approaches the weeping, broken-hearted supplicant the feet of Jesus,

not to claim, but to plead; not to boast, but to confess; not to dictate, or palliate his crimes, but to pray and implore mercy; and while sin, felt in the conscience, presses cries from his lips, and tears from his eyes, some little intimation of mercy, undeserved, and perception of the worth of him, at whose feet he lies, blends oftentimes the language of wonder, adoring gratitude, and admiration, with the most ardent cries for mercy; while he exclaims with Ruth, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" So wondered one of the favoured ones of old. "Who am I, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" So wondered one, also, who was privileged not only to lie at the feet of Christ, but to lean upon his bosom; and who, identifying himself with brethren, exclaimed, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called sons of God;" that we, strangers, we, aliens, we, poor sinful creatures, dwelling as we have, contentedly, in the Moab of this world, and in love with its idols, that we should find favour in the eyes of the heavenly Boaz. Wherefore is it, say such, that I should find favour; I, a traitor; I, a rebel; a sin-contaminated creature, who might have been eternally despised.

Reader, if you have been in Ruth's position, you will understand Ruth's language; but if both position and language are strange to thee, thou art a stranger to God and thyself; and living and dying thus in the Moab of this world, with it thou wilt be consumed. O seek that repentance may be thine, that, Ruth-like, thou mayest cleave to him who alone can save, whose loving bosom is still open to every broken-hearted, returning prodigal, and whose voice, in his word, still utters forth the sweet and gladdening welcome, "And let him that is athirst, come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life, freely."

MONTHLY SUMMARY.

THE Annual Missionary Meetings of the Baptist denomination have been pretty numerously attended, and the tone throughout highly devout and spiritual.

The efforts of Sir B. Hall, M.P., and others, to introduce a continental observance—or rather violation—of the Sabbath, has been signally defeated. Puseyite clergymen, the "Tiras," Charles Dickens, the novelist, and Holvoake, the Secularist infidel, are combining their influence and efforts to recover the ground they have lost. Let the friends of religion unit to their energies, and in vain will be the renewed efforts of these enemies of God and man. The Committee of the House on Sir W. Clay's Church-rate Bill, stands adjourned.

LITERARY NOTICES.

Christian Baptism. Is it the Immersion of Believers, or the Sprinkling of Infants, as testified by Pædo-Baptists? By DAVID WALLACE. 12mo, pp. 86. London: Houlston and Stoneman.

The writer, who was once an Episcopalian, has brought forward abundant evidence in favor of Believer's baptism, from witnesses wholly belonging to Pædo-baptists. The book is invaluable as a text book.

The Homilist, and Bi-Monthly Review. Edited by the Rev. DAVID THOMAS. Nos. xxviii. and xxix. London: Ward & Co. THIS well-conducted and talented serial continues to take precedence of all homiletic publications. We cannot endorse all the doctrinal views of its several contributors—indeed, to many of these we demur—at the same time we most readily acknowledge the work to be highly intellectual and suggestive, supplying germs of thought for earnest thinkers; to none others will it be of any service.

Hymns of Truth for Schools—Original and Select. By the Editor of the "Little Gleaner." London: J. J. Lemare.

This book contains upwards of 130 hymns, the greater part of which are excellently adapted for children.

Objections to Certain Doctrines generally held by persons culling themselves Brethren, &c. By a Servant of the Church. London: J. J. Lemare.

We most cordially recommend this expose of what we have long considered to be anti-scriptural in faith and practice.

Christian Solicitude, as exemplified in the Third Chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians. By the late Rev. JAMES HARRINGTON EVANS, A. M., sometime Fellow of Wadham College, Oxford, and Minister of St. John's Chapel, Bedford Row. 16mo, pp. 388. London: J. F. Shaw, 27, Southampton Row.

This is an charming book. It is full of spiritual thoughts, rich experience, and instructive counsels; and is particularly suitable for presents to young Christians. We have no doubt of its having a very extensive circulation.

Portions for the Sick and Solitary Christian.

By the Rev. ROBERT WHYTEHEAD, M. A., Rector of All-Saints, North Street, York. pp. 288. London: J. F. Shaw.

THIS volume consists of one hundred meditations on select passages of Scripture, written by a Clergyman of the National Church, who is not only a scribe well instructed in doctrinal and experimental truth, but who has a very happy method of giving expres-

sion to his views on the several texts placed at the head of each of these exercises. The portions are well adapted to yield comfort and instruction in the season of affliction and solitude.

The Congregational Pulpit, Edited by the Rev. T. G. HORTON. Vol. I., containing twenty-one Sermons from the MSS. of some of the most eminent Dissenting Divines. Crown 8vo, pp. 328. London: Judd and Glass.

The volume contains sermons of different degrees of merit; many of them are of first-rate excellence: to ministers, and indeed to all students of theology—it will prove exceedingly valuable.

The Practical Stenographer; or, Short-Hand for Schools and Self-Instruction, on an entirely New System. By E. SOREK. With numerous plates of Diagrams. London: Darton & Co.

A book which we can advisedly recommend to all who are desirous of learning this useful, we had almost said indispensable, art.

A Visit to Calvary. A Sermon by the Rev. C. H. SPURGEON. pp. 24. London: Alabaster & Passmore; and J. Paul.

New Park Street Library. Edited by the Rev. C. H. SPURGEON. No. I., pp. 48, price 6d. London: Alabaster & Passmore; and J. Paul.

Come ye Children. A Sermon addressed to Sunday school teachers, by the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark. pp. 24. London: Alabaster and Passmore; and J. Paul.

THE first of these is a Sermon preached by Mr. SPURGEON at Hanover Square Rooms, and is highly characteristic of this popular preacher, whose earnestness and power in preaching, Mr. Howard Hinton, a few days since, commended as a study to an assembly of Baptist preachers, educated at the several collegiate institutions belonging to our denomination.

The second consists of the two well-known sermons, of the immortal Whitfield, on Imputed Righteousness. In his introductory remarks, Mr. SPURGEON says, "I have selected Whitfield on Imputed Righteousness, not only from my intense admiration of the author, but also from a deep sense of the importance of the subject." It is neatly got up. We bid Mr. SPURGEON and his publishers God speed, and hope this serial will be every way successful.

MR. SPURGEON has displayed singular ingenuity and tact in the arrangement of the last of these discourses. He says, "I shall give you one doctrine, two encouragements, three

admonitions, four instructions, and *five* subjects for children." We have already, in a previous notice, given an outline of two of these. We have much pleasure in resuming our analysis of this interesting sermon.

"III. Now, thirdly, I give you **THREE** **ADMONITIONS**. The first is—*recollect whom you are teaching*. 'Come, ye children.' When you teach in Sabbath schools, you are, if it be possible, in a more responsible situation even than a minister. He preaches to grown up people, men of judgment, who, if they do not like what he preaches, have the option of going somewhere else; you teach children who have no option to go elsewhere. If you teach the child wrongly he believes you; if you teach him heresies he will receive them; what you teach him now he will never forget. You are beginning with the child; take care what you do with him. Many a child has been treated like the Indian children, who have copper plates put upon their foreheads, so that they may never grow. Have a care what you are after; you are teaching children; mind what you are doing. Put poison in the spring, and it will impregnate the whole stream. Take care what you are after, sir! You are twisting the sapling, and the old oak will be bent thereby. Have a care! It is a child's soul you are tampering with, if you are tampering at all; it is a child's soul you are preparing for eternity if God is with you.

"The second is, recollect that *you are teaching for God*. He who is doing a work for himself, let him do it as he likes; but he who is labouring for another, let him take care how he does his work; he who is employed by a monarch, let him beware how he performs his duty; he who labours for God, let him tremble lest he doth his work ill!

"The third admonition is—remember that *your children want teaching*. That makes your work all the more solemn. Your child wants teaching! He was born in iniquity; in sin did his mother conceive him. He has an evil heart; he knows not God, and he never will unless he is taught.

"IV. That brings me, in the fourth place, to **FOUR INSTRUCTIONS**, and they are all in the text.

"The first is—*get the children to come to your school*. 'COME, ye children.' The great complaint with many is that they cannot obtain children. Go and get them to come. Don't bribe them. But except that, don't be very particular how you get the children to school. Why, if I could not get people to come to my place by preaching in a black coat, I would have regimentals to-morrow. I would have a congregation somehow. Better do strange things than have an empty chapel or an empty school-room. All is fair against the Devil.

"The next is, *get the children to love you*. That also is in the text. 'Come.' 'Oh! thinks the child, 'how nice to have a teacher that will let me come near him, a teacher that does not say 'go,' but 'come.' The fault of many teachers is that they do not get their children near them, but endeavour to foster a kind of awful respect. Before you can teach children you must get the silver key of kindness to unlock their hearts, and get their attention. If a boy has a

teacher who always wears a sour look, but talks to him about Jesus, what does the boy think? 'I wonder whether Jesus was like you; if he was, I should not like him much.' It is of no avail to attempt teaching those who do not love you. Try and make them love you, and then they will learn anything from you.

"The next instruction is—*get the children's attention*. That is in the text. 'Come, ye children, *hearken*.' If you give them something worth attending to, they will be sure to attend. This rule may not be universal, but it is very nearly so. Don't forget to give them a few anecdotes. Anecdotes are very much objected to by critics of sermons, who say they ought not to be used in the pulpit. But some of us know better than that; we can speak from experience, that a few anecdotes here and there are first-rate things to get the attention of persons who won't listen to dry doctrine. A dear child once said, "I do so like to hear Mr. So-and-so preach because he puts so many 'likes' into his sermon—'like this and like that.'" Yes, children always love those "likes." Make parables, pictures, figures, for them, and you will always get on.

"The fourth admonition is—*have a care what you teach the children*. 'I will teach you the fear of the Lord.'

"V. I pass on, in the fifth place, to give you **FIVE SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS**—five subjects to teach your children—and these you will find in the verses following the text. "Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord." The first thing to teach is *morality*. "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue it." The second is *godliness, and a constant belief in God's overruling*. 'The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.' The third thing is, *the evil of sin*: 'The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.' The fourth thing is *the necessity of a broken heart*: 'The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.' The fifth thing is *the inestimable blessedness of being a child of God*: 'Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.' 'The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.'

These several particulars Mr. Spurgeon illustrated and enforced at length, with great point and power. At the close of which he adds—

"In conclusion, let me solemnly say, with all the instruction you may give to your children, you must all of you be deeply conscious that you are not capable of doing anything in the child's salvation, but that it is God himself who from the first to the last must effect it all. You are a pen; God may write with you, but you cannot write

yourself. Be ye therefore always mindful of this, that you must be first taught of God yourself, and then you must ask God to teach, for unless a higher teacher than you instruct the child, that child must perish. It is not all your instruction can save his soul: it is the blessing of God resting on it."

Again, we say, let every Sunday school teacher purchase and study this excellent and instructive discourse, of which we have only given a brief outline.

Monument to the Memory of the Author of "Persuasives to Early Piety."

We are informed by a correspondent (and we gladly give the information all the publicity our pages can afford) that the Church

and congregation at Derby, over whom the Rev. J. G. Pike for more than forty years so acceptably and successfully presided, intend to erect a Monument to the memory of this lately eminent, but now sainted, man of God. We shall be very glad to hear that a memento, worthy of the man whose memory is dear to us, having been favoured to enjoy his personal friendship, and which we are sure the whole Christian world will be delighted to honour, is erected to mark out the resting place of the mortal remains of him who is now shining as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars, for ever and ever. We understand Mr. Charles Stevenson, Athenæum Buildings, Derby, receives donations to this fund.

DENOMINATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.

Bessels' Green, Kent.—The Rev. W. Glanville has resigned the Pastorate of the Baptist Church.

Bethany Major, Monmouth.—The Rev. John Michael from Pennel and Llangwn.

Brighton, Windor Street, Sussex.—The Rev. Joseph Wilkins from Leighton Buzzard.

London Salter's Hall Chapel.—The Rev. Jesse Hobson has resumed the pastoral oversight of this Baptist Church on the retirement of the Rev. J. W. Todd.

—*Beulah Chapel, Somers' Town.*—The Rev. S. Couzens from Willenhall.

Burnell, Cambs.—The Rev. E. Lewes from Whitehaven.

Llanelly, Abergeenny.—The Rev. Thomas Lewis, from Llathewy, Monmouthshire.

NEW CHAPELS.

Brompton, Onslow Baptist Chapel.—The ceremony of laying the foundation stone was performed May 8th. After prayer by the Rev. J. S. Pearsall, the Rev. J. Bigwood, minister of the Church and congregation for whom the chapel is being erected, delivered the introductory address. The stone was laid by the Hon. Arthur Kinnaird, M.P. Addresses were delivered by the Hon. A. Kinnaird, and the Rev. Dr. Steane; the Revs. Dr. Angus and M. Hooper offered prayer. About 400 persons then sat down to tea, after which the Revs. B. S. Hollis, of Islington, and N. Haycroft, M. A., of Bristol, delivered short addresses.

Chippenham, May 6th.—A new and elegant place of worship for the Baptist Church and congregation was opened for divine service. After prayer by the Revs. T. Middleditch, of Calne, and W. Kingsland, (Ind.) of Devizes, the Hon. and Rev. B. W. Noel, A.M., preached from Rom. i. 16. In the afternoon a public meeting was held, presided over by G. W. Austie, Esq. Addresses were delivered by the Revs. T. Middleditch, of Frome, C. Stanford, of Devizes, W. Barnes, of Trowbridge, D. Wassell, of Bath, A. G. Fuller, of Melksham. In the evening the Rev. W. Brock, of London, preached from 1 Peter i. 25, and closed the engagements of the day with prayer. The collections of the day amounted to £90.

PRESENTATION SERVICES.

Bideford.—On Wednesday, April 23rd, the members of the Baptist Church, after a

social tea, held a public meeting to commemorate the completion of their pastor's seven years' ministry among them. Mr. R. Dyer, the senior deacon, after a suitable speech, presented in the name of the Church a substantial present to their pastor, B. Arthur, as a mark of their unabated love and attachment to him. Interesting speeches were then delivered by Messrs. R. Prior, T. Tucker, C. Wood, and the pastor, who reviewed the last seven years; during which period the Church and Sabbath School had more than trebled, a heavy debt on the chapel liquidated, and a new chapel at Abbotsham built and paid for.

Paulton, Somerset.—April 18th. A public tea meeting was held in the Baptist Chapel, when the pastor, the Rev. H. W. Stenbridge, was presented by Mr. Gerard, in the name of the Church and congregation, with a handsome writing desk, beautifully furnished, as a token of their esteem, which was suitably acknowledged by Mr. Stenbridge. The Rev. D. Wassell, of Bath, and other friends, addressed the meeting.

RECOGNITION SERVICE.

Stockport, April 14.—A public tea meeting was held in the Baptist Chapel, Greek Street, to welcome the Rev. Joseph Pywell, as pastor, at which about 300 persons sat down. Joseph Orme, Esq., the mayor, presided on the occasion, who, after tea, in a few appropriate remarks, introduced the proceedings of the evening. The meeting was addressed by the Revs. F. Tucker, B.A., of Manchester, W. F. Burdell, of Rochdale, N. K. Pugley, (Ind.) J. Buckley, (Ind.) and Mr. Pywell.

ANNIVERSARY SERVICES TO BE HOLDEN.

The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon will (D.V.) preach at the following places, afternoon and evening:

Busildon, near Reading.—July 4.

Rushden, Northamptonshire.—June 4.

Bishop's Stortford.—June 6.

Blunham, Beds.—June 17.

And in the Morning and afternoon at:

Chelmsford. (Mr. Corbitt's),—June 10; and

Mr. Wilkins will preach in the Evening.

Barley, Herts.—July 10, Mr. Foreman, of London, to preach morning and evening, and Mr. Marks, of Eden Chapel, Cambridge, in the afternoon.

Bexley Heath.—June 10, Rev. H. Hanks, of

Woolwich, will preach in the afternoon at 3, and the Rev. J. George, of Walworth, in the evening at half-past-six. Trains to Abbey Wood every two hours.
Chesham, Berks.—June 12. Mr. Wells, morning and evening, and Mr. Foreman in the afternoon.
 Trains leave Shoreditch at 9.0; 10; 12.45; 2.30; 3.30; 5.10; and return at 3; 6; 6; and 9.45.
 Tea provided at all the places; and, where there is a morning service, dinner also.

BAPTISMS.

Abingdon, May 5.—Four by Mr. Edgar.
Aylesbury, Bucks, March 30.—Three by Mr. Smith, of Harrow.
Bealieu Rails, Msr. 4.—Four by Mr. Burt.
Boston, April 15.—Three by Mr. Bull.
Brasford, April 6.—Nine by Mr. Wood.
Bury St. Edmunds, May 4.—Thirteen received into the Church, after baptism, by Mr. Elven.
Blunham, Beds, Old Meeting, May 11.—Four by Mr. Abbott.
Cheltenham, Cambray Chapel, April 20.—Ten by Mr. Smith.
Congreswall, Mar. 30.—Four by Mr. Collis.
Dunstable, Old Chapel, Mar. 23.—Four by Mr. Carpenter.
Geffulrhyd, Denbighshire, May 18.—One by Mr. Robinson.
Gretton, Northamptonshire, April 24.—Two by Mr. Hardwick.
Halifax, Trinity Road, April 13.—Five by Mr. Walters.
Helston, Cornwall, Apr. 30.—Five by Mr. Wilson; two from his Bible class.
Leicester, Belvoir Street, Mar. 31.—Eleven; April 2, fifteen by Mr. Mursell, *Friar St.* March 2, two, and April 6, two by Mr. Wig.
Louth, Walkergate, April 13.—Four by Mr. Kiddall.
Leominster, April 20.—Two by Mr. Nash, who commenced his pastoral duties here last February. One of the friends, who walks the distance of eight miles to worship with us, has since opened his house for preaching. Our two friends, with one by restoration and seven by letters of dismission, have been added to the Church, and sat down with us to 'show forth the Lord's death.'
Liverpool, April 20.—Three by Mr. Dawson.
 ——— *Stanhope Street*, Mar. 16.—One by Mr. Hughes.
Limpley Stoke, near Bath, Apr. 27.—Two by Mr. Huntley, the two eldest sons of Mr. H. taking part in the service.
London, Comberwell New Road, Feb. 24.—Four by Mr. Atwood.
 ——— *Chesham Street, Clerkenwell*, Feb. 28.—Nine by Mr. Hazleton.
 ——— *Islington, Cross Street*, April 30.—Six by Mr. Thomas.
 ——— *New Park Street*, May 1.—Twenty-one. May 23, and 28, thirty by Mr. Spurgeon.
Monmouth, Mar. 20.—Three by Mr. Evans.
Poleworth, Warwickshire, Mar. 23.—Three by Mr. Wilkins.
Newton, May 4.—Three by Mr. Baker.
Pembroke, Mar. 9.—Two by Mr. Walker.

Patishall and Eastcote, Northamptonshire, April 13.—Four by Mr. Chamberlain.
Pill, near Bristol, Ap. 13.—Five by Mr. Lee.
Portree, May 7.—Three by Mr. Davis.
Plymouth, George Street, May 7.—Seven by Mr. Short, B.A.
Ragland, May 11.—Three by Mr. Ewence.
Ryde, Isle of Wight, April 30.—Four; a young man and his wife, and two young sisters. May 11.—Four more; the father and mother of the two sisters, and two young females, one of whom had come to scoff at the previous baptisms.
Sandersfoot, Pembrokeshire, April 8.—Three by Mr. B. Lewis.
Sheffield, Eyre Street, April 23.—Seven by Mr. Ashberry.
Sirhowy, Monmouthshire, Mar. 16.—Eight by Mr. Ellis.
Walton, Suffolk, May 4.—Two by Mr. Warren.
Waterbeach, Cambs., May 4.—Four, in the river, by Mr. Smith: one formerly an Independent; he has been supplying the Church here, and has been invited to the pastorate.
Wilden, Beds, May 11.—Three by Mr. Hawkins.

DEATHS.

Ashworth. Mrs. Sarah, of Bacup, May 6th, aged 66 years. Mrs. Ashworth had been a member of the Second Baptist Church 17 years.
 Sharp, Christopher, of Thorn Meadow, Bacup, May 6th, aged 13. He was a very intelligent Sunday scholar. He loved his school, his teachers, and his Saviour, on whose love, a short time before his death, he addressed his parents and family in a very solemn and interesting manner. Let every Sunday school teacher take encouragement to persevere in his work of faith and labour of love.
 Sutcliffe, Mrs. Rachel, of Market Street, Bacup, April 27th, aged 62. Mrs. S.'s demise was very sudden and unexpected. She rose in apparent health, and committed herself into the hands of Him who is the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, and scarcely had the words of her prayer lost their echo than she ceased to exist, and her immortal spirit was conveyed to the realms of the blest. She was baptized by the Rev. — Templeman, at Millwood Chapel, in Yorkshire, about the year 1835, and was retained as a member of that Church until 1847: when, on her removal with her family to Bacup she was dismissed to the second Baptist Church here, and maintained a consistent walk and conversation up to the time of her death.
 Hollis, Mrs. Fauny, Wichenden Manor House, Lee, Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, April 29, aged 90. Many years a member of the Baptist Church, Lynnington, Hants.
 Pearce, Mr. G., father of the Rev. George Pearce, of Calcutta, at Rotherhithe, May 3, aged 90. He had been 75 years a member of the Christian church, having been baptized when he was 15 years of age.
 Jenkinsou, Selina, wife of our esteemed friend and correspondent, the Rev. J. Jenkinson, of Oakham, May 3, after a long and painful affliction, aged 39.

* * * Answers to Correspondents must be omitted this month for want of room.



yours very truly,
James Grant

THE
BAPTIST MESSENGER :
AN
Evangelical Treasury
AND
CHRONICLE OF THE CHURCHES.

FROM
JULY TO DECEMBER,
1856.

WITH A PORTRAIT OF JAMES GRANT, Esq.

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THE CHRISTIAN'S GLORIOUS INVENTORY.

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,

Minister of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.

"Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are your's; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."—1 Coa. iii. 21, 22, 23.

It appears from this Epistle, that the Church at Corinth was very much divided on account of certain ministers who had at different times preached amongst them the word of God. Some of them felt a deep attachment to Paul, and they said, "I am of Paul;" others preferred Cephas, and they cried, "I am of Cephas;" while another portion followed after Apollos, and declared, "I am of Apollos." So that the Church, which ought to have been one body, was sadly rent and divided by several parties who started up, following different leaders. Paul wrote the first Epistle to the Corinthians, in order to remove their strifes; and, if possible, to bind them again in the bonds of love and unity, to make of them one Church, to serve one Master, and strive together for the faith once delivered to the saints. Now, beloved, the same thing that occurred in Corinth, has happened in London and elsewhere many a time. It is but right that persons should feel an attachment to those who preach the Gospel to them; but when this grows to an overweening adoration, when it becomes almost a worship, and persons are led to despise all other ministers, and will hear none beside that one man whom they believe to be the minister for God; then indeed, they need a solemn reproof as did these Corinthians, and it is requisite to say unto them: "Therefore, let no man glory in men; for all things are yours." To love the man by whose means we are brought to know the truth, to have respect to him who speaks wondrous words, as God makes utterance by him, is indeed nothing but natural and just; but if we at any time exalt that man above the level he ought to stand upon, or put him above all others, so that we despise every other, and say, "I am of Paul, and will not hear Apollos; I am of Apollos, and therefore cannot hear Cephas," then it becomes a sin and iniquity; a transgression against God, against his Church, and his ministers; and the solemn reproof comes home with an emphasis; "Therefore, let no man glory in men, for all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas," &c.

Now Christian, rise and walk through the length and breadth of the land, and view your possessions this morning. Nothing will tend so much to lessen your reverence for men or to check your glorying in them, as a vision of what you are worth yourselves. If you see your own property, your own possessions, you will not be then so much inclined to place too high a value upon one certain thing, though it may be exceedingly precious.

Paul was a wise reprove, he did not reprove sharply. After he had said, "Let no man glory in men," mark how he reproves them; "For all things are yours." He used no hard words. We have heard of ministers who are perpetually whipping and scolding their hearers. It is an old saying of those who understood horses as well as men, "The best way is to put the whip in the manger." Feed people well, and they will work well; give them plenty of sound doctrine, and it will make them practical. It is not the way to make a practical people to be always talking about practice. Feed them with the manna that comes down from heaven, and with some of the honey out of the rock, and they will always be willing to strive for their Master, and labour for his cause. May God give you something this morning whilst we labour you what Paul said in order to bring these persons to a right condition.

First of all, we have before us *an inventory* of the Christian's possessions. "All things are yours." Secondly, we have *the title deeds*, "Ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's;" and thirdly, we have *the conduct expected* from a man who is so exceeding rich; "Let no man glory in men."

I. First of all, we have the INVENTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN'S POSSESSIONS. The Apostle sets down at the top the total of the whole, and then he proceeds to mention the possessions one by one. The sum total is "ALL THINGS;" but as these two words are said very quickly, and are very general in their meaning, he particularizes, and gives each of the things in its proper place. First he says, "all things," and then he gives us a list which includes "all things."

And first he says that *all ministers* are yours. As a Christian man, all kinds of ministers are yours, whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas. All preachers are not Pauls; all are not like Apollos; and all cannot speak like Cephas. But ministers of all kinds are yours, they are not their own, they belong to the Church at large. There is Paul; he has a clear, logical mind, he preaches good doctrine, and preaches it powerfully too; he is yours, go and hear him. There is Apollos, who preaches with eloquence; he is not so much a logician as an orator; he cannot reason, perhaps, but he puts thoughts into beautiful shapes, and delivers them well, go and hear Apollos. There is rough Cephas, a plain, blunt, honest, out-spoken man; he never minces matters; what he says he says out of his heart, *con amore*; his whole soul goes with every word. Do not despise him. You may like Paul better, and Apollos may be more to your taste, but Cephas has his work to do as well as Paul, and all are yours—their talents, their station, whatever they possess—all are yours. You sometimes speak of "my minister." Yes, you have a particular minister, but then all ministers are yours, not only that special one, but all who are called of God; whatever may be their peculiar mode of preaching, they are yours to profit by, if indeed they are God's servants. There is Boanerges; he preaches of the wrath to come in a thundering manner; his sermons alarm you; he drags a harrow across your soul; he speaks as if he had just come from the top of Sinai, where the thunders of God were pealing, and the lightning flashing beneath his feet; he speaks like a man impressed with solemn awe, as if he had for a while traversed the lake of fire and brimstone, and had descended into the abysses of hell, and seen the horrid pits where the wicked lie, and bite their bonds. Hear him, *he is yours*. There is another, a Barnabas, he speaks words of gentle comfort. You seldom hear thunder from him; he is the soft evening breeze; he has healing beneath his wings; gently he speaks to the broken-hearted, and bindeth up their wounds. You love to hear him. He is quite as useful as Boanerges, and Boanerges is as useful as Barnabas; and *they are both yours*. One is a loving John, sweet in his disposition. You can read love in his eyes; he hath leaned his head on the bosom of Jesus; and when he speaks he says, "I beseech you love one another." Another, is like Peter; he seems to call fire from heaven on your head; he speaks terribly of the last days wherein shall come scoffers, and of the fire which shall consume the ungodly. Both Peter and John have their special province, and *they are yours*. When God has blessed a man; when there is an unction from the Holy One resting on him, when he can trace his descent from the Apostles by being a follower of the Apostles, and preaching apostolic doctrine in an apostolic manner, then indeed you may say he is yours, for "all are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas." "Then how little and narrow-minded am I," perhaps the Christian will say, "that I have not cared for this or that man, because he was not exactly after my mode." Oh, dear creatures, would you have the making of God's ministers? A sorry lot they would be if you had. God makes them as he pleases, and sends them into the world after his own fashion, each with his own work to do in his own manner. But they are all yours. There is a minister who preaches very sweetly; well he is yours, he is your servant, your waiting-man, you are not his; he is not a lord and master over you, but your servant—"Ourselves your servants, for Christ's sake." Whoever he is, if he be a true minister of God, he will profess himself to be the servant of the Church, your positive property. Make all the use you can of him then. Try and recollect all the good things he may say; whatever choice

utterances, whatever golden sentences and silver words come from his lips, treasure them up, for they are all yours, whether they be the words of Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas. This is the first article in the inventory.

And next, *the world* is ours. This great world, considered naturally, the home wherein we live, is all ours. Men have carved it out for themselves; worldlings have said, "So much is mine, and so much is mine. Yonder fields belong to that rich man, and the houses there, in that park, belong to such another." They may call it theirs if they like, but the world is yours. It is yours as much as if you had a legal title to it here below; it is yours, not in imagination, or conception, but in reality. Do you ask me how it is? I tell you, the world only stands for you. If you and all your fellows were gone out of it, if the righteous were departed, the world at once would be a desert. "Ye are the salt of the earth." Take *you* away, and the world would be turned into rottenness and perish. "Ye are the salt of the earth," the conserve, the preserve of it, it abides for you. The world is but the scaffold of your soul's salvation; it is but the place where you prepare yourselves to enter into the world above. This world had been consumed by fire long ago, if it were not for the righteous. God bids the flames tarry till he has taken all his children home. He only keeps the world for the sake of his elect. It is a debased world! The trail of the serpent is in, and it is spoiled; its beauty is marred, it is a fair world but a false one, its glory is departed. God would utterly destroy it but that he intends his Church to be fostered in the wilderness, and he will not sweep the wilderness away till he hath carried his people through it.

This world is ours; there is not a speck of it which is not yours; the whole of it is yours, from the east to the west, from the north to the south. The lands of untrodden snows are yours; the wide, expansive ocean is yours; yon blue sky with all its gems of stars is yours. "All things are yours." One man says, "That is mine! that is mine!" He knows not what he says, it is yours. It is lent to him for a little while; he occupies it; he is but a tenant; he is but the man who takes care of your house for you. It is *your* house though he lives in it and enjoys it. He stretches himself upon the couch, but the house is yours. And it shall be yours by and bye, when Jesus Christ shall come a second time, without sin unto salvation, and shall reign upon the earth with his ancients gloriously. Then shall you wear a crown, and shall be made a king and a priest unto your God, and shall on the earth for a thousand years.

This world is yours now. "Nay, but," sayest thou, "I am poor, and have but little of it." It is thine, notwithstanding, only thou art not yet come of age. The son, before he is come of age, is as truly the heir of all the property as he will be when he comes into full possession. He has enough for his necessities, but not more; still he says, "It is mine, and when the day shall come that I am twenty-one, I will have it all." So, Christian, thou art a child, and it would not do to give thee all at once; thou art not come of age; but when thou hast passed through thy time of probation, thou shalt say, "It is mine." But did I hear thee say that thou hadst not enough of this world's necessities? Hush, he silent, or else the promise is broken—"Bread shall be given thee, and thy waters shall be sure." I know thou hast enough, or if thou seeest not enough at present, yet it is coming to thee. God will not leave thee, if he bring thee ever so low in poverty, still trust him, for his promise is engaged to supply thy wants. "The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that wait on the Lord shall not lack any good thing." Try thy Lord by faith. If thou hast no situation, no means for providing for thyself, yet ask him and he will give it. If thou hast no place to lay thy head, God shall provide it for thee. However deep thy distresses may be, he will never let thee perish. His honor is engaged, and he will take care of thee; and poor as thou art, this world is thine. Draw, then, on thy heavenly banker, go and ask thy God for what thou

wantest, and as truly as he is God, he will hear the prayer of the destitute, and will not despise thy prayer.

—And next, “*life*” is ours. Have you never heard persons say, “Oh! if I might but die and depart and be with Jesus?” And you have heard them utter sometimes a very silly wish, “Oh! that I had wings like a dove.” Now if they had wings like the dove, what would they do with them? Where would they put them? “Oh!” they say, “that I had wings like a dove, then I would flee away and be at rest.” No; you would not be at rest, for if you were to flee away before your work were done, you could not rest. But when your work is done, then you will be at rest without the wings of a dove. Therefore do not make such a silly request any more, but be content to wait and tarry. Moreover, look not upon life as such an evil thing. It is a good thing: it is one of the good things we possess. I know some say, “Ah! this life, it is a howling wilderness,” a place where we are obliged to sing

“Lord, what a wretched land is this,
That yields us no supply.”

I do not know what was the matter with Dr. Watts when he wrote that. I think he must have been scolding somebody a little while before he composed it. I like him a great deal better when, in another place, he says,

“The men of grace have found,
Glory begun below;
Celestial fruits on earthly ground,
From faith and hope may grow.
Then let our songs abound,
And every tear be dry;
We’re marching through Immanuel’s ground,
To fairer worlds on high.”

A “howling wilderness,” Sir? Yes; this world is a howling wilderness, and it is you that make the howling! There would be no howling if you did not make it! It is a glorious life, after all, when a man knows how to enjoy it and how to improve it. What! be ashamed to live here when I have such means of doing good and glorifying God, and such pleasant seasons of communion with Jesus, and such preparations for eternity. What! count life nothing? It is one of the greatest blessings we possess; and to stop here till our portion of labour shall be done is a blessing. Nor would we wish to have our lives shortened by a single hour if God had predestinated the time and its end. I think that man has morbid views who does not think life a blessing, and think, with all its trials and sorrows, it is still a precious gem. It may be set in a ring of iron, but it is a gem notwithstanding. Life may be hidden in the depths like a poor pearl, but he that by faith can play the diver will fetch the pearl up and see its value. Methinks an angel in heaven might be glad to live on earth for the good he might do. What! if I may be the means of saving souls from hell, if I can wipe away the mourner’s tear, if God shall help me to bind up the broken in heart and to set free the prisoner, if my fellow man by my means can be led in the paths of righteousness, if souls can be snatched from perdition, and heirs of earth be made heirs of heaven, by my staying here, then, O God let me live! Methinks, the life of Methuselah were well purchased, and that we might well brook even such a long delay from heaven, if we could serve God by staying here. Don’t look upon life as a curse, Christians! Count it a blessing, and seek to make it so. It will be full of weeds and thistles to thee if thou dost not plough it; but if thou ploughest life with the plough of persevering industry and goodness, thou wilt make it like a garden of the Lord. Thou canst make the wilderness blossom like Eden, and the desert shall be a very Carmel for joy; so that the mountains and hills shall break forth before thee into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Yes! Paul was right when he wrote it a blessing, for a blessing it is.

Now when we come to the next, that does not seem to be of any value at all; —“or death.” But, beloved, what were life if it were not for death? These

be some books that have plain letter till you come to the "Finis," which is illuminated; so it is often with life: it is printed in black letters till you come to the last leaf, and that page is lit up with glory—for that page is death! O life! I would call thee a curse if I could not see death behind. To live here always, who would wish it? To walk perpetually this same earth, and to dwell here absent from the Lord and present in the body, that were indeed a curse. But life is a blessing because after life cometh death. Yea, death itself is a blessing to the Christian! Usually we look at death not so much as what it is as what it appears to be. Death is an angel; it is the fairest in creation. But death sometimes dresses itself in terrible garments. It *appears* to be terrible but it is not. Moreover, we think death to be dreadful because we do not see the whole of death. You know why Belshazzar trembled when he saw the handwriting on the wall: it was because he could see nothing but the hand—he could not see the body. That is why we are afraid of the hand of death—because we see nothing but the hand. If we could see death we should count it a cherub. Death indeed is not a dreary thing. Those who know how to commune with death from day to day will never be afraid of talking or thinking of it. It is the gate to endless joy; and do we dread to enter there? What is it? The grave is a bath where my body shall, like Esther, bathe itself in spices, until its Lord shall say "Awake!" and I shall rise from my grave clothed in immortality and glory to dwell with him for ever.

Death! I have often trembled at thee. In midnight hours I have thought it were terrible to die, and I have shaken at thy pale apparition. O Death! thy ghastly appearance hath sometimes frightened me; I have striven to run away from thee. But thou art my slave, Sir, now! and I will not tremble at thee more. Death, thou art mine! I write thee down a chattel, a part of my own property. Take heed how thou triest to make thy master tremble. Thou art not *my* master, Death; but I am thine! Come here! Give me thy hand. O death! be it mine to talk with myself every day, and to talk with thee, too. It does us good to see the crossbones and skull and to see in the graveyard the remnants of mortality. It is beneficial to our spirits to look down and see that however high our powers our heads must be laid low; however lofty our appearance we must bend down and our body must become a carnival for worms and must be scattered like the dust of the highway to the four winds of heaven. It is good to think of that, and then to think—after all, with all its gloom and its shroud, with all that is dismal about it, death is ours.

Oh! it is pleasant to think well of death. I have heard of a good Christian who was asked if she was afraid to die? She replied, "I have dipped my foot in the river Jordan every morning before breakfast for these forty years, and I am not afraid of the current now." O it is good to die at last when we know what it is to die every day. Paul said, "I die daily." Well, if we die every day, it will not be hard to die in our last day. You will not be afraid of death if you love the Lord. If you knew death you would not be afraid of it, but you would feel it to be a joyous thing. You are thinking of that lonely chamber where the friends stand by your side when you bid them all adieu; you are thinking of the pains and groans and strife and dread solemnity of the hour; but think not of such things. Think that the Lord will come to meet thee, for he will come; and your soul will stretch its wings in haste and fly away to heaven. Would you be afraid to die with Jesus? You would not be afraid if you stood where I sometimes stand—by the bedside of the dying saint. I have taken the hand of such a one, and he has said to me, "Brother, this is the place that proveth that the Lord is gracious! I am going; my heart and strength fail me, but he is the strength of my life and my portion for ever." And his eyes have flashed with the very fire of glory, his lips have breathed sonnets, his looks spoke volumes, his heart seemed overflowed with eternity, and his whole soul radiant with immortality. O it is a

cheering thing to stand by when a Christian dies, to see him stand on the precipice of life, and clapping his wings ere he takes his flight, not into a vast unknown, but into a sea of light and love unknown, in which he floats until he reaches the gates of paradise. Oh! it is doubly sweet and blessed to witness such a spectacle of joy. Death is ours, then, we will not fear it, for it is indeed a privilege one day to die.

Then comes the next, "*things present*" are ours. Come, beloved, let us see what are our "*things present*" to day. One says—"prosperity is one of my things present; the Lord is blessing me in this world, and I have many joys, many comforts, nothing to complain of, everything to be thankful for." Well, that is thine; but take care my brother that thou makest it thine to profit by. Alas! prosperity has something the effect upon the soul which the holidays of Capua had upon the Roman soldier; it weakens the soul and takes away its power. Do not let it be so with you. It need not be so, for if by the help of God's Spirit thou art sanctified, prosperity may be of use to thee, for it is one of the "*things present.*" It is thine.

"Ah!" says another, "*adversity* is present to me. I am suffering in body excruciating pains, and my circumstances are not what I should wish them to be. I am exceeding pained, and tossed to and fro. I am like a poor sea-bird, lost in the wide ocean, tossed up and down, up and down from the base of the waves to the billows crown." Adversity is thine. It will do thee good man; it will help to bind thee up, and brace thy nerves and sinews; it will strengthen thee for labour. God hast put thee in the furnace thy dross to consume, thy gold to refine. Look on adversity as a blessing. In everything give God thanks, as much for thy trials as for thy joys, as much for thy temptations as for thy deliverances, as much for the bitters in thy cup as for the sweets, for the same loving hand that put the one there, mingled the other. All things present are thine. Then there is *Providence*. That is always present, and it is yours. "All things work together for good to them that love God." Then, there is *justification*. That is a present mercy. "Therefore being justified, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus." That is yours. Then, here is the *Bible*, that is a present thing, and that is yours. There is not a precious promise in it from Genesis to Revelations, but it is yours; there is not a single choice sentence in it, but it is yours. All things present belong to you. What else is there? Why, there is *adoption*, for "ye are now children of God." That is yours. There is *final perseverance* which God promises even now. He will keep his children, and preserve them to the end. That is yours. Again, whatever ye can conceive whatever is glorious, which is present with you now, is yours.

But now comes the climax; "*things to come.*" These are yours; what! art thou trembling at the "*things to come*?" Art thou saying, "I dread the future. My poor ship hath borne so many storms, I fear to go forward." Oh! tremble not, the future is thine; and, if it should be a future of storms and hurricanes, and tempests and rocks, and quicksands and shoals; it is thine. Thy Captain will steer thee through. Let death be in the future, with its shade and gloom, it is thine; it is one of the things to come. Then, after death, the lying in the grave for a time is thine. The *resurrection*, when thou shalt start from the grave in the body, is thine; the awful trump that shall startle the world, the books that are opened, the blazing lightnings, the terrific thunders are thine; the trembling universe with all the dread material of *judgment*, the mighty Judge himself is thine; thy brother, thy friend; and the conflagration of the universe, the flying away of heaven and of earth, the falling of the stars from heaven, like withered fig leaves from the tree, all these are thine; the rocking of creation, the tossing to and fro of matter, the earthquake, the trembling spheres, the shaking universe, the dissolving orbs, all these are thine; all that is terrible, majestic, sublime, terrific, all is thine. Let thine imagination gather around it all the dread things which are to come;

these are thine. Thy soul enshrined in immortality, shall say, "It is all mine." The great dread drama which shall receive its terrible consummation after death, is thine. If there be a hell that is horrible, to the wicked, as there most assuredly is, it is not for thee; but if there be a heaven, glorious and great as it is, it is for thee. There is not a harp in heaven which is not thine, nor a crown in heaven which is not thine. Think ye of the streets of gold, they are thine; for they are "things to come." Think of the Most High God himself; he is thine, and thou shalt feel him to be so. O Christians! *heaven* is yours, and if at any time ye can mount the top of Pisgah, and see

Sweet fields beyond swelling flood,
Arrayed in living green,

do you directly afterwards say, "Ah! these sweet fields are mine." And whenever you sing that sweet hymn

"Jerusalem, my happy home,"

lay a stress on the word "*my*":

"Jerusalem, *my* happy home!
Name ever dear to *me*,
Soon shall *my* labours have an end,
In joy, and peace, and thee!"

It is not a fiction Christians, that it is yours, but it is a reality. Try, beloved, if you can picture heaven to thyself. I think I hear thee say, "Is this heaven? and am I there? Have I a crown upon my head? and am I clad in white? O glorious world! I never conceived heaven to be like this. I had pictures, I had dreams, I had imaginations: but this hath far outdone all that I ever conceived. O, wondrous heaven, how glorious thou art! and there is my Christ!" I know not what thou wilt say of him. It were almost blasphemy to try to utter words about him; but when thou art with him, lying on his breast for aye, feeling his sweet heart palpitating against thee, and knowing that the God Man loved thee with an everlasting love, and feeling that that heart is for ever and ever thine, by the sweetest tie of blessed relationship—then wilt thou find that "things to come" are thine, for heaven has become thine actual possession. This, then, is the Christian's glorious inventory. He is rich indeed, who can own these things, and who can take up this language; "all things are mine, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or life or death, or things present, or things to come."

II. Now, we come to the TITLE DEEDS. The title deeds, you will see, are drawn up in the name of Christ; "ye are Christ's, Christ is God's." As I am by nature apart from Christ, none of those things are mine; they are all against me. Death would not be mine without Christ; it would be indeed a terrible doom. Life is not mine without Christ; that were dangerous indeed, to live here without him. All I have comes to me through Jesus. Come, then, let me look at the title deeds, and see if I am interested in them. Those things are yours because you are Christ's, and Christ is God's; you sometimes sing that hymn, and a very sweet one it is,

"When I can read my title clear,
To mansions in the skies;
I'll bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes."

And some persons sing that who cannot read their "Title" clear, because they have not any title to read; the "mansions in the skies" were never made for them, and they have no right or title to them. So they may sing and sing for ever, but they have no possession. But some of us have. Come, then, and let us read our title deeds. They consist of two parts. First, "ye are Christ's;" and Second, "Christ is God's."

"Ye are Christ's." Come, Christian, soliloquize thus with thyself: "My

soul, art thou Christ's? Canst thou say that thou art his in a three-fold sense? Art thou Christ's by the Father's donation of thee to Christ? Art thou Christ's by purchase through his blood? And art thou Christ's by thine own consecration of thyself to him? Am I Christ's by *eternal donation*, because God the Father gave me to the Son? Can I look back and see my name in life's fair book set down? Can I with holy faith look back and see the rolls of destiny, and read my name therein? Have I an humble, holy faith that I was given to the Lord long ere the foundations of the earth were builded, or the pillars thereof were piled? Am I his? Can I say, 'This covenant made of old, doth stand for ever fast?' Can I say that I was given to him? Do I rejoice in that sovereign electing love which gave me to the Saviour, for no reason whatever in me, but simply of his own free grace? If so, that is one proof that I am Christ's.

"But again, my soul, canst thou look back and see thyself to be Christ's by *bloody purchase*? When thou goest to Gethsemane, do those drops of gore fall upon the ground for thee? When thou goest to Gabbatha, canst thou think that ignominy and plucking of the hair was for thee? And at Calvary, canst thou feel that all its terrors were for thee? Canst thou sing like this:—

'Here I sit, for ever viewing,
Mercy's streams, in streams of blood;
Precious drops my soul bedewing,
Plead and claim my peace with God.'

Or, with another poet,

'Oh! how sweet to view the flowing,
Of his soul-redeeming blood;
With divine assurance knowing,
That he made my peace with God.'

Do you feel you were Christ's by bloody purchase, and can you say with Dr. Watts,—

"My faith doth lay her hand,
On that dear head of thine;
While like a penitent I stand,
And there confess my sin."

At a certain Primitive Methodist prayer meeting, a brother was not able to pray, and somebody else further down in the meeting, according to their rather disorderly manner, called out, "Brother, plead the blood, plead the blood; then you will be able to pray." The brother understood him well enough. He began pleading the blood of Jesus, and then he could pray indeed. O my soul! canst thou plead the blood? My hearer, canst thou plead the blood? My brother, my sister, canst thou say the sacrifice of Jesus was for thee? Dost thou feel that he bought thee and paid for thee? that the sacrifice was made for thy guilt? that he died especially for thy sins? Canst thou appropriate Jesus to thyself? If so, thou canst appropriate everything, since "ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

But we are Christ's by *consecration*. Now, let me ask you this question again; are you Christ's by consecration? Can any of you recollect the day when you could say,

"'Tis done, the great transaction's done,
I am my Lord's, and he is mine;
He drew me, and I followed on,
Charmed to obey the word divine."

Dost mind the place, the plot of ground where Jesus met thee? Ah! some of us can look back and tell the spot to an inch where we first gave our hearts to Jesus; many of the Lord's people cannot do it, and it is not necessary they should; but yet they can say, "I am the Lord's and he is mine." Dost thou feel this morning that thou hast given thyself to the Lord Jesus; that thou art not thy own, but being bought with a price, thou hast willingly given thyself to him? Hast thou taken Christ for thine all, and hast thou given up all

to Christ? If Christ were to walk up this aisle, and come to each one of you and say, "Sinner, lovest thou me?" what answer would you give him? If he were now to step from pew to pew, and look at each of you, shewing you his scarred hand with the print of the nails, and saying, "wouldest thou give thyself for me," what would be your answer? There are many of you who would turn aside to the ways of darkness, many of you would turn aside to sin and wickedness; and even the best of us might well hear the question asked—

"Can you cleave to your Lord? can you cleave to your Lord?"
 When the many turn aside,
 Can you witness that he hath the living Word,
 And none on earth beside?
 Do we answer "We can?" do we answer "we can
 Through his love's constraining power?"
 But oh! remember the flesh is weak,
 And will shrink in the trying hour:

Do you wish to give yourselves up wholly to Christ? Have you done so? Then all things are yours; because you are Christ's by consecration, because you have given yourselves to him.

If you consecrate yourselves to Jesus you will never find him a hard master; I have known him now some little while, and he hath been exceedingly kind to his unworthy servant. I have naught to find fault with him, but much with myself. A blessed master he is. O youth, or maiden, if thou wouldest love him, thou wouldest find him worthy of thy love in all respects. Why, methinks his very name is enough to make you love him. "My Master!" How sweetly doth "my Master" sound! Yes, he is my Master, and your master, if you have become his servant, and have given yourselves to him. But, if thou art not Christ's, thou hast nothing, thou art a poor miserable creature. How canst thou live if thou art not Christ's? How wouldest thou face grim death, how wouldest thou stand before Christ when he shall sit on his throne? Dost thou think thou shall be able to hear his thundering voice; "Depart ye cursed?" Are thy ribs of steel, and thy bones of brass? If they be, they will be broken when he speaks in his wrath. O then beloved, "Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

We must only hint at the other portion. In order to link us thoroughly with God, there is something else besides our being Christ's, and that is, "*Christ is God's.*" With one hand Christ links himself to men, with the other he is joined to God; and thus God and men are united. Oh! think of this. There is a link between thee and the Godhead. The God that thou canst not conceive of, the skirts of whose garments are dark with ineffable light, too splendid for man to view, that mighty God, filling immensity, the Infinite, the all things in one, is linked with thee, for Christ giveth thee his hand—thy brother, flesh and blood like thyself; and he giveth God his hand, the fellow of the eternal, the infinite God, very God of very God; and yet, very man of very man! Oh, what a glorious thought, that my deed is stamped by the Father and by the Son! It has the seal of them both. "Ye are Christ's and Christ is God's:" and having Christ, and being Christ's, I have all things in him. All things are yours, for "ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

But before I come to the third point, let me ask you, dear friends, now to put this question to your conscience, Are you Christ's? Oh! how many there are who attend God's house, and never feel any personal application of the truth! How many are there of you who sit Sunday after Sunday, and week-day after week-day, hearing sermons, and never getting any profit by them? O, sirs, preaching is not child's play. Some persons say, "I will go and hear a sermon;" and they go—just to amuse themselves. But, do you think that a true minister will preach to amuse you? Is it his business so to do? Oh,

believe me, it is solemn work to stand and speak for God, and in his name. Did you ever think what it is to preach God's word? Oh! if at the last great day it shall be shown that we have not preached faithfully to you, if we have declared not the whole counsel of God, you indeed, must perish, but your blood will be required at our hands! And, then, do you know what solemn work it is to hear? Oh! if the damned spirits in hell could come to earth, they would let you know what solemn work it is to hear the Gospel. Think not that thou canst hear the Gospel without having thy salvation or damnation increased thereby. There is not a word of the Gospel that ever enters into man's ear, that he shall not be brought to account for. I beseech you, as you believe in the Bible, as you believe that there is no salvation out of Christ, to lay these things to heart. They are not trifles, they are not imaginary things, they are not that which concerns your body, but they concern your eternal existence. You are rich or else you are poor; you are Christ's or the devil's; you are on the road to heaven or to hell—which is it? Oh, let the question ring through your ear—*Which is it, heaven or hell? Which is it, HEAVEN OR HELL?* Oh, let not that word, if it be e'er so harshly spoken, be rejected by you; but answer the question to your soul; and if honestly thou art obliged to say "I fear I am on the road to perdition," then, remember, if you feel *that*, if you confess your sin, Jesus Christ hath come into the world to save sinners—"this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;" not everybody, but "sinners," all those who will acknowledge and confess their title, shall be saved by divine grace. If you are a sinner, he will most assuredly and certainly save you. Go, tell him that you are a sinner, and he will deliver you from the wrath to come.

III. Now the third thing is, what is THE DUTY OF A MAN WHO HAS SUCH LARGE ESTATES, AND SUCH LARGE POSSESSIONS? "Let no man glory in men, for all things are yours." If a man has everything he has no right to glory about some little thing. A man perhaps has one gold ring, which is all he has in the world, and you will see him wearing it on his finger every day, and putting his hand in such a position that everybody may see it; but he who has much need not be particular about a little thing being seen. For instance: what does Her Majesty the Queen care that other people shall know what plate and jewels she has at Windsor? Everybody knows that she is rich, that she has an abundance, and therefore it is not necessary that she should display some little thing. Whenever you find a person glorying in some little thing you may be sure he is acting contrary to what he should be acting. I cannot conceive how a Christian man who has every thing can be proud because he has a little talent or a little wealth, or position, or station. Do not be proud of that, but say—"That is one stone in my estate; it is one little pebble that lieth in one of the brooks in my large domains. True it is mine; but it is nothing to boast of." "Let no man glory in men for all things are yours." Do not be boasting then, about one thing when all are yours. The little child when it hath some present, taketh and showeth it to every person who comes in the house; but when the child becomes a man he shows not everything that he has for he has more possessions than he had before. Thus the worldling may glory in his riches and boast of his strength; but, Christians, you are too far advanced for this, you are too wise, for all things are yours, and surely you will not attach undue importance to one. Now, what says this practically to you? One of you has lost a friend; you are weeping and saying—"I have lost every thing." Never mind! "all things are yours." He may have been a precious friend, a most loving one that you have lost; it is a deep trial, but bethink thee what thou *hast*. Thou hast God; thy sins are forgiven; thou hast the righteousness of Christ; thou hast not lost that. It is only some pence, which is gone, thy gold is safe, thy jewels are not taken away. "But I have lost my jewels," say you. Have you? Ah! then, you do not know Christ; for you would not venture to call anything a jewel save the precious Lord

Jesus. Is it not wrong for you to bemoan and weep so perpetually when "all things are yours," and you have not lost everything yet? Another one is expecting such and such a relative to be taken away, and is weeping over an expected loss. Now you have no promise to help you, for you weep before your trouble comes. God does not promise that he will help you who manufacture your own troubles. Remember, you cannot lose the title deeds of your possessions. If you have lost your copy you can get another, for the old deed is up in the ark in heaven.

Now, by way of a practical hint, I might say, if "all things are yours," how willing you ought to be to give something to the cause of God. A man who is poor and has nothing, is never expected to give; but a man who has "all things," should give like a prince. There are many princes in Israel who have all things in their possession, and I am sure I may ask them to give something for the Lord's cause.

But I again come back to this question. We will not put it away. We must have an answer; either now, or at God's bar. Are we Christ's. Some of you I fear, are not Christ's. Ye are none of his, because your conversation is carnal, your actions are worldly, your behaviour is inconsistent, and your lives are reproachable. Then, you are not Christ's. Some of you are not Christ's, because ye are trusting in your own righteousness, not leaning on the blood and righteousness of Christ alone. But we hope there are some of you who can join in that verse,

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On thy kind arms I fall;
Be thou my strength, and righteousness,
My Jesus, and my all."

If you can, then you are Christ's. If you have stripped yourselves of everything, and have taken Christ for all; if, devoid of all goodness, you make Christ your goodness; if, devoid of everything, you take Christ for all—then Christ is yours. Hence, you may revel in delights, and let your heart leap for joy, let your melancholy be dissipated, and your tears be cast away. Come, rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, for this world is yours; the world to come is yours, and heaven shall be your happy home. The Lord grant it may be so in the last day, when he shall make up his jewels!

OUR FATHER'S DEMAND.

BY THE REV. JAMES SMITH, CHELTENHAM.

"If, then, I be a Father, where is mine honour?" MAL. I. 6.

A PROFESSION of religion involves solemn obligations. The Lord expects us to be what we profess, and speaks to us accordingly in his Word. Do we profess to be Christians? Then God expects us to be Christ-like. Do we profess to be believers? Then the Lord expects us to walk by faith, and not by sight. Do we profess to be saints? Then the Lord expects us to live unearthly lives. Do we profess to be temples of the Holy Ghost? Then the Lord expects us to plan, purpose, and act as consecrated persons. Do we profess to be born again,—to be the sons of God? Then the Lord expects from us filial feelings, and filial conduct. "*If I be a Father, where is mine honour?*" Every baptized believer professes to be a child of God. Nor can he be a believer without, for "he that believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." Yes, we say "God is my Father, I am born again; born from above; born, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." What a privilege, to be the child of God! What an honour, to be called the sons of God! But this privilege, this honour, have all the saints. For we are all the sons of God, by faith in Christ Jesus. May the Spirit of adoption dwell in our hearts, nourish our graces, aid us in our devotions, help our infirmities,

and constrain us to live, not unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us, and rose again.

Beloved, do you call God, Father? Do you profess to be his child? If so, let me ask you for a little season to listen to his voice, he is speaking to you. He speaks in love. There is jealousy, if not grief, in his words. He asks you, "*Where is mine honour?*" The law says, "Honour thy father;" nature says, "Honour thy father;" grace says, "Honour thy father;" and the God of grace promises, "Them that honour me, I will honour." God expects, therefore, to be honoured by you. He expects you to keep an eye upon his honour always, and everywhere. He has honoured you, he intends to honour you more highly yet; hence it is but reasonable that he should expect you to honour him. Perhaps you are ready to ask, "How does God, as my Father, expect me to honour him?"

By exercising confidence in his promises. He has given you many, exceeding great, and very precious promises. These promises include all the blessings of his providence, and all the riches of his grace. They anticipate all the circumstances of life. They provide both for body and soul. They are expressed in the plainest and most unequivocal terms. They are ratified and confirmed by the death of his most dear and well-beloved Son. They have been fulfilled in unnumbered instances. They were never trusted in vain. They were never violated or known to fail. Having thus given you his word, having thus pledged himself to you, he expects you to place confidence in him. To expect him to be as good as his word. To do as he has said. But instead of this, many of his children give way to doubts, they are agitated with distressing fears, they are full of distrust. They doubt if he will make good his promises to them. They fear they shall be left unprovided and uncared for. They distrust his faithfulness and tender love. They do not say as much in words, but the spirit they breathe, the sighs and groans that escape them, the course of conduct they pursue, declare plainly that they do so. Now the Lord asks the doubting, fearing, distrustful professor, "*If I be a father where is mine honour?*" Does not the father naturally care for his children, provide for them, and interfere on their behalf? Is not the father's word law to the child, and ought not his plain and positive promise to silence every fear, and remove every doubt? Do you think that I shall do less for my children, than the father in nature will for his? Do you mean to say that my word is not to be taken and trusted, as soon, and as firmly as his? "*Where is mine honour?*" Poor, doubtful, distrustful professor, go upon thy knees, and answer this question to the Lord himself.

By filial love. The child naturally loves his parent, and the Christian professes to love his God. It appears very extraordinary when we think of it, but the sum of all that the Lord asks of his creatures is, "LOVE ME." And all that he asks of his children is, "LOVE ME." Strange, that God should so prize our love. But he does. Consider what he has done to win it. What he does to retain it. He loves us, that we may love him. He chose us in his beloved Son that we may love him. He redeemed us by the sufferings and death of Immanuel, that we may love him. He called us by his grace, renewed us by his Holy Spirit, and hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, that we may love him. He asks us to give him a child's love. The love that confides in him, communes with him, and prefers him above all other. But to how many cold hearted, earthly minded, self loving professors, may he well say, "*If I be a father, where is mine honour?*" Where is the love I ask for; the love I prize; the love I have done so much to win? Look at the love you have for earthly relatives, carnal objects, and temporal things. When do you love me with a love so strong, a love so ardent, a love so self denying? "*Where is mine honour?*" Words will not do. Profession is not enough. I want the heart. I wish to be loved as a Father, with the warm heart of a kind and affectionate child." Cold hearted professor, go to thy closet, and there answer the question of thy grieved and offended Father.

By acquiescing in his will. The father's will should rule the household, and the will of God should rule the universe. Our Father is infinitely wise, infinitely kind, and wills nothing but what is for our real and everlasting welfare. He manages all the affairs of the world, he superintends the meanest affairs of his children. He has appointed our lot, he arranges all circumstances. He says, "Nothing shall by any means hurt you; all things shall work together for your good." Now, if our Father's will is the offspring of his wisdom, and an expression of the deep and tender love of his heart, ought we not to acquiesce in his will; and with his beloved Son, amid the agonies of the garden, exclaim, "*Not my will, but thine be done.*" But, instead of this, many of his professed children fret, complain, and indirectly impeach his wisdom and his love. How very few are satisfied with the station appointed them, the talents given them, the lot assigned them! Each fancies he has something to complain of, or, that on some point, God deals hardly with him. Now amidst the murmuring, complaining, fretting, and fault-finding of his professed children, the Lord steps forward, and asks, "*If I be a father, where is mine honour?*" You confess that I am wiser than you, holier than you, more loving than you, and yet you do not acquiesce in my will? *Where is mine honour?* a father, and not give law to his own children! a father, and not dispose of his own property! a father, and not appoint the situations to be filled, and the lessons to be learned by his own offspring! Either renounce my name, and give up your profession, or acquiesce in my will." In other words, "Allow me to do what I will with my own."

By obedience to his precepts. Filial obedience honours God. He prizes the least thing done by his child with a view to please him. He has prescribed nothing but what will be for our good, and his own glory. His precepts are to rule our life, while his promises comfort our hearts. There is a fulness treasured up in Jesus to supply us; there is grace to be used by us, and what we receive from the Saviour's fulness, is to enable us to perform his precepts. Some of his precepts are moral, these are of everlasting obligation, and extend to every day of our whole life. Some of them are positive, and are intended for special times, and particular purposes. Every believer should do what the Lord commands, just because the Lord commands it. No other reason should ever be required. But there are many who call God Father, who neglect to attend to his positive institutions altogether; and who pay but little attention to some of his moral requirements. Now to such the Lord appeals when he says, "*If I be a Father, where is mine honour?*" Where is the obedience I have a right to expect? The prompt, hearty, unhesitating, steady obedience of filial love?" If God is our Father, surely he ought to be obeyed; and if my reader lives in the neglect of any New Testament ordinance, or violating any one of God's moral precepts, let him go in before the Lord, and tell him honestly why he neglects that ordinance, and why he violates that precept. Every one of us must give account of himself to God, and the sooner such parties do it the better. Reader, do you live practically disobeying any of God's precepts? If so, answer the Lord's question, "*Where is mine honour?*"

By asking for great things at his throne. He has hidden us come boldly upon our mouths wide, and ask what he shall give us. Yet some seldom pray. Others go to God, as a servant would go to a hard master, to wring a favour from him. We should go in faith. We should ask with confidence. We should expect whatever we ask, if it is promised in his holy Word. Our heavenly Father considers himself honoured if we go to him very often; if we go for all we need; if we fearlessly ask for the greatest blessings he has to bestow. But when we seldom pray, when our prayers are cold, when we have no confidence in God, when we do not expect to receive the blessing we ask; then the Lord may well ask, "*If I be a Father, where is mine honour?*" Is this the way to treat a Father? a Father who has done so much for you? a Father who has

given so many blessings unasked by you? a father who has made so many promises to you?" Reader, if thou seldom prayest, if thy prayers are mere forms, if thou hast no faith in God's love, if thou art afraid to ask for great things at God's throne, or if thou dost not expect him to give thee what thou askest of him; then go and answer his question, "*Where is mine honour?*" and give him a reason for thy conduct.

By valuing his presence. Every affectionate child loves and values the presence of its loving and kind-hearted parent; and every one that professes to be a child of God, should love and value the presence of God. There should be the morning visit for the morning blessing. The noon-day visit for intercourse and communion. The evening visit for confession, and the token of approbation. We should walk with our Father in the field of nature, in the garden of his ordinances, and in the paradise of his Word. The presence of God should be daily sought, constantly realized, and highly prized. But some professors appear to value the world's smiles, the pleasures of time, or the accumulation of wealth, more than the presence of God. Reader, if anything is dearer to thy heart, more precious to thy soul, or more anxiously sought after than the presence of God; he may well come forth and ask thee, "*If I be a Father, where is mine honour?*" Is it an honour to me to have the world's smiles, or wealth, or pleasure, preferred to my presence? Is it an honour to me, to have my children so taken up with the world, as scarcely to have time to speak with me, or listen while I speak to them?" If you prefer anything earthly to the presence of thy God, my reader, go and inform him why. Go answer his question, so pointedly proposed to thee, "*Where is mine honour?*"

But I must close. Is God indeed your father? *Then feel for and pity the fatherless.* There are many poor, fatherless, Christless souls around you. Pity them. Pray for them. Speak to them. Tell them of your father. Tell them of his nature, his character, his love, his compassion, and especially of his readiness to adopt poor fatherless children for his own. Try to induce them to accompany you to his throne and to his house, and seek by all means to introduce them to him. Is God your father? *Then admire the greatness of your privilege.* What a mercy to have a father, and such a father! a father with such wealth, such love, such infinite condescension; a father who ever lives, ever loves, and ever cares for you; a father who will never let you want, or suffer your enemies to triumph over you; a father whose eye follows you, whose arm encircles you, and whose heart ever sympathizes with you. Are you in doubt whether God is your Father? *Desire it as the one thing needful,* as the greatest blessing, as the highest privilege you can enjoy. Set your heart upon it. *Seek it right earnestly.* Seek it daily. Seek it at once. Seek it determined to possess and enjoy it. Jesus takes in all poor orphans who apply to him. God looks lovingly down on poor seeking sinners, and says, "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of youth?"

Brethren in Christ, as God is our Father, let us be jealous of his honour; let us reverence his authority, and let us walk worthy of his holy name. If tempted to sin, repel the temptation with this, "I am God's child, I must not, it will grieve my Father's heart, and will wound my Saviour afresh." If tried by providence, remember it is your Father's providence, and the darkest cloud may be charged with the greatest blessing. If harassed by Satan, go and tell thy Father of him, crying as one of old did, "Deliver my soul from the sword, my darling from the power of the dog." Are you afflicted? It is your Father's rod. Are you happy in his ways? It is your Father's smile. Are you drawing near to death? It is going home to your Father's house. With God for your Father, you may brave any danger, face any foe, carry any cross, endure any trials, and rejoice in the greatest tribulation. Let the point be settled then, God is my Father; and this point being settled, let it be the one aim of your life to honour him who predestinated you to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, to the praise of his glorious grace, wherein he hath made you accepted in the Beloved.

LOVE TO CHRIST.

BY THE REV. H. FREECE, MINISTER OF COTTON STREET CHAPEL, POPLAR.

"I love them that love Me."—Prov. viii. 17.

SOME suppose that wisdom, one of the Divine attributes, is here personified; others regard it as the language of Christ, the second person in the Trinity, speaking by the mouth of the "Preacher" to the "sons of men." It is the latter view under which we shall consider it, and we invite you to notice—the source, the object, and the evidence of true religion.

I. THE SOURCE OF TRUE RELIGION. "Love." On no subject, perhaps, have there been, or are there, more erroneous opinions entertained, than on the right source of true religion. Some regard religion as having its source in the senses. The feelings moved and wrought upon by the sweet, soft, and mellow strains of sacred music, are regarded as religious feelings. The emotions excited by the view of imposing rites and gorgeous ceremonies, by gazing upon the figure of a crucified Saviour, hanging upon the accursed tree, are regarded as religious emotions; the tears shed by hearing a recital of unparalleled sufferings, and of a tragic death, are regarded as religious tears; the fears awakened by a vivid representation of the day of judgment, and of the agonies of the lost in the regions of woe, are regarded as religious fears. Others again, regard true religion as having its source in the intellect. A speculative knowledge of the plan of salvation, as originated by God the Father, and executed by God the Son, is regarded as religious knowledge; a theoretical conception of the truths of Sacred Writ respecting man's condition and God's mercy; man's sins and Christ's atonement, is regarded as the possession of religious truth; to reason clearly and conclusively on religious principles and Gospel doctrines, is regarded as religious wisdom. Others again, regard true religion as having its source in obedience to moral duty. Constant attendance on the means of grace, is regarded as religious worship; uprightness in our dealing with our fellow-men, is regarded as religious rectitude; assisting benevolent institutions, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, relieving the destitute, are regarded as religious charity. Now, while we would not separate some of these from true religion, the Bible teaches us that true religion does not *consist in all*, or in any *one* of them. Listen to the language of Paul. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling symbol. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

In what then does true religion consist? The apostle tells us in "charity," or as our text tells us in "love." Religion, true religion has its source in the affections, not absolutely, or exclusively, but ultimately, that is, love in a scriptural sense implies all the other graces of the Spirit. Where love reigns there every spiritual grace and godlike virtue will flourish and abound. Practical love is the highest eminence to which, in a moral or intellectual point of view, men, angels, or even God himself can attain. The definition of the character of God as given by the Apostle John, is strictly philosophical, "God is love." There may be good works without love, we mean love in a Scriptural sense of that term—in which we are now employing it. Indeed, some of the best works in the world's estimation have sprung from pure selfishness; some of the world's greatest philanthropists, have been the greatest self-seekers; the applause of men, the love of honour, the lust of self-aggrandizement have prompted them to make the sacrifice they have apparently made, and not disinterested love. There may be intellect without love; some of our wisest

men have been the most cold and indifferent to the claims of God and man, the most ambitious and proud; states of heart the most incongruous with pure and disinterested love. There may be feeling without love. Have we not seen the cheeks suffused with tears, the breast throbbing with sighs? have we not heard groans and cries, but which have been as the "morning cloud," and as "the early dew" which soon pass away? Sympathy may be awakened then, tears may flow, the emotions may be moved, and still no true religion. Why? Because true religion is *supreme* love.

Religion is love in its fullest, its strongest exercise and power. Hence, Christ himself tell us, that "on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." And, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." There can be no true religion where this pure, this supreme love is not the moving spring of every action, the nerve of every work, the inspiration of every prayer, the object of every sacrifice, the fountain of every tear. Neither can there be any true religion where love is not the current of holy feeling, that carries man forward in the performance of every duty, in the acquirement of every good; where love is not the element in which man lives, the blood which flows through every vein of his spiritual system, the principle of every plan, the stimulus of every step. Religion must be all and in all, ever present, all-absorbing, all powerful, and ever prompting; or it is nothing.

II. THE OBJECT OF TRUE RELIGION; "Me." As the stars of the solar system revolve around the central sun, so the sympathies of the emotional system must revolve around the central affection, supreme love for Christ.

Our love to be supreme must be personal, "Me." We may love many things about a man, but not the man himself. Just so with Christ; we may love what he has said, we may love what he has done, we may love what he is doing, and still we may have no ardent love for, or strong attachment to him, without which there can be no true religion.

Christ demands supreme personal love. A decided preference for him, before every thing and every one beside. This must be manifested in a willingness, if necessary, to leave all to follow him. Christ himself has said, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."

There is nothing more reasonable than that Christ should be the object of our supreme personal love. Whom should we love the most? Surely the friend that has done the most for us. There is no one that has done so much for us as Christ. Towards whom should we cherish the most ardent affection? Surely towards the friend possessed of the most lovable qualities. Beauty painted on the canvas, is powerful in its attractions; beauty manifested in nature, is more attractive still; but beauty displayed in spirit and morals is most attractive of all. Beauty in the landscape must call forth our admiration, but beauty, moral beauty in the man, must kindle the flame of love. Now where shall we find such beauty, such charms, such loveliness, as we find in Christ? He is no mere ideal of perfect excellence, he is its consummate embodiment. Let imagination task its mightiest powers, let it take the "wings of the morning," and traverse the habitable parts of the globe, let it soar on the pinions of faith to those mighty million orbs that roll in space, and from thence to the very company and presence of angels, and "the spirits of the just made perfect," and from the knowledge acquired and excellence seen, let imagination form its own god of moral beauty and loveliness; its glory, though the fruit of so much toil, would be but as the flicker of a taper amid the rays of the noonday sun, when compared with the glory of Christ. "He is the chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely." "He is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person."

Then this supreme love for Christ is absolutely necessary for the full develop-

ment of moral excellence. It requires no argument to prove that love always assimilates its subject to its object; the fact is patent to our senses. The mighty attractive power of devoted love no language can express. Do we not see loving children walking in the footsteps, and manifesting the spirit of their parents? Do we not see friends becoming like those with whom they associate? The strength, and reverence, and ardour of the affection too, with the depth of devotion which the subject loving feels towards the object loved, always determine the power of assimilation. Such being the case, it is of the highest importance that the object of supreme personal love should be the highest standard of moral excellence, and in every respect perfect; for in this way only can the noblest powers of the soul be developed and matured, and the highest dignity of man be attained. Now, as we have seen, Christ is just such an one, therefore reason apart from revelation would dictate, that Christ should be the object of our supreme personal love.

III. THE EVIDENCE OF TRUE RELIGION. "I love them that love me." We can imagine an anxious soul just setting out in the Divine life asking with a trembling heart, am I an object of Christ's love? How can I know that true religion has taken hold upon my heart? How can I be assured that Christ is my Saviour and my Friend? What is my evidence that I am not deceiving myself, and resting upon false hope? Our text furnishes us with a reply to questions such as these. Christ says, "I love them that love me." That is, the love felt in the heart towards Christ, is the effect, not the cause of Christ's love towards us. The evidence then of Christ's love to us, is seen and felt in our love towards Christ. If Christ did not love us, there would not be a spark of love in our hearts towards Christ. There would be no longing desire that we may enjoy his presence, and participate in the blessings of his finished work—no striving to copy his example, and to walk in his footsteps—no desire to possess his mind, and to manifest his Spirit—no desire to see Jesus, and to rejoice in his salvation. If then, you feel these longing desires, if you feel the flame of holy love burning in your breast for him, if it be the studied purpose of your life to do those things that are well pleasing in his sight, if you earnestly pray, and ardently desire that Christ may be the object of your supreme personal love, then you have the inward evidence that Christ loves you, for these could not exist unless his love had been shod abroad in your heart.

(To be continued.)

THE MAIDEN OF MOAB; OR, TRUE AND FALSE RELIGION.

(Intended for the Young).

BY THE REV. W. P. BALFERN, OF DOW.

III.—THE RECEPTION.

"The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust."—Isaiah ii. 12.

THE reader possibly has never seen an eastern sunset, but he can imagine Naomi and the pensive Ruth seated together on some fine summer's evening, after the toil of the day, beneath the shade of some wide spreading tree, holding sweet and fraternal intercourse with each other, on topics altogether alien to the history and theology of Moab. It may be readily imagined, too, with what interest the ardent and

affectionate girl would listen to the description given by the venerable Israelite of the beauty of her native country, and of the wonderful things wrought by Jehovah on behalf of its favoured people. That Naomi brought the history of her nation before the attention of her daughter-in-law, and sought earnestly her conversion to the religion of her people, there can be no doubt; while the fact that the God of

whom she heard so much from the lips of Naomi, was the God of that husband, whom she had but recently consigned to the grave, imparted, through the divine blessing, an intense interest to what was communicated, and which ultimately led to the decision which she expressed (Ruth i. 16), and which has given her so illustrious a place in the temple of truth, as forming a part of that noble line from whence, as to the flesh, the Messiah came, and which has made her character and history so interesting, as illustrative of the conduct of the true disciple of Christ, in the pursuit of those things which are essential to his peace.

How sweet must these words of welcome have sounded in the ears of Ruth. She had forsaken her native country, home and friends, to accompany this poor lone widow into the land of Israel. She knew not what awaited her, what dangers she might meet with, through what sorrows she might have to pass, or what privations she might be called upon to endure. But love, pure ardent and sincere love, bound her to Naomi for better or worse, richer or poorer, sickness or health. She knew, it may be, but little or nothing of the rich relative she was to meet with, of his corn fields, his maidens, his dignity, power, or wealth, of the generosity of his character, or of the love he would exhibit towards herself. With what surprise and gratitude, then, must not this affectionate salutation have fallen upon her ear, and gladdened her heart. She started forth expecting to glean a few handfuls of corn, when, lo! a sweet benediction from the lips of Boaz; yea, instead of gleaning a few ears of corn, she gleaned the master himself, as the sequel proves.

So the sincere convert, made honest by divine grace, forsakes, like Ruth, the Moab of this world, and those things likely to impede his progress in the pursuit of the salvation of his soul. He feels persuaded there is secret vitality in the religion of Christ, a reality in the word of God, especially in those parts which declare the

state of man, for he has their counterpart in his own experience; he perceives, moreover, a beauty in real godliness, which he cannot describe, and feels his heart drawn out in love towards those who are its subjects. Connected with this inwrought persuasion and perception, there is a secret decision and determination of mind, of which the Holy Ghost is the author, to seek, at all costs, this religion for himself, while of the glory of him in whom it all centres he has but little knowledge. Into the land of Israel, however, simple and sincere he comes, intent upon finding out this secret, and among the people of God he sojourns; these are the people whom he desires to be his people and their God his God. From the maidens of Boaz, the preachers of the word, he begins, however, to learn something of the true dignity and exalted relationship of the people with whom he dwells, and the glory of him to whom they belong. Some transient gleam of the heavenly Boaz, some stray kind word melts his heart, and makes him feel his unworthiness more than ever, while yet it encourages him to glean with more diligence in his field. He goes again and again, hoping to gather some few scattered ears of truth as heretofore, when, lo! the heavenly Boaz speaks; he knows all about him—his eye has followed him from Moab to Israel—a kind benediction, a gladdening welcome, beneath the wide-spreading wings of the mystic cherubim, and sheltered beneath the golden propitiatory of a Saviour's blood, for the first time he lifts up his head with a "my Lord and my God." Thus this poor outcast is gathered into the family of the heavenly Boaz, while grace pours into his bosom a full reward, made up of pardon and peace, the love of Christ, and a secret joy which no man taketh away.

Here, then, enquiring youth, behold the faint tracing of that full reward which awaits thee, if thou art with all thy heart and soul seeking an interest in the heavenly Boaz. On the part of Ruth it stood connected with the love

of Boaz, union with him, participation in his dignity and wealth, identity with his kindred, and separation from Moab for ever. And so shall it be with thee, if Jesus is the object of thy love and search ; his love and welcome shall be thine : the day will come when he will say, " I have blotted out thy transgressions as a cloud, and as a thick cloud thy sins." The wide-spreading wings of his blood and righteousness shall cover thee—the king shall bring thee into his banqueting house, while his banner over thee shall be love—thy nuptials shall be solemnized to the sweetest music, even the voice of the heavenly bridegroom himself, who shall rejoice over thee with joy and singing—married to the King of kings and Lord of lords—one with him—a member of his mystic body—thou shalt partake of his glory, and reflecting it again stand forth marked as a child of God, and joint heir with him in whom thou art accepted and complete. A gulph shall be placed between thee and the Moab of this world, never to be passed again ; while thine heart shall thrill with a joy, to which, while in Moab, thou wast altogether a stranger, but which carries its own witness that it is but the earnest of bliss far more sublime and exalted.

Such, then, is the reception, and such the "full reward" which love freely bestows upon every returning prodigal, brought by faith to the feet of Christ ; a reward which stands connoted with an interest in his everlasting love, a covenant ordered in all things and sure ; the merit of his blood, the imputation of his righteousness, union with his person, separation from the world's sin and curse, the enjoyment of his love, the embrace of his bosom, the guidance of his eye, the support of his arm, and final victory over all foes ; which brings to a kingdom and a crown, a mansion of bliss, a throne of glory, a harp of gold, a song of victory, and a place upon that sea of glass, where the royal priesthood of heaven for ever shout forth the high praises of their ever-living and exalted King—for "he that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I

will be his God, and he shall be my son."

O, reader, art thou decided for Christ ? Little did Ruth think when, with faltering step and tearful eye, she left the land of her nativity, the glory which awaited her in the land of her adoption ; and O, seeking youth, notwithstanding all thou mayest hear or read of the full reward which Jesus gives to his disciples, thou canst form but a feeble conception of it. Consider what he is, contemplate frequently his essential and mediatorial glory ; the glory of his nature, and the glory he hath acquired ; and, remember, that what he gives is ever worthy of himself, as all he has done is like himself. Throw a small shell into the sea ; dost thou wonder that it is filled to overflowing ? and canst thou wonder that the heart, when filled by Jesus, should overflow with joy, or that heaven should be what it is ? Thou art saying, perhaps, thy sins are too numerous for him to remove, and thou art afraid the *full* reward will never be thine. Thy sins are too numerous ? Well, they might be, were Christ less than he is, or his grace less abundant. But he has said, " I will abundantly pardon." Canst thou understand this ? Apply this word to him as the God of nature. Canst thou count the drops of rain he sends to fertilize the earth, or the rays of light which stream forth constantly from the sun ? Canst thou number the flowers with which he has embroidered the earth, or the leaves with which he has clothed the trees ? Descend into the sea ; mark the multitudinous creatures with which his word has peopled the mighty deep. Gaze upon the heavens at night, and count the stars ; yea, ascend to the throne of God ; behold the angels there, the hymning cherubim and seraphim, and tell their number if you can ; and then, remember, that he who made them all, is the same who hath promised a "full reward" to all who seek his face, and said he will *abundantly* pardon all who confess their sins. And has he not merit sufficient, think you, to put them away ? How can they be otherwise than lost

in the mighty ocean of his redeeming love? O, fearful disciple, take heed of unbelief; a full reward there is for all who cleave to Christ, made up of many blessings, and in its very centre, lined with love, and crimsoned o'er with Jesus' blood, the precious jewel of pardon lies.

And ye who have hesitated to give your hearts to Christ and publicly to confess your love, learn from the history of Ruth the importance of decision. Had she have listened to her friends, or obeyed even the bias of mere reason, she would never have been the wife of Boaz, or have occupied so exalted a position on the page of truth. O, if ye would be truly great, if ye would have the full reward which Jesus gives to those who truly love and serve him, listen to his voice and obey *at once* his word.

How criminal is thy conduct, undecided one. What, wilt thou dare to proclaim that Christ is a hard Master, that the service of sin will make thee happier than his love; that the pleasures of this world are more worthy of thy embrace, and that thou dost deem it a misfortune to rest upon his bosom at once and enjoy his

smile? And why dost thou listen to the world? It has no "full reward" to give thee. Is not its language still, "who will show us any good." Consult the devotees of pleasure, listen to their voice; hast thou ever heard them exclaim, like one of whom we read, whom Jesus blessed.—"Hold Lord, *it is enough!*"—filled with an ecstasy of bliss. Look nearer home; what saith thy heart? 'Tis vacant still; yes, and it *must* be till its rightful owner comes. Thou hast read many books; religious novels too; religious truth mixed up with earth-born love. Did those bring thee a "full reward" of holy joy and peace, and give a relish to thy secret prayer? Have *they* unlocked thy heart to Christ, and made his Gospel sweet? Thou hast not found a full reward in them, then? No, nor in poetry, art, wealth, nor fame. Waste no more time, be humbled for your sin, show yourself on the Lord's side. Let the decision of the Psalmist be yours.—"I made haste and delayed not to keep thy commandments." Remembering who has said, "I love them that love me, and those who seek me early shall find me."

EARLY LIFE OF DR. KITTO,

AUTHOR OF THE "PICTORIAL BIBLE, ETC., ETC.,"

JOHN KITTO was a rare man in a rare position. Totally deaf from his thirteenth year, he became an inmate of a workhouse when fourteen, a parish apprentice at seventeen, and nearly died of misery, solitude of heart, and unrequited toil, under the tyranny of a base master; and yet, despite his small schooling, and almost utter friendlessness, he contrived closely to study many of the best books, and wisely to read his own heart; so that before he was eighteen, he distinguished himself by the vigour and chasteness of his compositions, and that in such a manner as to excite the interest and sympathy of several persons of distinguished talent and large-heartedness, by whose help he became the *protégé* of the *literati* of his native town, through whose jealous patronage he steered with modest and grateful independence of spirit. Under the auspices of a noble friend and Christian brother, he at length came forth from manifold trials a laborious Christian; his spirit going out through all his tribulations in the strength of that hope which cannot be confounded, because springing from the power of God's own love, felt in the heart.

Thus Kitto, by his experience, his learning, and his love, ultimately reached his highest and fittest earthly position, being acknowledged in all directions as the best practical illustrator and expounder of the divine word in his country or his age. The biography of such a man must be full of lessons of the deepest interest and instruction. Such biographies elevate humanity, and cause us to exclaim—

"Lives of great men all remind us,
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us,
Footprints on the sands of time."

Kitto was born in Seven Stars Lane, Plymouth, on the 4th of December, 1809. It is true he was a puny, sickly infant, and the vigour he afterwards evinced was rather that of the brain than of the muscles; and his energy was rather that which rendered him capable of keeping close to his story-telling grandmother, and enjoying in quiet the current of ideas thus early awakened, than the

bodily activity in which most healthy children delight.

The Almighty hand snatched Kitto from destruction, when those from whom he sprang were in danger of sinking down into those vices which extinguish families and nations. His father from being a respected man of good talents, as a master builder, became a drunkard and a pauper in the prime of his life. His mother, however, was a brave, and patient, and pious woman, who laboured with her own hands for the bread of which her husband's intemperance deprived her children.

At the age of four years he was removed from his father's house and his mother's care to that of his maternal grandmother, Mrs. Picken, whose affectionate attention to her "Johnny" was well proportioned to his helplessness and necessity. With her his mind was early entertained with wonders, and so it rapidly grew, inquiring, and reflective, and metaphysical; for under her oral tuition he could think of little but witches, wizards, and hobgoblins, subjects of no mean importance for exercising whatever powers of abstraction any child, of lesser or larger growth, may possess.

The effect of this dear old soul's loving-kindness is worth thinking of; it was such that in long-after years when "Johnny" was about to enter on his chief literary undertakings, he says, "I cannot think of her without deep emotion."

Verily, this grandmother was a prophetess in her way, for she taught him to enjoy the works of God in creation, and above all taught him to believe in a love that watched over him incessantly, helped him with sympathy in all his labours, rejoiced in his triumphs, and encouraged his further efforts. It was his love for this loving heart, who was, as he says, more than a mother to him, that inspired him with natural confidence in the doctrine of the soul's immortality, long before that doctrine was brought to light in his heart by faith in Him who is the resurrection and the life. Oh, the might of loving-kindness! What would Kitto have been without this grandmother, with a drunken father and a mother overburdened with the weight of her life? We see many lads in our streets, ragged, wretched, shrewd, and abandoned, who may tell us without words. O ye Christians, clothed in soft raiment, honour and imitate Mrs. Picken.

Next amongst Kitto's early enlighteners we have his friend the story-telling shoemaker, Roberts, who gave little "Johnny" his life-long attachment to books and pictures. As usual among the poor, his first books and favourites were those that speak most powerfully and plainly of man's interests and destinies; the Bible and the "Pilgrim's Progress," with demonstrative engravings, filled him with delight; and it is no wonder that he "glorified" those engravings with abundance of red, blue, and yellow paint, as soon as, by the generosity of a neighbour, he became possessed of his four-penny box of colours. Such was the commencement of his Bible illustrations.

As a child he used to hear Dr. Hawker, vicar of Charles, Plymouth; and certainly, from what we remember, Dr. Hawker was a

preacher well calculated to impress either man or child by his earnestness, point, and straightforwardness of style, as well as by his spiritualisms, that always gave one the hope of seeing more than appeared. Dr. Hawker, then, was Kitto's first pattern of a preacher, and so "Johnny" would preach too, taking a chair with the bottom out for a pulpit, much to the scandal of dear Mrs. Picken, who thought this precociousness rather profane; but then, as after, "Johnny," being obstinate, would not read aloud at all, unless allowed to do so in his own way, like an embryo D.D. as he was.

He very early proved his pertinacity in acquiring knowledge and applying it. He bored one of his friends by borrowing her books until he was ashamed to ask for a fresh supply, so he tried to express his wishes in notes; and these notes were his first attempts at composition, and were always successful. From notes the transition to authorship is easy. He became an author, and a paid one too, before he was twelve years of age. A cousin had a penny, and would buy a story-book. "Johnny" could write a story, and wanted a penny, so a bargain was struck, and a long story about "King Pepin" was produced, with a painted picture at the beginning, very much to the satisfaction of both parties. The story related to the doings of the wild men that once dwelt in England. Here we see a mental vigour beyond his years; and in his familiarity with pictured story-books and a box of colours, we trace the commencement of his talent for those pictorial illustrations by which he afterwards so largely drew the attention of the young to the Book of books.

All Kitto's schooling extended only from his eighth to his eleventh year, much interrupted by headaches and changes of master; so that it is really surprising that he became so good a reader, and no wonder that his penmanship and arithmetic were but rude. He was God's pupil. He observed nature closely, and caught intelligence from every fact about him. He collected a museum of objects for his little garret-study and bed-room, and he thought on all he saw. There was vast variety in its contents; he studied pebbles and odd bits of God's handiwork in such a manner as to infer order, mind, will, and moral government, alike from stones and from books. Fancy and hope converted his dingy closet into a dreamy paradise.

Fully to understand the promise of Kitto's mental faculties at the period, we must remember that it was his habit, before he was eleven years of age, to make copious, clear, and useful indices of all the books he read; and that these were no mean works, for Young and Spenser were his especial favourites, and the Bible his constant study, with the help of Josephus' "Antiquities of the Jews," and such Christian writers as Baxter and Watts. The Hand Divine was guiding the lad, and preparing him, within and without, subjectively and objectively, for his futurity of extensive labour and usefulness. "The child was father of the man."

In Kitto's eleventh year, his fond grandmother's means failed, and he became again dependent on his father, whose bad habits had now returned him to the necessity of

seeking labour as a journeyman and jobbing mason. He took young Kitto to help him as a labourer, and this employment led to the grand crisis in the lad's life, for on the 18th of February, 1817, when thus engaged with his father in repairing the roof of a house, his foot slipped, and he fell from a height of thirty-five feet upon a stone pavement beneath. He remained unconscious for a fortnight, and then gradually recovered, except that from that time he never heard the slightest sound. "Speak! speak! why not speak?" said he to his attendants. Then the fatal truth was written on his slate, "You are deaf." Crusing truth!

Who can sympathize fully with such a soul who has not thus had "the porches of the ear" closed to the voice of wisdom and affection? The deprivations of the deaf are more pitiable than those who hear can imagine. The story of Kitto's own feelings, efforts, struggles, and consolations, as a deaf lad, and a deaf man, is charmingly, touchingly, and philosophically told in his very interesting work on "The Lost Senses." He views his own case like a Christian philosopher, with the design of benefiting other sufferers by the detail of his own experience.

The life of the deaf is literally shocking—it is full of surprises. Dr. Kitto enables us better to understand this by his description of the inconveniences to which he was so much exposed by the percussion of bodies near him, or suddenly coming upon his sight. Hence the violent shock which Kitto felt when his chair was accidentally struck, and the torture he experienced from any movement or concussion on the floor—the percussion reached his brain in an unprepared state, and filled him with trepidation. This dependence on the eye for intelligence concerning the state and proximity of surrounding objects, causes the deaf man to acquire a keen vigilance of vision, and a discriminating aptitude by which he is enabled at a glance to read off the visible meanings of things. The absolutely deaf is a thorough discerner of faces, and the hypocrite had better not approach him; for, though he may deceive angels, the deaf man will probably detect his disguise.

Dr. Kitto very nearly discovered the art of hearing and enjoying music with his fingers. Would he had energetically cultivated the hints he acquired on this point, and with the appliances of science continued his experiments on "felt sound"; and we would urge any deaf person who may read this, patiently to study and apply his suggestions on the subject. While at the Missionary College, at Islington, Dr. Kitto accidentally discovered that when his hand was laid on a piano, an agreeable sensation, quite distinct from mere percussion, was imparted to him. He says: "On experiment, I found that the notes were most distinct to me when the points of my finger nails rested upon the cover; and still more when the cover over the wires was raised, and my fingers rested on the wood over which the wires were stretched." "I have often thought, that if I had cultivated this perception, some finer results might have been obtained."

It is clear that the nails in contact with

the sounding-board actually conveyed the musical vibration to the hearing power of the brain. Kitto really felt the sound. How was this? Merely because bone is a good conductor of sound, and the nails being partially bony, brought the sound-vibrations more directly into the bony frame, which is nearly in contact with the brain. The sound in fact travelled through his bones so completely, that he could make out the tune. We know that a concert might be laid on and conveyed from house to house, and street to street, and town to town, like gas, not through tubes, but through solid rods of deal or cedar, or any other good sound conductor, only providing that the conductor touch the vibrating instrument, and also an appropriate sounding-board at the place where the desired sound is wanted.

But we return to the poor boy Kitto. His privations were extreme, but there was a mighty spirit stirring within him; and though in a position in which it was impossible for him to get a living, he yet did not despair, for he had the beginning of a treasure that grows for ever; he had some knowledge, much hope, and not a little faith; and all he needed was opportunity for their exercise. The gifts he had he used. He could paint birds, trees, and flowers, after a childish fashion; and children bought his paintings, and with the pence thus earned, he bought books, and so ascended, step by step, the steep path that ultimately gave him such a commanding view of truth. His first readings were of an essentially religious tone. That he early caught this tone, and was early sustained by revealed wisdom under the hard pressure of his lot, is fully evinced in his Journal, written when he was just sixteen, and while an inmate of the workhouse, stands this sentence—"He hath declared, whom he loves he rebukes and chastens. Does misfortune render me inferior in thy eyes, O my God? No, for thou hast said thou art no respecter of persons. Thou hearest alike the king and the beggar. Dare I, a worm, the creature of his will (the Almighty Power) repine at his behests?" The boy had learned a kind of acquiescence in the divine disposal then; but there is a sort of "quiesquis ille" in his mode of speaking of the Almighty; and though he verbally called on his Saviour, he states himself that he did not really know him as his God and Saviour until years after. His observations upon the character of his early readings are wise and good. "My mind was thus carried through a very useful discipline. The theological bias given by my earlier readings and associations remained, and the time eventually came, when I was enabled to return to it with redoubled ardour; and after that another time arrived, when I could turn to rich account whatever useful thing I had learned, and whatever talent I had cultivated, however remote such acquirement might at first have seemed removed from any definite pursuit." This is a point of importance, and involves an instructive lesson for the young.

(To be continued.)

LITERARY NOTICES.

Evangelical Pulpit, Nos. 9 to 12. London: J. F. Shaw, 36, Paternoster Row. THESE "Studies for the Pulpit" continue to be conducted with great ability; and to those who can do without them, they may be of no small service.

Christ Alone Exalted—the complete works of Tobias Crisp, D.D. With explanatory notes by John Gill, D.D. 2 vols. octavo, with portraits. London: W. H. Collingridge.

THESE volumes contain most full and precious exhibitions of the Gospel. Owing, however, to some few bald and unguarded expressions—which in this edition have been fully explained by the learned editor—it has been the fashion, in some quarters, to decry Dr. Crisp's works as the essence of Antinomianism and subversive of Christian morality. Having in our early days derived no small advantage from these sermons, the burden of which is expressed in the declaration of the Saviour, "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance," we do very cordially recommend them to the perusal and study of ministers of the Gospel, and, indeed, to all who can afford to purchase them.

Missionary Reminiscences; or, Jamaica retraced. By the Rev. C. H. Cornford, ten years missionary in that island. Leeds: J. Heaton & Son. London: Houlston & Stoneman.

A VERY interesting volume, and admirably adapted for presentation purposes.

The Right Word in the Right Place. A Companion to the writing desk, pulpit, and platform; forming a new and improved Dictionary of English Synonyms, in which is incorporated the Selections of Crabbe, Archbishop Whateley, and others; comprising a greater number of words of similar meaning, from which to make choice, than any other collection; pp. 64. London: J. F. Shaw.

Whoever in writing or speaking would acquire the facility of expressing their ideas with force and precision, should without delay procure this marvellously cheap book, which within a small compass, and at a cost seven times less than the cheapest collection, contains a far greater number of words having a general coincidence of meaning, than any other work of the kind. To Sunday school teachers and public speakers it is in-

dispensable. All who purchase it will find it to be Sixpence well spent.

Nonconformist Theology, or Serious Considerations for Churches, Pastors, and Deacons: being Seven Letters to the Principals and Professors of the Independent and Baptist Colleges of England. By John Campbell, D.D., Editor of "The British Banner," &c. London: W. H. Collingridge. LAST month we directed the attention of our readers to an important controversy on certain theological opinions between the "Electio Review and fifteen London Ministers on the one side, and Mr. J. Grant, the Editor of the "Morning Advertiser," on the other. Since then much has been written in defence of the poetry of Mr. Lynch, and of the reverend indorsers of the theology of the said "Hymns for the Heart and Voice." Dr. Campbell, as we intimated in our previous notice, has published an analysis of the book; and although we can scarcely help smiling at the vehemence with which the worthy doctor grasps these frail products of poetical genius—fairly crushing them to death,—with two or three exceptions we quite concur with him in the results of his investigation; with Dr. Campbell, we feel that this controversy has relation to something of far greater importance than the adaptation of a volume of poetry to accomplish the design for which it was avowedly published; we view it as expressive of a tendency towards a negative style of writing and teaching, in matters pertaining to life and godliness, which has ever been the dread precursor of positive error, and the death of all spirituality in the churches of Christ. The "Freeman" has rushed into the arena, and delivered itself of a leader, filling four of its massive columns, highly eulogistic and apologetic of the "Rivulet," and condemnatory of the Editors of the "Morning Advertiser," and the "British Banner"; in this article the "Freeman" says, "The great centre of evangelical ministration is the cross, but an *illimitable* circle surrounds it; perhaps the ministry of our day is accustomed to travel further [from it?—Edit. B. M.] than heretofore, or to dwell with a more minute attention on individual portions of the mighty region." We need not add that we most heartily sympathize with Dr. Campbell in his pungent and seasonable strictures on some of the phases of modern "Nonconformist Theology."

DENOMINATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.

Borough.—Mr. A. Triggs will commence his labours in Crosby Row Chapel, King St. Borough, on Lord's Day, June 20th, 1856. Week Services, Tuesday Evening.

Shoreditch, Providence Chapel.—The Rev. Mr. Russell, of Chatham, has received an unanimous invitation to the pastorate. *Walsingham*.—The Rev. P. Prout from Ham-bottom.

Penzance.—The Rev. J. R. Jenkins has resigned the pastorate of the Baptist church, Clarence Street, owing to ill health.

Tring, Akeman Street.—The Rev. G. Wyard, late of Soho Baptist chapel, London, has

accepted of the cordial invitation to the pastorate of this church.

RECOGNITION SERVICES.

Middleton Cheney.—On Wednesday, the 28th of May, services were held in the Baptist Chapel, for the public recognition of the Rev. J. F. Medaill (late of Bythorn, Hunts) as the pastor of the church. A sermon was preached in the afternoon by the Rev. W. Maisoy, of Hooknorton, from Col. i. 27, 28. In the evening the Rev. W. T. Henderson, of Banbury, delivered the charge to the newly elected pastor; and the Rev. J. Morris preached to the church from 1 Pet. ii. 9. The Revs.

J. Bullock, M. A., late of Glasgow; J. Coles, of Sulgrave; and G. Tustain, of King's Sutton, assisted in the services.

Uzbridge, June 17th.—Of the Rev. G. R. Lowden. The introductory discourse by the Rev. W. B. Bowes, of Blandford St., London. The usual questions were proposed by the Rev. Mr. Inmy. The recognition prayer was offered by the Rev. Mr. Lance, of Brenford. The charge by the Rev. F. Wills, of Kingsgate Street Chapel; and the sermon to the people by the Rev. W. B. Bowes.

SPECIAL MEETING.

Spencer Place, Goswell Road, London, May 27th.—An exceedingly interesting meeting was held, to welcome the Rev. J. H. Cooke, late of Stepney College, as successor to the Rev. J. Peacock, in the pastorate of the church. Mr. Peacock presided over the meeting, and expressed his cordial approval of the choice the church had made. He also stated, that during his pastorate upwards of 600 had been brought into the church there. Mr. Shick, one of the deacons, then presented a very handsome easy chair to the retiring pastor. The meeting was addressed by the Revs. P. H. Davison, Wandsworth; R. Finch, Deptford; C. J. Hull, Missionary to China; F. Wills, of Kingsgate Street Chapel; and by Mr. H. Holland.

SERVICES TO BE HOLDEN.

Islington Green.—The Rev. W. H. Bonner, former of Unicorn Yard, Southwark, will preach on Lord's Days, July 6th and 13th, and on the intervening Wednesday evenings.

Shouldham Street, Bryanston Square.—The anniversary sermons for the Sunday school, July 20. Morning, at 11, Rev. W. A. Blake; evening, quarter to seven, Rev. J. Whitmore, of Eynsford, Kent, will preach.

BAPTISMS.

Aberysthan, April 27.—Four by the pastor.

Ashley, Hunts, April 30.—Three by Mr. Hall.

Abingdon, May 15.—Four by Mr. Edgar.

Bath, Ebenezer, June 5.—Seven by Mr. Huntley, sen., of Limpley Stoke. The friend who supplied this report states that several of the candidates acknowledged their special obligations to God for sending Mr. Spurgeon to preach in that neighbourhood.

Bezley Heath, May 25.—One by Mr. Wiloughby.

Brighton, Windsor Street, June 5th.—Six by Mr. Wilkins.

Bedminster, near Bristol, May 6.—Eleven by Mr. Nicholson.

Bridlington, April 27.—Three by Mr. Morgan, one of whom was his eldest daughter.

Bristol Counterstep, May 4.—Twenty by Mr. Winter.

Bristol, King Street, May 6.—Thirteen by Mr. Bosworth.

Bow, June 8.—Four by Mr. Balfour.

Brynmawr, Culbary, June 15.—Two from the Sunday School, by Mr. Roberts.

Cheltenham, Cambray Chapel, May 18th.—Nine by Mr. Smith.

Clyton, Buckingham Chapel, May 8.—Three by Mr. Nicholson.

Crayford, Kent, May 25.—Seven by Mr. Hosken.

Ezeter, Burtholemeu Street, May 11.—Seven by Mr. Tuckett.

Honham, May 11.—Four by Mr. Newth.

Hunslet, Leeds, May 4.—Seven by Mr. Rowden.

Kettering, April 30.—Seven by Mr. Mursell.

King, Stanley, May 9.—Four by the pastor.

Llanidloes, April 27th.—Three by Mr. Evans.

Llanrhadrath yn Mochnant, June 1st.—One by Mr. Robinson.

Longford near Coventry, June 1st.—Nine by Mr. Veals.

Llanfyllin, Montgomeryshire, April 6.—Three in the River Cain; 20th, One; 27th, One; and May 4, One, by Mr. Roberts.

Leeds, Call Lane, April 20.—Nine by Mr. Tunncliffe.

Liverpool, Stanhope Street, May 4.—Two by Mr. Hughes.

Middle Mill, Pembrokeshire, April 6.—Three, and May 4, one by Mr. Lewis.

Montrose, N. B., May 4.—Three by Mr. Alexander.

Newark, Notts, May 25th.—Eight by Mr. Bayley.

Oakham, June 1.—Three by Mr. Jenkinson, one of whom had recently been the vicar's churchwarden in the village in which he resides.

Pattishall and Eastcote, Northamptonshire, May 11.—Three by Mr. Chamberlain.

Penknapp, Wilts, May 11.—Seven by Mr. Hurlstone.

Paisley, March 2.—One; April 13, One by Mr. Wallace.

Road, Isle of Wight, June 15.—Two.

Sabden, May 4.—Eight by Mr. Kitching.

Tor, Devon, June 1.—Eight by Mr. Hicks; one a soldier, disabled at the Alma.

Wolsey, Warwickshire, May 11.—Two by Mr. Knight.

DEATHS.

Atkin, Miss Betsy, of Louth, Lincolnshire, who died May 21st, aged 21 years, a member of the Baptist Church, Walkergate, and teacher in our Sabbath school; her loss is much felt by the teachers and scholars, and deeply lamented by her sorrowing parents; her end was peace.

Serch, Mrs. Deborah, in the 97th year of her age; for many years a member of the Baptist church at Bow; she was constant in her attendance at the house of God till laid aside by her last illness, and retained her faculties till the last.

Usher, Mr. W. B., Blunham, Beds, June 3rd, aged 74, deacon of the Old Baptist Meeting. [Our own and our father's friend—Editor of the Baptist Messenger.]

Winchester, Mrs. Ann, June 1, at Hurstmonceux, Sussex, aged 73. The deceased had been for forty-one years a member of the dissenting church in this village; and by a consistent and holy deportment has shown forth the praises of her Maker. The Pastor, the Rev. J. R. Smith, feels his faith much tried in the frequent removals that have taken place in the church and congregation. In three years, in a small community, he has preached twelve funeral sermons.

Horsley; the Rev. Nathan, Baptist minister of Chatteris, Isle of Ely, May 27th, aged 43.

Honest and faithful to Christ's cause and word,
He lived and preached; nor lived and preached
in vain;

His greatest joy was to exalt his Lord,
And now with him he duth for ever reign.
Death shot his arrow and our brother fell,
But Jesus caught him, and faith says "'tis well."

THE DEW OF BLESSING.

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,

Minister of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.

"I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and east forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon."—HOSEA xiv. 5-7.

How beautiful the Bible is in regard to poetry! Apart from the weighty matters of which they treat, and their solemn doctrines, the style of the Scriptures is so sublime that if all poets were to bind all their books in one, that one would not contain so many gems as the Bible; and if you culled all the sublimest flights of all the poets, they would not soar one-half so high as does Jehovah when speaking to his beloved people. It is in vain for man to attempt to surpass the Bible in anything; it is, as Herbert called it, "Not only the book of God, but the God of books." It is a book of stars, and every page a sun. Mark our text. It may not be so full of beauty as many passages, but still it would, of itself, suffice to show that the Bible was, above all books, the book of poetry, if it had no other claim to honour. The bards of the Bible are the noblest the world has ever known; before them all other bards must resign or veil their harps. The text contains a promise of grace; the blessed effects of divine grace; and these effects of grace are declared to be not only visible in the believer himself, but also on all those who dwell within the circle of his influence.

I. We have in the text **A PROMISE OF GRACE.** "I will be as the dew unto Israel." I need not explain to you fully the beauty and force of the figure—"the dew." You have often been told how, at the creation, when "the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth," "there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground": and how the Easterns look not to springs and rivers of the earth in their drought, but look right up to God's heaven, and ask for the dew to fall.

Supposing, therefore, that you understand the beautiful allusions in these words, we ask you to notice, first, the emphasis on *I*. "*I* will be as the dew." It does not mean that the word or work of God shall be as the dew, so much as that God himself will be as the dew unto Israel. We may preach the soundest doctrine in the world, and yet the souls of the hearers shall be barren. God is the dew. That grace dwells not in the Saviour's garments, nor in the Saviour's works; but the Saviour himself "will be as the dew." Many seek for grace in doctrine, and in experience, or in divers other things; but remember, that the grace comes direct from Christ. Christ is the marrow of his own gospel—the gospel of the gospel—and if that gospel be like the open heaven, Christ is like the dew.

Again, the dew *comes from above*; so, in this respect, God will be like the dew. God's children want something from above—something out of themselves. A hypocrite can water himself any day of the week; a formalist can, like the Egyptians, dig his own artificial wells and canals; but the true believer wants supernatural grace—nothing else will do. Many professors think to grow very nicely without any such dew. Their religion springs from themselves, from their own nature, from their own free well; and, therefore, their own nature can supply all the wants of that religion; and then ascribing all to God, they take all the glory to themselves. But for me, "Drop from on high, sweet dew, for my poor well is dry, and I know not where to get it filled." We want something which God himself must cause to distil upon us often, like the dew, as God said to Job, "Who hath begotten the drops of dew? out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?" so "I myself will be as the dew unto Israel."

Again, the dew falls *silently and secretly*. Divine grace often comes into the believer's heart in an almost imperceptible manner. Did you ever hear the footsteps of the dew? Did ever any blow a trumpet at its approach? Sometimes, indeed, divine grace comes into the heart like rattling hail. There are doubts, and fears, and innumerable tumults, deep anguish, and terrible sufferings. In many other cases it comes by the still small voice. There are some who wish they had been tempted like John Bunyan, and visited by a like fearful but decisive experience. Perhaps you say I cannot tell the day or mode in which the heavenly dew fell upon me. Never mind. Don't think it was not grace because you did not see it come. Nine-tenths of God's people cannot do this. Be content, then, with grace, however it comes. Never get chalking out God's plan; he knows best, and, come how it may, it is still God's grace. Art thou dry and barren now? This is a sweet promise, and in five minutes thou mayest be covered over with the heavenly moisture. Often, when you least expect, God pours his dew into your hearts.

I need only mention that God's grace, like the dew, comes down copiously, constantly, sufficiently for all the purposes of a believer's life.

I must now apply these words. How many are there who have never known that dew? Mark, the promise is *not to any one, only to Israel*; are you among those who can call themselves by that name? To answer this question, let us first ask what is meant by Israel? Secretly and mystically it means God's elect; a people chosen of God and precious. But as you cannot tell beforehand whether you are of this mystical body, I proceed to say that, openly, Israel means a *man of prayer*. Jacob got his new name by wrestling. Art thou a man of prayer? and cannot live without prayer? Oh, if not, this promise is not thine; it has nought to do with thee; it has to do only with the man who lives by prayer. How many are there who can afford to live without prayer, or with very little prayer? You say a few hurried words when you are half asleep at night, and a few more in the morning before business calls you, just enough to ease Mr. Conscience, but not enough to make you live—really live; just enough to keep you in spiritual existence, but not with all its proper life and power as those who understand the holy art of prayer.

Again, Israel, openly, is *the man who has given up the mess of pottage*. It includes all who are saying I love not my life, "neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy"; who can say, one thing I do, I set mine affections on things above; I call this world a poor and pitiful mess of pottage. No man can be serving God and mammon at the same time. I deem it enough to make the best of the next world; I set all my heart on things to come, and leave the things that are to the providence of my God. Are you like Israel in these respects? If so, the promise is yours. Don't take it if it is not for you; but if you be Israel, indeed, take it and live on it.

II. NOTICE THE VARIED EFFECTS OF DIVINE GRACE IN A BELIEVER'S EXPERIENCE, as here set forth. The first thing grace does when it comes into a believer's heart is to make it grow *upwards*—"he shall grow as the lily." This is the daffodil lily, which after refreshing rain or heavy dew, springs up rapidly, and makes the meadows of the East as a yellow carpet. Did you never notice how quickly the young convert grows up in grace at first? Some older Christians see this, and say, "You grow too fast, young man; the frosts will be coming soon, and they will nip your zeal and piety." Now don't tell the young that their piety will be nipped. If it is to be nipped, don't put any of your frosty breath upon it. God can manage them better than you; leave them to God. Oh, how zealous the young convert is! There is not a prayer meeting but he is there. How sweet is the word! How sweet the singing! He would go over hedge and ditch to hear the word. He would go many miles to serve God, or to enjoy a moment's communion with God. His song night and day is of grace.

"The men of grace have found,
Glory begun below."

And remember that this is a very precious season. I would not have you try to make it shorter. Let us poor young people grow up awhile, we shall have to pass through fierce trials, by-and-bye, that our roots may strike deeper, but while we can grow up, leave us to do so. Never let our zeal be checked, or our warm love grow cold. There never can be any reason in God why the Christian's first love should wax cold. But since you say it will wax cold, don't envy the young man his growing upwards now. If he did not grow you would begin to say he had not the root of the matter in him; then let him grow. Grow away, grow away, ye young ones as the lily, your nipping time will come. Let the frost do that, but let no one else do it. Let your present and continual cry be, "Nearer to thee, my God, nearer to thee."

Secondly. After the Christian has grown upward he has to grow *downward*; "He shall cast forth his roots as Lebanon." There is a remarkable phase of experience which passes over the heart of God's child sometimes two or three months, or it may be two or three years after his conversion. It is when we commence learning our own depravity—the power of sin within us. Then follows the terrible conflict of dismay and doubt with the young faith of the heart. Frequently when this change takes place Christians are anxious. They sing—

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Or it causes anxious thought."

Just at this period doubt is the strongest. Though he thought he should always remain zealous, something has crept in; he is more prudent and not quite so hot. At such a time he begins to ask, Is my religion genuine? Well, perhaps it is more so than it was; the first fervours may have been but wild-fires, which flashed and were swept away, and then came the real flame of divine grace. It is quite as blessed a work to begin to find out the evil of our own hearts, as to learn the fulness of Christ Jesus; for both lead to one result. What we want now-a-days is, more growing downward—more rooting and grounding in the faith. Of late we have become so tremendously liberal, that people don't believe anything, through trying to believe everything. A man will go to one place in the morning and hear plain "Yes," and to another place in the evening and hear plain "No," and will say of both, what blessed sermons! A female came to me some little time since to have conversation concerning her religious experience, previous to being proposed for membership. I asked her if she believed that God's people were chosen by him from before the foundation of the world. She answered, "Yes sir." "What," I said, "Do you really believe that God did from everlasting choose some to be saved." She said, "No sir." And there are not wanting preachers who will absolve men from all necessity of sound doctrinal faith. I cannot find in Scripture that God ever absolved me from the consequences of an erroneous judgment in doctrinal matters. I believe that my thoughts of his doctrine will be judged as well as my other thoughts, and my thoughts as well as my actions. I believe it is a falsehood to say that God won't judge my doctrinal beliefs. He who gives way to heresy must give account of his departure from the truth, as well as he that falls into open transgression. No one finds it written that we have liberty of conscience. Between man and man there is liberty of conscience, and none shall dare to call me to account for my belief, but between man and God there is no liberty of conscience. No one else shall call me to account, but God will. This indifference about doctrine won't do. It is a sign that grace is wanting. When grace in the heart is in full operation, it will not suffer that heart to be carried about with every wind of doctrine.

3. Not only will the Christian grow upwards and downwards, but *outwardly* "his branches will spread." We shall become more known and make a better profession. God's people are not long in making known their grace.

Grace cannot be kept a secret, and if we have much grace it will be so much the more difficult to conceal it. If a man puts a light under a bushel we know what is the result; and if he puts it under a bed, you know what becomes of the bed—it is soon on fire. And you—are you secret disciples—are you ashamed of Christ? I confess I never yet could see anything in Christ to be ashamed of, and yet by all accounts some are ashamed. Ask a young man what chapel he attends and he will hum and ha, and seem ashamed to answer. Ask another what public-house he frequents, and he will tell you in a moment without a particle of shame. Is not this sad that men should not blush for their evil deeds, but Christians will blush for their good deeds. Some persons stand aloof because it is written, "He that believeth shall not make haste." A person who had been for years a Christian quoted this text to me, and I replied, "No fear of you; if you made a profession to-morrow nobody could say you had made any haste." Another will say, "Suppose I was to fall." I ask you, is there more likelihood of you falling when you are in the way of God's commandments than when you are disobeying him? Oh, you answer, but I should bring disgrace on the cause. Well, and would you not bring disgrace on the cause if you fell now? You go to chapel and join in the services, and the world outside knows no difference between you and the members of the church, and if you were to fall, men would point at you and say, "There goes a Meetinger." Depend upon it your Master will keep you better than you can keep yourself. I should say you must be a deserter to be thus ashamed of your regimentals. No, oh no, put on your helmet of grace and come forth in the name of the Lord. Do you say, "I will be a secret Christian"? It is a thing I never heard of, which you never saw or heard of, and I have some shrewd doubts whether such a thing as a secret Christian has any existence. Christ always tells me that religion will not be concealed. If you love Christ we tell you as the maid said to Peter, "Thy speech bewrayeth thee." Perhaps some one is inclined to say, "But I know one who is a secret Christian." The fact of your knowing him to be a Christian, proves that he is not a secret one.

4. When his branches have spread, he shall be made *beautiful*; "His beauty shall be as the olive tree." Like the olive, because, first, that tree is an evergreen; and, secondly, it is fertile and fruit-bearing. A Christian is the most beautiful sight on the earth. We need not climb Alpine heights, basking in the sunlight, and gazing down upon golden valleys rich with verdure, or with ripening corn and fruits; we need not cross the sea, and touch at islands where birds of glorious plumage wing their flight, the noblest work of God, the grandest effort of our Maker is the Christian. Now the most beautiful tree is that which bears the best and the most fruit. If you or I had a tree in our gardens which was a fruit-bearing tree, we should not care about its shape nor as to whereabouts it stood, but we should value it according to its fruit. In our churches, likewise, we do not value riches and talents, but say at once the most useful Christian is the most beautiful. The angels think him beautiful. God judges them to be very beautiful, and he is the best judge of what is beautiful. We have said the olive tree is an evergreen so, too, is the Christian. The Christian is constant in his religion. He is not gracious on Sunday merely. We have much Sunday religion, and a very good thing it is; but I think I like better a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday religion. There are people who rejoice to be called Latter-day Saints; but I like every day saints—those who are themselves holy, and keep a Sabbath all the week long. What we want is not a religion of the pulpit, or of the pew, or of the chapel; but a shop religion, an office religion, and a barn-yard religion. In my presence, not long since, a lady remarked that she did not approve of people thrusting their religion into society. "It was all very well in its place," she said, "and ought to be confined to the chapel." I said, "Then would you have beds fitted up in the chapel, my dear madam?" "Beds! no; why

beds?" "Because," I said, "religion is a very good thing to die with; and if it is confined to the chapel, we must have beds like a hospital." She was confuted, and could only say, "You say such strange things, sir." And I rejoined, "Mine was an odd way of reproving you; but then, yours was an odd way of sinning."

5. The last of these blessed effects is, "His smell shall be as Lebanon." By smell I understand report. As on the sides of Lebanon so many aromatic shrubs and flowers distil their odours that the whole region is perfumed, so will it be of the Christian. I often see and hear of people who are so anxious and troubled by false reports. Never be afraid of your character as long as the heart and life is all right. I have even heard of people bringing actions for slander. The rose never brought a law suit against the thistle for saying that it was not sweet; the rose kept on perfuming the air, and left Mr. Thistle alone, so that in the end everybody knew that the rose gave forth a precious scent. I like that idea of a good man's scent; the scent of a good man is like the smell of wine in old casks—it never goes wholly away.

III. Notice the EFFECTS OF DIVINE GRACE, as seen IN BELIEVERS upon others around them. The effects of grace in the heart are always more or less visible, not only in themselves, but on all who dwell under their influence. "They that dwell under his shadow shall return." I trust you do not like a selfish religion. Some people attend a chapel, and expect a minister to be constantly preaching in such a way as to suit their particular state of mind. Now I could not bear to sit under a minister who was always preaching for my benefit. I should be thinking of my neighbours. I should say, I wish our minister would preach to sinners sometimes; and if he said he did not know how, I should reply, Then you are not fit to preach at all. I could not eat my morsel alone. I must be sure that my neighbour is not starving while I feed upon the word with great delight. Others must benefit besides and because of me. If you grow in grace, if the dew fall, the effect will be that "they that dwell under your shadow"—your neighbours and relations—shall return; return from all their backslidings, and all their wayward courses. They shall "revive like the corn" which has been beaten flat by showers and tempests. "They shall grow as the vine" twisting round you: as a vine trained up along the stately tree or hill-side. Thy children shall grow up as the vine. "Train up a child in the way he should go"; or, like the ivy round the oak. And the effect which a good man's influence has is well set forth by holy Whitfield, who tells of a young man saying, "I am miserable in this house of my father; I cannot live in it; I must sell it, and all it contains; for the very chairs, and stools, and tables smell of piety."

* Owing to Mr. Spurgeon's visit to Scotland, this sermon is obliged to go to press as reported by the short-hand writer, without its having been revised by Mr. S.

OUR FATHER'S ASSURANCE.*

BY THE REV. W. BROCK, MINISTER OF BLOOMSBURY CHAPEL, LONDON.

"I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty,"
2 Cor. vi. 18.

THE Scripture warrants us in declaring, that none are, or ever will, become the "sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty," except they be born again. All, therefore, who are interested in the privilege proffered in the text are setting their affections on things above—have exercised repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ; they have put their own loving trust and confidence in the precious blood and grace that cleanseth from all sin. I ask you therefore to consider what is included in the privilege of being thus received

* Substance of a Sermon to Young Men and Maidens, preached on Lord's Day, June 29, 1850; of which, with the exception of the exordium (omitted for want of space), the above is a full-length and accurate report.

and acknowledged as the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, that you may be encouraged to seek for it with your whole heart.

I. Now, are not sons and daughters always WELCOME TO THEIR FATHER'S HELP? "Always," you answer. There are persons who might succour you, persons who are willing to succour you, but then you must ask for it. It would be unseemly to take it for granted their resources would be at your disposal; it would be altogether out of keeping with your relative position, to presume that they would help you, whether or not; they will help you probably, but then you must ask for it in every case, and then you must wait and see the result of your application. Now, no son needs to wait and see whether his father will render him the succour he wants. Let an emergency arise, and the parental wisdom, the parental guardianship, and the parental loving-kindness, and the parental influence are at once open to your command. At all events, they are within your reach, and instinctively you think of them when you get into trouble, and intuitively do you make your appeal to them, and implicitly do you believe that they will be vouchsafed of course.

You never dreamed of asking whether a loving child might trust his father. Why, a loving child may always do it, and a loving child always does it, and a loving child never does it in vain; the confidence that he manifests, his father reciprocates, and reciprocates of course. The child leans, the father supports; the child takes shelter, the father puts the child within the shelter, and stands for its defence; the child refers to the father some responsibility which has just arisen, and the father takes the responsibility; thenceforward, involve what may, the responsibility is his, and not the child's. Now you know all that; you recollect, some of you, when you were only boys and girls, how that was perpetually coming to pass; it came to pass so often, that perhaps you did not mark it very probably; it came to pass so naturally, that perhaps you did not mark it at all; but you remember now how to your father's help you always were welcome. As soon as any anxiety arose, there was your father's interferences; you asked, and had; you required, and he came; and so, from one time to another, until, under God, that parental guardianship and carefulness was the means of preserving you, even until now.

Now, my brethren, interference like your father's is promised to you here, by the Lord Almighty. Yes, to his help you are freely welcome. Upon his promise of immediate and all available interference you are told that you may rely; and being reconciled to him by Jesus Christ, there will not be a want in your history, however great it may be, that will not be provided for accordingly, as for the sons and for the daughters of his unchanging love. And do I not say that which many of you already begin to find out, that you very often want help that no father on earth is able to supply to you? Why here you are in this great metropolis; you cannot always get access to your father; you may always get access to God wherever you are, there and then; it may be in the shop, it may be along the street, where temptation may be plying you on the right hand and on the left, there is the help accessible, and there is help available.

And when you could get access to your father, has it never been so that you have received this answer (or cannot you conceive of receiving it?), "I have no more resources to which you can look"? Much as the father's heart is grieved to say so, that is his answer—"There is no alternative; you must look to yourself, or elsewhere." You never get that answer from Him of whom I am speaking now; never! Be the emergencies of a life in this great city whatever they may, seeing that it is Omnipotence that provides what is requisite, there never comes that extremity of your being told that you must look to yourselves, in that sense; that you must look to yourselves, or that you must look elsewhere.

And now, ye young men and others assembled here on this bright and beautiful morning, tell me sometime if you are not hard pressed with anxiety

and temptations, and trials, and cares. It is not true that your days begin and continue in a merry and live-long indifference, or unacquaintance, or unfamiliarity with difficulty, and with distress. I do not think that any mistake was ever made that was greater. I can quite believe thoughtless young men and maidens, as well as thoughtless old men and women;—I could well understand such persons being in a sort, after a manner, free from care; but give me a boy, a girl, who is thoughtful and forecasting, and looking around about as to what things are, and I do not think there is a greater mistake on earth than to say, "Oh, they do not know anything about perplexity; they do not know anything about difficulty; they do not know anything about care."

Now, you do know about these things; you have had a difficulty, and perhaps expect it again to-morrow, in being unavoidably truthful; you have had a difficulty, in being unscrupulously honest; you have had a difficulty, in being generously self-denying; you have had a difficulty, in being inflexibly virtuous; you have had a difficulty, in carrying out these resolutions that you formed before you came to London; and you have had a difficulty, in fulfilling the promise that perchance you made to your father or your mother the night before you left home. It is not easy work, but difficult; it is not child's play, it wants strength, and vigour, and earnestness, that sometimes you do not know where to look for. You hope that you shall never deviate from the paths of rectitude, and honour, and purity, and the like; but sometimes, as you now testify in your conscience, you are afraid. You hope that you may never disgrace your name; you hope you may never be amongst the fallen and lost ones; but the thought has sometimes disturbed your mind, "If sinners go on enticing me like this, I do not know what may come; I am half afraid I shall have to consent." But only realize that God has become your Father, and you never will consent;—that you have become his sons and his daughters, and if all the sinners in the metropolis were to tempt you with all their fascinations, or with all their frowns, the thought of your being the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, would render you positively impregnable; for the Lord would be a strong tower, into which you might run and be safe. You would not have anything to wait for; you would not have to write and ask some friend to come to your help; you would not have to go to some other place, in order that there, peradventure, you might be safe; but there at your right hand would be God, a very present help in the time of your emergency; there he would be opening his omnipotence, and asking you to shelter within it; and, sheltering there, you would be inviolably secure. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord will pity you, by taking you from all such danger, by his help being entirely at your service, and being as a living, presiding, governing, and supreme Ruler over all things; he will deliver you with a high hand and an outstretched arm. I pity any young man or maiden who has not got the full hope that for the time of his extremity—and times of extremity will come at every step—who has not this promised help, which is guaranteed to us here: "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

II. Are not sons and daughters CONFIDENTLY ASSURED THAT THEY MAY RELY UPON THEIR FATHERS' SYMPATHY? "Confidently assured," you answer. There is a mysterious but exquisite fellow feeling between the father and the child; a congenial, ever active, heartfelt communion and perfect understanding of that strong representation that they are "members one of another." It is often so, and you have seen it, that if the child be exposed the father realizes the exposure; that if the child be the subject of sorrow the father participates in that sorrow; that if the child be passing through the valley of the shadow of death, it is as though the father was passing along the valley and doing his best to uphold and cheer his loved one amidst the surrounding gloom. In all his children's afflictions he is afflicted; in all his children's gladness he is glad. He does not want long and importunate entreaties to

secure his attention; he does not want a loud and long beseeching to exercise his care; there is no need for apprehending that what he can supply, will not be supplied at once. The reliance is absolute. My father feels for me; my father feels with me; to touch me is very much like touching the apple of his eye. In a thousand cases the father is far more concerned about the welfare of his child, than the child is about his own welfare. Now some of you have known this. You can go back to other days, not very long with some of you, and you recollect how your father lived in your life; and how perhaps he lives in your life now. Oh! how he feels when things go right with you, and how he feels when things go wrong with you! You are his other self. For it to be well with you is for it to be well with him; or the contrary. Now so far as the nature of the case admits of the illustration, God warrants us and permits us to say that he will feel towards you, young men and maidens, ye who are his sons and daughters, like that, he is ready to live in your life. What a thought that is; he is ready to live in your life, just like your father did or does; he is ready to participate in all your manifold diversified experience; he is ready to respond to all the utterances, aye, and to all the nuttered emotions of your regard and love for him. He is ready to reciprocate the fullest amount of child-like confidence that you can get possessed of in the multitude of your thoughts within you. Indeed, indeed he is; he is ready to do all that, and to perpetuate all that.

And some of us could tell you that it is not merely a welcome to his help, but it is also a taste of his sympathy. To use the expressions here which are perfectly intelligible to those who have grace to discern them, we know what it is to taste of the sympathy of the Lord God Almighty—"to taste and see that the Lord is good"—and precious as have been the interweavings of human thought with our thought; and invaluable as have been the blendings of human feeling with our feeling; and utterly indescribable for their worth to us the communings of human father with our sonship, I ask you to take our word for it, that they are just as nothing to these sacred transactions which God originates and maintains between himself and his sons and daughters. I cannot tell you how it comes to pass, I leave that unexplained, but let me tell you that if you have come into that relationship, the Father of your spirits will have such dealings with you as you cannot in any language utter—as you cannot by anticipation look forward to. He will shed abroad his love in your hearts, and he will comfort you when you are cast down; he will give you the spirit of adoption; and he will enable you to call him, Abba, Father; he will put all your tears into his bottle, and he will number the very hairs of your head; he will make your bed in your sickness. Yes, he will do all this more instinctively than your father ever did that which was like it. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord will pity you in that sense; not only shall there be the material help that your emergencies may require, but there shall be all this exquisite, ever active, and perceptible sympathy, that before you call he will answer, and that whilst you are speaking he will hear. "I will be a father to you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty," welcome to my assistance, and what is even better than that, you shall be guaranteed that the sympathy that never slumbers or sleeps shall be exercised for you.

III. ARE NOT SONS AND DAUGHTERS CARED FOR INCESSANTLY BY THEIR FATHER'S SOLICITUDE? "Cared for incessantly," you answer. Little did Job's sons and daughters think about their father's anxiety when he was making sacrifices and prayers to God on their behalf, lest, peradventure, they had committed sin. And little have we known what our fathers have been doing for us, or thinking about us; often, it may be, when we have presumed everything was going on smoothly, and when we were entirely and most complacently at our ease; oh, if we could know all, we should find that many a time in our early life (and perhaps to this hour in regard to many of you) when we were quite

thoughtless about it, there was the father rapt, aye, rapt in earnest anxiety about us, employed in profound deliberation at the midnight hour, or in arduous toil on our behalf. There were things we never apprehended, but his solicitude apprehended them; there were things we never conceived of, but he saw that they were coming, and he took care that we should be put upon our guard. My brethren, the unregistered acts of your father's solicitude are a great many more than the acts of which you have taken cognizance; much as we think we have known, by very far the larger part remains unknown of that which has been done for us in this respect. So with our Father who is in heaven; so with him who has become your Father, and you his sons and daughters. That knowledge of his that comprehends all things, will be made subservient to your own welfare perpetually; and that control by which he works all things according to the counsel of his own will, will be employed on your behalf incessantly; and that power whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself, will be evermore employed for your good. When you little think of it, perhaps even when you may be blameworthy indifferent to it, there will be the Lord Almighty giving his angels charge over you; sending ministers of heavenly grace to provide for your escape in times of danger, ay, leading you and guiding you by a way that you know not, by an invariably and absolutely right way. And as the sons and daughters of your father's family have occasion to look back with thankfulness, and to say, "through his watchful solicitude we were provided for," so the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty those who come into this position, and by whom this promise is enjoyed may say that about their heavenly Father. Instances have come to my own knowledge, in this great metropolis of ours, which have seemed to me to come close up to the very narratives of Joseph and Daniel, instances of God's care of those who have put their trust in him. Oh, how evidently has God covered their heads in the day of battle. How evidently has God guided them, and caused all things to work together for their good; and how evidently (as I have known) has he done exceeding abundantly for them, above all that they could ask or think. And now he waits to do all that for you; you shall not be unbenefitted—not be at the mercy of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Like as a father pitieth his children, so is the Lord ready to pity you, and has put you into this relationship with all the attributes of his nature, and with all the evolutions of his government, that, come what may, you shall be able to possess your heart in calm satisfaction, and to say, "All things are ours, and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's." "Ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

IV. And lastly, are not sons and daughters **LAWFULLY ENTITLED TO THEIR FATHER'S HERITAGE?** "Lawfully entitled," you answer. In the time of their minority they look to it as their own; it is not to be alienated; it is not to be injured. Let them come of full age, and the guarantee is given—so far as it can be—that it shall be within their own power. My dear friends, and sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, ye are guaranteed, not conditionally or contingently, but absolutely and inviolably, a heritage which is thus described in the language of inspiration: it is "incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away"; it is reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Now there is no contingency—there is nothing conditional there. The persons here spoken of are inalienably assured that when they depart hence they shall pass into the "inheritance of the saints in light." The Almighty is "not man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent;" his purposes are not to be defeated, nor his designs to be frustrated; and if he has put you into the position which is indicated here, you have the pledge that neither death nor hell can take away, that on your leaving this world you pass immediately into the fulness of joy and into the pleasures which are for evermore.

Now in the inheritance incorruptible there is no decay; you do not get the

golden streaks tarnished; you do not get the pearly gates sullied; you do not get the righteousness of the saints corrupted by the moth; you do not get the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God, like Jonah's gourd, withering from the roots; it is all immaterial and indestructible, it is an inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled; there is no sin there, no element of evil ever putting it in danger; and it is unfading—

“There everlasting spring abides,
And never withering flowers.”

It is in heaven; nobody can get to it, no assailant can have access to it; it is reserved in heaven; and those of you who have come into that position will be reserved for it; you will be kept by the power of God like a great body-guard all around you. Yes, that is the idea—kept by the power of God, as though that power constituted a great body-guard, a phalanx of might, and of activity, and of vigilance; a phalanx that no onset can break, that no ambush can surprise, that no treachery can seduce, that no weariness can tire; a phalanx that will attend upon your footsteps right up to the very threshold of your heavenly home, and then give to you an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Well now, young men and maidens, as God is thus willing to receive and acknowledge you as his sons and daughters, and to adopt you into his family. Will you not from this time—how auspicious a time! how suggestive a time!—will you not henceforth cry unto him, “My Father,”—the very prayer is put into your lips—“My Father, be thou the guide of my youth.”

THE SUPPLIANT'S CONFIDENCE.

BY THE REV. JAMES SMITH, CHELTENHAM.

“The Lord will hear when I call unto him.”—Ps. iv. 3.

SATAN often suggests that he will not. Unbelief falls in with the suggestion. The believer, looking at his own unworthiness, imperfections, and want of faith, fancies the falsehood must be true. Thus often when going to pray, while praying, and after prayer, we are tossed, troubled, and tormented. But we may be sure of this, if Satan believed the lie, he would not torment us with it. But because he believes the text, and knows the power of prayer, therefore he tries to hinder our exercising faith. “The Lord will hear when I call unto him,” thus said the Psalmist; but when we have used the words, it has seemed almost as if we heard a voice saying, “*He will not hear you.*” But why not? Because you are such a sinner. Because you have such dreadful corruptions in your heart. Because such trifling things engage your attention, or such horrible thoughts pass through your mind, while in prayer. Because you have not a full assurance of your acceptance in Christ, nor are you certain that the privileges of the Lord's people belong to you. “*He will not hear you.*” Satan, begone! He will hear the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness. Therefore men ought always to pray, and not to faint.

Let us then, first, look at THE EXERCISE SUPPOSED. Calling upon God. *Prayer proceeds from God, and returns to God.* It is the effect of divine life, the result of divine teaching, and the proof of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Nature may say prayers, but it never calls upon God. The form of prayer will satisfy the dead, but only the power of prayer will satisfy the living. God calls upon us by his Spirit, in a way of grace; and then we call upon God, in heartfelt, earnest prayer. Till we hear God speaking to us, he never hears us cry unto him. *Prayer is calling upon God for what we need or desire.* The Spirit of God shows us our needs, and kindles in our hearts good desires

Prayer at first is a strange employment; but in time it becomes natural, nor can we live without it. The soul of God's child turns to its Father in all its needs, and calls upon God for all its wants. The spirit of prayer is one of the best evidences of regeneration. Prayer brings down the Lord to listen to our cry, and prayer takes us up into heaven to commune with our God. In prayer we call upon God for *wisdom* to direct us in our difficulties. We often feel that we know not what to do. Our path is so rough, our way is so trying, our difficulties are so many, and our foes are so powerful, that we feel quite at a loss how to proceed. Then the direction of God's word meets us: "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth unto all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." This draws forth the spirit of prayer within us, and we begin to call upon God in good earnest, that he would give us wisdom, teach us to do his will, and guide us into the right path. In prayer we call upon God for *strength* on account of our weakness. One of our daily lessons is, to learn out our own weakness, and our need of divine strength. In order to this, we are sometimes put upon the performance of difficult duties, or are required to carry a very heavy cross, or are burdened with internal and external troubles. Now we feel that we are weak indeed. Nature says, "It is impossible to do and endure this" Satan insinuates, that the Lord's people are strong, and that our growing weakness is a proof that we do not belong to the family. But the word points to Jesus, and says, "He is the strength of the poor, and the strength of the needy in his distress." Now we lift up the heart and the voice, and cry to the Lord that he would strengthen us with might, according to his glorious power in the inner man. The result is, and we have to testify with one of old, "I cried unto the Lord, and he heard me, and strengthened me with strength in my soul." In prayer, we call upon God for *comfort* under all our sufferings and sorrows. We are often brought into circumstances in which none but God can comfort us. No voice, but our Father's voice, can give us rest; no power, but our Saviour's power, can calm the troubled ocean within. Man may try, but he will fail; if an angel were to attempt it, he would be insufficient. Like some children, when they are distressed, who will be soothed by none but the mother's voice, will be quiet nowhere but on the mother's bosom; so the Lord's people sometimes—their sufferings are so great, their sorrows are so deep, their minds are so distressed, that no one but the Lord can comfort them; they feel this, and as the book represents the Lord as saying, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you"; therefore they call upon him, nor cease to cry until it is said again, "The Lord hath comforted his afflicted." In prayer, we call upon God for *patience* in affliction. We find that we have need of patience, that when we have done the will of God, we may inherit the promises. We have stood quietly under the burden for some time, but its weight increases, and our strength sensibly diminishes. We have faced the storm, and breasted the wave, silently for a long season; but the wind howls more fearfully, and the waves roll more powerfully. We have met the foe, and braved the dangers of the battle-field, with some fortitude; but the enemies increase, and the strife becomes deadly. Fears will arise and work; unbelief will operate and discourage; dangers will threaten, and the flesh will cry out. But as God is the God of patience, as he causes the very tribulation his people endures to produce patience in them, we are impelled to call upon him to give us patience, that in it we may possess our souls. In prayer, we call upon God for *deliverance* in danger. Our danger often seems to increase with our years, and wherever we look, we see danger staring us in the face. Does the world frown upon us? We are in danger. Does it smile? Our danger is greater still. Is Satan harassing and tormenting us? We are in danger. Is he silent and still? Our danger is increased; we are in danger from the storm, but in more danger from the calm; we are in danger from our sins, but in greater danger from our righteousness; we are in danger from our foes, but in much

more from our friends ; we are in danger in the world, but at times we are in greater danger in the church. We are in danger from without, but in greater danger from within ; we are in danger from others, but in the greatest danger of all from ourselves. Thus, placed in the very midst of danger, we need to be watched every moment, and to be kept as the apple of the eye. Realizing our danger, we feel timid and fearful ; but we read, "He who hath delivered, and doth deliver, in him I trust that he will yet deliver me." 'This raises the eye, excites the desire, and produces the cry, "Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies ; I flee unto thee to hide me." And the reply is, "He will deliver thee in six troubles, and in seven shall no evil touch thee." Prayer is often occasioned by our troubles, or fears, or the desire to attain to excellency ; but whatever may be the means that leads us to call upon the Lord, the Holy Spirit is invariably the author of all true prayer to God. But we will now,

Secondly, consider THE CONFIDENCE EXPRESSED. "The Lord will hear when I call upon him." Others may refuse if I ask them ; they may neglect me, if I place confidence in them ; they may be unkind, if I apply to them : but so will not the Lord ; he will hear me ; he will sympathize with me ; he will treat me as a child ; he will take occasion from my difficulties, dangers, sorrows, and afflictions, to show me more of his loving heart, more of the truth of his word, and will glorify his perfections in my supports, supplies, and deliverances. The Lord will hear me, *for he has promised to do so*. How often in his word has he said, "Call upon me, and I will hear thee." Nor does he rest his promise upon any goodness possessed, or good works performed, by those who call upon him. No, but he rests it upon his own paternal love, his tender pity, his great mercy, and his immutable faithfulness. The Lord will hear me, *for he has done so before*. Past mercies ensure future favours. If the Lord begin a work, he never leaves off in the middle. If he had intended to refuse me now, he would not have heard me before. His love in the past forbids me to doubt his love at present, or in the future. He had a mind to bless me once, and he is in the same mind now, for who can turn him ? It was in his heart to bless me, when I was dead in trespasses and sins, and he is without variableness, or the shadow of a turning. Yes, yes, he has heard, he has answered, he has granted blessings before, and he will bless me to the end. The Lord will hear me, *for he always hears his own people*. I am the Lord's. He sent his word home to my heart ; he put a cry into my soul ; he allured and brought me out of the world ; he drew me from all my false refuges ; he led me to cast myself on Jesus ; he shone into my heart, and doubt, fear, darkness, and bondage fled ; he allowed me to plead with him, as a man pleadeth with his friend ; he produced the conviction in my soul, that he had loved me with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness he drew me to his bosom. *I could not doubt once ; why should I doubt now ?* No, I will not doubt ; I must be the Lord's, poor, sinful, and unworthy though I be. The Lord will hear me, *for my Advocate is with him*. Yes, I have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the righteous. He died for my sins, he rose for my justification, and he ever liveth to make intercession for me. Therefore he is able to save them to the uttermost, to save them for evermore that come unto God by him ; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. He receives my prayers ; he reduces the confused mass into order ; he perfumes them with his much incense ; he presents them to his Father, and pleads that they may be answered for his sake. Precious Lord Jesus, I bless, I praise, I adore thy most holy name, that thou dost plead my cause with thy Father, and secure an answer to my prayers.

"Through thee my prayers acceptance gain, although by sin defiled ;
 Even accuses me in vain, and I am owned a child."

Yes, the Lord will hear me, *for I am his child*—a poor, weak, sickly, stuttering, stammering child, I may be ; but still a child. The child has an interest in his Father's heart. There is something there that prompts the Father to

listen to and sympathize with his child. When I pray, I say, "*Father.*" And when I say, "*Father,*" my prayers enter into the ears of the Lord God of Sabaoth. The Lord will hear me, *for it is his delight.* The prayer of the upright is his delight; he loves to hear us; he patiently listens to us; he smiles while he attends to us; he rejoices over us to do us good; he is pleased to answer us. The Lord will hear me, *for it is for his own glory.* He gets glory, by relieving the necessitous, by pardoning the guilty, by accepting the unworthy, and by granting the requests of those whom he might righteously refuse. He never would have put the cry into my heart, if he had not intended to hear it; he never would have promised, if he had not intended to perform; he never would have begun to answer me, if he had not intended to continue to do so; he would not have put me among his people, made me his child, or have admitted my Advocate to his presence, if he had not intended to hear me.

Observe—prayer is our best relief in trouble, a most profitable employment, and the certain path to deliverance and honour. God is ever-present when we pray, and is always ready to hear and help us. Confidence in God is warranted by his word, expected in the saints, and is always rewarded by God. He loves to see his children believe his love, give credit to his word, depend on his faithfulness, and expect him to do as he has said. Our doubts, slavish fears, and unbelief, often grieve his loving heart. He never gave us the least reason to doubt his word, fear that he would refuse our prayer, or disbelieve his love to us; but the opposite has ever been the case. Let us, therefore, realize our doubts to be sin, our slavish fears as dishonourable to our God, and our unbelief as an insult offered to the God of truth; for he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he hath not believed the record that God gave of his Son.

Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of prayer, dwell in our hearts; and, as a well of living water, send forth, from time to time, streams of holy desires, ardent petitions, fervent supplications, earnest ejaculations, powerful intercessions, grateful thanksgivings, devout adorations, and elevated communications; that so we may pray without ceasing, pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting, and in everything give thanks, because this is the will of God, in Christ Jesus, concerning us.

July 4, 1856.

SPIRITUAL CONFIRMATION.

BY THE REV. W. P. BALFERN, OF BOW.

"Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you."—1 Cor. i. 6.

A STATE of uncertainty in reference to anything which materially affects our temporal interest, as it generally involves a certain amount of anxiety if not suffering, is generally avoided as much as possible, and that which is so undesirable in reference to temporal things is felt to be doubly so by all who as the result of divine grace are brought to be truly concerned as to their present condition and eternal destiny.

To be persuaded there is a heaven of bliss and a hell of torment, that steadily and solemnly and with undeviating constancy we are every moment of our fleeting life moving on towards the one or the other, and that as surely as we live we must reach either the one or the other;—a firm, inwrought and abiding conviction of this kind in the mind of a man, will make him serious and give a solemnity and importance to his existence which must be felt to be appreciated; while at the same time, any uncertainty as to the place to which we are hastening, must be painful indeed to a mind influenced and affected as we have described.

From the language above recorded it is evident that Christ has made provision for this state of mind. The Apostle speaks of the truth of Christ being confirmed in the believers at Corinth, we shall not stay to define what is meant

by the term "testimony of Christ," but attempt to describe the confirmation mentioned with its attendant results.

I. THE CONFIRMATION.—Much has been written and spoken respecting this—what is it? It is not a ceremony—an ecclesiastical picture in a stone building, in which a bishop is the most prominent object. It is not memory repeating its catechism; it is not the mind asleep upon a stereotyped creed; it is not ignorance embracing a book because his great great grandfather did so; or in deference repeating a form got up for the occasion. It is not youth coerced into obedience by priestly authority;—no, it is none of these things—but something infinitely more sublime and important. No human agency simply can affect it; no gifts however bright, no eloquence however thrilling. The Holy Ghost is the only efficient agent here. Man may strive to effect it without him, but the work will not be accomplished. And in making the attempt they resemble an artist endeavouring to take a sun picture in a dark room. In vain he spreads his plate before the object he would have transcribed, not until he lifts up the blind and lets in the light of day does he witness the desired effect—and thus in spiritual confirmation. The soul of man is like a dark chamber, and his heart like a piece of steel plate, and not until the Holy Ghost comes and removes the blind of ignorance from the mental vision, and causes the rays of truth to flood *inwards* upon the soul, to imprint not only principles but Christ upon the heart, is spiritual confirmation effected, and the mind established. Then is fulfilled the promise—"A new heart will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

To express ourselves more fully upon this interesting topic, we may add that faith is the prime instrument by which the truth as a divine reality is demonstrated upon the heart. It is through the windows of faith that the Spirit of God shines upon the mind, for one great peculiarity of the Gospel is that it must be believed to be understood. And this faith is the gift of God and the fruit of the Spirit. The truth must be appropriated, it must live in us as well as we in it—hold us as well as we hold it. It is not by looking at bread that the body is nourished, or we become acquainted with its properties. It must be eaten, enter into us and form part of ourselves. And it is not by simply looking at the gospel intellectually that we are vitally confirmed in the truths of the gospel. We may receive the facts of divine revelation in theory, give an assent to them in judgment, and yet be ignorant of the nature of those facts as vitally incorporated and made ours by the mighty assimilating, sublime, and soul transforming power of that faith of which the Spirit of God is the Author. This important function of faith as manifesting the divine origin of the gospel, meeting our spiritual wants and establishing our minds in the truth, was referred to by our Saviour when he said—"Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man ye have no life in you." Except the work I have come to accomplish, my sufferings and death, are apprehended intelligently, become as essential to your spiritual life as natural bread is to your natural life, ye have no religion whatever that will be of any real service to you.

We may observe further, that chastisement is also made use of by the Holy Spirit to confirm the truth in us—"Happy is the man whom thou chastenest and instructest out of thy law." Chastisement is a kind of style in the hand of the Spirit, by which he writes the testimony of Christ or the gospel on the heart, and cuts it in deeply upon the conscience. He also makes use of observation, and a spiritual perception of the internal harmony of the truth and prayer; spiritual confirmation, therefore, it will be seen, involves more truth than we can get from human intuition or inward light, and the exertion of a greater power than any human being can put forth; it involves the truths of the Gospel brought into our daily experience by the omnipotent agency of the Holy Ghost; but we must not enlarge.

II. THE RESULTS. 1st. There is *Establishment*. The Lord ever tries

his own work. There is still a furnace in Jerusalem for the precious sons of Zion, and a crucible for the gold and silver of that sanctuary which God hath pitched and not man. The work of God, however, will ever bear the test he applies to it; a living tree is but rooted the more deeply by the storms which beat upon it. The flood which removed the house of the foolish builder did but manifest the strength of that which was erected by the wise. Like as those planets, which are fixed in their orbits by the finger of omnipotence, continue to revolve in silent grandeur around their several centres of attraction, undisturbed by the irregularities of other bodies in their immediate vicinity, so believers in whom the testimony of Christ has been confirmed continue to ascend upwards in faith and affection towards him who is the only sun of Zion's firmament, the great source of her strength and fruitfulness.

Little clusters of men are sometimes to be met with who are very wise in their own eyes—a very nucleus of theological brightness—but the brightness soon recedes into darkness. The testimony of Christ not being confirmed in them, when other eccentric bodies cross their path they are soon gone—their course is indeed but a series of irreligious gyrations around other bodies whose movements are frequently as uncertain and as impulsive as their own.

2nd. *Growth.* The establishment which stands connected with spiritual confirmation does not lead to a dead settlement of soul but a living progress. The truth within will not dwell there like so many dry chips in the breast of a marble statue—but like the roots of a living tree which will grow, expand, and declare their existence by the fruitfulness without.

3rd. *Usefulness.* The truth confirmed within will shine without. Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord. Believers in whom the testimony of Christ is confirmed are the lamps of the moral hemisphere and intended to light poor benighted travellers to paths of safety and eternal rest.

4th. *Assimilation.* The whole life of a believer is but a lesson of vital confirmation in the truth. And this process is going on even through those periods in his experience when it seems to him as if even the little truth he has obtained was about to be taken from him. The Holy Spirit is constantly at work—sometimes taking away from us what we think to be gold and are unwilling to part with, but in reality only dross and tin. And his work is to last; the testimony in us is to be displayed. It is wonderful how he writes such great truths upon such little minds. We have admired the ingenuity of the man who could write the Lord's prayer in such small characters that it could be placed in a nutshell; how much more should we admire that glorious spirit who writes the name of JEHOVAH in letters of grace upon so little a creature as man. And this fine sample of divine workmanship is not to perish—the minute epistle of divine mercy is to be read above, and is destined to exhibit more of God than the highest archangel before his throne.

Jehovah is ever seeking to conform his people to himself by conforming them to the truth—and like as the sculptor chisels and chips and chips and chisels the rude block of marble into a material exhibition of his own beautiful ideal—so the Spirit of God is ever at work, and by various chastisements and selected instruments is constantly seeking to conform believers to the truth as it is in Jesus, and when the last finishing stroke is given, he takes them home to God's temple above where they are to stand for ever, living monuments of the vital force, power, and beauty of Christ's testimony in the soul, of the holy and benign influence of God's Spirit, and of the might of Jesus to save.

LOVE TO CHRIST.

BY THE REV. B. FREECE, MINISTER OF COTTON STREET CHAPEL, TOPLAND.

"I love them that love Me, and they that seek me early shall find me."—Prov. viii. 17.

Continued from page 21.

Having considered the source, the object, and the evidence of true religion, we proceed to notice—

IV. THE RECIPROCAL ELEMENT IN TRUE RELIGION. "I love them that love Me." Christ's love to us is infinite, eternal, immutable. It knows no bounds, it can know no end. It has heights to which we can never soar, depths which we can never fathom, lengths which we can never traverse, breadths which we can never grasp. But our enjoyment of that love will be regulated by the ardency, the sincerity, and the supremacy of our love towards Christ. The light which an object gives, is in exact proportion to the power which that object has to reflect the rays of the sun which fall upon it; so our enjoyment of the love of Christ will be in proportion to the power with which we reflect the love of Christ to us. The more we love Christ, the more we shall enjoy his love; the more ardent our attachment to him, the more joy we shall realize; the more we regard him as the object of our supreme affection, the more we shall share his spirit, and become conformed to his image. And, oh, dear friends, is not the enjoyment of Christ's love worth making any effort or sacrifice to realize? It can gild every dark cloud of sorrow, it can calm every billow of grief, it can hush every storm of distress, it can soothe every rising woe, it can support in every trial, it can strengthen in every conflict, it can triumph even over death itself. It inspires the sublimest hopes, it awakens the most joyous emotions, it pictures the brightest prospects, and gives the assurance of a blissful immortality in heaven. Seek then grace to love Christ more, that you may enjoy more of his love in your own souls; and in order that you may do this, often think upon his condescension and grace—upon the love and compassion that prompted him to pour out his heart's blood to wash away our sin, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Think upon Bethlehem, its lowly manger; think upon Gethsemane, its bitter cup of sufferings and sorrows; think upon Calvary, its agonies and woes; think upon Christ's ascension to the throne of God, where he lives to intercede for you; think upon his final triumph and bliss, when he shall present all who love him faultless before the throne of his Father with exceeding joy; think upon the love, the benevolence, the meekness, the compassion, the tenderness, the purity and the grace which characterized his earthly career; think upon his love to you, poor guilty sinners; think upon his design respecting you, to place you amongst the ransomed of heaven, clothed in white, and crowned with glory. And, oh, will not the flame of sacred love burn brighter and higher, will not your hearts be knit in closer bonds to him, and will you not sing?—

"Jesus, I love thy charming name,
 'Tis music to my ear,
 Fain would I sound it out so loud,
 That earth and heaven might hear."

V. THE PROMISE MADE TO THOSE WHO SEEK TRUE RELIGION. "And those that seek me early shall find me." To the young, especially, there are peculiar promises given, and advantages offered, to induce them in early life to seek true religion. But you may ask, How are we to seek it? We say, follow the advice we have given to those who wish to enjoy more of the love of Christ. True religion, having its source, as we have seen, in supreme love, it is useless for us to *command* you to be religious. It would be useless for me to command an enemy to love me; in like manner it is useless for us to command you to love Christ, until your hearts have been softened by *his* love. How then are you to seek true religion? Sit down and calmly read the book of God; seriously reflect upon your state and condition; upon the character of God, his holiness, his justice, and his mercy. Reflect upon the love of Christ, and his character as we have described it, then we shall have proof that you are seeking true religion, and if you are sincere you will soon have proof of the faithfulness of Christ's promise, for the same Spirit that led you to seek will enable you to find.

We shall now conclude our observations by adverting to some of the benefits and advantages enjoyed from seeking and loving Christ in early life.

1. A continual and joyful sense of pardoned guilt, through the atoning sacrifice of Christ. Oh, how sweet the reflection, to retire to bed every night to arise in the morning, and to go forth to the duties of the day, under the conviction that our sins have been pardoned; not on account of anything we have done, but washed away by the blood of Christ! It is thus in seasons of trial, of suffering, and of sorrow, you may be cheerful, peaceful, and calm. This is the fountain from whence flow the streams of pardon, through the blood of the cross.

2. It will lead you to a diligent study of divine truth, which will furnish you with great sources of enjoyment through life and in death. Could you, my young friends, but know the joy, the pleasure, the comfort awakened by the remembrance or suggestion of some sweet promise, or spiritual truth found in the word of God, in the hour of darkness and death, you would forego the fancied pleasure or gratification afforded by the perusal of the light and empty reading of the present day; that you might "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest" the contents of this holy book.

3. It will awaken a strong desire for the salvation of those we love, and for the prosperity of Christ's cause. There is a luxury in doing good to others, and where we have not the power to accomplish what we desire for those we love, there is a pleasure in seeking the assistance of Him who can.

4. It will inspire you with the hope of a happy and glorious meeting with Christ, and pious friends above. We fondly cherish the memory of those we love, but whom death has taken from us; and the more they have cherished and manifested the love of Christ, the greater our loss by their removal, and the more ardently we desire to see them again. You may, perhaps, have a pious friend amongst the ransomed above; an affectionate husband, a loving wife, a kind father, an indulgent mother, a beloved child, an amiable sister, or a gentle brother; and oh, is not the hope fondly indulged, that they are gone but not for ever, that you will see them again, and meet to part no more? Now supreme love to Christ gives the assurance that that love will be consummated in heaven—that it is a spark that can never be quenched.

"For ever with the Lord,
Amen—so let it be;
Life from the dead is in that word,
—'Tis immortality."

5. It will prepare you for the hour of death, whether it come in youth or old age, and will give you victory over this your last foe. And oh, what is a life of pleasure if you have a death of sorrow; what is a life of mirth if you have a death of anguish; what is a happy life if you have a miserable death? The love of Christ provides for both. The believer in Christ is happy in life, and triumphant in death.

THE TEARS OF JESUS.

BY THE REV. W. ABBOTT, OF BLUNHAM, DEBDS.

"Jesus wept."—JOHN I. 35.

In that interesting life of Jesus Christ written by the beloved disciple, we have this touching incident recorded, in connexion with the scenes and circumstances of the death and grave of Lazarus—"Jesus wept." Observe,

I. The *source* of Jesus' tears. Jesus weeps—and what tears he weeps!—from what a loving, sympathising, friendly heart they spring. Not mere

eye tears, but heart tears; as sincere as they were sympathising. The love of the Saviour's heart is made known to us by his words, his tears, his deeds.

"His heart is made of tenderness,
His bowels melt with love."

II. The *power* of Jesus' tears. We speak of the beauty, of the eloquence,

of the power of tears, but how surpassing in all these were the tears of Jesus. Tears sparkling with brightest love—tears eloquent with kindest love—tears powerful with love surpassing all power. Love, love human, friendly, and divine, was the spirit of Jesus' tears. Tears, unparalleled and astonishing; tears, such as never flowed from eyes before nor since the days of Christ; tears, the tears of heaven shed upon earth. Tears that excited the attention of men and angels, that pleased the Father, and that consoled the weeping saints.

Jesus wept on earth—he weeps not in heaven. Earth is a scene of tears, but heaven of smiles and joys. But though he is in the midst of joys, he forgets not his followers in the vale of tears. His heart is touched for them,

he casts his tender looks upon them, he sends his kind and cheering words to them. He gives them joys on earth, and assures them of greater joys in heaven. Many and oft repeated are the causes of sorrow, but greater and never failing are the sources of joy. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Again he says to his weeping ones, "And ye now have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." The period is hastening when the beautiful and precious prophesy shall be realized in all its fulness: "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

THE JOY OF HARVEST.

BY THE REV. JAMES HAMILTON, D.D.

"They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest."—ISA. ix. 3.

EVERY season is a preacher, but of them all we are inclined to think Autumn the most popular and impressive. It needs no acquaintance with Nature's mysteries to understand his sermon; it needs no peculiar susceptibility to be carried along by his direct and homely eloquence. In the field which he is reaping the unlettered rustic sees the answer to the fourth petition of his daily prayer, and the Christian philosopher sees his heavenly Father giving bread to himself and his children, as plainly as if it were sent by the hand of an angel, or rained through a window in heaven. And whilst the purport of the discourse is so obvious, it is spoken to great advantage. Around there is little to distract, whilst there is much to fix the thoughts, to open the ear and soothe the spirit. Autumn is the sabbath of the months; and with its mellow light and listening silence, the whole land seems consecrated into a temple hushed and holy. Nor is there lack of ministers. The laden trees are priests, the corn-fields are choristers; and, yielding to the tran-

quil influence, if you yourself be devoutly silent, their psalm will come into your soul.

To a mind that sees God in everything there is a special "joy in harvest." It is a new pledge of Jehovah's faithfulness;—another accomplishment of that ancient promise, "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest shall not cease";—a promise made all the more striking by the incidents which imperilled its fulfilment; the winter that looked as if it would never go away, perhaps the drought which threatened to scorch the seed in the baked and burning furrow; perhaps the cold skies which forbade the ear to fill, or the drenching floods, which, when filled, dashed it to the earth again;—but past all these perils, or through them all, a mighty Providence has borne the sustenance of a world, and, as it spans the clouds of the dissolving equinox, the rainbow asks on behalf of the great Covenant-maker, "Hath one word failed of all that God hath spoken?" And so it proclaims the loving-kindness of the Lord, and the care

and munificence of the great Provider. It is not a mere subsistence he secures to the children of men, but it is a feast of fat things; not only the bread which strengthens man's heart, but the wine that makes him glad, and the oil that makes his face to shine, all the variety of fruits, and grains, and herbs, and spices; nor bread for the children only, but crumbs for the creatures under the table. Nor at this season can we fail to mark the minuteness of forethought and munificence of kindness with which our heavenly Father feeds the fowls of the firmament; the profusion which not only fills the barn of the husbandman, but which, in every forest and every hedge-row, has a store-house for those pensioners of his who can take no thought for the morrow. With its banquet hall so wide and so populous, with its heaps of abundance, and its air of open-handed welcome, Harvest is the season which tells us of God's hospitality.

Besides the palpable Providence—the visible nearness of a God most gracious and merciful—a material element in the joy of harvest is the reward of industry.

If the sleep of the labouring man is sweet, so is that labourer's bread. The fields are bare: the year's work is done: and as he nestles among the sheaves, so glosey, dry, and fragrant; as he surveys the golden heap, fresh-sifted on the threshing-floor: as he watches the snowy powder flowing from between the revolving cylinders: as he sits down with his rosy children to the household loaf, that bread has to him a flavour which no science can impart—those sheaves have a grace and beauty which no pencil can reproduce, for no artist can spy. That bread has the pleasant flavour of personal industry: that garner concentrates in itself a year of his own toil-worn history. And now, in the snug comfort of his cottage, and amidst rainy gusts prophetic of winter it calls up

to complacent memory the frosty morning when by lantern-light he yoked his team—the grey and windy noon when he sowed the seed—the day when to save the tender crop and the crumbling furrows, he battled with the swollen brook and banked out the thunder-torrent: the weary nights when he waked so often, and from the dripping eaves and gurgling corbels presaged rotten shocks or flattened fields: and now that all these anxieties and toils are ended, and now that the Most High has given these results to his labour, he that went forth weeping, bearing precious seed, comes again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

And the analogy goes up, and upward still, from that rejoicing peasant to the Christian parent who reaps his prayer and efforts in the salvation of his child:—up to the Christian patriot who, after all the ebbs and flows of popular favour, is rewarded with the extinction of an evil, or the reformation of a realm:—up to the missionary who after a ten years' sowing, sees coming in the first fruits of Greenland or Tahiti unto Christ:—up to the martyr who from beneath the Heavenly Altar looks down—Cranmer on his England, Huss and Jerome on their Prague, Wishart on his Scotland, and from his ashes sees a mighty church upsprung and flourishing:—upward and upward yet to that King of Martyrs and Prince of Missionaries, who, from his thirty years of husbandry among the hills of Galilee, when his head was filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night—who, from the handful of corn which he then planted in the earth, and at last watered with his blood, already sees fruit that shakes like Lebanon, and who, when at length the harvest of the earth is ripe, and Heaven's garner has received the last of his redeemed, shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

CHRIST'S LOSS OUR GAIN.

O! what a melting consideration is this, that out of his agony comes our victory;—out of his condemnation our justification;—out of his pain our ease;—out of his stripes our healing;—out of his gall and vinegar our honey;—out of his curse our blessing;—out of his crown of thorns our crown of glory;—out of his death our life.

EARLY LIFE OF DR. KITTO:

AUTHOR OF THE "PICTORIAL BIBLE," ETC., ETC.!"

Continued from page 26.

HAVING no relative to support him, Kitto became an inmate of Plymouth workhouse in his fifteenth year. His misery had been previously intense. Slightly clad, unshod, and gnawed by hunger, he yet could not be induced to enter the pauper asylum but by artifice. Like the wolf in the fable, he used to say he would rather starve in a state of freedom than fatten in chains. He even planned his escape from the workhouse; but, fortunately, he resorted to his pen, and with it pleaded so well that the governor allowed him to sleep in his former study, where he might and where he did continue to devour books. This indulgence was further enlarged by Mr. Burnard, the clerk of the board of guardians, who deserves high praise for that discerning sympathy which first prompted him so warmly and generously to befriend the deaf lad; and which bound him as a friend to Kitto to the end of his career.

While he was engaged from six in the morning till late at night in making list shoes, with a touch of prophetic fire he inserted these words in his well written journal: "I had thought of plans for enabling me to visit Asia! and the ground consecrated by the steps of the Saviour! Even now, notwithstanding my deafness, it would not be impracticable if some kind gentleman, on his travels, would permit me to be his faithful servant." He knew that his journal was read by his sympathizing friend, and went on thus revealing his feelings to good purpose. Why should a pauper keep a journal? He tells us his motive. He acknowledges vanity; but he wished to produce a book of his own writing, and to read some of it to such connexions as would be interested in it. His heart was in his journal, and it proved both warm and intelligent.

Here is an entry: "Nov. 14th. On Monday I had been a year in the workhouse. I have made seventy-eight pairs of list shoes, and mended many—premium one penny per week." This penny, with any other he might get, was expended on mental food. He used to walk two miles and back, as frequently as his holidays allowed, namely, from Plymouth to Devonport (then Plymouth Dock) for the purpose of getting a cheap reading at a book stall in the market-place there; and there the writer has often stood by his side while both tumbled over tattered classics and titleless divinity. The stall was kept by a happy old man, quite a character, who a loved boys to read at their leisure around him, though they might borrow books at a penny a week, from "Newton's Principia," to the "History of Tom Thumb."

"I never was a lad: I have been accustomed to think—to think deeply—think as I read, as I worked, as I walked. While other lads were employed in trifles, I thought as a man, felt as a man, and acted as a man. I have walked hours in the most lonesome

lanes, abstracted in melancholy musings." In short, "Beattie's Minstrel" might have stood for Kitto's mental portrait; but to the writer, who not unfrequently met him at this period, he appeared like a foreigner, knowing no one to talk with.

The strength of his feelings at this time is best seen in his journal, particularly where he mentions the death and burial of his grandmother already alluded to: "Oh, then—when I saw the corpse—when I saw those eyes, which had often watched my slumbers, and cast on me looks of love, were closed in eternal sleep! those lips which often had pressed mine, which often had opened to soothe me, tell me tales, and form my infant mind, were pale and motionless; when I saw the hands which led, caressed, and fed me, for ever stiff and motionless;—when I saw all this, and felt that it was for ever!—gone for ever! that is the word of agonizing poignancy. Yet not for ever; a few short years at most, and I may hope to meet her again—there is my consolation. Joyful meeting! yet a little while to bear this—

'Fond, restless dream which idiots hug,
Nay, wise men flatter with the name of
Life.'

Accursed be the atheist who seeks to deprive man of his hope of immortality. What were man without this hope?"

It is thus by a love that has blessed us that *The Father* persuades us of his own personal love for us—all the mystery of sin, suffering, and death notwithstanding.

Kitto wished to be confirmed a short time after this bereavement, and he was approved by the minister; but, like a youth all eye, he was so intently engaged in watching the ceremony and the bishop, that he forgot to go up with the rest of the boys, and was never confirmed after all!

His friends Mr. Burnard and Mr. Nugent having been impressed by many proofs of the excellence of his mind and heart, were desirous of drawing him out in the right direction, and for this purpose furnished him with written questions on Christian doctrine, to be answered scripturally. And he did answer them fully and most satisfactorily. He afterwards wrote lectures, at the request of the board, to be read to the boys of the workhouse, and great was his joy at this proof of confidence in his ability and fitness. He exclaimed, as he ran about the court on receiving this request, "What I, John Kitto, write lectures to be read to the boys,—and Mr. Burnard thinks me competent too!" Immediately after these encouragements, from a workhouse inmate he became worse—a workhouse apprentice; and that, too, to an ignorant shoemaker of the Legree stamp, a mere slave-driver. He had been with this man but a short time before he thus wrote in his journal: "Jan. 19th. O misery! art thou to be my only portion?"

Father of mercies, forgive me if I wish I had never been born!" He was cruelly overworked and ignominiously smitten by his tyrannical master. In his work on deafness he says—"This was a terrible time for me; I submitted, I acquiesced. I tried hard to be happy; but it would not do; my heart gave way." "It somewhat mopes me to look back upon that poor deaf boy in utter loneliness, devoting himself to objects in which none around him could sympathize, and to pursuits which none could even understand." In this pity for his former self, we thoroughly sympathize, for had indeed it must have been to macerate that toil-worn body by the nightly denial of needful rest in order to satisfy the cravings of the mind for the knowledge on which it grew. But this was the darkness before the dawn. The suffering soon became intolerable, and he complained in a letter that astonished "the bench," and awakened such a general interest in his behalf that he returned to the workhouse with some hope. That place seemed a paradise in comparison, for he had friends there, and there he worked with all his heart to perfect himself in shoemaking, that he might go forth and support himself manfully. But other work was waiting for him. In 1823, George Harvey, an eminent mathematician, and Mr. Nettleton, the proprietor of the *Plymouth Journal*, stirred their friends in his behalf; some of his essays were published, their good promise appreciated, a small sum raised for his aid, and he was placed in the public library to read at his will. The committee-room of this institution he calls his *second study*. Strangely enough his reading was here almost confined to metaphysics, and yet it was very natural for a mind so constructed to look into its own nature as far as possible. He was speedily convinced, however, that such studies are more laborious than profitable.

Kitto had a loving heart. Numberless and unremitting were his endeavours to attach children to him; but he bemoans the transient nature of their attachments. He seemed to forget that souls get attached to each other chiefly through speech, and he was nearly dumb, and could not hear at all, so that it is but natural, that until his heart

was read in his writings, Mr. Burnard's dog appeared to have formed a more sincere and disinterested attachment to him than any rational creature. His pen soon obtained him friends that loved him for his soul's sake, and for whom he could have died. Being aware of his very imperfect utterance, he endeavoured to avoid speaking, but he was cured of this injurious habit in a very Christian and philosophical manner by Dr. Korek, a German physician, who had taken orders in the Anglican Church, and by Mr. Jadownicky, a Polish Jew, both of whom were going with him to Malta. These well-informed and kind-hearted men soon perceived how matters stood with him, and they entered into a conspiracy with the captain of the ship, not to understand him otherwise than orally throughout the voyage. In this they persevered to a marvel, and during the six weeks of the voyage he made such progress in the use of his tongue, as almost to overcome his habit of clutobing pen or pencil for the purpose of communicating his thoughts to his present friends; and at length, by diligent practice, his voice and articulation were so much improved that he could be readily understood, even by a foreigner. Nevertheless he confined himself too much to short sentences and to dry, hard words, which, of course, were rather repulsive, except to those who know his heart. Great was the joy of his little child, who, on first hearing him say "Dear," ran to his mother with the glad news—an incident only less touching than Kitto's complaint, that he never heard that child's voice.

His plan of study will enable us to see the means of his mental progress. He divided his week thus—Seven parts open or optional; six for writing to his friends; twelve for reading; nine for grammar; two for extracting, and one for church. He enjoyed sermons and lectures by sympathy; he could feel their effects as visible in those who heard. He at length addicted himself almost exclusively to those books that required to be well digested, and he gave a thorough heart to the study of the Bible as "the only book of sound principles and perfect science ever written."

To be continued.

DENOMINATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.

London, Camden Road Chapel.—The Rev. J. Davies, assistant minister of Counterslip, Bristol, has accepted a unanimous invitation to the pastorate.

Kingsbridge.—The Rev. Thos. Peters, of Raleigh, has accepted the unanimous invitation to the pastorate.

Wrexham.—The Rev. E. Griffith, of Burnham, Essex, has accepted the unanimous invitation to the pastorate.

Brideport.—The Rev. H. W. Stenbridge, late of Paulton, entered upon his pastoral duties July 6th.

Cocentry, Cow Lane.—The Rev. R. P. Mc Masters, of Walsall, enters upon the pastorate of the Baptist Church, first Lord's day in September.

Devonport.—The Rev. R. W. Overbury has resigned the pastorate of the Baptist Church in Morrice Square.

Woolwich, New Baptist Church in Lecture Hall, Nelson St.—The Rev. H. Cruss-weller, B.A., late of Loominster, commenced his stated labours July 29.

Crosby, Westmorland.—The Rev. J. Marshall, of Hunnamby, has accepted an invitation to the pastorate.

Blakeney, Bradley House.—The Rev. W. Copley, after sustaining the pastorate for twelve years, has, in consequence of protracted illness, resigned, and the Rev. W. D. Elliston, of Stepany College, has succeeded Mr. C. in the pastorate.

Rotherham, Westgate.—The Rev. Joseph Ashmead, of Horton College, Bradford, has accepted the pastorate.

RECOGNITION SERVICES.

Baptist Chapel, Uzbridge.—On Thursday, June 17th, services of a highly interesting character were held for the purpose of recognizing the Rev. G. Rouse Lowden as pastor. At half-past two the chapel was crowded. After prayer by the Rev. J. Bigwood, of Brompton, the Rev. W. B. Bowes, of Blandford St. Chapel, delivered the introductory discourse. The Rev. W. Emery, of Mill End, Rickmansworth, asked the usual questions. The recognition prayer was offered by the Rev. J. W. Lance, of Brentford, and the Rev. F. Wills, of Kingsgate Chapel, London, proceeded to deliver the "charge" to the newly elected pastor, from 1 Tim. iv. 16. The Rev. G. Hawson, of Staines, concluded with prayer. The company then adjourned to partake of tea refreshments, to a tent on the ground. In the evening an eloquent and impressive sermon was preached by the Rev. W. G. Lewis, of Westbourne Grove Chapel, London. The devotional exercises were conducted by the Rev. Messrs. Jeffery, of Amersham, Lillycrop, of Windsor, and the Pastor.

Bethel Chapel, Leighton Buzzard.—On Thursday, June 12, services were held in the above chapel for the public recognition of the Rev. B. Davies (late of South Chard, Somerset) as the pastor of the Church. The Rev. G. Wyard, of Tring, stated the nature of a Gospel Church, proposed the usual questions, and offered the recognition prayer. The Rev. Samuel Cozens, of London, delivered the charge to the minister, and Rev. George Murrell, of St. Neot's, preached to the Church.

Upton-on-Severn, June 25.—A tea-meeting was held in the Baptist Chapel to commemorate the settlement of the Rev. Joseph Green (late of Darlington) as pastor, after which a public meeting was held, over which the Rev. W. Crowe, of Worcester, presided. Appropriate addresses were delivered on the duties of pastor and people, by the Chairman, the Pastor, the Rev. Messrs. Overbury, of Pershore, and Dunn, of Atch Lench.

ANNIVERSARIES TO BE HOLDEN.

Gravesend, Zoar Chapel, Peacock St.—The anniversary of the above place will be held in Zion Chapel, Windmill St. (kindly lent for the occasion) on August 25th. Mr. Wells in the morning, Mr. Stringer in the afternoon, and Mr. Foreman in the evening.

The Church and congregation of Dacro Park Chapel, Blackheath, are preparing to hold a bazaar on the 27th and 28th of August next, in the Literary Institution, adjoining the Railway Station, Blackheath. The object is to liquidate the chapel debt, and thereby give the energies of the people free scope for benevolent and Christian enterprise.

Tasteful and useful articles, suitable for sale (or subscriptions) will be thankfully received by—

Mr. Whittaker, Spensor Place, Blackheath.
Mrs. Glassecock, Lewisham.

NEW CHAPELS.

Stoke Rivers, Near Bradford, June 25.—The new Baptist Chapel was opened for divine service. In the afternoon, after prayer by the Rev. S. Newman, of Barnstable, the Rev. W. Slater (Ind.) preached to a crowded congregation. In the evening a public service was held in the open air, to accommodate the overflowing congregation. Addresses were delivered by the Rev. Messrs. Norrington, Sutcliffe, Little, Newman, Slater, and Soverch. This is the third chapel built in connection with the church at Brayford.

Rama, near Brecon, June 10, 11.—Services connected with the opening of the new Baptist Chapel were held. Appropriate and stirring addresses were delivered by the Rev. Messrs. E. Richards, of Pont-y-pool, W. Harris, of Pont-y-celin, W. Richards, of Penrhewl, T. Williams, of Lear, J. W. Evans, of Kinsington, Brecon, R. A. Jones, of Llanvaeriarinn, D. B. Edwards, of Watergate, D. Jarman, of Newbridge, and R. Johns, of Maesyberlan.

Woolwich, Anglesea Road, July 14.—The foundation stone of a new chapel, in connection with the Baptist Church and congregation meeting in Carmel Chapel, New Street. After prayer by the Rev. J. Austin, of Deptford, the Revs. J. Wells, and H. Hunks addressed the meeting, when John Thwaites, Esq., President of the Metropolitan Board of Works, performed the usual ceremony, after which he delivered a very earnest and appropriate address. About 300 persons partook of tea refreshments in the old chapel, after which the Rev. J. E. Bloomfield, of Meard's Court, Soho, preached to a crowded audience.

Birmingham, Cannon St., July 16.—Jubilee services in connection with the opening of the above chapel were held. About 400 persons partook of tea refreshments, after which the chair was taken by the venerable pastor, Rev. T. Swan. Addresses were delivered by the Revs. I. New, J. Hammond, J. J. Brown, G. Cheate, T. Morgan; and by Messrs. J. W. Showell, J. H. Hopkins, White, Room, and others. Cannon St. Church is the mother of Dissenting Churches in Birmingham, and now contains 700 members.

PRESENTATION SERVICES.

London, Trinity Chapel, Southwark, July 16.—A meeting of the young members, and other friends connected with the Baptist Chapel in this place, assembled for the purpose of presenting their pastor, the Rev. H. J. Betts, on his birthday with a testimonial of their affection. It consisted of Dr. Angus' "Bible Hand Book," and other valuable articles. Mr. Oliver, in presenting the testimonial, delivered a suitable address, which was appropriately acknowledged by Mr. Betts.

Milport, Scotland, June 26.—A soiree was held in the Baptist Chapel, on which occasion a handsome testimonial was presented, through Mr. D. Wallace, to the Rev. W. M. Mc. Kirdy, consisting of fifty-seven volumes, including "Dr. Kitto's Biblical Cyclopædia," Dr. Pye Smith's "Scripture Testimony to the Messiah," the works of Barnes, Neander, &c., together with a purse of gold. Addresses were delivered by the Chairman, the Rev. J. Williams, of Glasgow, the Rev. M. Walker, of the Free Church, Mulport, and Mr. J. Wallace.

Chenies, Bucks, June 29.—The members of the Baptist Church and congregation presented the Rev. T. C. Carter with a handsome silver cream ewer, on his retiring from the pastorate, as a testimony of their high esteem.

Bistol, Counterslip, July 4.—A valedictory service, on the removal of the Rev. J. Davis to London, was held in connection with his late Bible Classes. After an affectionate address by Mr. Bowbeer, Mr. P. Gast presented Mr. B. with a handsome duplex watch and chain, Bagster's Quarto Bible, and a purse of forty guineas.

Newport, Isle of Wight, July 1.—A valedictory service was held on the Rev. W. Jones' removal to Nottingham, when Dr. Navell, one of the deacons, presented to Mr. Jones, in the name of the Church and friends, Dr. Bloomfield's "Annotations on the New Testament," in eight vols. Capt. Hall, Governor of Parkhurst Prison, T. Upward, Esq., and others, affectionately addressed Mr. Jones, who most feelingly acknowledged the kindness thus manifested.

Chatham, Zion Chapel, June 30.—A farewell meeting was held, attended by a large number of ministers and friends. The Rev. J. S. Hall, independent minister, presided, and suitable addresses were delivered by the Rev. H. Davis, Rochester, and Messrs. Everest, Love, and Wallhurst, on which occasion an elegant writing desk, and a purse of gold, were presented to Mr. Russell, as a token of grateful esteem.

Kingston upon Thames, July 2.—A deeply affecting meeting was held, when a purse of fifty guineas was presented to the Rev. W. Collings, late pastor of the Baptist Church, on his leaving to take the oversight of the Baptist Church, Gloucester. At the same time the members of the Independent congregation presented Mr. Collings with a purse of ten sovereigns, as a token of their fraternal regard.

BAPTISMS:

Dacon, Norfolk, June 29.—Four by Mr. Moneymont.

Banbury, May 4.—Two by the pastor.

Blackburn, Branch Road, May 25.—Two by Mr. Barker.

Birmingham, Hope Street, May 25.—Five

Cannan Street, May 14.—Eleven by Mr. Swan.

Coseley, Staffordshire, Providence, May 18.—Four by Mr. Maurice.

Castle Acre, Norfolk, June 8.—Two by Mr. Stutterd.

Cheltenham, Cumbray Chapel, June 8.—Seven by Mr. Smi.h.

Exeter, Bartholomew Street, June 1.—Five by Mr. Tuckett.

Halifax, Pellon Lane, July 3.—Four scholars in the Sunday school, by Mr. White-wood.

Hatherleigh, Devon, June 1.—Three by Mr. Norman.

Husbands, Bosworth, Leicestershire, June 1.—Four by Mr. Ibberson.

Kettering, May 28.—Four by Mr. Mursell.

Leighton Buzzard, Bethel, July 6.—Two by Mr. Davies.

London, Cross Street, Islington, July 23.—Five by Mr. Thomas.

Lynn, Norfolk, July 1.—Twenty-two by Mr. Wigner. Mr. W. has now baptized 500 during his pastorate.

Olney, Bucks, May 18.—Six by Mr. Row, of Stevington, after a sermon by Mr. Simmons.

Pill, near Bristol, June 8.—Eleven by Mr. Lee.

Poplar, near London, July 27.—Ten by Mr. Preece.

Manchester, York Street, Jan. 1, three; May 25, two; June 29, three; by Mr. Chenery.

Uxion Chapel, May 19.—Three by Mr. Weeks.

Grosvenor Street, Chorlton-on-Medlock, May 1.—Three.

Middleton, Cheney, June 24.—Three by Mr. Medcoffe.

Newtown, Montgomeryshire, July 27.—Five by Mr. D. Evans.

Roads, Northamptonshire, April 27.—Four; May 11, four; June 15, two; by Mr. Sutton.

Sudben, June 1.—Fourteen by Mr. Kitchen.

Swansea, York Place, May 1.—Ten by Mr. Hill.

Walton, Suffolk, July 6.—Two by Mr. Warren.

Turporley, Cheshire, June 1.—Three by Mr. Aston.

Upton-on-Severn, July 4.—Three. A sister of the pastor, together with the widow of the late much respected deacon, Mr. S. Hudson, and her young daughter, by Mr. Green — in addition to two other daughters previously baptized — a household of believers.

Wyken's, Walgrave-on-Sowes, July 6.—Six by Mr. Sargent.

Zoar, Anglesea, June 15.—After an address by Mr. Bower, five by Mr. Jones.

DEATHS.

Anthony, Mr. A. (late of Bedford), May 28, aged 37 years, leaving a wife and five children. He fell asleep in Jesus.

Cave, Mr. John, June 15, for forty-five years an honourable and useful deacon of the Church, at Hackleton, near Northampton, aged 70.

Brooks, John, Esq., at Bewdley, June 22, aged 87. Mr. B. had been fifty-four years

deacon of the Baptist Church in this place.
 B Oughton, Rev. John, July 4, for many years pastor of the Baptist Church, Hedgend, Hants.
 Spittal, Mrs., at North Queensferry, aged 93 years, one of the earliest professors of Baptist principles in that district.

AN ABUNDANT ENTRANCE INTO LIFE.

On Wednesday morning, July 9th, Deborah, the beloved wife of Mr. S. K. Bland, Baptist minister, of Cheshunt, fell asleep, aged 31 years.

The mysterious providence which has thus swiftly removed the wife and mother from that circle of promising happiness and usefulness—not one year since entered upon—is truly a dark cloud; but through the partings of the veil the heavenly glory irradiates the prospect and bids the mourners' hearts be still, for "God is his own interpreter, and he will make it plain."

After about six weeks' grievous suffering, her mind became alive to the solemn truth that her days were few upon the earth. Still the bonds of time were precious, and the lingering hopes of recovery remained and seemed to trammel the free resignation to the will of the Master.

But "His people shall be willing in the day of his power." That day came, and so came the will. On the Saturday preceding her removal, she feebly told her husband "I feel I cannot last long, and I do not wish it. I now long to be gone; and the Lord will bless you. I feel I can give you up now—to depart to Christ is better."

After getting into bed she said, "Come near me, dear; let me lean on you—and now—talk to me about Jesus."

Her husband called to her mind a very favourite Psalm (the 91st), and spoke of Jesus as the "Shadow of the Almighty."

"Oh, yes," she replied—

"The soul that on Jesus has lean'd for repose
 He'll never, no never, desert to the foes;
 That soul, tho' all hell should endeavour to
 shake,

He'll never, no never, no never forsake!

Ah! I did hope to have been spared to train up those dear children—but—it may not be."

From this time her resignation and calm peace was undisturbed. Early on Wednesday morning she exclaimed (awaking from a confused slumber), "Oh, my dear mother, I am going now—I am going to glory! glory!! glory!!! I shall soon be there—I am there. You will soon follow me—we shall meet again in glory,—and my husband—we shall all be there. Rock of Ages shelter me—I will never leave thee—nor forsake—precious—precious—precious Jesus."

Those were her last audible words; and although, for nearly half an hour, nature struggled with the last enemy, all the while her lips moved, and her face was lighted up with the dawn of a far greater and exceeding weight of glory. At length she clasped her hands upon her bosom, and all that was left on earth was that redeemed but fast-corrupting body.

"It is sown a mortal body,
 It shall be raised in glory."
 Blessed portion, may that be ours!

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We tender hearty thanks to our numerous correspondents for the denominational intelligence supplied by them, and for their expressions of kindly sympathy. We again solicit their co-operation in promoting the circulation of the "Baptist Messenger." There are yet five months to the commencement of a new year, and during the intervening period there will be abundant opportunity for our readers to interest themselves on its behalf. If each of our subscribers will only secure one other, our object will be attained. It is surprising to find that, notwithstanding its comparatively extensive circulation, in many quarters the "Baptist Messenger" is not yet even known. Will our friends, therefore, personally aid us in giving to it all the publicity they can.

* * * Reviews of New Publications, and several other articles, stand over for want of space.

A Second Series of TEN PORTRAITS of BAPTIST MINISTERS, beautifully engraved on Steel, will be given with the Number for January, 1857.

ZION'S PROSPERITY.

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,

Minister of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.

"Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof."—*Ps. ciii. 13, 14.*

A SELFISH man in trouble is exceedingly hard to comfort, because the springs of his comfort lie entirely within himself, and when he is sad, all his springs are dry. But a large-hearted man, a man of benevolence and Christian philanthropy, hath other springs from which to supply himself with comfort, beside those which lie within himself. He can go to his God first of all, and there seek abundant help: and we who go to comfort him, can use other arguments not relating to himself, but to the world at large, to his country, and above all, to the Church. David, in this Psalm, seems to be exceedingly sorrowful; he says, "I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert. I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top." And the only way in which he could comfort himself, finding there was no solace in his own circumstances, was, that God would arise, and have mercy upon Zion: though he was sad, yet Zion should prosper; however low his own estate, yet Zion should arise. Christian man! thou canst always comfort thyself in God's gracious dealings towards the Church; but, if the church of which thou art a member be in a sad and sickly condition, wherewithal shalt thou comfort thyself? Surely, then, thou wilt be compelled to say, "I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping, because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down."

We shall notice four things. The nature, necessity, means, and signs of Church prosperity.

I. THE NATURE OF THE PROSPERITY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. Here I shall differ from many, for we do think that many churches that are called prosperous, are far from being so, while some which are despised, are the most prosperous Churches in God's estimation.

We do not conceive it to be a sign of a church's prosperity when the congregation is *large*. We love to see people throng to hear God's Word, and to hear assembled multitudes shout aloud the praises of Jehovah; but when we witness these things, we do not take it for granted that the church is prosperous. Concerning some places, we would pray God would empty every seat of them, for there is in them a going away to Rome, a wandering from the fundamental principles of God's Word:—the church may be full, crammed to its very doors, but there is a desolating blight therein. There may be more prosperity in a place, where but six of God's people meet together, than where thousands congregate to worship God, in a way which they think to be right, but which is not in accordance with his sacred word.

Nor do we conceive that the *riches* of a people make a church prosperous. Ask some aristocratic member of a church, "Is your church prospering?" "Yes, there were nineteen carriages waiting outside the other Sunday." Ask another; he will say, "Yes, so-and-so joined the church, who is worth so many thousands." We say a rich man's soul is as good as a poor man's; but at the same time give us all the gold of the mines of Peru, and the church would not prosper thereat. There are many churches rich in wealth, but exceedingly poor in faith, who might well barter all of it for the humble piety of the Methodist, or the earnest zeal of the ancient Puritan.

Nor do we think that a church is necessarily prosperous, because the minister is exceedingly eloquent. The tendency of the present day is intellectual preaching, concerning such, we never could see any intellect in it, we have heard literary men—we could only pun upon the name, and say they made a "litter." I could say of many learned men what Locko said: "If a man

cannot make you understand what he means, do not seek to find out, for there is no meaning in it." If you cannot understand him at once, just leave him alone, for he does not understand himself. We hold it to be a wrong thing, that intellectual rationalism should disgrace our pulpits. God's pulpit was meant for God's Gospel. We have theatres and public halls, in which to spout philosophy. Put away Christianity out of our pulpits, and what have we done? the pulpit is the bastion of the Church—the Thermopylæ of Christendom, here the great truths of the Bible must be taught—and he that useth not his pulpit, to preach the Gospel therein, hath disgraced it, even though his talents be superhuman; he has disgraced God's church in not unceasingly proclaiming the evangelical principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Then, my friends, you may ask me, how can I tell the church is prospering? I answer, I must consider for what purposes the Church was formed, and if it be not accomplishing that particular object, it is not prospering. The Church is established for two particular objects: first, for bringing God's wandering sheep back to the fold of Christ; secondly, for fostering those sheep that are brought within the fold.

We enter a place where we hear Divine truth proclaimed. We inquire, "How many have been added to the church this year?" "No addition"—"no progress" We inquire again another year, the same reply is received, "no sinners saved"—"none brought into the fold." We are very deferential towards the ministers of the everlasting Gospel, we would sooner receive a bad one as our friend, than reject a good one; but we will not flatter our brother, we will not mind about his congregation; if he does not win souls to Christ, his church is not prospering; if the pool of baptism has never been opened to receive a convert; if the church doors have never turned upon their hinges to receive souls seeking salvation; if no fresh members are received, to sit down at the table of the Lord; if God's elect have not been brought in, we have strong suspicions whether that man be a minister of God, we are certain that he is not a successful one. That church is in a sad, sad condition, which never hears the cry of new-born souls brought to God. God forbid we should preach a month without winning souls; we think it would be death to live a year, and not hear of hundreds brought to Christ. We think it is prosperity when children are gathered together, when God is pleased by the agency of the Word, to break hard hearts, to bend the stubborn will, and bring the mourner to rejoice in the love of the Saviour. Is your church thus increasing? then it is prospering.

We also said there is another reason for the establishment of the Church of Christ, *viz.*, for its own edification. It is a happy church in which the sheep of Christ are fed. Beloved, if God's people are not fed, we do not think the church is prospering. Some have laughed at the term "fed." We have heard people say, "What do they mean by being fed?" Ah! children know the meaning of it, and our hearers know what is meant by the term—they do not care about our garnishings, for the platter on which we serve the food, for the manner in which we carve it; we may cut it with a blunt knife, yet the child of God loves it; but if there is no food in the church; if the members do not grow in grace; if they be not irreproachable in their conduct; if they have not the Spirit of Christ; if they do not enjoy fellowship with Jesus; if they have not attained to the knowledge of the love of God in Christ; if they cannot enter into rest; if they do not live near Jesus, and endeavour as much as in them lies to imitate Him, we say the church is not prospering. It may be the wealthiest under heaven, but it may also be the most impoverished. It may be the most learned, according to human views, but the most heretical, the farthest from prosperity, and the nearest to blasphemy. Let us look at our churches as they ought to be viewed. Are souls saved? Are saints edified and built up? This is the only thing I ask myself. Some say this, some that, and the other, we care not in the least about the ten thousand

opinions people form of us, we only say — sinners are saved, and we will keep on preaching as long as this is the case; and if we can find men declaring that they are fed, we feel our mission is successful. Is it so in your church? then you have the elements of a prosperous one.

II. We shall now consider THE NECESSITY FOR THE PROSPERITY OF OUR CHURCHES. What matters that to some? They come regularly to chapel, and occupy their pews; yes! but they never ask themselves this question, "Does my church prosper?" Oh, no! that is the minister's business, the deacons must look after that. Our friend comes to chapel Sabbath after Sabbath, like a very religious man. He does not sleep; that I have upon evidence. Sometimes the sermon would stir him up, and yet it does not. He takes up the idea of everybody minding his own business, and whilst carrying out the old maxim, "Charity begins at home," he allows it to end there. Now and then he prays for the minister if called upon at the prayer meeting, but he does not regard the minister as his brother, he does not pray for him at the family altar. He hears missions are succeeding abroad, but for aught he cares, the mission houses might be closed; he does not care much about it. He would like the church to prosper, but he would not put himself out of his way; and, as to giving up himself like Curtius of old, and leaping into the gulf to serve the church; oh, no! he would not do so rash an act. He would not endanger his own life, lest the church might be damaged by losing so good a man. But I trust some of you have a regard for the church's prosperity; if not, you ought to have. Let me remind you why; even selfish as we may be, we ought to care for the success of the church.

First, then, for *our own sakes*. If Divine grace enables us to live for our fellow-creatures, their decline will have a deleterious influence upon our own piety. The coldness of the church of which I am a member tends to chill me; the lukewarmness of my fellow-Christians has a tendency to pull me down; but if I belong to a church rich in grace, the tendency will be to fill my mouth with marrow and fatness, and to rejoice in the ways of the Lord.

Your *families*, too, are deeply interested in the prosperity of the church. I know that many sons and daughters do not attend chapels where their parents go; and their parents do not ask them to; they would not like them to go there; it is not suited to their taste; "it does very well for us," they say, "but it does not suit them." Then, there is something amiss there! What is good for the parent is good for the child, and what is good for the child is good for the parent. I like what Robert Hall said; he had been preaching a doctrine which he was told was suitable for old women, "If it be," he replied, "then it is suitable for everybody; and I shall preach that doctrine again." Now, if you love your families, and would see them brought into Christ's church, you must labour with God in prayer, that He would be pleased to favour Zion, that her set time may come, that her servants may take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.

For the sake of the *neighbourhood* in which you live, labour for God, seeking his grace, that your church may prosper. Wherever a minister's voice is raised in the cause of his Master, all around there ought to be a green spot; as in the desert, where water is to be found, there is an oasis, where the traveller can rest, so where a house for God is built, there ought to be a green spot where the efforts of the tract distributor and the Sabbath school teacher shall tend to keep the soil fertile.

Again. For the sake of our *nation*. We hope we love it, and although we have not gone to-day to see our mighty armaments; yet here we would pray that God would give us peace. If we are to be a prosperous nation, we shall not accomplish it by our commerce, or by the force of arms, but by our Christianity. As long as ever Christ's Church remains in this land, old England shall stand. England hath been the cradle of the Gospel, and rest assured, when the Gospel grows strong, England shall be mighty. They tell

us the flag of old England will be stained with dust. Nay, it never shall; it is nailed to the mast, not by our sailors, but our God, and He has driven in as nails thousands of Sunday scholars, and hundreds of teachers, and myriads of the fair-footed sons of Zion; who, on the mountains of Israel, proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Let the church prosper, England is safe as long as she keeps fast by the true Protestant principles of the everlasting Gospel. Her ministers never need fear, for firm as the eternal hills, strong as the mountains, shall this our happy land for ever rest. God grant the church may prosper for old England's sake.

But, most of all, we want to see the church prosper for *Christ's sake*. He to us is everything; the nation is something, but compared with Christ, the nationality is less than nothing, and vanity. But oh! when we think of all the Saviour did and suffered for us here below, surely we could desire nothing less than for Him to see of the travail of his soul, and be abundantly satisfied. When thou bendest thy knee in prayer to God to bless his church, think that thou hearest Christ groaning in Gethsemane, that thou seest Him sweat that bloody sweat when he agonized in the garden; think of him in Gabbatha, when the thorns were placed on his head, think of the shame, the spitting, the plucking off the hair! Aye, when thou dost pray for the church, think then thou dost behold the Lamb of God stretched on the cross expiring, think that thou hearest him cry, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" When thou thinkest of these things, surely thou wilt say, "Did Jesus suffer thus to win a crown, and shall I not pray that that crown may rest on his head? Did Jesus thus die that his children might be ransomed, and his elect saved, and shall I not pray that he may see that desire?" For your Master's sake then, for your Lord's sake, for his blood and agonies' sake, I beseech you pray always for Zion, pray for the peace of Jerusalem, "They shall prosper that love her."

II. WE NOTICE THE ONLY MEANS OF REVIVAL IN GOD'S CHURCH. What is it? We may hear of some great evangelist going through the land, surely he will revive the churches! We will hold a convocation of clergy, and they shall devise means for reviving the churches. Not so the Psalmist; he says, "Thou shalt arise," as if God had nothing to do but to get up, arise, and his church should rise too. There is no need to send posts hastening through the land, for when God arises, Zion begins to rise, and to be prosperous. How easy are the methods by which God accomplishes his great works! No doubt if we had had to devise means for lighting up this earth, when the darkness of the evening comes upon it, we should have recommended some fifty-thousand lights hung somewhere about, in order that the world might be illumined. But look at God's wondrous means of lighting the globe, the sun rises, the light shines, and all is done! So with God's plan of reviving his church. We devise this plan, and the other, God only arises, has mercy upon Zion, the time to favour her, the set time is come. Let us learn this; if our church is to prosper, God must do it; if we are to grow up in Christ, and see great revivings in these latter days, God must do it. Can I revive the church? can the minister? can the people? Certainly not; God alone can accomplish that. He must arise, and have mercy upon Zion. There are means which he puts into the hands of his people, and influences them to use; but still the ultimate cause and reason of a church's growth, is, that God arises and has mercy upon her. If the prosperity of a church consists in the salvation of sinners, must not God arise to save? If the building up of God's elect, be another part of spiritual prosperity, must not God arise to build up his people in their faith, for "except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it?" You shall bring me a man filled with the Holy Spirit, possessing the zeal of Peter, or the eloquence of Paul, but no prosperity will there be in God's church, unless God himself the heavenly shower bestows, and sends salvation down. What the churches want just now, is not simply men. We think we may

have our God among us, but I fear we have not so much of his presence as our forefathers used to have. I am inclined to look back upon the old times, to the days of George Whitfield, or Rowland Hill; there was then a larger influx into the church than now, and a more visible manifestation of God's Holy Spirit. We are multiplying our places of worship, doing very much for evangelizing the world; but we have not the shout of a King in our midst as we used to have. We have all our soldiers clad in steel, their arms bright and glittering, their swords of the best metal. We have a mixed, motley assemblage, heaven knows who we have, every one flies to the Bible, but what of that? We may have all the soldiers, but the great lack is, we have not got the King as we once had: I am sure, having passed through many churches, there is a sad want of the influences of the Holy Spirit; there is a lack of vital godliness and earnest piety; there is some prayer, but not prayer which thunders in heaven's ears, and brings blessings from on high. Where are the Elijah's now that can stop up the bottles of heaven? where are there now men on the earth engaged in fervent prayer? where now those who can face a multitude, and prophesy to the dry bones, knowing that when they speak, souls shall be saved? Come into our prayer meetings. In London, I hope it is not so generally, the minister is obliged to say that he has not enough people present to ring the changes, but he himself has had to pray twice, for all his preaching he cannot get the people to pray. Shame upon such a church! eternal, burning shame upon it! this evidences God is not in our midst as he was formerly. When God shall arise, his church shall arise in prayer—earnest, fervent prayer—for the time to favour Zion, yea, the set time is come.

IV. Now, beloved, let us consider the fourth point, which was **THE SIGNS WHEN GOD'S CHURCH SHALL BE BLESSED:** this is when his "servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof."

What are the "stones" of Zion? The Church is built of living stones, *i.e.*, the children of God; and it is a good sign when God's servants take pleasure in one another, and "favour the dust," not the ministers, not the deacons, *but the poor members.* In these degenerate times we do not take much pleasure in each other; there is but little Christian sociality; we meet together on Sunday afternoons, or at other times, and our conversation is something of this kind:—"Did you ever hear the Rev. Mr. so-and-so? What do you think of him?" There is a deal of gossip about the preachers of the Gospel, but a very little about the Gospel itself. Then there is a little anecdote circulated about this man, and the other; a new batch of lies invented, the relaters of them forgetting there is a little passage in the Word of God something about "all liars," and I am afraid that some will come into condemnation at the last, for their inventions about this minister and the other. But it is a happy sign when the members meet together in a cordial spirit, and begin to talk of what the Saviour did and suffered here below, and of Jesus' charming name, which has a sweeter sound than music, when Christians begin to speak often one to another; and to all such matters God himself turns eavesdropper to his children. He hearkens and hears, and a book of remembrance is made. He turns reporter, and reports the conversation of "them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." We shall be sure the church is prospering when all the members love each other, and the poorer ones are not overlooked. Bear me witness, there are some chapels where a Christian brother and sister are divided by that rail in the centre; they have sat there some years, and do not know each other's names; they did shew each other a hymn book one day when one came too late; but they have never shaken hands; they are members of the same church, one may be poor and starving, but the other knows nothing about it, because he does not "favour the dust thereof." But, when God arises, and has mercy upon Zion, then his people can say:—

"Is there a foe before whose face
I fear thy cause to plead?
Is there a lamb among thy flock
I would disdain to feed?"

It is a good sign for a church when its members "take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof."

The next translation we will give of this is, the "stones" are the *doctrines of the Bible*. By the term "doctrines" I do not mean some three or four particular points, but in God's Word doctrines are the stones which build up the church. In these days it is usual to hear people say, "Oh! it is no matter what you are; doctrines are of no importance; you may be this or that, you will go to heaven all the same." It strikes me God has given us a Bible, and common sense, and judgment, and if we foolishly say, "it does not matter," we have sinned against God. It is important we should be right in doctrine, though not so important as that we should be right in heart. The tendency of this age is what is called "charity." I hold that charity is not for us to give up our sentiments, but for each of us to preach them boldly. Oh! the charity of this age; people want us to get rid of our angular points, "Do not say anything to offend such-and-such an individual." Nonsense! What matter whether we offend or no; if it is God's truth, are we, for fear of sinful man, to restrain and alter his great truths? Charity is for me to speak out boldly my views, and for my brother of an opposite opinion to do the same, and yet I will love him, if he holds the Head, Christ Jesus; but it is no charity to put a gag on us all. There is a great evil in the universal charity of the present day. It is Satan transforming himself into an angel of light; he sees us divided into different squadrons, and he says, "*Put down your flags; no sectarianism;*" *no religion* he means. But let us all keep to our own regiments, and fight manfully for them, yet combining against the common enemy. Let us hold God's truth, but not with a slippery hand. If a doctrine be true, let us hold it fast, though the earth shake or the heavens fall. Christian men! where there is a love for God's truth, God will bless his church; but because this is a time serving age; because we have not come out plainly with the angular points of the Gospel; with those things which distinguish us from each other; because we have charitable deference to each other's views, and have not boldly declared the great truths of his Word; this is the reason God has deserted us.

You say, "I do not see so much in doctrines after all." Then you will not see much prosperity. I love what I think to be true so much, that I would fight for a grain of dust of it, not for the "stone" only, but for the "dust" of it. I hold we ought not to say a truth is non-essential; it may be non-essential to salvation, but it is not non-essential. Why you might as well take one of the jewels out of the queen's crown, and say it is non-essential, she will be a queen all the same. What! tell God a doctrine is non-essential? Oh? gracious Spirit, and hast thou written what is non-essential? Hast thou given me a book respecting which I say, My father and mother believed so-and-so, it is not necessary for me to see if it is true? God has given me a judgment, am I to take it easy and follow in the wake of other people, thinking I shall be sure to be right, and God will never ask me what I was? Easy kind of religion this! Aye, it was not so in the days of good old John Bunyan and Berridge, they sang a far different song. But now people are saying, "I can hear so-and-so, and so-and-so," people that contradict one another. We cannot but think little of a congregation, who can hear opposite opinions, and yet believe both to be correct. We cannot expect much growth unless you hold the truth and "take pleasure in the stones, and favour the dust thereof," every atom of it.

Once again. The stones of Christ's Church are the *ordinances* of it, and God's people ought to take care that they love her "stones," and favour her "dust;" for those two divine institutions, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, there ought to be an intense love in the hearts of God's people, that they may be kept from the innovations of man, and a holding to the practise of them as handed down to us from apostolic times. Let us always love what God has

given us, it may be thought old and formal, yet never let it go; for then will God build up the ruined walls of Zion.

I may mention also the *ministry of his Word and the prayer meeting*—it is a good sign of the church's prosperity when the latter is well attended. A friend of mine said the other evening, "I shall go to the lecture to-night, but did not go on another occasion for it was only a prayer meeting." Why that is the best service in the week. What is to become of our minister in the other services, if you do not pray for him? And yet many good Christians never think of meeting for prayer, of course not, *it is only a prayer meeting*; leave that to the old members, those that always begin about "the unthinking horse rushing into the battle," and the service becomes a dry, dull one, and they retire from the prayer meeting little benefited by the service; that is not real prayer, not the breathing of heart with heart, soul with soul; not the placing of shoulder against shoulder, and foot to foot, and taking heaven by storm. A prayer meeting ought to be superior to a lecture; and there should be at least all the members met together to pray." "Oh!" you say, "it is only a prayer meeting," and that is the "dust; aye, but recollect it is a good thing when God's people "take pleasure in the stones, and favour the dust thereof," the little services as well as the great services. "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof."

And now, dear friends, you may not agree with me, as to my ideas of a church's prosperity, but there must be one thing you have observed, as the great want of the churches in the present day; that is the need of more prayer, more firm attachment to the walls of Zion, and greater love to the doctrines of the Bible; and I beseech you be henceforth doubly in earnest in seeking for God's Spirit, to enable you to cling heart and soul to every "stone" of God's temple, and let nothing be given up to please men:—cleave fast to what God has ordained, and He will prosper you.

AN EXPOSITION ON MATTHEW XIX. 13—27.

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,

Very probably the children referred to in verses 13 and 14 were brought by their parents. Their mothers having listened to the voice of Jesus, and felt the grace that poured from his lips, desired that his hands might be placed on their heads, that his arms might be thrown around them, and that by his prayers they might become his followers, and being trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, might be useful in their generation. It is to be believed that this prayer of Jesus Christ was heard; for we read of Ignatius, that he was one of those upon whom Jesus Christ laid his hands, and he was one of the most eminent of the early saints. We doubt not that this heavenly confirmation which our Saviour Jesus Christ gave to these children was efficacious for their salvation; for the prayer which he put up was doubtless heard in heaven, and when he laid his hands on them it was to some purpose. Not like that idle confirmation of the bishop, when he layeth on hands, and wilfully and deliberately lieth before God, and saith that those girls and those boys are regenerated, when they are not. Not like that most idle, wicked, and blasphemous ceremony of confirmation practised in the Church of England. May God grant it soon may cease! But something that is real, something that is good—the laying on of the hands of Jesus, whereby grace was abundantly conferred, and the children undoubtedly saved. "He laid his hands on them, and departed thence."

Here are children first. Now notice young men next. "Behold, one came and said unto him, good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I

may have eternal life?" You see, he started wrongly, for we can do no good thing to inherit eternal life. Eternal life comes not by doing, but by believing. Salvation is not purchased by working; but "unto him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly," unto him grace is given. "Good Master," said this man, "what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God;" and you do not believe me to be a God. You think me to be a Good Master, and that is all. If I am good, then I am God; therefore hear me, for I speak authoritatively, as the God of heaven and earth. "But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." But if any one would enter into life in that way, he must keep them perfectly. There is such a thing as being saved by the law; that is to say, if there is such a thing as keeping the law perfectly. If we could obey the law without a sin, then we might be saved by it; or rather, then we should have no need of being saved at all, for then we should not have fallen. But since "we have erred and strayed from his ways like lost sheep," if we were never to stray again, future keepings of the law could not atone for the past. However clean I may walk in this world, I cannot by my clean walking take away the blots and blurs that are upon my character even now. However upright I may behave, yet I cannot by any means through future good works ransom myself from the penalty of past sins. Old debts are not to be discharged simply by not running any further into debt; the debts must be paid that are already incurred; and since good works cannot pay them, they become utterly ineffectual in the matter of salvation; but we must take Christ to suffer in our stead, and so to pay our debts, and then after that to fulfil the whole law perfectly for us, so that we, being clothed in righteousness and washed in blood, may stand as complete as if we had been ourselves perfect, and had in our own persons kept the righteous law of God.

But since this poor man believed in salvation by the law, Christ gave him enough of it. "He saith unto him, Which" of the commandments? "Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" and he was going on to say all the rest of them, but the young man was impatient; he did not like to be told such things as those. What, does the man tell me to do no murder? I do murder? I am a most respectable gentleman, and never thought of such a thing. Does he tell me I am not to steal and not to bear false witness? I am an honourable and upright man in all these matters. So he stopped Christ short, and said, If that is the case it is nothing at all, "for all these things"—what a mouthful he makes of them!—"all these things I have kept from my youth up;" and then with matchless self-complacency he asks, "What lack I yet?" I think I have done all you have said; but I believe I have stopped you, sir, in the middle of your sentence: "What lack I yet?" Jesus did not answer him, but put a question to him, showing him the secret evil of his heart—showing him that he loved the world rather than God—that his affections were set on the things of this world, rather than those of heaven. "Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect"—there is one little thing, and how beautifully he put it! He knew that this young man was an avaricious man, and so he put it so—"go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." Oh, how he put his hands deep into his pockets then! How he clutched his purse, and began to see that he had not lost any of his money! Oh, he would have parted with anything else, rather than his money. Now he was touched to the quick. It was "Good Master" before: but we never hear that he called Jesus "Good Master" afterwards. Down he sent the lancet, right deep into his wound. Then he turned away—and mark how he turned away: "when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions."

That had touched him. Those possessions were inside his heart; and when Jesus touched him there, then he "went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven." The commentators have tried to fritter away the meaning of that passage, by telling you there was a certain cable called a needle, and a certain rope called a camel. But the Bible says, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle"—and when it says a camel, it does not mean a rope; and when it says a needle, it does not mean a cable, nor any such thing—it means a camel, and it means a needle. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Ah, says one, that is not true, for is it not impossible? My friend, do we not continually use parables, which we never mean to be taken in a positive, literal sense, but only conveying the idea of the greatest possible difficulty? It is one of the hardest things in all the world for a rich man to be saved: that is what Jesus Christ said. You are always in the habit of saying in your daily conversation, when anything is very hard, You might as well get a camel through the eye of a needle as do that; so I will use your own proverb. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." That is to say, it is quite impossible of itself; but God, who is able to do anything, can make it go through, for he can either make the needle's eye bigger, or make the camel smaller; and that is how he does with the rich man: he either magnifies his grace, when he saves him, or else he takes away some of that natural pride which perhaps might exist in him, by making him a small, poor man, so that he says, "This poor man crieth"; and then the Lord is able to save him.

I must remark here how very plainly Christ Jesus spoke. Suppose I had said that, my friends; suppose I had said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God"; why, they would have put it in the newspapers, and gone and scandalized me ever, where for daring to say such a thing as that. But if this is not as rough a simile as ever you heard, I do not know what is.

And he said something like it once before, when he said, "Ye blind guides, ye strain at a gnat and swallow a camel." If I had made such a remark as that, the people would have said, Oh, he told us that a man swallowed a camel." People do not take what is said in its connection, but they take a little bit out of its connection, and say, Why he said so and so; he could not prove that. "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have wept unto you, and ye have not lamented: but wisdom is justified of all her children." We speak as God enables us, and we care not exactly in what style we deliver his message: God at last shall vindicate us, if we have but had a right motive, and sought his honour and glory. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?" For they had a notion that all rich people would be saved, and none that were poor. The Rabbis had fostered this opinion amongst the Jews. "But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them"—and now he explained what he meant; you should take the connection always—"With man this is impossible"—you cannot get a camel through the eye of a needle—"but with God all things are possible": and therefore it is possible for him to save a rich man. It is possible that he may forsake the pomps and vanities of this present evil world; it is possible that the gay company, that the light frothings of amusement in high circles may yet be forsaken; it is possible that that constant round of doing nothing, which too often wastes away the very heart of men in the higher circles, may yet be removed. It is possible. Though impossible with men, this is possible with God, who can do whatsoever he pleaseth, not only in the armies of heaven, but also among the creatures of this lower world.

THE DISCIPLES IN DANGER.

“And he went up unto them into the ship, and the wind ceased; and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.”—Mark vi. 51.

It is no uncommon thing for Christians to fancy that they have strong faith in God, and to take to themselves the credit of such confidence by acknowledging it to others, so long as they think themselves secure, and their paths remain untroubled by adversity, undisturbed by dangers. But distress often brings doubt; and difficulties, which make our condition one in which there is greater need for confidence in an Almighty arm to deliver us, often dazzle our faith, and draw our eyes from the great Source of all strength to our own weak selves and feeble resources. And it is only when we have experienced some wonderful deliverance, or some special manifestation of God's providence, that we find our faith again in exercise, reduced by the trial, but refined and established, and more likely to sustain us in future days of adversity.

It was so with the disciples of Jesus, whom he constrained “to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.” When the ship was in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves and in danger, the wind being contrary, the Saviour appeared unto them in the fourth watch of the night, but they knew him not; they were “tolling in rowing”—using their own efforts to rescue themselves, which, as far as they went were right and plausible; but God was not in all their thoughts, for when they saw their Lord walking on the sea, they recognised him not, but “were troubled, saying It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.” And they were likewise exceedingly, unbelieving, for if they had reposed confidence in him, they would have felt assured that he was able to calm the tempest; and as they had before seen his wonderful works, when Jesus went up unto them into the ship, and the wind ceased, they would not have shown that surprise and amazement beyond measure which they manifested. But “their heart was hardened,” and their wonder was, that he had wrought a miracle which they doubted his ability to achieve, “for they considered not the miracle of the loaves.”

Now when Jesus entered the ship, having stilled the tempest, and, as we may suppose, having administered a little of that kind reproof which he knew so well how to give, and which told with such wonderful power upon the consciences of his hearers; they that were in the ship—and we may imagine in their fore front poor Peter, who had thought he could walk upon the water by his Master's side, but whose faith failed him when he saw the boisterous waves—they that were in the ship, brought to themselves, shown their want of confidence in their Lord, and their forgetfulness of his divine power, came forth with melted hearts overflowing with gratitude to worship him, and to disclose the conviction of their inmost souls—“Of a truth thou art the Son of God.”

There is, then, in Christians, a tendency to doubt, when in trouble, the Divine power to sustain and deliver them. And this is often shown in the case of those who, when in prosperous circumstances, seem to possess a larger portion of faith and courage than Christians in general, and who make much ado of their attachment to the cause of God. There is an example in Peter, whose language at one time was, “Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.” Yes, he would go with Christ to prison and to death, so long as there was no danger; but when the day of fierce persecution appears, and his Master is betrayed, and led away to the high priest, with whom were assembled “all the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,” we find Peter following him *afar* off; his courage is cooling; and if we go with him a little farther, to the place where his love is about to be tested, and where he is accused of being connected with Jesus of Nazareth, we hear the very person who a short time since said, “If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise,” declaring with oaths and curses that he never knew the man. Such is the weakness of frail humanity. And this infirmity has cou-

tinued to the present time. We know it by experience, and have to lament, like David, that it belongeth to us. It needs no great exertion to trust in God while our prosperity continues, and things present a favourable aspect; but let adversity overtake us, affliction lay us low, and dark clouds gather over our path, and how then do we stand? Oh! how prone are we to be fearful and of little faith, to judge of God by feeble sense, instead of trusting him for his grace; and to lean to our own understandings, rather than to trust in the Lord with our whole hearts. We are often too much like Peter, who looked upon the troubled sea, and listened to the howling tempest, instead of confining his attention to Jesus who stood by him, and who was able to support his feet from falling if he had trusted in him.

And Christians in trouble often altogether lose sight of a Divine power, and look only to themselves for deliverance. Although God has given us great and precious promises, which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus, and which shall verily be fulfilled to the faithful, yet when we are in difficulties or affliction, we for a time seem to lose sight of them all, and dwelling upon our fancied perplexed circumstances, our faith fails us, we begin to be depressed in our spirits, and dreaming of future evils which we add to the present, we increase our miseries, and are almost inclined to murmur against the workings of God's good providence. And it is not until we are brought properly to know ourselves, and to look beyond ourselves, and to trust in him who has said, "call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me," that the dark clouds begin to disperse, the sunshine of prosperity again beams upon our path, and we can go on our way rejoicing.

But we see, in the last place, the good results of affliction to the Christian. God cleanses his children by bringing them through fiery trials, and greatly increases their virtues. By being brought low, the Christian is stripped of any pride that may have been lurking in his bosom; he sees the vanity of the world and all its concerns; learns his dependence upon a divine power, and has frequent opportunities for intercourse with God. His faith is confirmed, his prayers become more earnest, and as he comes forth refined from the furnace, he says, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I have kept thy word." He learns that behind a frowning providence, God hides a smiling face; that he is ever the same, for his mercy endureth for ever. He looks more to the promises, and draws from them greater consolation and sweetness, knowing that he is faithful who has promised, and that "all things work together for good to them that love God."

Broadlanes, near Bilston.

DAVID BAILEY.

THE LOVING LIFE.

BY THE REV. R. WHYTEHEAD, M.A.

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death."—1 John iii. 14.

"We know that we have passed from death unto life." Then *all*, by nature, are in the land of death. We pass over from one territory to the other, by our *Regeneration*. And when once the border is crossed, we shall never return. So our Lord declares: "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." We 'have eternal life' already, in its

budding, rudimentary state. Just as the leaves, flowers, and fruits of the summer are contained in the root of the plant in winter. They are really there, though concealed by the bark and bud. So "our life is *hid* with Christ in God." We have a spring of life in him, and a connection with that spring in ourselves; so that our life is dependent upon, and indissolubly united with his. "We know that he abideth in us." "We dwell in him, and he in us."

"Because we love the brethren." This is one of the simplest, and yet the strongest marks and tests of our interest in Christ—*love*. We may be puzzled and perplexed by the direct enquiry, "Do I love the Lord Jesus Christ?" but we have no need to be perplexed with the other enquiry, "Do I love the *brethren*?" We have not seen Christ; this makes it more difficult to feel love, even where love exists. Love to an unseen object, is something very different from love to "that which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled."

We cannot live unless we love. We cannot be in the region of life, and joy, and peace, except we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and, believing, love him. But it is another thing to be assured that we do love. Here, the Lord meets our infirmity with his grace, and puts his members as the representatives of himself. "We love the brethren," those that are the children of God by faith in Christ. We love them because they are brethren

in Christ, and evidently belong to him. We love them, "not in word neither in tongue" only, "but in deed and in truth." There is a union of heart, which produces an union in action, a ready help, a free access, a cordial co-operation, a warm and generous benevolence. Covetousness, selfishness, narrowness of heart, closeness of hand, looking to mine and thine too carefully; all these things indicate a want of love. They are alarming symptoms. "He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death."

"Come, children, let us go!
Our Father is our guide;
And when the way grows steep and dark,
He journeys at our side.
Our spirits he would cheer,
The sunshine of his love
Revives and helps us as we rove,
Ah, blest our lot e'en here!

"Come, children, let us go!
We travel hand in hand;
Each in his brother finds his joy
In this wild stranger land.
As children let us be,
Nor by the way fall out,
The angels guard us round about
And help us brotherly."
TESTERGES (in "Lyra Germanica.")

HARVEST HOME.

BY THE REV. JAMES HAMILTON, D.D.

"Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."—1 Cor. vi. 9.

We see the earnest even now. He that sows to the flesh, he who spends his property or his talents in self-indulgence, in idolatrous vanities, in that cruel luxury which is deaf to the cry of misery, in gratifying the coarser appetites and passions of this fallen nature, of the flesh he reaps corruption. His harvest is a heart constantly contracting. His harvest is often a shortened life or a shattered intellect: a body prematurely blighted and a mind that loses susceptibilities and powers which once lost can never come again. His harvest is more and more of that corruption which he sows, sin added to sin, the habit of evil strengthening, a growing remoteness from virtue and happiness, because a growing proneness to evil, and a grow-

ing powerlessness against temptation.

And he that soweth to the Spirit, even before he reaps "life everlasting," see how rich is his intermediate recompense! From that dependent spirit of his and from those devotional habits, see how large is his harvest of peace and serenity! Amidst tumult and agitation see how fixed is his heart, trusting in the Lord: and amidst the flaming shower of each day's temptations, burning into the souls of many, and leaving dark scars on the conscience, see how on his panoply of faith the sparks die out undecieved and harmless! From that God-fearing spirit of his, see how large is the harvest of social respect and personal security! what a fund of confidence and honour has accumu-

lated from those early acts of self-denial, or from one deed of courageous honesty! what a fortune has been founded on a single commandment tenaciously remembered and constantly observed; and from that benevolent spirit of his, see how large is his harvest of love and gratitude! What a music is in his name, what a continual comfort in his presence! See how all hearts open towards his, as instinctively as they close on the approach of others; and see how he inherits the earth, a meek but universal monarch carrying captive the whole community, and reigning by love in souls which swords and sceptres fail to reach, and which even genius cannot conquer!

But this is only a faint foreshadowing of that final and exhaustless harvest which is to follow this earthly seed-time; for although salvation is all of grace; yet, compatibly with its entire gratuitousness, we know that in this life he who gives grace for grace, is pleased to acknowledge the services of his believing people, for the sake of that Saviour in whose strength they are wrought, and to whose joy their recompense adds; and if in this life why not also in the life to come? and in somewhat the same sense as reaping is the reward of sowing, we are taught that gracious habits, formed and cherished on earth, shall find their consummation in the still higher and holier products of eternity—whilst the self-denial implied in their culture will be infinitely over-balanced and requited in the joys of the life everlasting.

Think of this, you that are well-nigh weary of well-doing; you that stand alone in a godless household, and who sometimes grow disheartened amidst the coldness, and the opposition, and the jeering; you who have enlisted under Christ's banner, but who, if you have not actually forsaken house and lands for his sake, have at

least felt constrained to let pass many a golden opportunity:—you who have been for years watching for a soul, if haply you might win it, and who still see it as far from the kingdom as ever:—you who have long been contending with a wicked temper, or an unholy passion, and who dare not say that you have gained any sensible advantage over it; oh, be not weary! Think of the joy of harvest. Think of the day when you shall rest from your labours, and these works shall follow you. Think of the day, the humbling, affecting, overwhelming day, when the cup of cold water will reappear as an ingredient in the everlasting glory. Be not weary in well-doing, for in due season you shall reap if you faint not.

Yet be not deceived. God is not mocked. He that soweth to the flesh shall have his harvest also. Darnel grows as well as wheat, and thistles as well as barley. The awards of eternity are not the fictions of arbitrary power, but they are the legitimate products, the prolongations, and out-workings of the present; a harvest corresponding to the seed-time: so righteous, so congruous under the government of a just God, so inevitable that the sinner feels, if he does not confess, that the sentence is just. Reader, be not deceived. Let not that day, that harvest-day of sorrow, come on you as a thief—that day when he who showed judgment without mercy shall receive judgment without mercy—that day when he who wrought abomination and made a lie, shall find himself excluded from those pearly gates through which nothing enters that defileth, that day when he who used to say to God, "Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways," shall hear God say to him, "Depart from me ye workers of iniquity; I never knew you."

JESUS IN JORDAN.

BY THE REV. G. A. ROGERS, A.M.

"Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."—Matt. iii. 15.

II.—THE EXEMPLAR.

JORDAN'S streams are now more honoured than when the priest's feet touched them, Elijah's mantle divi-

ded them, or Naaman dipped himself in them.

The forerunner of Jesus appears at

Jordan; planting his feet in its waters, he opens his divine mission and declares: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness"; and then appears "the Word" of which that voice spake. He, too, came to be baptized, not unto repentance, for he needed none. The Baptist was amazed to see him descend into the flowing stream, and, "he forbade him." John knew not fully the mysteries of redeeming love. Wonders of grace were to be displayed at Jordan, which John had never anticipated. "To fulfil righteousness," Jesus unrobed himself of heaven's glory, and now appeared in Jordan's streams. (Matt. iii. 15.)

He becomes *visibly*, before men and angels, in the face of heaven; the baptized head of a baptized body. His people join themselves visibly to him by the same hallowed rite. He is conformed in all things to his brethren, and they are conformed to him. How amazing was this his stoop of humility! How sweet is the thought that both *visibly* and *invisibly*, Christ and his people are one.

Reader, take heed and beware, lest the Enemy deceive you. As he was a Jew who was one inwardly; and as true circumcision was that of the heart—in the spirit, and not in the letter—so he only is one with Christ, who is one inwardly, whose baptism by water is but the sign of the baptism by the Holy Ghost "of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter." Spiritual and invisible union with Jesus alone insures salvation through his covenant headship.

Rising from Jordan's waters he *prayed*. His words are not recorded; perhaps they were not heard by man. But prayer at such a season, on such an occasion, was a public act, and full of meaning. Oft, and long, was he wont to pray. But seldom was he *seen* to pray. Alone, in Olivet's dark solitude, he would spend whole nights in prayer. Withdrawn even from his disciples, in Gethsemane's garden, he wrestled and agonised in prayer. Twice, indeed, was his voice of prayer heard in public; once at the grave of Lazarus, and once at Jerusalem at the feast. But on both occasions he spake *aloud*, that others might believe that his Father heard and answered

him. (See John xi. 42; xii. 30.) But now he appears, for the first time, as *the great interceding Head of his body* the Church. As our "advocate with the Father," he prays. This baptism was a public act; his prayer was public. Its acceptance by the Father *public* too. Behold then, in *his* acceptance the acceptance of all his people in him! Their prayers ascend through the channel which his intercession then made. The feeblest breathings of the praying soul penetrate heaven by this consecrated way. No prayer upborne by his intercession, can ever be rejected. "Whatsoever we now ask, believing," is already granted. The prayer of faith travels to the mercy-seat, in the footprints of Jesus.

His prayer ascended, pierced the heavens, and burst open the gates of glory! Down through this new-made channel, came streaming forth the smiles of the Father. No longer were the gates of Paradise closed, and guarded by flaming cherubim. The tree of life was now approached by a new and living way. "Heaven was opened, and the angels of God ascended and descended upon the Son of Man." Never was heaven closed to Him, but as he "bore the sin of many." But now, as "fulfilling all righteousness," and "making intercession for the transgressors," the bars of heaven roll back, and the gates of Paradise are opened unto him.

Reader, would you travel towards an opened heaven? See that you tread in the footprints of Jesus! See that his obedience, his death, his intercession, is for you. Elisha caught the mantle of Elijah, and with it cleft asunder the waters of Jordan, and passed over dryshod. You must grasp by the hand of faith the mantle of Jesus, for with it only enrobing your soul, will you find a pathway to heaven. You must make Christ your refuge—you must be united to him by the Holy Spirit—you must be one with him—if you wish heaven to be an opened heaven to you. Happy they who are one with Him! Heaven opened to the Head, can never be closed to the members of the body!

THE DYING WIFE.*

BY MRS. HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

CRIPPS had now filled a pipe with tobacco of the most villanous character, with which incense he was perfuming the little apartment.

"Laws, Massa, dat ar smoke an't good for Missis," said Tiff. "She done been sick to her stomach all day."

"Oh, let him smoke! I like to have him enjoy himself," said the indulgent wife. "But, Fanny, you had better go to bed, dear. Come here and kiss me, child; good night—good night!"

The mother held on to her long, and looked at her wishfully; and when she had turned to go, she drew her back, and kissed her again, and said, "Good night, dear child, good night!"

Fanny climbed up a ladder in one corner of the room, through a square hole, to the loft above.

"I say," said Cripps, taking his pipe out of his mouth and looking at Tiff, who was busy washing the dishes, "I say, it's kind of peculiar that gal keeps sick so. Seemed to have good constitution when I married her. I'm thinking," said he, without noticing the gathering wrath in Tiff's face, "I'm a thinking whether steaming wouldn't do her good. Now I got a most dreadful cold when I was up at Raleigh—thought I should have given up; and there was a steam doctor there. Had a little kind of machine, with kettle and pipes; and he put me in a bed, put in the pipes, and set it a going. I thought, my soul, I should have been floated off; but it carried off the cold complete. I'm thinking if something of that kind wouldn't be good for Miss Cripps."

"Laws, Massa, don't go for to trying it on her. She is never no better for dese yer things you do for her."

"Now," said Cripps, not appearing to notice the interruption, "these yer stove-pipes, and the tea-kettle—I shouldn't wonder if we could get up a steam with them!"

"It's my private 'pinion, if you do, she'll be sailing out of the world," said Tiff. "What's one mau's meat is another man's pisin," my old mis's used to say. Very best thing you can do for her is to let her alone. Dat ar is my 'pinion."

"John," said the little woman, after a few minutes, "I wish you'd come here, and sit on the bed."

There was something positive, and almost authoritative, in the manner in which this was said, which struck John as so unusual, that he came with a bewildered air, sat down, and gazed at her with his mouth wide open.

"I'm so glad you've come home, because I have had things that I've wanted to say to you! I've been lying here thinking about it, and I've been turning it over in my mind. I'm going to die soon, I know."

"Ah! bah! Don't be bathering a fellow with any of your hysterics!"

"John, John! it is'n't hysterics! Look at me! Look at my hand! Look at my face! I am so weak, and sometimes I have such coughing spells, and every time it seems to me as if I should die. But it ain't to trouble you that I talk. I don't care about myself, but I don't want the children to grow up and be like what we've been. You have a great many contrivances; do, pray, contrive to have them taught to read, and make something of them in the world."

"Bah! what's the use? I never learnt to read, and I'm as good a fellow as I want. Why, there's plenty of men round here making their money

* All who have read Mrs. Stowe's world-renowned and heart-inspiring "Uncle Tom" (and who has not?) will learn with delight that she has written another anti-slavery story, which will be published in a short time, both in this country and in the United States. The *New York Tribune*, edited by the Hon. Horace Greely, one of the most honest and fearless of the anti-slavery journalists of America, contains an advance publication of a chapter from the new work. The chapter is entitled "Old Tiff," and, judging from this specimen, the book is not likely to be inferior to "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in genuine humour, womanly pathos, and all those admirable attributes which distinguish Mrs. Stowe's genius.

every year that can't read or write a word. Old Hubbell, there, up on the Shad plantation, has hauled in money, hand over hand, and he always signs his mark. Got nine sons—can't a soul of them read or write more than I. I tell you there's nothing ever comes of this yer larning. It's all a sell—a regular Yankee hoax! I've always got cheated by them tarnation reading, writing Yankees, whenever I've traded with 'em. What's the good, I want to know? You was teach'd how to read when you was young—much good it's ever done you!"

"Sure enough! Sick day and night, moving about from place to place, sick baby crying, and not knowing what to do for it no more than a child! Oh, I hope Fanny will learn something! It seems to me, if there was some school for my children to go to, or some church, or something—now, if *there* is any such place as heaven, I should like to have them get to it."

"Ah! bah! Don't bother about that! When we get keeled up, that will be the last of us! Come, come, don't plague a fellow with any such talk! I'm tired, and I'm going to sleep." And the man, divesting himself of his overcoat, threw himself on the bed, and was soon snoring heavily in profound slumber.

Tiff, who had been trotting the baby by the fire, now came softly to the bedside and sat down.

"Miss Sue," he said, "it's no 'count talking to him! I don't mean nothing dis'spectful, Miss Sue, but de fact is, dem dat is'n't born gentlemen can't be 'spected for to see through dese yer things like us of de old families. Law, missis, don't you worry! Now, jest leave this yer matter to old Tiff. Dere never wasn't anything 'tiff couldn't do if he tried. He! he! he! Miss Fanny, she done got de letters right smart; and I know I'll come it round mas'r and make him buy de books for her. I'll tell you what's come into my head to-day. There's a young lady come to de big plantation, up dere, who's been to New York, getting edicated, and I's going for to ask her about dese yer things, and about de chil'en's going to

church, and dese yer things. Why, preaching you know, is 'mazin' unsartin round here; but I'll keep on de look out, and do de best I can. Why, Lord, Miss Sue, I's bound for the land of Canaan myself, the best way I ken; and I's sartin I shant go without taking the chil'en along with me. Ho! ho! ho! Dat's what I shan't. De chil'en will have to be with Tiff, and Tiff will have to be with the chil'en, wherever dey is. Dat's it. He! he! he!"

"Tiff," said the young woman, her large blue eyes looking at him, "I have heard of the Bible. Have you ever seen one, Tiff?"

"Oh, yes, honey, dar was a big Bible that your ma brought in the family when she married; but dat ar was tore up to make wadding for de guns, one thing or another, and dey never got no more. But I's been very 'serving, and kept my ears open in a camp meeting, and such places, and I's learnt right smart of de things that's in it."

"Now, Tiff, can you say anything?" said she, fixing her large, troubled eyes on him.

"Well, honey, dere's one thing the man said at de last camp meeting. He preached 'bout it, and I couldn't make out a word he said, 'cause I an't smart about preaching like I be about most things. But he said dis yer so often that I couldn't help remember it. Says he, it was dish yer way: 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'"

"Rest, rest, rest," said the woman thoughtfully, and drawing a long sigh, "Oh, how much I want it! Did he say *that* was in the Bible?"

"Yes, he said so; and I 'spects, by all he said, it's the Good Man above dat says it. It always makes me feel better to think on it. It 'peared like it was jist what I was wanting to hear."

"And I, too," she said, turning her head wearily, and closing her eyes. "Tiff," she said, opening them, "where I'm going maybe I shall meet the one who said that, and I'll ask him about it. Don't talk to me moro now, I'm getting sleepy. I thought I was better a little while after he came home, but

I'm more tired yet. Put the baby in my arms—I like the feeling of it. There, there; now give me rest—please do!" and she sank into a deep and quiet slumber.

Tiff softly covered the fire, and sat down by the bed, watching the flickering shadows as they danced upward on the wall, listening to the heavy sighs of the pine trees, and the hard breathing of the sleeping man. Sometimes he nodded sleepily, and then, recovering, rose, and took a turn to awaken himself. A shadowy sense of fear fell upon him; not that he apprehended anything, for he regarded the words of his mistress only as the forebodings of a wearied invalid. The idea that she

could actually die, and go anywhere, without him to take care of her, seemed never to have occurred to him. About midnight, as if a spirit had lain its hand upon him, his eyes flew wide open with a sudden start. Her thin, cold hand was lying on his; her eyes, large and blue, shone with a singular and spiritual radiance.

"Tiff," she gasped, speaking with difficulty, "I've seen the one that said *that*, and it's all true, too! and I've seen all why I've suffered so much. He—He—He is going to take me! Tell the children about Him!" There was a fluttering sigh, a slight shiver, and the lids fell over the eyes for ever.

SPIRITUAL DISSOLVING VIEWS.

BY THE REV. JOHN COX, LATE OF WOOLWICH.

Most persons have at some time or other seen dissolving views. They were first introduced at the Polytechnic Institution, and excited considerable attention. Since then, they have been employed to instruct the young, and to interest children in Christian Missions, by presenting views of distant lands, picturing scenes of idolatrous worship, and portraying the results of missionary enterprise. Like most other useful and ingenious things, this invention has been enlisted in the service of folly. Ridiculous and almost sinful things have been brought before the eyes of young people, instead of something calculated to instruct and benefit.

To a short series of dissolving views of a different character to any mentioned I now invite attention. They relate to subjects most important, and should be deeply interesting to all.

The first scene I would present to the mind of the reader is a dreary wilderness. In one direction vast plains of sand are stretched out as far as the eye can trace; in another, lofty mountains without trees or verdure, rise frowning to the skies. Here and there a few stunted trees and small plants may be seen, and a little

grass struggles for existence in the hollows where torrents lately ran.

Over this dreary scene a dark cloud hangs frowningly, and foretells a terrible storm. Already the sand seems to heave into billows. Alas for the traveller over this terrible waste. But see the dark cloud begins to roll away, a pleasing light gradually increases, and in the midst of that vast ocean of sand, a change is going on. What is that we see now? It is just what the weary traveller over the desert often longs to find, and which, when found, brings life to his fainting frame. It is that which, if abundant, would soon change the desert into a fruitful field. A fountain has sprung up; see how it glitters in the sun, which now shines forth in all its glory, where the dark cloud lately hung. We seem to hear the gurgling of that beautiful spring, and almost long to bathe our brows in the brook which already is flowing joyously on its way.

Behold the beasts of the wilderness are come to quench their thirst; around the spring grass and trees are growing, and the birds are warbling a song of praise among the branches. The fountain has produced an oasis in the desert, and that oasis is extending and becoming more and more beau-

tiful. But as we gaze, another change gradually comes over the lovely prospect. What! is this beautiful oasis only a delusion after all? Nay, a brighter, far brighter scene comes next. The oasis is changed into a Paradise, a garden of delights. How beautiful its verdure, how rich its fruits! What noble fountains do we behold; what harmonious music do we now hear; what glory lights up the whole! How blessed are those who dwell amidst this loveliness, and walk in the light of such glory!

Dear reader, do you know what all this means? You have heard and read about it many times; you have seen part of what it represents take place, and, perhaps, you have been the subject thereof; if not, God grant that very soon you may be:

The dreary wilderness sets forth man's state by nature. The sands describe the heart's barrenness, and the sterile mountains its pride. The stunted trees and dying grass represent man's boasted goodness; and the dried up water courses, quenched convictions; while the dark cloud portrays the righteous wrath of God which overhangs and follows sin-loving and impenitent souls, and which will one day burst upon their heads, unless a great change takes place. Take one of the many descriptions God gives in his Holy Word of man's state by nature: "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived; serving divers lusts and pleasures; living in malice and envy; hateful and hating one another," Titus iii. 3.

Mark, the apostle Paul includes himself in this description, and it sets forth truly what all our hearts are capable of doing, and what the conduct of many has been.

But what is there which, answering to the fountain in the wilderness, can change this sinful nature, and produce the fruits of righteousness? It is not man's own strength and goodness, for he is "without strength and ungodly." This fountain is no artesian well, wrought by human skill; no invention of popes or priests, nor even any outward ordinance instituted by

God himself. The name of this fountain is "*regeneration*." Like as the natural springs rise out of the earth, and then flow over, fertilize, and beautify its surface, so with this living water; it springs up in man's heart, first changes that, and then overspreads his character. But the springs which burst from the hill sides, and water the vallies, come *first* from heaven; they do not rise from the granite rocks beneath. So also is it with regenerating grace. "A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven." Read over again the description given of man's condition, Titus iii. 3, and then read what follows, and if you never wondered before, wonder now. "*But after that*, the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour," Titus iii. 3-7. Every spiritual oasis in this moral wilderness is produced by this divine process, and by this means some of the most deformed characters in the world have become the most beautiful; and some of the most injurious persons have become the most useful.

There is one other point which should be carefully considered. In connection with this change of character, there is a change of *state*. Man is depraved, and needs to be regenerated, but he is also condemned, and requires to be pardoned and justified. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to all who believe on his name; thus, and only thus, is their "transgression forgiven, and their sin covered"; and thus they become possessed of a title to eternal life. It is by believing the Divine testimony concerning the work and death of the Saviour, that the change called *regeneration* is wrought in us. John iii. 14, 15. We thus get new views of God, and new feelings toward him; are prepared to serve him on earth, and "made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

This inheritance is "incorruptible and undefiled, and fadeth not away." The longest series of dissolving views must come to an end, and the spectators at last see nothing but the white blank surface, on which the various objects have been pictured. But it is otherwise with the series we have just contemplated. Nature gives way to grace; grace appears under various views and aspects, all beautiful, though imperfect; at length grace changes (not into nothingness but) into glory. All the world's changes end in a dreary blank; the changes effected by the Spirit and Word of God, end in "eternal life." "We all, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." "Whom God justifies, them he also glorifies."

Reader, have you good reason to

believe that you are born of God? What is your state, and what your character? How do you think you appear in God's sight? Does he see you clinging in simple trust to the cross of Christ? Does he see you in secret wrestling with him to make you holy, and behold your heart longing to live to his glory? If so, all hail; you are "justified by his grace, and made an heir according to the hope of eternal life." But if your soul is yet like a wilderness of sand, thorns, and briars, and nigh unto cursing, oh, that you may be induced to go at once to Christ, and ask him for the living water, John iv. 10.—and to adopt the Psalmist's prayer as your own: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Go, then, "Seek the Lord till he come, and rain down righteousness upon you."

THE INFIDEL AND CHILD.

IN the city of London, there lived a little girl, who attended for three years, and by stealth, the teachings of a Sunday school. Coming under the saving influence of truth, she became concerned for her father—a noted infidel, and active opposer to Christianity. She obtained a Bible, but knew not how to put it into his hands; for she feared his displeasure, and dreaded any prohibition which might deprive her of the prized advantages of the Sunday school. She retired to seek Divine guidance. Her father, passing the door of the apartment, heard the voice of his child; it was the voice of prayer—she prayed for him. He became affected, agitated, distressed. After a little, the family assembled at the tea-table; the beverage was handed round, but he could not partake.

"Is there a Bible in the house?" he said.

"My dear," replied his wife, apprehensive of the purposed repetition of the act, "did you not burn every Bible that we had, not leaving so much as one?"

"Is there any good book, then?" he inquired.

His little daughter thinking that God might be answering her prayer, arose, took him by the hand, asked him to go with her, and when they had left the room, looking in his face, said, "Father, sure you won't be angry with me? I know you won't be angry with me; come with me and I will get you one." And she brought him and gave him the Bible, which for this very purpose she had procured. He felt deeply, and trembling while he handed it back to her, said, "My child, I cannot read this book, will you read it for me?" She did so, and then taking her in his arms, he kissed her, and said, "Tell me, my child, where did you get this book, and how did you obtain the knowledge of it?"

She told him all, how she attended the Sunday school, the effect upon herself, and how she became concerned for his salvation. That very evening he accompanied her to the chapel. As they entered, the minister was engaged in prayer; his manner and ad-

dress made a powerful impression on the father's mind, for he seemed to walk with God. The sermon aided in deepening the impression. It was an interesting sight when, two or three Sundays afterwards, that father appeared in that chapel, with his wife and nine children, and openly renounc-

ed his infidelity. That was the Weigh house chapel; the minister, Thomas Binney; and that infidel, reclaimed through the influence of Sunday school instruction on the heart of his child, was the celebrated author of "The Every Day Book."

THE PREACHING FOR THE AGE.

FROM THE CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE YORKSHIRE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

"THE churches of Christ must be fed, or they cannot grow. And this food must be plentifully supplied, and of suitable quality and character. It must not be the preaching of philosophy; it must not be essays on abstract truths; *not Mechanics' Institute Lectures, with a text at the beginning and another at the end to sanctify them.* It must not be an harangue upon some solitary truth, however important; not going about the Gospel, but preaching the Gospel. We are not to be content to linger in the vestibule of truth, but we are to advance within the veil, and stand in the very holy of holies. We must speak out the Gospel in all its parts; our ministry should be the echo of an entire inspiration, 'not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.' *The tendency in the present day is not to deny the Gospel, but to conceal it; not to extinguish the light of inspiration, but to obscure it.* We may desire a clearer deliverance from all our pulpits upon the doctrine of the Trinity, the choice of men to ever-

lasting salvation, the nature and stability of the covenant of grace, efficacious grace in conversion, free justification through the righteousness of Christ, the utter ruin of human nature, the necessity of the Spirit's work, and the entire freeness of the Gospel, with its adaptation to the circumstances and guilt of sinners, wherever they are found, with all the enforcements of practical godliness. We are not to preach ourselves, we are to preach Christ, even Christ crucified. *The age in which we live requires a dogmatic theology;* bold, unhesitating asserations, founded upon the words of the living God, such a sound of the trumpet as shall make every man's ears to tingle; a sound, a savoury, an earnest, a fearless ministry is the demand of the times. Not Antimonianism, but Calvinism; Gospel doctrine and Gospel practice, Paul's free grace, and James's good works. Such a ministry is 'the joyful sound'; it is the jubilee trumpet, it is 'the feast of fat things'; under it God's people are fed, sinners are quickened, for it is the Word of Life."

ORIGINAL POETRY.

BAPTISM.

'Twas on a lovely summer's eve,
The summer's sun reposing,
The mountains for his pillows had,
The vallies round him closing—
When nature, cradled in a smile,
Lay dreaming of to-morrow,
And busy man had ceased his toil,
Nor thought again of sorrow—

That one, by faith and love inspired,
To God the Great Creator,
Who, taking on him human form,
Became man's Mediator,
Was plunged beneath the crystal wave,
In humble imitation
Of him, who in the Jordan gave
The sign of Consecration.

Oh, beautiful, instructive rite,
 How like to what it meaneth;
 And yet from it the sceptic mind,
 Cause for derision gleaneth.
 Oh, happy choice, this youth has made,
 While many gaze and wonder;
 But why alone? This question weighed,
 Would make the thoughtless ponder.
Niton, Isle of Wight, July 23.

Oh, may her bright example be,
 As seed the sower soweth,
 Perhaps with weak and trembling hand,
 But yet with strength it groweth;
 And may the Church that's planted here,
 Excel in holy duty,
 Just as the hills and vales appear,
 Arrayed in sweetest beauty.

M. A.

SUPPORT.

"Underneath are the everlasting arms."—Deut. xxxiii. 27.

Hear the words that mercy saith,
 Whispering peace to thine alarms;
 Troubled spirit, "Underneath,
 Are the everlasting arms."

Yes, those arms that rescued thee,
 Still retain their glorious power;
 Everlastingly will be,
 Manifest in sorrow's hour.

In the path of trial near,
 When no mortal eye can see;
 To deliver will appear,
 And thy secret helper be.

In temptations dismal night,
 When the powers of darkness press.
 With Omnific haste and might,
 They shall succour thy distress.

When these forces like a flood,
 Threaten to o'erwhelm the soul;
 He who once the ocean trod,
 Shall the angry waves control.

In no circumstance can thou,
 In this world of sorrow be,
 But the faithful One and true,
 Can and will deliver thee.

Need'st thou be afraid of death,
 Trembling view thy fierce alarms?
 Sweet assurance—"Underneath,
 Are the everlasting arms!"

DEATH OF THE REV. WILLIAM GROSER.

THE Baptist denomination has sustained a great loss in the decease of the Rev. William Groser, who died at his residence in Islington on Wednesday evening, the 8th instant. His valuable life was brought to a close at the ripe age of sixty-five, by a visceral complaint of long standing, which resisted the power of medicine. The last time that we met with him, he spoke, though engaged in his usual occupations, in the tone of a man conscious of inevitable and approaching dissolution.

Mr. Groser was born, we believe, at Watford, where his father was pastor of a small Baptist Church. Under what circumstances the son was led to embrace the same vocation we are not informed. All we know is, that, from local circumstances, he became early acquainted with the late Dr. F. A. Cox, whose friendship he retained through life; and, that he entered upon the Christian ministry, without any previous course of special training. Such, however, were the nature and requirements of his subsequent official duties, that he must have begun life with at least a respectable elementary education.

His first pastoral charge was undertaken at the early age of twenty, and was over the Baptist Church at Prince's Risborough; whence, after a short time, he removed to Maidstone, in which town he filled a similar

office for nearly twenty years. While still resident in Kent, his knowledge, skill, and judgment, pointed him out as suitable to undertake the Editorship of the *Baptist Magazine*; which he conducted without interruption till death—the Number for the present month appearing without any intimation of his having been obliged to lay down the pen.

The immediate cause of Mr. Groser's removal from Maidstone to London was, the earnest wish of the Baptist Missionary Committee to have the benefit of his services in relation to the controversy which had arisen concerning the Serampore Mission. His exactness and accuracy being known, he was requested to conduct the documentary investigations which then became necessary; and when those affairs were at length arranged, his services were found too valuable to be dispensed with.

In London, Mr. Groser had no settled pastoral charge, except for a short time in connexion with a Baptist Church at Chelsea. His engagements at the Baptist Mission House, in addition to his editorial duties, demanded his whole time; for he was a man who performed methodically and thoroughly whatever he undertook. A few years ago, the secretarial department of the Baptist Missionary Society underwent modifications which enabled the committee to dispense

with Mr. Groser's services, and him to accept the appointment of Secretary to the Baptist Irish Society; and its *Irish Chronicle* for the present month bears internal evidence of having proceeded from his pen.

Though not a voluminous author, Mr. Groser has left behind, apart from his editorial writings, several pieces, avowed or anonymous. The principal of these is a small volume of Lectures on the Romish Controversy, published many years ago, and of acknowledged excellence. His compositions, like his preaching, are marked by clearness, candour, sufficient information, and a sober judgment. His calmness of mind

was thought to verge sometimes upon coldness. We attribute this characteristic of his style, not to any want of feeling for either the warmer beauties of composition or the moral bearings of a subject, but to a conscientious respect for the understandings of his readers, and an aversion bordering on contempt for the expression of rash and intemperate judgments. They who knew him best, can testify that he possessed a warm heart as well as a strong understanding; and he descends to the grave amidst the esteem and regret of those among whom he passed, with much credit, a long and useful, though unostentatious career.—*Patriot*.

LITERARY NOTICES.

The New Park Street Library. Edited by the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon. No. II.—*Christ the Rock*: by the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon—and the *Choice Drop of Honey from the Rock Christ*: by the Rev. T. Wilcocks. London: Alabaster and Passmore; and J. Paul.

"THE Choice Drop of Honey," by Wilcocks, was our father's favourite almost half a century ago; the original portion supplied by the editor, is intended to show, that both the rock at Horeb and the rock at Kadesh were eminent types of Jesus Christ, who, being smitten, gives forth water, for the refreshing of his people; and who follows them all the desert through with his refreshing floods. The first rock was Christ personal; the second rock was Christ mystical. We heartily recommend this excellent publication to all our readers.

Hard Words made Easy. Rules for accent and pronunciation. London: Groombridge & Sons.

LIKE all the books in the sixpenny library, very instructive, and marvellously cheap.

Recollections of Events in the Life of a Sagenurian, addressed to some friends; in which are narrated instances of the loving-kindness of the Lord in Providence and Grace. London: Houlston & Stoneman. We have had great pleasure in the perusal of this interesting pamphlet. We have no idea who the writer is, but we doubt not his narrative will prove very acceptable to a large circle of friends.

Adulteration Detected in our Daily Food and Drink, by Simple and Inexpensive means. This little book exposes the frauds practised upon a too credulous public.

A Plain Man's Examination of Popery, addressed to Plain People. London: Houlston & Stoneman.

NOT fewer than two hundred and fifty thousand copies of this publication have already been disposed of. We can only say it is worthy of the success it has realized.

Children, and How to Manage Them. By Mrs. PULLAN. Author of "Maternal Counsels," and Editor of the Work-table Department of the "Ladies' Newspaper," &c., &c.

How to Cut and Contrive Children's Clothes at a Small Cost. With numerous explanatory Engravings. By the same Author.

BOTH the above books of Mrs. Pullan will prove serviceable to thousands.

London: Darton & Co.

GROOM'S PUBLICATIONS.

We have received from Mr. Groom, of Birmingham, and of the Soho Bazaar, a packet of books, very attractive in appearance, and admirably adapted for presentation to both young and old; many of them will be found interesting to the advanced Christian.

Illness Prevented, or Speedily Cured by Simple Means; a Code to Health for Popular Use. London: Groombridge & Son.

IN many cases this will be a very safe medical adviser.

Talking and Debating; or, Fluency of Speech attained without the Sacrifice of Elegance and sense. A handbook of Conversation and Debate. London: Groombridge & Son. A book which, as it concerns everybody, everybody should make themselves masters of its contents.

Blunders in Behaviour Corrected; a Concise Code of Deportment for both Sexes. London: Groombridge & Sons. THIS book of manners may be studied to advantage.

Apostolical Hymns; or, Prayers of the New Testament in Verse. For use in churches, by William Wrightson, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Wack, Northumberland. Edinburgh: Johnson & Hunter.

A book of poetical paraphrases—simple and devout.

The Young Housewife's Book; or, How to Eke out a Small Income, and insure Happiness and Plenty with a limited scale of Expenditure. London: Groombridge & Son.

THOSE who purchase it will be well rewarded for the outlay.

Old Jonathan, the District and Parish Helper. Broadsheet, 20 columns, illustrated, one penny. London: W. H. Collingridge.

THIS is a very taking monthly illustrated paper, and deserves, as we think it cannot fail to secure, an extensive circulation.

Letter-Writing Simplified for those who are not used to it; a Guide to Friendly, Affectionate, Commercial, and Complimentary Correspondence.

A CAPITAL idea well worked out.

Faith in God as to Temporal Things. An account of the rise and progress of the New Orphan House, Ashley Down, Bristol, under the superintendance of the Rev. G. Muller. London: W. H. Collingridge.

THIS admirable little volume contains most remarkable illustrations of our Lord's declaration, "All things are possible to him that believeth."

DENOMINATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.

Aberaman.—The Rev. D. Evans, from Brynhyfryd.

Coate Oxon.—The Rev. B. Arthur, from Bideford.

Dunkerton, Near Bath.—Rev. H. Biggs from Burnham, Somerset.

London.—Church St., Blackfriars.—The Rev. W. Barker, of Blackburn, has accepted an unanimous invitation to the pastorate, and enters upon his stated labours the third Sabbath in this present month.

RECOGNITION SERVICES.

Beaumaris.—Services were held in this town on the 10th of August, for the purpose of recognizing Mr. S. Morgans, late student of Haverfordwest College, as a Pastor of the Baptist Church in this town. The public services in the morning were commenced by the Rev. H. Williams, Aulwh, who read and prayed. The Rev. W. Bowen, Llanfachraeth, preached in Welsh (James v. 20), and the Rev. John Pritchard, Llanguollen, in English (Col. i. 12, 13, 14). Afternoon, after prayer by the Rev. W. Williams, the Rev. W. Bowen delivered the introductory discourse, and the Rev. John Pritchard proposed the usual questions, and offered the recognition prayer; the Rev. H. Williams delivered the Charge to the minister (from 2 Tim. ii. 15). In the evening, Mr. S. Morgans introduced the meeting by reading and praying; and the Rev. John Pritchard delivered the charge to the Church (from 1 Thess. v. 12, 13), and the Rev. H. Williams preached to the congregation (from Matt. vi. 33). On the following Monday, Missionary Services were held, when the Rev. J. Pritchard delivered an excellent sermon on the occasion.

New Busford, Notts., July 29.—Services in connection with the settlement of the Rev. C. Forth, as pastor of the Baptist Church in this place. After prayer by the Revs. McAll (Ind.), the Rev. J. Edwards, of Nottingham, delivered the introductory discourse. The usual questions were proposed, and the recognition prayer offered

by the Rev. W. J. Stewart, of Swanick, and the charge delivered by the Rev. Dr. Acworth, President of Horton College. After tea a public meeting was held, when addresses were delivered by the Revs. J. Burton (Ind.), J. Stevenson (Gen. Bap.), F. Forbes, and W. J. Stewart.

Edinburgh, Richmond St., July 24.—Of the Rev. Thos. Taylor, as pastor of the Baptist Church. The introductory discourse was delivered by the Rev. J. Malcolm, of Aberdeen. The usual questions were proposed, and the recognition prayer offered by the Rev. W. P. Grant, of Cupar. The charge to the pastor was delivered by the Rev. D. Wallace, of Paisley, and the Rev. J. Williams, of Glasgow, addressed the Church. In the evening, interesting addresses were delivered by various ministers.

Bridport, July 21, 22.—A series of services was held in connection with the settlement of the Rev. H. W. Stembidge, as pastor of the Baptist Church. The Rev. A. Wayland, of Lyme, delivered the introductory discourse. The Rev. D. Wassall, of Bath, preached to pastor and people, and the Rev. T. Winter, of Bristol, preached on "Seeking the things of Jesus Christ." In the evening addresses were delivered by the Revs. Messrs. Jefferies and Prescott (Wesleyans), H. W. Stembidge and Mr. A. Sims, of Paulton; the Revs. J. K. Stallybrass, R. Waterman, and J. Hargreaves (Independents), and Job Stembidge took part in the services.

Hunslet, Leeds.—Services in connection with the public recognition of the Rev. Andrew Bowden, of Horton College, as pastor of the Baptist Church, were held August 13. After prayer by the Rev. John Walcot, of Sutton, the Rev. S. G. Green, B.A., of Horton College, delivered the introductory discourse; the usual questions were proposed by the Rev. C. Daniell, of Horton College; the recognition prayer by the Rev. R. Brewer, of Leeds; the Charge was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Acworth, President of Horton College. After tea, a public meeting was held in the evening—Dr. Acworth in the chair—when addresses were delivered by the Revs. Dr. Acworth;

Dowson, of Bradford; Rawson, of Bramler; Bailhache, of Leeds; Campbell, of Shipley; J. Tunncliffe, of Leeds (General Baptist); and Mr. Cook, of Bradford.

ANNIVERSARIES TO BE HOLDEN.

Eynsford, Kent. ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10th.—Jubilee Anniversary and Harvest Thanksgiving Services will be held in the Baptist Chapel, Eynsford, Kent; on which occasion the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, Minister of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark, will preach in the morning and afternoon; and in the evening there will be a double lecture, by the Rev. W. P. Balfern, of Bow, Author of "Glimpses of Jesus," and the Rev. J. George, Minister of Arthur Street Chapel, Walworth. Services to commence at half past eleven, at three, and six o'clock Dinner and Tea will be provided.

Beulah Chapel, Chapel Street, Somers Town, Oct. 1.—Mr. Spurgeon, of Park Street, will preach two sermons, in the afternoon at three, and in the evening at half-past six. Collections after each service. Tea refreshments will be provided at 9d.

"The Strict Baptist Union for the promotion of the doctrines, precepts, and ordinances of the Gospel," will hold its first General Meeting on Tuesday evening, Sept. 16, 1866, at Soho Chapel, Oxford Street. Commencing at half past six, precisely.

Sion Chapel, Whitechapel, Sept. 30.—The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon will preach (D.V.) two sermons. That in the morning at eleven, and the evening at half past six. Collections will be made.

Hoxton Tabernacle.—The seventh annual tea meeting commemorative of the ordination of Mr. J. P. Searle, the pastor, will be held (D.V.) on Monday, Sept. 29, when several ministers will address the meeting. Tea at 5, public meeting at 6 o'clock.

BAPTISMS.

Audlem, Cheshire, June 22.—One by the pastor.

Birmingham, Newhall Street, June 20.—Two by Mr. O'Neill.

Blunworth, May 4.—Four candidates were baptized. Nearly four years have elapsed since the administration of this ordinance. We hope others are seeking.

Bristol, Broadmead, July 3.—Eight by Mr. Haycroft, and three by Mr. Nicholson.

Bristol, Pitbay, July 6.—Ten by Mr. Probert.

Bridgend, Hops Chapel, June 1.—Four by Mr. Cole.

Capel-gwyn, July 13.—One by Mr. Roberts.

Cheltenham, Camrroy Chapel, July 6.—Seven by Mr. Smith—among them was his youngest daughter.

Chipperfield, Herts, June 22.—Three at Boxmoor by Mr. Pratten.

Cottenham, July 22.—Seventeen were baptized in the river by Mr. R. G. Edwards.

East Dereham, Norfolk, July 6.—Five by Mr. Williams.

Fairford, Aug. 3.—Five by Mr. D. Wassall.

Kewington, July 13.—Four by Mr. Evans.

Llandysil, June 22.—Five by Mr. Owen of Newcastle Emlyn.

Llundesant, Anglesea, Aug. 7.—One by Mr. Bowen.

Langley, Essex, June 19.—Four, and July 29, three, by Mr. C. Smith.

Leominster, June 15.—Four by Mr. Nash.

Lampy Stoke, July 27.—Four by Mr. W. Huntly. The ordinances was administered in the River Avon. A larger number of persons were assembled than had ever been known on any previous occasion.

London, Spencer Place, Goswell Street, Aug. 5.—Two by Mr. Cooke.

—, **Shoalham Street, July 20.**—Twelve by Mr. J. Bowes of Manchester.

—, **Borough Road, July 6.**—Three by Mr. Keen.

—, **Duke Street, Westminster.**—Nine by Mr. Cox, late of Woolwich.

—, **Mount Zion, Chadwell St, June 20.**—Six by Mr. Hazleton.

Newark, Notts, July 27.—Five by Mr. Dayly. Two of them were husband and wife.

Raunds, Northamptonshire, July 13.—Five by Mr. R. Abbott.

Pembroke, Berean Chapel, June 22.—Three by Mr. Walker.

Swoffham, May 4.—Three by Mr. Woods. We regret that this notice was mislaid else it would have been inserted in the June Number.

Somersham, Hunts, August 1.—In the river Ouse, at Erith Bridge, after a sermon by Mr. Alderson of Willingham, five by Mr. Flory. Mr. Whiting of Needingworth preached in the evening.

Tenbury, Worcestershire, Aug 21.—Two, by Mr. Heritage.

Willingham, Cambs, Old Meeting, July 31.—Ten by Mr. Alderson.

Wurminster, Wilts, July 6.—Six by Mr. Howe.

Windsor, June 20.—Three by Mr. Lillycrop.

DEATHS.

Cormack, Mr. B., at Hunster by Wick, N.B., July 21st, aged 77. He was at the Baptist Chapel, Wick, on Sabbath, the 20th, and the following day, by twelve o'clock, was in heaven. During his whole life he has been noted for his anxiety to know and love the Lord, and for many years, like Enoch, he walked with God; and his end was more like a transition than death "for God took him." He went out of his house to take a walk in the fields, and in a few minutes he was brought in again lifeless. He was one who prayed without ceasing, who was ever doing good, and often would say that he was thankful to have an opportunity of giving to any good cause. He took a deep interest in the young, the Jews, and indeed the world, the church, and the poor. Many will miss him. He was never, if able to be out of bed, absent from the house of God. He is regretted by all who knew him.

Gledhill, Mr. J. Rochdale, aged 34.

SPIRITUAL GLEANING.

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,

Minister of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.

"Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not," RUTH ii. 15.

OUR country cousins at this season have been engaged in harvest occupations, and most of them will understand what is meant by gleaning. Perhaps they are not all of them so wise as to understand the heavenly art of spiritual gleaning. That is the subject which I have chosen on this occasion; my attention having been called to it in riding along, and as I like to improve the seasons of the year, I shall, therefore, give you a few homely remarks in regard to spiritual gleaning. In the first place, we shall observe, that there is a great Husbandman. It was Boaz in this case; it is our Heavenly Father who is the husbandman in the other case. Secondly, we shall notice a humble gleaner. It was Ruth in this instance; it is every believer that is represented thereby, at least we shall so consider. And in the third place, here is a very gracious permission given. "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not."

I.—In the first place, then, we will CONSIDER SOMETHING CONCERNING THE GREAT HUSBANDMAN—God. The God of the whole earth is a great husbandman; in fact all farm operations are really carried on by him. Man may plough the soil, and he may sow the seed; but God is the great husbandman after all. It is he that farms the clouds and the sunshine, it is he that farms the winds and the rain, and so by various processes of nature, he brings forth the food for man. All the farming, however, which God does, he does for the benefit of others, and never for himself. He has no need of any of these works. If he were hungry, he would not tell us. "The cattle on a thousand hills," says he, "are mine." If he were athirst, he would not ask us for drink. All things are God's, and all he does in *creation*, all the works of his providence, are not done for himself, but for his creatures, out of the benevolence of his mighty heart. And in *spiritual* matters God is a great husbandman: and there, too, all his works are done for his people, that they may be fed and satisfied, as with marrow and fatness. Permit me then, to refer you to the gospel fields, the great fields which our Heavenly Father farms for the good of his children. There is a great variety of them, but they are all on a good soil, for "the fountain of Jacob is on a hill, a land of corn and wine, also his mountains do drop down dew."

He hath many fields, but they are all full of plenty, and there is always an abundant harvest. One field is called *Doctrine field*; oh, what large sheaves of blessed corn are to be found there! He who does but glean in it will find very much spiritual nutriment. There is the great sheaf of election, full, indeed, of heavy ears of corn like Pharaoh saw in his first dream, rank and strong. There is the great sheaf of experience, wherein it is promised to us that the work that God has begun he will assuredly complete. And if we have not faith enough to partake of either of these sheaves, there is the most blessed sheaf—*ay*, it is many sheaves in one; the sheaf of redemption in the blood of Christ. Many a poor soul who could not feed on electing love, nor realise his perseverance in Christ, could yet feed on the blood of Jesus. He could sit down and rejoice that redemption was finished, complete, and that for every penitent soul there was provided a great atonement, whereby we have been reconciled. I cannot stop to tell you of all the great sheaves in the field. Some say there are only five: I believe the five are in some degree a summary of the rest, and the five are but five distinctive points wherein we differ from those who "err from the faith and pierce themselves through with many sorrows." But there are many more doctrines besides these five,

and all are alike precious, alike valuable to the true believer's soul, for he can feed upon them.

I wonder why it is some of our ministers are so particular about locking the gate of this field. They do not like God's people to get in. I believe it is because they are afraid Jeshurun would wax fat and kick, if he had too much food, at least, that is what I must be charitable enough to suppose. Or, I conceive that many are like the huge corn monopolist, buy up the doctrine of election, but keep it singly to themselves—believe it is very true, but never preach it at all. They say all the distinguishing doctrines of grace are very true—yes, there are Particular Baptists as sound as any one of us; but unfortunately they never make any sound about it, and though they are very sound alone, they are very unsound when they come into their pulpits, and never preach it. I say, swing the gate open, and come in, all ye children of God! I am sure in my master's field there is no charlock. If the doctrine be a true one, it cannot hurt the child of God; and so as it is truth, you may feast on it till you are full, and no harm will come of it. The idea of reserve in preaching—keeping back some doctrines because they are not fit to be preached!—I will repeat what I said before, that it is a piece of most abominable impudence on the part of man, to say that anything which God has written is unfit to preach. If it is unfit to preach, I am sure the Almighty would never have revealed it to us. No, like the old man in Solomon, they are "afraid of that which is high." It is a mark of their imbecility and anility that they are afraid of these great things. God was not afraid to write them, and we, therefore, ought not to be afraid to preach them. It is a glorious field, beloved—the doctrine field. Go in it, and glean, and you may glean an ephah of the finest wheat every day.

2. Then God has a field called *Promise* field; on that I shall not dwell, for you have been into that, many of you. But just let us take an ear or two out of one of the sheaves, and show them to you, that you may be tempted to go and glean. Here is one: "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." There is a heavy ear for you; now for another: "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." Here is another; it is a short stalk, but there is a great deal of corn in it: "My strength is sufficient for thee." Here is another: "I am with thee, fear not." Here is another one for thee: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." There is the promise of Christ's glorious second coming; and is not that a heavy ear of wheat for the Lord's children to pick up? Yes, beloved, we can say of the promise field, what cannot be said of any farmer's field in England; namely, that it is so rich a field, it cannot be richer, and has so many ears of corn in it, that you could not put in another one. As the poet sings:—

"What more can he say, than to you he has said?—
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

Go and glean in that field, Christian; go and glean in it; it is all thine own, every ear of it; and pull handfuls out of the sheaves, if you like.

3. Then there is *Ordinance* field; a great deal of corn grows in that field. One field is the field of *Baptism*, and, verily, God profits his children very much, even at the sight of the baptism of others; it comforts and cheers them, and helps them to renew their dedication vow to the Lord Most High. But I must not detain you long in this field, for some of my friends never go

into that field at all, it is too damp a soil for them; and though the corn is very fine, and very high, they are afraid to go there. However we will leave that, and pass on to another field. Oh, it is sweet, divinely sweet, to sit at the *table of the Lord*, and eat the bread and drink the wine. What rich things hath there been given to us. Hath he not given us there the "kisses of his mouth?" For we have tasted his love, and felt it to be "better than wine." Beloved, go in that field; do not despise either, but walk in the ordinances of the Lord blameless, and so will he fill your souls with marrow and fatness.

4. But God has one field on a hill, which is as rich as any of the others; and indeed you cannot go into any of the other fields, really and truly, unless you go through this field, for the road to the other fields lies through this hill-farm of God's: it is called the field of *Fellowship and Communion* with Christ. Ah! that is the field to glean in; some of you have only run through it, you have not stopped in it; but he who knows how to stop in it, and to walk about it, doth never lose anything, but gaineth much.

Beloved, it is only in proportion as we hold fellowship with Christ, and communion with him, that either ordinances, or doctrines, or promises, can profit us. All those other things are dry and barren, unless we have entered into the love of Christ, unless we have realized our union with him, unless we have a sympathy with his heart, unless we bear his likeness, unless we dwell continually with him, and feel his love, and are ravished with his delights. I am sorry to say that few Christians think much of this field; it is enough for them to be sound in doctrine, and tolerably correct in practice; they do not think anything about holding fellowship with Christ. I am sure, if they did, there would not be half so many naughty tempers as we have everywhere; not half so much pride, and not a tithe so much sloth, if our brethren went into that field oftener. Oh, it is a blessed one; there is no such field as that; you may go in and revel in it in delights, for it is full of everything that the heart can wish, or the soul imagine, or the mind conceive. Blessed, blessed field is that! And God leaves the gate of that, too, wide open for every believer. Oh, child of God! go into all those fields; do not despise one of them; oh, go and glean in them all; there is the richest gleaning there in all creation.

II.—And now, in the second place, we have a **HUMBLE GLEANER**. Ruth was a gleaner, and may serve as an illustration of what every believer should be in the field of God. He should be a gleaner, and he *may take a whole sheaf home if he likes*; he may be something more than a gleaner if he can be. But I use the figure of a gleaner, because I believe that is the most a Christian ever is. Some may say, Why does not the Christian go and reap all the field, and take home all the corn home with him? So he may, if he can: if he can take a whole sheaf on his back, and go home with it, he may if he likes. And if he will take a great wagon, and carry away all there is in the field, he may have all, if he can carry it; but generally our faith is so little that we can only glean. We can take away but a little of the blessing; and though faith does take and enjoy much, yet when we compare it with what there is to be enjoyed, a gleaner is the true picture of faith, and more especially of little faith, for all it can do is to glean; it cannot cart wheat home, or carry a sheaf on its shoulders; it can only take it up ear by ear. I am sure we shall all be content to be considered as gleaners.

2. And again, we may remark, that the gleaner, in her business, *has to endure much toil and fatigue*. She rises early in the morning, she trudgeth often to a field; if that be shut, she trudgeth to another; and if that be closed, or all gleaned, she goes to another after that; and all day long while the sun is shining on her, though she sits down sometimes under a tree, to refresh herself a little, still she goes on, stoop, stoop, stoop, to gather up her ears of corn; and she goeth not home till nightfall, for she desireth, if the field is good, to do much business that day, and she would not go home

SPIRITUAL GLEANING.

unless her hands were full indeed of the rich corn she so much desireth. Beloved, so let every believer be; let him not be afraid of a little fatigue in his Master's service. If the gleaning is good, the spiritual gleaner will not mind a little fatigue to get it. One says: I walk five miles every Sunday to chapel; and another says: I walk six or seven. Very well, if it is the Gospel, it is worth, not only walking six or seven miles, but sixty or seventy, for it will pay you well. The gleaner must expect some toil or trouble; he must not expect that everything will come to him very easily. We must not expect that it is always the field next our house that is to be gleaned; it may be a field at the further end of the village: let us go trudging off to it, that we may get our hands full.

3. But, remark next, that *every ear the gleaner gets she has to stoop for*. Why is it that proud people do not profit under the word? Why is it that your grandees cannot get any good out of many of your ministers? Why, because they want the minister to pick the corn up for them; and the fact is, that many of the ministers hold it so high over their heads, that they can scarce see it, and they say: Here is something wonderful; and they admire the science of the man that holds it up. Now, I should like to scatter the corn on the ground as much as I can; but I do not mean to hold it up so high for you. One reason is, that I cannot; I have not the talent to hold it up where you cannot see it. My ability will only allow me just to throw the corn on the ground, so that the people can pick it up; and if it is thrown on the ground all can get it then, and all can understand it. If we preach to the rich only, the rich can understand, but the poor cannot; but when we preach to the poor, the rich can understand it if they like, and if they do not like, they must go somewhere else. We believe that the real gleaner, who gets any food, will have to stoop to pick it up. I confess, I would stoop to anything, to know and understand the Gospel; it is worth going anywhere to hear it. But, now-a-days you must have your fine steeples, you must have your fine gowns on, you must have fine rings on your fingers, and then you must preach most eloquently. But it is not the way the Lord ordained; he intended that there should be humble preaching, and by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Beloved, gleaners who are to get anything must expect to stoop.

4.—And note, in the next place, that what a gleaner gets *she gets ear by ear*; sometimes she gets a handful. In the case of Ruth, handfuls were let fall on purpose for her; but the usual way is to glean ear by ear. The gleaner stoops and gets one ear and then another, and then another; only one ear at a time. Now, beloved, where there are handfuls to be got at once, there is the place to go and glean; but if you cannot get handfuls, go and get ear by ear. I have heard of certain parties, who have been in the habit of hearing a minister in London, saying, when they go to the sea-side, "I cannot hear anybody after him; I shall not go to that chapel any more." So they stay at home all day on the Sunday. I suppose it is to illustrate the meaning of the passage, "not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is." Why is that? They cannot get a handful, and therefore they will not have an ear. So the poor creatures are starved, and they are glad enough to get back again. Serve them right! They should have gone, if they could but get one ear; and it is a sorry minister who cannot give them that. And if they got only one ear, it would be worth having; if it be only six words of God, if we think of them, they will do us good. Let us be content, then, to get it ear by ear; let us take away a whole sheaf with us if we can; but if we cannot do that, let us get ear by ear. "Oh!" say some, "I cannot hear some ministers at all; they give us such a mangle mangle sort of thing." I know they do. But it will be a wonderful thing if you cannot get an ear or two from them. There is a great deal of chaff, you are not required to take away that; but it

will be strange if you cannot take an ear or two out of it. You say, "The other part distresses my mind;" no doubt it does; but that is your weakness. The best way is to leave that part alone, and pull out the sound truth; and if there is no sound truth, the best way is to read it all backwards, and then it will sure to be sound. I heard a man of that kind once, and I thought I would just play him a trick; when he said a thing was, I said it was not; and when he said such a thing would happen, I said it would not—and I enjoyed the sermon then. He said, "The people of God through their sin would perish;" and I had only to put a "not" in, and what a sweet thought it was! And that is the way, when you hear a bad sermon, just to qualify it so; and then, after all, it has suggested spiritual thoughts to you, and it has done you good. But you must be content, whenever you go, to pick up the corn ear by ear.

5. Note, next, that *what the gleaner picks up, she keeps in her hand*; she does not take it up, and drop it down, as some do. There is a good thought at the beginning of the sermon; you are all agape to hear another, and you let the first go. Then towards the end of the sermon there is another flash, perhaps, and you have forgotten all the other in trying to catch that, and when the sermon is over, it is nearly all gone; so that you are about as wise as a gleaner, who should set out and pick up one ear, drop that, and pick up another; then drop that, and pick up another; and she would find at night that she had got—ay, what? That she had got nothing for her trouble. It is just the same in hearing a sermon; people take up the ears, and drop them again. But one says, "I know I got nearly the whole of the sermon." Now just allow me to drop a remark. Many a man, when he has got nearly the whole sermon, loses it on the way home. Very much depends on our conduct on our way home. I have heard of a Christian man who was seen hurrying home one Sunday with all his might. A friend asked him what he was in such a hurry for. "Oh!" said he, "two or three Sundays ago, our minister gave us a most blessed discourse, and I most blessedly enjoyed it; but when I got outside there were two deacons, and one pulled one way, and the other the other, till they pulled the sermon all to pieces; and though it was a most blessed discourse, I did not remember a word of it when I got home—all the savour and unction had blown away; so I thought I would go home to night, and pray over the sermon before I spoke to them at all." It is always the best way, beloved, to go straight home. You get at your chit chat about this thing and the other, and you lose all the savour and unction of the discourse: go home as quick as you can. I would advise some of you to go home a little quicker after service, and you might then get quite as much good from the service possibly.

6. Then, again, the gleaner *takes the wheat home, and thrashes it*. It is a blessed thing to thrash a sermon when you have got one. Many persons invert the order, and thrash the preacher; but that is not half so good as thrashing the sermon. They begin finding this fault and the other with him, and they think that is doing good; but it is not. Take a sermon, beloved, when you get one, and lay it down on the floor of meditation, and beat it out with the flail of prayer, and you will get the corn out of it. But it is no good unless you beat it. Why, it is as if a gleaner should stow away her corn in the room, and the mice should get at it: it would be a nuisance to her rather than a benefit. So some get a sermon, and carry it home, and allow their sins to eat it all up; and it becomes an injury to them, rather than a blessing. But he who knows how to flail a sermon well, to put it under the thrashing machine, and thrash it well, has learned a good art, and shall profit much. We have heard of an aged Scotchman; when he returned from "kirk" one Sunday rather earlier than usual, his wife said to him, "Donald, is the sermon all done?" "No," he said, "it is all said, but it is not all done by a long way." We ought to take that sermon home; to do it, that is what I mean by thrash-

ing it. But you catch that sermon and are content to carry it home; glad enough you are, perhaps, to talk a little about it; but there is no thrashing it by prayer.

7. And then, in the last place, the good woman after thrashing the corn, no doubt winnowed it afterwards. She did it all in the field; but you can scarcely do that. You must do some of it at home. And, observe, she did not take the chaff home; she left that behind her in the field. It is a great thing to winnow the sermon. I would not have you spongy hearers, that suck up everything. I would have you winnowers, to separate the precious from the vile. With all ministers there is a certain quantity of chaff mixed with the corn; but I have noticed a sad predilection in some to take all the chaff, and leave the corn behind. "Well, there's a curious expression; wont that make an anecdote for me at the next party! Mr. S. used such and such an expression." But if you hear a man talk in that way, do you know what you should say to him? You should say, "Stop; we have all got our faults, and perhaps we have got as many as anybody else: cannot you tell us what he said that was good?" "Oh, I don't recollect that." That is all gone; they are so ready to remember what is bad. Let me advise you to winnow that sermon, to meditate upon it, to separate the chaff from the wheat, and take care of that which is good. That is the true way of heavenly gleanings; may the Lord teach us it, that we may become "rich to all the intents of bliss," that we may be satisfied with the favour and goodness of the Lord.

III.—And now, in the last place, here is a GRACIOUS PERMISSION GIVEN. "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not." She had no right to go there. She had no right, but Boaz gave her a right to go there by saying, "Let her do it." For her to be allowed to go amongst the sheaves, in that part of the field where the wheat was not already carted, was something; but to go among the sheaves, and to have handfuls dropped to her, was the grace of Boaz. It was his love to her; so, beloved, it is God's free grace that lets us come a little among the sheaves, that lets us lay hold of election mercies, doctrinal blessings, promise blessings, or experience blessings. We have no right to be there of ourselves; it is all free and sovereign grace that lets us go there.

And shall I tell you the reasons that moved Boaz's heart to let her go? One reason was, *because he loved her*. He would have her go there, because he conceived an affection for her, which he afterwards displayed in due time. So the Lord lets his people come and glean among the sheaves, because he loves them. Didst thou have a gleanings amongst the sheaves the other Sabbath? Didst thou carry home thy sack, filled like Benjamin's brothers, when they went down to Egypt? Didst thou have an abundance? Wast thou satisfied? Mark; that was thy Master's goodness. It was because he loved thee. Look, I beseech thee, on all thy mercies as proofs of his love. Look on all thy spiritual blessings as being testimonies of his grace. It will make thy corn grind all the better, and eat all the better, if thou think it is a proof of love that thy sweet seasons, thy high enjoyments, thy blessed ravishment of spirit, were proofs of divine affection. And there was another reason why Boaz let Ruth glean amongst the sheaves, because *he was a relation to her*. And that is why the Lord gives us such sweet mercies sometimes, and takes us into his banqueting house, because he is related to us. He is our Brother, our Kinsman, nearly allied by blood; aye, more than that, he is the Husband of his church; and sure he may well let his wife go and glean among the sheaves, for all she gets is not lost to him. It is only putting it out of one hand into the other, since her interests and his are all one. And so he may well say, "Beloved, take all thou pleasest; I am none the poorer, for thou art mine. Thou art my partner, thou my choice, and thou my bride; ay, take it, take it, for it is all in one family, and there is none the less, if thou hast taken all thou canst."

What, then, shall I say to you, beloved brethren and sisters? Go a spiritual

gleaning as much as ever you can. Never lose an opportunity of getting a blessing. Glean at the mercy-seat; glean in the house of God; glean in private meditation; glean in reading pious books; glean in associating with pious men; glean everywhere—wherever you go; and if you can get only an ear a day, you who are so much in business, and so much penned up by cares; if you can only spare five minutes, go a gleaning a little; and if you cannot get a sheaf, get an ear; and if you cannot an ear, get a spare grain. Take care and get a little; if you cannot get much, get as much as ever you can.

Just one other remark. O child of God never be afraid to glean. All there is thine. Never stay away, never think your minister will be angry with you. The only thing he is likely to be offended with you for is, because you do not take enough. "There," he says, "it is. Take, take, take; eat, eat, abundantly; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." Therefore, if thou findest a rich promise, suck it, and get the honey out of the comb. And do not be afraid, if thou gettest hold of some blessed sheaf, to carry it away rejoicing. Thou hast a right to it; let not Satan cheat thee out of it. Sharpen up the sickle of thy faith, and go harvesting; for thou wilt; if thou wilt; and if thou canst, take a sheaf, and carry it away for spiritual food. The Lord teach you how to glean!

BE STILL.

BY THE REV. JAMES SMITH, CHELTENHAM.

"Be still, and know that I am God:"—Ps. lxxi. 10.

THIS most precious Psalm has been a source of blessing to many of the Lord's people. It is in general the language of one deeply taught of God, living in close communion with God, and therefore exercising strong confidence in God. Rising above second causes, God is seen working, supplying, and making his people happy. The most terrible convulsions are supposed, but faith remains firm. An invitation to behold the works of God is given, especially his victories over his warlike foes. Then the Lord himself interposes, he appears in his majesty, he speaks with authority, he commands silence, he says,—*"BE STILL."* He will be known, acknowledged, and exalted. His glory shall cover the heavens, and the earth shall be filled with his praise. Let us hear God speak, and seek grace to profit by his words.

"BE STILL." That is *fret not*. Do the wicked prosper, do thy enemies increase, do thy foes prevail? Are thy circumstances trying, perplexing, and painful? *"Fret not thyself."* There is no cause for it. There is no good to be gotten by it. Thy God knows all about it. He wisely permits it. He intends to glorify himself by it. It is for trial, for the trial of your graces and principles. *"BE STILL."* *Complain not*. Israel in the desert met with sore trials, with great privations, with painful mortifications; but we read that "when the people complained, it displeased the Lord." And as the Lord was displeased with complaining Israel, so will he be displeased with thee; and if displeased he will hide his face, withhold his comforts, and perhaps close his hand. They had little cause to complain, if they looked back to what they were in Egypt, or forward to what was before them in Canaan. Just so with us, what cause can we have to complain? What were we? Where are we? What should we have been but for the grace of God? *Complain!* Nothing can be more unseemly. Nothing can be more ungrateful.

"BE STILL." That is, *kick not against God's dispensations*. His purposes are like mountains of brass, on them we can make no impression, but we may greatly injure ourselves. His providence is a great deep; we may sail over it, but we can never fathom it, or divert its course. Art thou wiser than God? Would you counsel him whose understanding is infinite? Resistance is folly. Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft.

"BE STILL." That is, *yield thyself unto God*. Bow to his sovereignty. Submit to his rule. Acquiesce in his will. Be not like dead matter, or a lifeless corpse, "But submit yourself unto God, as one that is alive from the dead." "BE STILL." That is, *Be silent before the Lord*. The Psalmist said, "I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it." This was wise. This was becoming. Look at Israel's high priest, his two sons were slain by one stroke, by fire from the Lord, "But Aaron held his peace." Deeply did he feel. Nature in him was the same as nature in us, and therefore when Moses afterwards reproved him for neglect he said, "Such things have befallen me." Such things! Such uncommon things! Such painful, such distressing things! Yet he replied not. He held his peace. Believe, whatever loss you sustain. Whatever cross you are called to bear. Whatever rivers of trouble you may have to wade through, be silent. Keep thy mouth as it were with a bridle. Utter not one word of complaint or repining, but bow like the pliant osier to the breeze. "BE STILL." That is, *wait*. God will not be hurried. He will not have his work hastened. Lay thyself at his feet. Watch at the posts of his doors. Say with the tried Church of old, "I will wait for the Lord that hideth himself from the house of Israel, and I will look for him." The Lord will appear. Circumstances will change. It will be all right in the end. Lay thyself at the Lord's feet. Watch the Lord's hand. Expect the fulfilment of the promise, and all will be well.

"BE STILL," for *God is working*. He is the great Agent, whoever and whatever may be the instruments. He leaves nothing to chance. There is no contingency with him. He works according to a settled plan, and with a fixed end in view. While God is working you be still, be silent; it will lead better than you expect, as well as you could wish. "BE STILL," for *God will overrule*. The things that appear most against you, will be overruled for your good. The end will crown the whole. God would not permit, if he did not intend to benefit you, and get glory to himself. His hand turns the wheel. His eye watches the whole of the machinery. His wisdom will bring sweet out of bitter, light out of darkness, and good out of evil. "BE STILL," for *God will explain*. He says to you, as Jesus to his disciples, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." Now we are to believe, to walk by faith, not by sight. The promise is to be our stay, and the presence of God our solace. By and bye, every dark cloud will be dispersed, every mystery will be explained, every difficulty will be cleared up. "Now we know in part, and we prophecy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. Then shall we know, even as also we are known." Let us then be still, because God commands us, assured that he seeks our comfort, and will make all things work together for our good.

But if the reader is unconverted, if he has not been born again, we do not say to him "BE STILL." No, to such we say, "Flee from the wrath to come." Haste to Jesus, that you may escape the terrible storm that is coming. To the refuge! to the refuge! for the avenger of blood is at hand. His sword is furnished, his arm is nerved, he is ready to strike the fatal blow. Beware, O beware, lest justice find you out of Christ! Lest the executioner overtake thee on the plain. If he smite thee once, all is over. Wrath will come upon thee to the uttermost. Everlasting fire will kindle in your soul. The vulture of remorse will begin to prey upon thy vitals, and all that will remain for thee, will be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. Flee then, O flee to Jesus! Believe in his dear name, trust in his precious blood, rely on his faithful word, and cast thyself into his saving arms. There is mercy with him. There is mercy for thee. Rest not, until you have obtained it, until you enjoy it in the pardon of your sins, in the peace of your conscience, and the sanctification of your soul. Then, whatever storms may gather, whatever foes may arise, whatever troubles may befall you, whatever difficulties you may meet with, we echo the words of the Lord, "BE STILL." Precious Lord

Jesus, who didst command the winds and the waves on the lake of Galilee, speak to my troubled, tempest-tossed soul, and say, "Peace, be still," and there shall be a great calm.

Sep. 6.

BIBLE APOLOGUES.

NO. IV.

BY REV. JOHN COX, LATE OF WOOLWICH.

"A thing that hath been, and still is."

God's truth never wears out. From age to age it endureth; ever scattering blessings, imparting instruction, and sounding the note of warning. The staff of promise on which patriarchs leaned remains for our use, who still tread the valley of Baca. The bright mirror of truth in which David looked with delight, undimmed by age, is still presented before us. The characters therein portrayed, good, evil, and doubtful, have their counterparts in our times; and as we read what happened in past ages, and under other dispensations, we naturally exclaim "as in water face answereth to face, so doth the heart of man to man." Who can deny this if they look carefully around them after reading the following verses?

"This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me: *There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man. Then said I, wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard. The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools. Wisdom is better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good.*"—Eccles. ix. 13—18.

There can be no doubt but that many of the parables of the Lord Jesus were taken from circumstances and events of real life. It was when seated in a fishing vessel on the lake of Gennesaret, with the beautiful hills and dalos of Galilee before his eye,

that the Lord referred to the sower and the seed, the fishes and the net; which parables were naturally suggested by the scenes before and around him. It may be also that the parables of "the Prodigal Son," and "the Good Samaritan," (if indeed the latter is a parable) were founded on real incidents. This remark is we think applicable to the words just quoted from Solomon. We suppose that he knew of some such case as this, and introduces it here as an illustration; while at the same time it is a parable which finds its interpretation in all ages; frequently in the world, and sometimes in the church: therefore we have termed it "*a thing that hath been, and still is*"; and purpose using it as a foundation on which to build some practical remarks.

Usefulness—or "serving our own generation by the will of God"—is the subject on which the wise men had been dwelling. The exhortation is, "Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with thy might;" and this is enforced by the solemn consideration, "for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest." "If," says a useful writer on these words, "thou do a thing carelessly, it will never profit; and if thou put it off, it may never be accomplished: life is the time for exertion, heaven is the place of rest." The next verses intimate that success in any work does not, after all, depend on human power or wisdom; and imply that we must look beyond these while we do our best—"The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong," nor bread to the wise. "The power to foresee and overrule belongeth not to mortals." Man sometimes fails in

his best land schemes, and dies while successfully carrying out his wisest projects, even as the fishes and the birds are taken in the net and the snare, ix. 12. Therefore let him learn dependence on God, as well as practise diligence.

Still, a sound judgment, the result of observation and experience, is of great use, and under God often leads to good and beneficial results. This is one lesson taught in the verses quoted. "Therefore get wisdom, and with all thy getting, get understanding." Wisdom has been defined as "knowledge applied to wholesome and practical uses." Mere knowledge without skill or instruction to *apply* it, is valueless. Such a mind is like a hive of bees without a queen; or like a gold watch of elaborate workmanship, without a regulator.

But to come to the incident or apologue before us. In it we have a *place*; and four classes of persons. The place is "a little city," the persons are the *besiegers*, the *besieged*, the *deliverer*, and the *observers*.

How many associations cling round the word "CITY"? Who can mention the names of Nineveh, Babylon, Palmyra, Rome, Paris, or London, without peculiar feelings? But these are, or were, *great* cities, this is a *little* city. Well, every *little* city, or even village, hath its associations; and may well call forth a train of sorrowing and profitable reflections. In each little community human hearts have throbbled with emotion, human heads have planned, and human hands have toiled. There families have been trained, each with its history of sorrow and joy. There generations have passed away, one race has walked over the graves of others, and thus "names have been forgotten out of their dwelling place." Many such little cities have quite faded from remembrance, and the corn now grows in luxuriance where a busy community once reared their dwellings. War, horrid war, has razed the quiet habitations to the ground; or change and gradual decay has done the work as effectually, though more quietly.

Our "little city" was doomed to perish. Some human monster called "great king," fixed on it his evil eye, and determined to make it his prey. Why, or wherefore, we know not. Perhaps in revenge for some petty or imagined offence, or it may be out of mere caprice, or through the madness of ambition; but whatever the cause, "he came and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it." Here we see the *insatiableness of human ambition*. He was a great king, and no doubt had great dominions; yet, the *little* city must be added to them. Thus it has ever been; sometimes on a small scale, and sometimes on a large one; the principle is the same in God's sight, "house to house, field to field, or kingdom to kingdom"; and over all hangs God's terrible "woe." Well and wisely did our British chief Caractacus, when a prisoner at Rome, reprove his grasping, imperial conqueror, when he said, "Why should the possessor of all this grandeur envy me a poor cottage in Britain?"

But in what an evil and apparently hopeless case are the besieged in this "little city." Hence we learn the incapacity of man, whether considered personally or relatively, to protect himself. The continuance of life, health, and safety, is a daily miracle, and so is the existence of nations, especially small nations, in which more of liberty is found than in larger empires. What a remarkable proof of divine care does our own country afford. With all our failings, it has been to a considerable degree the home of liberty, an asylum for the persecuted, and a pattern for other kingdoms. Surrounded as we are by nations of much greater military power, where despotism triumphs, Christians will do well to bear in mind that "safety is of the Lord," and to adopt the pious resolution of the church, "some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God."

When the besieged ones in the "little city" were at their wits end; a deliverer appears. "There was

found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city." The way in which God raises up the suitable instrument at the needed moment, is a study of deepest interest. He does this sometimes to repel and roll back a tide of evil which threatened to overwhelm everything beneath its dark angry billows. Thus tyrants and mad conquerors have sometimes been stopped in their midway course, and overwhelmed with confusion in the moment of expected triumph. Time would fail to tell of Moses, Gedeon, Barak, Jephthae, and David, among God's ancient people, or of Charles Martel, William Tell, and others, in more modern times. These instruments are usually such as show the hand of God, and secure the glory to him. The "worm" threshes the mountains; but the worm must not wear the crown of victory.

The way also in which God raises up instruments to *do good* as well as repel evil, deserves, and well rewards attention. In the inventions of modern times, and the discoveries in science, by which the condition of man has been improved, we trace the hand of God. The mariner's compass, printing, steam machinery of various kinds, the different applications of chemistry and electricity, viewed in connection with the discovery of new continents, the increase of population, the spread of civilization; all show the hand of God. These things may be abused to the purposes of pride, luxury, and oppression; this is man's doing, ever perverting God's good gifts; but in the things themselves we may trace the hand of God, from whom cometh all knowledge, skill, and understanding, Is. xxviii. 23—29.

But to return to the "little city." The tyrant's evil designs were baffled, he was obliged to raise the siege; this ancient Archimedes was too skilful for him. The people breathe again, and walk about without fear. As we pass in imagination through their streets, some months or years after this event, we naturally look out for a stately column on which the name of the deliverer is inscribed, but can-

not find it. We inquire whether any book is written, or where there is any public chronicle giving an account of this siege and deliverance, and one is speedily put into our hands. We turn it over, and find the names of those who carried out the plans of "the poor wise man," *but his name is not there*. We inquire after him; no one scarcely seems to recollect him, or where he is living now. "*No man remembered that same poor man.*" This was no libel on them, but sad and sober truth.

Thus it ever has been, not indeed without exception, for John Howard has a monument in St. Paul's, and Elizabeth Fry's memoirs are laid on the tables of many grand drawing rooms; but still, generally, and especially as regards those who aim to spread truth and do good *directly* to men's souls, *the best benefactors of mankind frequently have been treated with ingratitude*. Those who flatter, tickle, and amuse people, are often honoured and crowned; while those who teach, admonish, and reprove, though in tender love, are passed by, or frowned down. Zedekiah struts about in state, while Micaiah pines in prison. Never mind honest prophet, a good conscience is sweet sauce to thy "bread of affliction."

Let no honest, neglected servant of God be soured by such conduct. Let him work on steadily at whatever God sets before him, be it small or great, out of sight, or in view of others. Let him "take the prophets for an example of long-suffering affliction, and of patience," while labouring for the good of others, Jas. v. 10. Above all, let such "consider him who endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, lest they be weary and faint in their minds," Heb. xii. 3.

What further instruction does this incident yield? What conclusion does he come to, who tells us this ancient and instructive story?

1.—He determined to hold fast to *facts*, and cling to *great principles*. He did not let men's folly, or changing circumstances, draw his attention away from these. Uninfluenced by

the ingratitude of the citizens and their forgetfulness of their deliverer, he looked at the *facts* of the case, and concluded, "Wisdom is better than strength." "Wisdom is better than weapons of war." This was wise, this was noble. Let us go and do likewise, and learn to esteem what is really good and excellent, though multitudes agree to pass it by.

2.—*Yet he mourned over human ingratitude.* Sorrowingly he utters the words, "*yet no man remembered that same poor man.*" Let us learn to sympathise with neglected worth, and endeavour to cheer those whom men overlook or neglect. Here are plenty to flatter the rich and prosperous, to help on the popular, and swell the train of the world's crowned ones. "The sinner who destroyeth much good"; but who "doeth well to himself," will have many to praise him, Ps. xlix. 18. But who envies such a short lived triumph while it is written, "Man that is in honour and understandeth not, is like the beast that perish"?

3.—*He determined to bide his time, and advises others to do the same.* He felt sure that truth would come out at last. "The words of wise men are heard in quiet, more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools," 17.

Those who carried out the poor wise man's plans, made such a noisy boast of their success, that his words are not heard amidst the general din. But their noise will die, and his *quiet words* will live. "Great is the truth, and must prevail." A great chattering did the priestly inquirers make as they thrust Galileo into his dungeon; while he only said in a low whisper, "it still moves." Yes, the earth moves, and all believe it *now*. Terrible was the din round Harvey when he propounded his theory of the circulation of the blood; who denies it *now*? The clamour was fearful when the bones of Cromwell (or those of some one else for his) were hung on the gibbet, and for generations historians taught us all to think of him as a hypocrite; but in our "quiet times" his voice is heard again, and

many haste to do him honour. Christian labourer! wait on the Lord, wait for the Lord, work and wait; in no wise fret thyself to do evil, and "the Lord will bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon day."

We cannot close these reflections without adverting for a moment to to the most remarkable of all sieges; the greatest of all deliverances, and the most flagrant instance of ingratitude. The town of Mansoul was not only besieged, but taken, as a greater authority than Bunyan teaches. Her deliverer was "*a man*," "the Son of Man," "man by excellence," "the man of God's right hand," "the man his fellow." He dwelt in the city unknown, unsought unto. He became poor, though he was rich. He was wise; yea, the wisdom of God, the word of God, "in whom were hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He identified himself with this desolated city. He declared war against the tyrant, its destroyer, and he has wrought a glorious deliverance. All who dwell in this city of humanity, partake of many temporal blessings from his merciful and self-sacrificing interposition, and all are invited to receive spiritual and eternal blessings through him. Yet how few remember him. The most say, "we will not have this man to reign over us"; and do their utmost to banish him, and obliterate the memory of his deeds. While many give him only cold compliments, without that heart affection which he desires, and is so worthy of.

Let us form exceptions to this too general rule, and evermore *remember him*, and determine to do all we can "to make his name to be remembered to all generations." Let us also imitate him in his untiring love. "Knowledge is power," says the world's philosophy. "Wisdom is better than strength," says the inspired Solomon. Love is omnipotent, is the language of the New Testament. This was demonstrated at the cross when Jesus died, as it is now being demonstrated by the cross in all who are called. The God of all

grace, by the Son of his love, hath proved that grace is mightier than sin; and now he says to all who know this by blessed experience; still go on in self-denying service, and con-	strained by the love of God, though uncheered by the smile of man, seek to "OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD."
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THE CHRISTIAN'S TRIALS.

BY A KENTISH PASTOR.

"He performeth the thing which is appointed for me, and many such things are with him,"
JOB XXIII. 14.

NEITHER our trials nor our mercies are accidental. All we experience of joy or grief is by the appointment, and under the control and arrangement of the infinitely wise, just, benevolent, and supreme Governor of the universe, whose blessings are as sovereignly bestowed as his corrections are equitably inflicted. Jehovah's appointments, though governmental and absolute, are parental and gracious. If he has appointed for us the rod, it is to correct us for our faults and follies. If he has chosen us in the furnace of affliction, it is to purge away our dross. For the Lord doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. To secure certain important and benevolent intentions respecting us, he is performing the very thing which, as seeing the end from the beginning, he has afore determined to be done. Our afflictions, in all their variety, degree, duration, and influence, are therefore matters placed above contingency, being the results of an ever-living, all-comprehending, and ever-loving Father's appointments.

Nor are we to regard our trials as being at all singular. Many such things are experienced by others. Let us not, therefore, think it strange concerning the fiery trial, which may be appointed to try us, as though some strange thing happened unto us; for the same afflictions have been accomplished in our brethren. In this land of our exile we must deport ourselves as pilgrims and strangers, following in the track of those who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises.

And if many more such things have to be accomplished in ourselves, yet let us not forget that the path of sorrow leads to glory. The crown succeeds to the cross; and if we suffer with Christ we shall also reign with him. Besides there is a needs be, that we are in heaviness through manifold temptations. Let us therefore bear the rod, and him who hath appointed it, and remember that the design of its infliction is to destroy the love and power of sin in us, that we be not destroyed with the wicked; and that if our tribulations abound, our consolations do still much more abound.

Eynsford, September 15th.

RICHES AND PIETY.

"I WAS one day," said the late William Jay, of Bath, "visiting with him (John Foster) at the house of a gentleman, who, though a deacon of the church, was too much carried away with the pride of life. The mansion was decorated with every kind of ornament, and the table furnished with every luxury. As we were entering the sumptuous dining room, Foster

pinched my elbow, and said, "Is this the strait gate?"

Foster possessed a somewhat surly temper, and we would by no means endorse all his remarks. Still he was a keen observer as well as a profound thinker, and the question recorded above may well be pondered by all to whom Providence has given wealth. That the rapid increase of wealth in

our country is obliterating the lines of distinction between the church and the world, cannot be denied. Should the process of assimilation continue, it will soon be impossible, from any outward showing, to distinguish between the families which lay claim to piety and those who are confessedly without God. Surely things ought not to be so. If God sees fit to give to a redeemed sinner temporal riches in addition to an eternal inheritance, that is no reason why the recipient should feel less interest in God's cause, and do less to promote his glory. On the contrary, it lays him under increased obligations to gratitude and activity in the work of benevolence.

Which of these two effects are usually produced? Do we find men increasing in good works in proportion as their property increases? Is it expected that a rich man will feel as deep an interest in the cause of spiritual religion as the man of moderate means?

Will the possession of property atone for the want of spirituality? Will a large subscription be an off-set against non-attendance at the prayer meeting? Is there one standard of duty for the rich man, and another for the poor man? Certainly not.

We do not contend that the same duties are, in all cases, incumbent upon

the rich and the poor. We do not contend that the rich man ought to live in the same style as the poor man. It is lawful for the rich man to expend for the comfort of his family more than it is lawful for the poor man to expend. It may be lawful for the rich man to ride in his carriage, when it may be the duty of the poor man to go on foot. God makes men to differ in their temporal circumstances, just as he makes them to differ in mental endowments. In both cases these differences modify duties; but they do not modify the grand principle of duty. It is the duty of both to love God with all the heart. It is the duty of both to do all for the glory of God. It is required of both that they be not conformed to the world. It is the duty of both to work in God's vineyard.

God does not give a Christian wealth merely that he may get more. He gives it to him that he may render a return of gratitude, and that he may have the means of working more efficiently in the vineyard. Is the divine purpose accomplished in the case of the majority of wealthy professors of religion?

The poor men of moderate possessions should not neglect their duty, because some who are rich neglect theirs. Every man must give his own account unto God.

THE VOICE OF THE OLD PULPIT.

I.—THE OLD PULPIT'S APOLOGY FOR SPEAKING.

I hope that the reader will not be alarmed when he finds that a *dumb* creature like myself proposes to address him. The thing is possible and scriptural. Jesus said of his disciples, "If these should hold their peace, the *stones* would immediately cry out." The Bible often refers to the language of the *mute* creation; such as the voice of thy brother's *blood* crieth unto me from the ground"; "The *heavens* shall reveal his iniquity"; "*Day* unto *day* uttereth speech"; "The *birds* of the air shall carry the voice, and *that which hath wings* shall tell the matter." And if all these speak, why should not the Old Pulpit utter his voice also? In telling my *history*, I shall endeavour to be brief, clear, and honest.

I am OLD. I boast of my antiquity. I might prove, from the Bible, that I am more than three thousand years of age. I lived with Solomon and Ezra; consequently, according to the reasoning of Elihu, I demand attention, if "days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom." My outward appearance has been diversified at different periods and places. I have seen pomp, and I have seen simplicity. In 2 Chron. vi. 13, I am thus described:—"For Solomon hath made a *brazen* scaffold"; and in Neh. viii. 4, I am described thus:—"And Ezra stood upon a *pulpit* of *wood*." In the former in-

stance, I am a splendid structure made of brass, and erected in the court of the Temple; in the latter, I am nothing but a simple stage of wood on the side of a street. In the royal chapels, and in some of our large temples, I am made of the most costly materials. Art and wealth combine their efforts to adorn me. But on the day of the great assembly in Wales, I am nothing but a few beams and planks, put one across the other, in the centre of a field. In one case, my drapery is of the finest scarlet, silk, and velvet; but in the other, my only covering is a coarse sackcloth; and I presume that a mountain stone was the pulpit upon which the Best of Preachers stood, to deliver the best of sermons.

My great influence is acknowledged by a large majority in every age and clime. The several denominations differ in their confessions of faith, and explanations of articles, but nearly all agree to invite me to their places of worship. A missionary work is seldom commenced without my assistance. I find myself in nearly all chapels, churches, synagogues, and temples, in very land. I may be called the principal furniture in a place of worship. Every seat faces me, and every worshipper, when he comes to his temple, looks towards me. The most weary would not make a bow for a resting-place if I were not in sight. And, inasmuch as I am seen by all, I have an opportunity to see all, and make remarks upon their conduct.

(To be continued.)

THE DREAM OF CALEB EDMONDS.

"CHRISTIANITY, indeed!" said Mr. Edmonds, as he looked over his books, in the little back parlour behind the shop, "I am disgusted with such hypocrisy!"

There was a dark frown upon the brow of the man of business as he spoke these words, and an irritability in his manner of turning over the leaves before him, which spoke of some bad debt troubling his mind, and robbing him of his good temper.

"What is the matter?" asked a cheerful little woman by the fire, at whose side a basket of stockings told of a large family, and a consequent demand for stitchery.

"Matter!" echoed the husband, "do you not know that Welsford owes me four pounds ten and sixpence?"

"Well, he will pay, I suppose?"

"Not he. The goods were purchased more than a year ago, and I have not had a penny yet!"

"What does he say when you see him?" asked Mrs. Edmonds, who evidently loved to look at the bright side.

"Say? he does not say much to me, I can tell you. I told him not to worry me with his excuses, but to bring his money; and that he need

not cross my door step again until he could do that."

"I am sorry for his wife," said the little stocking-mender, presently; "she appears to be a truly pious woman."

"Pious!" retorted her husband, "yes, and so is he, 'tis that disgusts me. Religion, indeed! and he owes me four pounds ten and sixpence. I thought the Bible said, 'Owe no man anything.' Christianity, forsooth!"

Mr. Caleb Edmonds was a highly respectable grocer in the town of Marlby—in fact, a man of substance, for business had prospered with him. He was industrious and obliging, rising early, working hard; and thus from small beginnings he had risen to the possession of considerable wealth. But although an excellent man of business, Mr. Edmonds was a very ordinary Christian. True, he had begun the race, but he did not press toward the mark; alas for the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches! And, as it is characteristic of a low standard of piety to be harsh and censorious in our judgment of our fellow Christians, so Mr. Edmonds, when he heard of any defect in the character of professors around him, was always

the first to exclaim, "Christianity, indeed!"

Is not this too common with us all? Do we not, even if we give no expression to our thoughts, doubt and hesitate much more than we *should* doubt and hesitate, regarding the reality of the religion of our "Ready-to-halts" and "Feeble-minds?" Do we not set up a standard of perfection for our fellows, which were too lofty, in our view, as a standard for ourselves? And are we not too ready to exclaim against the wanderings of others, even while we turn aside into forbidden paths?

Perhaps such thoughts as these had passed through the mind of Mrs. Edmonds, as she set over her work, for when she rose to leave her basket for some more active household duty, she bent over her husband for a moment, and said gently, "Caleb, I do not like hear you say, '*Christianity, indeed!*' as you did just now. Suppose your fellow Christians were to judge of *you* as harshly as you of them! You often say it;" she continued hastily, "you doubted John Watson's religion yesterday, because he lent money to your rival; and Thornton's because he opposes you in business, and you shook your head about Miss Milwood's piety, because she argued with *you* against total abstinence! '*Judge not that ye be not judged.*'"

Long after his wife left him, these words rang in Caleb's ears—"Judge not!"

At last, as he sat in the twilight, between sleeping and waking—for business was very dull, and he could spare half an hour for rest—a vision stole upon him, and he passed in imagination, rapidly through the scenes which follow.

At first he found himself in a very quiet neighbourhood, and in the presence of three maiden ladies, whose names he knew very well. They had their feet upon the fender, and—their knitting laid aside—were evidently discussing the affairs of their neighbours.

"Such pride!" said the elder, whose name was Rayby, "what will come next, I wonder?"

"The most fashionable boarding-school in R—, I assure you," said another—Miss Philip.

"Ah!" said Miss Rayby, "and I can remember the time—of course I was very young then, but still I can remember—when Caleb Edmonds swept out his own shop."

"Dear me! and now he has the upstart impudence to send his girl to such a school as that!" exclaimed Miss Sophia Milwood, the spinster who had not yet spoken. "O, the pride of human nature!"

"And he a professor, too!"

"Professor!" said Miss Rayby; "religion does not teach a man such absurd pride as that!"

Miss Phillip shook her head, and began to lament the increase of false professors.

"Well," thought Caleb, "I believed that in spending some of my cash upon the education of my children, I could not go very far wrong; but I find I am misunderstood, even here."

The next scene was the drawing-room of John Watson, of whom Mrs. Edmonds had spoken. A lady was making tea behind a silver urn, and a gentleman—her husband—sat beside her.

"Poor Thompson," said Mrs. Watson—for it was she—"I trust he will succeed."

"He shall, if by God's blessing I can compass it."

"He is a very deserving young man," continued the lady; "the manner in which he bore the loss of all his property would win esteem, even if he had no other claim."

Mr. Watson did not reply, his mind had wandered to another branch of the subject. "That Caleb Edmonds," he said at length, "I am surprised at the ill-feeling he displays."

"Towards Thornton?"

"Yes, he is evidently annoyed at the opening of another shop so near his own; whereas, in the principal street of a town like this, he should have expected competition. Besides he has made a little fortune, and has nothing to fear; yet he will not treat George Thornton with ordinary civility."

"I thought he was a religious man," said Mrs. Watson.

"He pretends to be," replied her husband, "but I have not much faith in a religion which brings forth so little fruit!"

Poor Caleb! his wife's words—the *Master's* words—still sounded in his ears as they had never done before, meeting with a responsive echo in his heart.

Again a change, and Mr. Edmonds found himself beside a sickly-looking woman, who, leaning upon her husband's arm, walked slowly towards the house of prayer. It was impossible to look without interest upon her pale and anxious face—a face which had once been beautiful; and equally impossible to disregard the careful tenderness with which her steps were guided by the strong man at her side. Their conversation, too, was worthy of remark—they were speaking of the consolations of the gospel.

"Who knows?" exclaimed the invalid, "perhaps there may be words just suited to our case this morning. Words for the poor!"

"Poor as regards this world only, Mary!"

Her eyes brightened as she looked up cheerfully, "Yes, yes, rich in treasure far more costly than earth's gold, God help us to look up, and to trust him for the 'meat that perisheth.'"

They walked on for awhile, and then the wife said mournfully, "I sometimes fear that it is pride which makes me shrink from meeting Mr. Edmonds, I do shrink from it. O, if we could but pay him."

"We shall be able to do so soon, I hope," said Welsford; "it has been a hard struggle, Mary, starvation almost, but I think it is nearly over."

"Ah, it was all for me! I am sure Mr. Edmonds would be patient, if he knew how much you spent in medicines for me, and how little work you have."

"He is patient, after a fashion; and we have reason to be thankful for that; still he has said some crushing things to me—harsh things which he may live to repent—things which have made me doubt his Christianity.

"Nay," said Mrs. Welsford, gently, "I would not judge him; how many inconsistent things we do."

"You are right. I may not lift up my voice; alas, but little likeness to my Lord is found in me!"

Again the echoing voice thrilled through the soul of the listener—again he heard the words "*Judge not!*"—and as he dwelt upon them the vision slowly faded, and he; Bunyan-like, awoke, "and behold it was a dream!" But the lesson of the dream was not quite lost upon him, for he awoke to a deeper spirit of Christian charity, a nobler self-denial, a holier humility, a nearer likeness to Jesus. He had been taught in that brief twilight musing, one of the grand old lessons of the Book of God.

The fireside morning worship was just ended, and Charles Welsford was about to go forth to his daily toil, when a gentle knock at the door spoke of a visitor; how great was the surprise of all when Caleb Edmonds entered!

"You are come, sir—"

"I am come," said the grocer, interrupting him, "to express my hope that you are not under any concern about the little amount you owe me. Take your time, my good sir, take your time."

The poor man's eyes were filled with tears, and grasping the outstretched hand he tried to speak his thanks.

"My wife," said Mr. Edmonds, turning towards Mrs. Welsford, "put something into my hand, just as I left, for you, ma'am." And forth from his pocket came tea, sugar, biscuits, from the good wife's ample store, till Mary's eyes, too, filled with grateful tears.

"And now," said the visitor kindly, "don't forsake the shop; get your little parcels there, and pay just when it suits you. By the way, if a sovereign would be of any service to you, I have one which will burn a hole in my pocket—as the saying goes—unless I give it to somebody." And before I could reply, he had laid the coin upon the table and was gone.

"Mary," said Mrs. Welsford, "let us thank God for this."

They knelt, and as he breathed forth his heart's gratitude, his wife wept tears of joy, and even the little ones murmured the "Amen."

But Mr. Edmonds did not stop at this; it was to him Charles Welford owed a situation which soon after placed him far above the reach of want; it was to him he owed a host of kindly deeds, which came like sunshine to his inmost soul.

We hasten on. Not alone in this regard was Caleb Edmonds changed, for two days after his strange dream, he walked into his rival's shop, shook hands, invited him to drink tea at his

house, spoke pleasantly about their "opposition," and even hinted at his own retirement at some future day, when his new friend would have "a better chance."

And from that time, the charity which "suffers long and is kind, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," held an almost undisputed sway over the heart of Caleb Edmonds; and ever was the maxim of the Bible borne in mind, "Judg not, that ye may not be judged."

"THIS IS NOT YOUR REST."

Why sittest thou thus dreamily within life's wayside bower,
Fanned by the soothing breeze which stoops to kiss each perfumed flower?
Before thee lies a steep ascent which thou hast yet to climb,
And solemn messages are breathed on every silvery chime;
Night's star-gemmed mantle soon will hide the radiance of the west,
Arise, oh pilgrim, and depart, for "this is not thy rest!"

Nay, linger not, resist each charm that would thy footsteps stay,
And with "Excelsior" on thy lips pursue thine arduous way;
When one fresh eminence is gained let nobler heights be tried,
Nor in self-gratulations waste the hours that swiftly glide;
But in those seasons which may seem the holiest and the best,
Arise, oh Christian, and depart, for "this is not thy rest!"

Some loved one's grave its shadow flings o'er scenes once bright and fair,
And, clad in garniture of woe thou often weepest there!
A seraph face with sweetest smile bends o'er thee in thy dreams,
Earth less attractive now appears and heaven more home-like seems.
Soon parted ones shall meet again in mansions of the blest,
Arise, oh mourner, and depart, for "this is not thy rest!"

How evanescent are the joys which twine around thy path!
How quickly care and change must break the circle round thy hearth!
How painful is the conflict which thou hast with self and sin!
How weary art thou in this world, of all its strife and din!
Then hear, and joyfully obey the call to thee adroost,
Arise, oh pilgrim, and depart, for "this is not thy rest!"

Sept. 9th.

ANNA.

DENOMINATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.

March, Isle of Ely, Cambridge.—The Rev. John Garritt, late of Salem Chapel, Stoke Newington, has engaged to supply the pulpit twelve months.

Inskip, near Preston.—The Rev. J. Compton will resign the pastorate in November.

Chippenham.—The Rev. J. J. Joplin, from Keyusham, near Bristol.

RECOGNITION SERVICES.

Clare, Suffolk.—July 29.—Of the Rev. J. Pells, as pastor of the Baptist Church.

The day was fine, the chapel densely crowded, and the services were of a highly interesting character. In the morning, the Rev. S. Collins, of Grundisburgh, stated the nature of a Gospel Church, and asked the usual questions. In the afternoon, the Rev. J. Cooper, of Wattisham, delivered a very solemn and impressive charge to the minister, from 1 Tim. iv. 10—"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine, &c." In the evening, the Rev. P. Dickerson, of Alie St. London, addressed the church from 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.

Bury, Knowsley Street, August 25th.—A series of religious services took place, in connection with the settlement of the

Rev. A. Ashworth as pastor of the church assembling in the above place of worship. In the afternoon, sermons were preached by the Rev. W. Burehll, of Rochdale, and the Rev. Franklin Howorth, of Bury. In the evening, the Rev. T. Dawson, of Liverpool, delivered the charge to the minister, which was listened to throughout with the deepest interest. The Rev. Joseph Harvey, of Little Leigh, Cheshire, (formerly pastor of Bury) addressed the church, founding his observations on the 17th chap. John, 24 ver.—“Father, I will &c.” Subsequently the congregation was addressed by the Rev. Howe, of Waterbury, and the Rev. P. Prout, of Haslingden.

Ifracombe, Sept. 9.—Recognition of the Rev. J. J. Brown, late of Leicester. After prayer by the Rev. E. Hands, of Appledore, the usual questions were proposed by the Rev. S. Newman, of Barnstaple; the Rev. Thomas Winter, of Bristol, preached from Acts ix, 22—27. About 150 persons partook of tea refreshment, after which a meeting was held, presided over by H. Lee, Esq., of Clifton; and addresses delivered by the Rev. Messrs. Sheldon (Wesleyan), Newman, Hands, Little, Lovingey, Dann, and Winter.

PRESENTATION SERVICE.

London, New Park St. Chapel, Sept. 11.—After the evening lecture, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon presented to Mr. Cutler, the late superintendent, and Mr. Kimber, the late Secretary of the Sabbath school connected with the place, with tokens of affectionate and grateful remembrances of their past services. Mr. Spurgeon, after a suitable address, in the name and in behalf of the teachers, presented Mr. Cutler with a very handsome time-piece, on which was engraved the following inscription:—“Presented by the teachers of New Park Street Sunday School to Mr. Cutler, as a token of their Christian love, on his retiring from the office of superintendent, Sept. 11, 1856”—which Mr. Cutler appropriately acknowledged; and Mr. Kimber was presented by Mr. S. with a Tune book, and the comprehensive edition of Dr. Rippon's Selection, the largest size, and handsomely bound, and Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns to correspond.

Bezley Heath, Kent, Sept. 16.—In the afternoon a Harvest Thanksgiving Sermon was preached by T. W. Medhurst. After tea a public meeting was held, when, after addresses by Messrs. Hewit and Medhurst, the Rev. C. H. Hosken, of Crayford, presented the Rev. J. Wallis, the venerable pastor of the Baptist Church, with a copy of Dr. Kitto's Pictorial Bible, and a purse of money, as a mark of affection from the members of the Church.

SPECIAL SERVICES.

Newtown, Montgomeryshire.—On the first Sabbath in July, was celebrated the first anniversary of Mr. David Evans's ministry in this place. When he came from Swansea, and undertook the charge of the church here, the cause was not in a prosperous condition. The chapel still contain

above a thousand, but for some time had not been well attended. There was also a debt on the chapel of £400. In a few weeks a happy change was manifest. The congregations increased, and it was obvious that the Spirit of God accompanied the faithful and earnest appeals of his servant. There have been received into the Church during the twelve months of Mr. Evans's ministry, one hundred and forty-four members; one hundred and eight of these were by baptism, and one of the number was a Primitive Methodist preacher. But the energy and perseverance of the excellent pastor did not stop here. He said he was preaching a free salvation, and he desired to have a free chapel, and so, excited by his example, the people went to work in earnest, and we are happy in being able to say that on Lord's day, July 8, Mr. Evans announced from the pulpit that the whole debt of £400 was paid off. We also add, that the unanimity, concord, and brotherly love which prevails, is truly gratifying and delightful. May it ever continue, and God have all the glory.

Steventon, Beds.—The celebration of the bi-centenary of the Baptist Church in this village, took place on Tuesday, the 29th of July. The services on the occasion commenced at 2-30 p.m., when the Rev. G. B. Phillips, of Harrod, announced for singing the hundred and thirty second Psalm. After prayer by the Rev. J. Jukes, of Bedford, the Rev. James Simmons, A.M., of Olney, delivered a discourse in every way suitable to the deeply interesting occasion, at the close of which, the Rev. W. Rowe, the respected pastor of the Church, gave a brief history of the cause of Christ in that place, through extracts derived from the very ancient church book. After the company had partaken of tea refreshments in a barn kindly lent, and profusely decorated for the occasion, the services were resumed. After prayer by the Rev. J. Dorney, of Risely, addresses were delivered by the Rev. J. Jukes, and H. Killen, of Bedford, the Rev. Edwd. Cecil, assistant minister at Surrey Chapel, London, and the Rev. Thos. Owen, of Cranfield. The services of the day evidently engaged the attention and interest of the numerous congregations assembled to commemorate this remarkable event; and the union of feeling manifested by the attendance of so many persons, and ministers of different denominations, was peculiarly delightful.

ANNIVERSARIES TO BE HOLDEN.

Bury St. Edmonds, October 17.—The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon will (D.V.) preach two sermons, afternoon and evening, at Mr. Kiven's chapel.

Winslow, Bucks, Oct. 7.—The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon will (D.V.) preach at 12 and 3 o'clock. Refreshments will be provided.

BAPTISMS.

Birmingham, Great King St., July 27.—Five.

Bradford, Yorks, Aug. 3.—Seven by Mr. Wood.

Brighton, Ebenezer, Sept. 4.—Eleven by Mr. Atkinson.

Bury, Lancashire, Ebenezer, July 5.—Two by Mr. Ashworth.
Calvary, Brynmawr, Aug. 10.—One, and Sept. 6, three, by Mr. Roberts.
Clayton, York, June 15.—Four by Mr. Asten.
Cheltenham, Cumbergy, Aug. 24.—Five by Rev. J. Smith.
Coventry, Aug. 3.—Two by Mr. Goadby.
Cowbridge, Gloucestershire, July 27.—One by Mr. Davies.
Crayford, Kent, June 29.—One by Mr. Hosken.
Dringington, Bucks, July 24.—Four by Mr. Bedding.
Gravesend, Aug. 27.—Seven by Mr. Stringer.
Hillsley, Gloucestershire, Aug. 10.—Five by Mr. Keller.
Kettering, July 31.—Three in the baptistry of Mr. Mursell's chapel, by the Rev. Thomas Toller, minister of the Independent chapel, Kettering.
Kingstunley, July 27.—Nine by the pastor.
Leamington, July 6.—Three by Octavius Winslow, D.D.
Liverpool, Myrtle St., July 30.—Five, three of them teachers of the Sabbath School, by Mr. Hugh Stowell Brown.
 —, *Soho St.*, Sept. 21.—Two young men, belonging to the Bible class, by the Rev. Joseph Harvey, who is supplying the pulpit at Soho for a season.
Longford, near Coventry, Aug. 24.—Five by Mr. Veals.
London, New Park St., Aug. 28.—Fourteen by Mr. Spurgeon.
Maiseyhampton, near Fairford, Aug. 3.—Five by Mr. D. Wassall, of Bath.
March, Isle of Ely, Sept. 3.—Three by Mr. Garritt.
Manchester, York St., Aug. 31.—Three by Mr. Cheney.
 —, *Rochdale Road*, Aug. 4.—Three, and Sept. 7, one, by Mr. Taylor.
Newtown, Montgomeryshire, Sept. 7.—After a sermon by the Rev. D. Jones, of Folkestone, fifteen by Mr. D. Evans.
Padham, Aug. 10.—Eight by Mr. Kitchin, of Skibden.
Pattishall and Eastcote, June 13.—Six, July 2^d, one, and Aug. 3, two, by Mr. Chamberlain.

Pill, near Bristol, Aug. 10.—Nine by Mr. Lee.
Portsea, Kent St., Sept. 3.—Five by Mr. J. Davis.
Quinton, Bucks, Aug. 10.—One by Mr. Walker.
Reading, July 28.—Eight by Mr. Aldis, one of whom a son of the esteemed administrator.
South Molton, Devon, July 20.—Three by Mr. Little.
Southsea, Portsea, July —.—Ten by Mr. E. Davis.
Stoney Stratford, Bucks, July 20.—The Rev. R. J. Langridge, Independent minister, from London, by Mr. Foster. Mr. Langridge has commenced his stated labours as pastor of the church at Nunestbn.
Stroud, Gloucestershire, Sept. 4.—Five by Mr. Yates.
Twerton, Bath, July 6.—One by Mr. Clarke.
Weston by Weedon, June 22.—One, and July 13, two, by Mr. Ibberson.
Whitehaven, June 22.—Two, Aug. 3, one, by Mr. Wilson.

DEATHS.

Buckley, Mrs., many years a member of the Particular Baptist Church, Soho Street, Liverpool, wife of one of the deacons, on July 30th, aged 63. She suffered severely for many months, and was enabled by the grace of God, to hold on her way unto the end, rejoicing in the salvation of her Lord and Saviour. When told by her medical attendant that her sickness was unto death, she gave proof of the reality of religion by submitting cheerfully to the will of her Lord. She knew that "Jesus has done all things well," and realized in her own experience
 " 'Tis religion that can give,
 Sweetest pleasure while we live,
 'Tis religion *does* supply,
 Solid comfort when we die."

Reynolds, Rev. W., the late pastor of the Baptist Church at March, Cambs, and formerly of Greenwich, and Eynsford, Kent, on Saturday, September the 6th, aged 71.
Rogers, Hester, youngest daughter of Mr. H. Rogers, Eynsford, Kent, Aug. 27. Aged 13.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We tender our thanks to a large number of brethren in town and country for their valuable communications. We, however, crave their patience, as many articles now in type are obliged to stand over for want of space. For this reason the insertion of Mr. Bulfern's excellent paper must also be postponed until next month. We have received for review "Keach on the Parables," and several other publications. These will be noticed in due course. A pamphlet in reply to a disgustingly scurrilous attack upon the "Soldier's Friend, and Army Scripture Readers Society, has been forwarded for notice. The Committee of this most excellent Society have administered a severe but well merited castigation upon their clerical slanderer, while they have borne high and honourable testimony to the character and services of their excellent and indefatigable secretary, the Rev. W. A. Blake.

"*Negative Theology*," by Dr. Campbell. Under this title a pamphlet is announced in our advertising pages. It has reached a fourth edition within a few days after its appearance. We have read both Dr. Campbell's and Mr. Binney's pamphlets, and we deeply deplore that the latter gentleman should have put himself in a position to deserve the tremendous thrashing he has received at the hands of the stalwart editor of the "British Banner." Mr. Binney's postscript to his former privately issued brochure, is in our opinion a miserable failure; and is within a degree of being a sublime specimen of arrogant assumption. Mr. B. in effect says—"My word none have right to dispute." We have carefully watched the progress of this painful controversy, and unhesitatingly we say, that the Congregational Churches owe a large debt of gratitude to Mr. Grant and Dr. Campbell, for their faithful and courageous defence of "the faith once delivered to the saints."

We go to press this month with a white paper wrapper. The "Messenger" will however appear in its usual livery next month.

THE OFFENCE OF THE CROSS.

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,

Minister of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.

"And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased," Gal. v. 11.

THE religion of Jesus is the most peaceful, mild, and benevolent religion which was ever promulgated. When we compare it with any set of dogmas invented by men, there is not one of them that can stand the least comparison with it for gentleness, mildness, and love. As for the religion of Mahomet, it is the religion of the vulture; the religion of Jesus is that of the dove—all is mercy, all is mild: it is like its Founder, it is an embodiment of pure benevolence, grace, and truth. And yet, strange to say, gentle as the Gospel is, and inoffensive as its professors have always proved themselves to be, when they have acted rightly—not resisting evil, but submitting to it, whatever it might be—yet there has never been anything which has caused more disturbance in the world than the Christian religion. It is not a sword, and yet it has brought war into the world; it is not a fire, and yet it has consumed many old institutions, and has burned much that men thought would last for ever; it is a Gospel of peace, and yet it has parted the dearest friends, and caused direst feuds and confusions everywhere; though in itself it is all gentleness, yet it seems as if the standard of the dove were the standard of battle, and as if raising up the peaceful cross had been the signal for war; like the blood-red fiery cross, which of old they passed through the tribes in Scotland, to provoke to battle. Strange, yet strangely true, that the cross has always been an offence; that the cross has provoked the hardest battles, and the stoutest strifes which ever men had with men.

We shall discourse to you a little concerning what "the offence of the cross" is; secondly, as to how men show their offence against the cross; thirdly, we shall have a little to say to those who are offended at the cross, to show them their folly; and, lastly, shall conclude by an inference or two, for the special benefit of Christian ministers, and the Church at large.

I.—WHEREIN CONSISTS THE OFFENCE OF THE CROSS?

Our limits forbid any attempt to be elaborate, and we commence by saying, That "the offence of the cross" lies, first, *in the way in which it deals with all human wisdom*. The philosopher looks at the cross, and he puts his glass before his eyes and says: I cannot see anything so very wonderful in it, with this splendid glass of mine, more than can be seen by that poor, humble peasant; I don't care about such a system as that. Any simpleton can understand the cross. So he passes by, and sneers at it. The man who loves controversy comes to the Gospel, and finds that there is in it pure dogmatism. Such things are said to be true, and sinners must believe them, or else be damned. I shall not do it says he; I shall not yield implicit faith; I like disputing upon points; I like controverting them; I shall not listen to your preacher who says: This is the truth, and nothing else. I will not hear the man who speaks thus authoritatively; I like men who give me margin enough, who let me believe what I like and no more; I like to use my reason and common-sense. When you come to talk to him about religion which says: Believe that, or else be lost; believe that, or else be shut out of the pale of salvation, he turns on his heel, and says: I will not believe any such thing. And when he asks what it is he is to believe, he professes himself to be wiser even than that. What! says he, believe in the atonement! I can't; it is contrary to my common-sense. Believe election! why it shocks my humanity. Believe in the total depravity of human nature, and the impossibility of being saved without being born again, why I cannot receive it for a single moment. It is not contrary to all that the schoolmen ever taught; and different from what ever any philosopher ever would have invented; I shall not receive it. And

he turns away with an anathema against the cross; he cannot bear it by reason of its simplicity; if he could describe it as being so wonderful that he really could by no means make the people understand it, only that he understood it himself; or if it were some figure of which he could say—"It is most plain and palpable, I understand it all," he would not mind it. But as it is so simple and plain he turns away. He cannot bear the Gospel of the cross; it has not wisdom enough in it for him; forgetting that the knowledge of Christ crucified is the most excellent of sciences; that never is reason so glorified, as when it seats itself down under the shadow of the cross.

2.—But there is something which hurts men's pride rather more, that is, it is *opposed to all their notions of human ability*. The man who is relying on his own strength does not like it. If a man preach a Gospel which tells the sinner that he has power to save himself; if he preach a Gospel which tells us Christ having died to put all men in a salvable condition, that they have only to exercise the power they have and they will be able to deliver themselves—if a man thus preach something which exalts the skill and strength of the creature, he will never offend his hearers. But if he once begins to lay the sinner down in the dust and declare, "No man can come to Christ except the Father which hath sent him, draw him;" and that in the Scriptures all men are declared to be "dead in trespasses and sins;" then they turn away and say, "I am not going to be insulted so, to have all my powers levelled to the dust! Am I to be made into a mere machine? into a piece of clay, and to lie passive in the potter's hands?" If a minister give him a little to do himself, and let him sacrifice a little to his own idol, he would drink it down "as the ox drinketh down water;" but since we lay him powerless, like the poor bleeding man when the Samaritan met him, he says, "I will have nothing to do with you."

3. And the cross offends men yet again, because it goes clean *contrary to their ideas of human merit*. There is not a soul in all the world, that by nature loves to be stripped of all merit. No! the last thing a man likes to part with is his righteousness. I have known poor sinners stand on Sinai's top until their knees knocked together, and they have held fast by their self-righteousness even there. I have known men stand close to the place where God's earthquakes were coming under their feet, and the thunder and the lightning played above their heads, and yet they still held fast their self-righteousness. It is a hard thing to get that away from men. You know Bunyan says when Great-heart slew Giant Despair, the giant had as many lives as a cat; well, I am sure self-righteousness has many more lives than that. It is the hardest thing in the world to kill. You may cut the evil weed self-righteousness up, but when you think you have got to the bottom of it, it will be up again before you shall sharpen your knife to cut it off once more. It is bred in man's nature. When you preach against it, O, how men will roar against you. They cannot bear that. Sometimes I receive letters from persons who say—"I should not wonder if all your congregation were all to live in sin, because you are always preaching against man's righteousness, and preaching to poor sinners to come by simple faith, and be saved by Christ." They would not "wonder" I dare say; but I should "wonder" if they did live in sin. And I bless God I have no cause to wonder about that, for a holier people you will not find this side heaven, than those who receive into their hearts the doctrine of Christ's righteousness. This we will say of them, that grace hath wrought in them good fruits; that they do walk in the fear of the Lord, in the love of one another, and in the practice of uprightness and godliness. Well, men cannot bear it, because it lowers their merits. Tell men they are a very good sort of people, then they will like it. Give people a little self-respect and they will get on. Self-respect—that is the ruin of thousands. I am sure it is when we begin to say—

"I am nothing at all,
And Jesus Christ is my all in all."

that we are saved. But as long as we have respect unto ourselves, I am sure there is not much hope for us then. Nevertheless, this is "the offence of the cross," that we do not let men have any merit in the matter.

4. But there is another offence, which is a very sore one, and the world has never forgiven the cross that "offence" yet:—*it wont allow any distinctions of mankind.* The cross makes moral and immoral persons come to heaven by the same road; the cross makes rich and poor go to heaven by the same door; the cross makes the philosopher and peasant walk on the same highway of holiness; the cross procures the same crown to the poor creature with one talent, that he with ten shall receive. Hence, the wise man saith—"What! am I to go and be saved by the same cross which saves a man who does not know his letters?" Your fine lady says—"Am I to be saved by the same fashion as my servant girl?" The gentleman says—"Am I to be saved the same way as that chimney-sweep?" And he who boasts in self-righteousness says—"What! am I to jostle against a harlot, to elbow a drunkard on the road to heaven? I wont go to heaven at all, then!" 'Then, sir, you will be lost. There are no two roads to heaven. It is the same road for everyone that does come there; and hence, the cross has always been offensive to men of mark and might—few kings and queens have ever bent before it. They have covered the cross up with some fine gilt ornament, and they have said they loved it. It was not the cross they cared for, it was the meretricious ornament. If it had been the simple cross, they would have dragged it through the streets the same as Mahomet's people did the cross at Jerusalem. Thus much on the offence of the cross.

II.—This brings me now to tell, HOW PERSONS SHOW THEIR OFFENCE AGAINST THE CROSS OF CHRIST. In old times, they did it by burning, torturing, and tormenting Christians, making them suffer all kinds of indescribable agonies. But that method did not answer, and so the devil adopts other measures now. He found that the more he oppressed them, like Israel in Egypt, the more they multiplied; and so he tries another fashion. How does he do it? Not exactly by open persecution; but "the offence of the cross" shows itself sometimes by *private persecution.* You do not hear, all of you, of the persecution that is going on in regard to the Lord's people. Every now and then things of this sort come to our notice, though you may not hear of them; besides, how many are there who have drunken husbands, who persecute their wives incessantly because they will cleave fast to God! How many a young man, how many a young woman is there who is called to suffer persecution from father and mother and sister and brother, for Christ's sake! Persecution is not over yet; it works slyly, and comes not out openly before the world. It comes not out in Smithfield, though there may not be a house in the neighbourhood of Smithfield but what reeks with it; it comes not out in an honest garb, but ever sits in a covert way. It is not the lion, but the prowling jackall, though it is as wild a beast and as ravenous as ever. And when it does not display itself in positive acts, it operates by means of jeers and scoffs, and by the shrug of the shoulder; and, let me say, more men have been ruined by this practice than by the direst slanders. Men who shrug their shoulders generally do a deal of mischief, though they may not know it. When setting at table I have mentioned a person's name, and some one has said, "Oh!" and shrugged his shoulders—the man's character was half gone! If the person had anything to say why could not he say it out, and not leave us in the dark to surmise all manner of iniquities? But men will say—"I don't persecute you; you can go to chapel as often as you like;" and yet there is the cold sneer, the jest; every idle rumour is circulated, and everything that can be invented against the minister of the Gospel and Christian people—all still showing that there is an offence in the cross.

But I will tell you the patent plan now-a-days. It is not to oppose the cross; but it is to *wind round the cross, and try to get the cross to alter its*

shape a little. Men say—"We preach the gospel, too." They alter it; they misshape it; they make it "another gospel which is not another." Let others say, if they like, that yea and nay can meet together; that fire and water can kiss each other; that Christ and Belial can be twins: the true minister of Jesus Christ cannot do that. Truth is truth; what is opposite cannot be truth. Truth is one, and that which opposes it must certainly go down. But that is the fashion. Look at very many of the churches; they say they hold the truth. Look at their articles; there are all the five points. And if you ask the ministers whether they believe election? "Certainly," they say. If you ask them whether they believe all the great cardinal truths of the Gospel? "Oh, yes," they say; "certainly. We believe them, but we do not think they ought to be preached to the common people." Oh! you have a fine notion of yourselves, if you do not think the common people as good as you are, and can receive the doctrines as well as you. "Oh! but they are dangerous; they drive the people to Antinomianism; they make them 'Hypers,' and the people would be ruined." They say this; but when we write to them, they reply, "O, we are as sound as you are!" Yes; but it is one thing to be sound, and another thing to preach sound truth. I never will believe a man to be better than he says. If a man does not out with the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, we like him none the better because he says he believes it— but we will like him ten times worse! We would rather he did not believe it at all than conceal his sentiment. They hide the truth, and prove that they are as much offended with the cross as if they openly tried to refute its doctrine. God send us the day when the pure, unadulterated doctrines of the grace of God, which is in Christ Jesus, shall yet be proclaimed in every chapel, and shall be heard in every street, and received by every professed Christian.

III.—Now we come, in the third place, TO SAY SOMETHING TO THOSE WHO ARE OFFENDED AT THE CROSS. In the first place, *how foolish it is* of a man who does not believe the Gospel to oppose those who do. If a man does not love the Gospel, he might let other people alone that do. You have often heard of the old fable of the dog in the manger, but here is another, here is the dog out of the manger—he does not even lie on the hay himself, and yet he barks at those that come to feed. He does not love the gospel, and because they do he hates them. Why, surely, what you do not want yourselves, you might let other people have in quietness. You need not oppose those for carrying away what you count worthless rubbish. Why should you be so offended, and so endeavour to stand against the truth, since you cannot get anything out of it, and may burn your fingers for your trouble?

2. Then, how foolish it is to be offended at the cross, *seeing that you cannot stop its progress.* He who should place himself before Juggernaut's car to be crushed, would be as wise as you who are standing against the gospel. If it be true, recollect truth must prevail. Yet, who are you to stand against it? You will be crushed; but let me tell you when the car goes over you, the wheel won't be put up an inch by your size. For what are you? A small tiny gnat, a creeping worm, which that wheel will crush to less than nothing, and not leave you even a name as having been an opponent of the Gospel. There have been men that have stood up and said, "We will stop the chariot of Christ." Thousands have looked at them, and have been afraid. Their trumpets have blown loud and strong, and some poor Christians have said, "Stand aside! Here comes a man who will stop the chariot." At one time it was Tom Paine; then it was Robert Owen. But what became of them? Did the chariot stop for them? No; it went on just as if there never had been a Tom Paine or a Robert Owen in the world. Let all the infidels in the world know assuredly that the Gospel will go on just as well with them as without them. I believe it is all a waste of time to go after these men as Mr. Brewin Grant does. Poor creatures! their efforts to oppose the Gospel are not worth our

notice. They cannot stop the truth, for it is mighty and must prevail. Ay! sometimes the gnat thinketh to quench the sun. Go, gnat, and do it, and burn thy wings, and die. Some tiny insect thinketh to drink the ocean dry. Drink the ocean; ay, and thou wilt sink, and it will drink thee. Go, ye who despise the Gospel; what can ye do? It cometh on "conquering and to conquer." The more enemies the Gospel has, I always think, the more it will advance. As the old warrior said, "The more enemies there are, the more there are to be taken prisoners, the more there are to be killed, and the more to run away." No! double your hosts, ye opposers! Come on against us with a mightier power still! Rage ye more loudly! Slander ye more foully! Do what ye can, victory is ours! It is predestinated! The iron column of predestination standeth firm, and on its top there are the eagle wings of victory to every believer—victory to the Church of God. God's truth must conquer and shall conquer; wherefore, then, dost thou, as a foolish creature, hope to oppose the Gospel because it offends thee. The stone shall overcome and crush thee that falleth upon thee.

3. But another thought, and I have done with this. O man! if thou art one who hatest the Gospel, let me say to thee solemnly how doubly *foolish thou art to be offended with Christ, who is the only one who can save thee*. As well might the drowning man be offended with the rope which is cast to him, and which is the only means of salvation; as well might the dying patient be offended with the cup of medicine which is put to his lips, and which alone can save his body from death; as well might the man whose house is burning be offended with the fireman who roughly puts the fire escape against his window—as thou offended with Christ. Offended with him who would snatch thee as "a brand from the burning"! Offended with him who alone can quench the fire of hell for thee! Offended with him whose blood alone can wash thee white, and give thee a place with him in glory everlasting! Offended with him! Thou art mad indeed. Not Bedlam itself can produce a maniac more foolish than thou art. Ah, ye despisers, ye shall wonder and perish. Ye are offended with the Gospel because it does not let you have any merit. Why, you have not got any, and why are you offended about that? You are offended at the Gospel because it does not want anything of you. If it did want anything of you, you would be lost. It is just the Gospel for you; it is made on purpose; it fits your condition; it is adapted to your case—and yet you are offended with it! O, how can it be? Did you ever hear of a man that was offended with a coach that was carrying him because it had wheels? Why should you be offended with the Gospel because it is full of free grace? for it could not advance except on the wheels of free grace. What! offended with the Gospel because it lays you low? Don't you know that it is the very best place for you? for the devil would have you very high. My dear friends, I beseech you by Christ himself, do think a little on this matter, why, you are offended with the Gospel. I know it grates on your prejudices. When you first hear it you do not love it; but remember it is your only salvation. Are you offended with that which alone must save you? Offended with that which can put a crown on your head, a palm branch in your hand, and give you bliss for ever? Offended with that? Then, methinks, when you sink to hell, you will look up to heaven and say, "Ah, Christ! I was offended with thee, and now I see thou wast the only Saviour. I hated thy name, of which it is written, 'At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow.' I hated that Saviour who was the only Saviour to redeem sinners from sin."

IV.—Lastly, WE OFFER ONE OR TWO INFERENCES, and the first is this:—*If the cross is an offence, and always was an offence, what is the reason why so many professed Christians go on so easily from January to December, and never have any trouble about it?* Old John Berridge says: "If you do not preach the Gospel, you may sleep soundly enough; but, if you do preach it thoroughly, you will hardly have a sound place in your skin, for you will soon

have enemies enough after you." Oh! how is it we never hear of any scandal against a great many ministers? Every thing goes easily and comfortably with them. Nobody is ever offended with their preaching, but people go out of their chapel doors and say, "What a nice sermon! It was just the thing for everybody, and nobody could be offended." They do not preach the Gospel fully, or else they would be sure to offend the people. Somebody says to me—"Do you know that Mrs. So-and-so was fearfully offended with you?" Then I bless God for it. A celebrated preacher was once told that he had pleased his hearers. "Ah," said he, "there is another sermon lost." The most effective sermons are those which make opposers of the Gospel bite their lips, and gnash their teeth. "That preaching is worth little," Rowland Hill used to say, "that cannot make the devil roar. He preaches but very little truth, who does not sometimes set him roaring against him." Depend upon it, Satan does not like the Gospel better than he did, and the world does not like the Gospel one scrap better than it did. And if there is not so much persecution and hatred, it is because men do not come out with the plain, simple truths. People go to hear nice velvet-tongued preachers; they like the minister to prophesy smooth things unto them. "I wont go to hear that Mr. So-and-so," they say, "for he will be sure to offend me. I could not bear it; I should be horrified." Now what is the reason of this? The one preaches a Gospel that suits your corrupt, carnal tastes, and that is no Gospel; and the other preaches the truth of God. But do men think we want to offend them? Do they think there is any profit to us in driving our hearers out of doors? Nay, God knows, the hard things we often say cause us more pain than they do our hearers. But it is a good thing when we care little for men, and when we have learnt to live above the world. Once let men come out with the plain Gospel, and we shall soon hear the laughter, and scorn, and jeers. It was an ill day when the sons of God made affinity with the daughters of men; and it will be an ill day for the church when the world speaks well of it, and everybody commends it. The sect that is most spoken against is usually the sect where Christ most dwelleth; but the sect that is lapped in plenty, and dandled on the knees of honour is usually the most corrupt. Preach the Gospel firmly, steadfastly, steadily, strongly, out-and-out, and you will not be long without hearing something about "the offence of the cross."

Our last thought is this. O, my brethren, *how much reason have we to bless and extol our gracious God, if we have not any offence against the cross.* I hope many can unite with me in saying there is nothing in the Bible that offends us; there is nothing in the Gospel that offends us now. If there is anything you do not understand, you do not hate it; if it seems dark and mysterious you do not laugh, but you are willing to learn. Ah, my God, if all I have ever preached be false, I stand prepared to disown it when thou shalt teach me better; if all I have ever learnt be a mistake, and I have not learnt it of thee, I will not be ashamed to recant it in that hour when thou shalt teach me more of thyself, or show me my error. We are not ashamed to bring ourselves wholly into the mould of Scripture, to take it just as it stands, to believe it, and to receive it; and if you are in that state, mark you, you are saved—for no man can say he receives the Gospel wholly, loves it all, and receives it in his heart, and can yet be a stranger to it. I have heard preachers ignorantly talk about "natural" love to the Gospel. There cannot be such a thing. I heard some one say there was a "natural" love to Christ. It is all rubbish. Nature cannot beget a love to Christ, nor love to any good thing; that must come of God, for all things are of him. There is nothing good in us by nature. Every conviction must in some way or another come from the Holy Spirit. Even if it is a temporary one, it must be traced to him, if it is good. O, let us adore, and exalt, and magnify the mighty grace that has made us love the gospel! for I am sure, with some of us, there was a time when we hated it as much as any people in all the world. Old John Newton

used to say—"You who are called Calvinists, though you are not Calvinists, but the old, legitimate, successors of Christ, you ought above all men to be very gentle with your opponents, for, recollect, according to your own principles, they cannot learn truth unless they are taught of God, and if you be taught of God you ought to bless his name; and if they have not, you should not be angry with them, but pray to God to give them a better education." Don't let us make any extra "offence of the cross" by our own ill-humour, but love the cross at all times. Let us rejoice exceedingly that we do love it.

Ah! poor sinner, what sayest thou? Art thou offended with the cross? No, thou art not. It is there, thou wishest to loose thy sins. Dost thou wish this moment to come to Christ? And sayest thou—"I have no offence against Christ? O, that I knew where I might find him, I would come even to his seat!" Well, if thou wantest Christ, Christ wanteth thee; if thou desirest Christ, Christ desireth thee. Yea, more; if thou hast one spark of desire after Christ, Christ hath a whole burning mountain of desire after thee. He loveth thee better than thou canst love him. Rest assured thou art not first with God. If thou art seeking him, he hath sought thee first of all. Come, then, thou destitute, thou weary, thou lost, thou helpless, thou ruined, thou chiefest of sinners; come, put thy trust in his blood, and his perfect righteousness, and thou wilt go on thy way rejoicing in Christ, set free from sin, delivered from iniquity, rendered as safe, though not as happy, as the very angels that now sing high hosannas before the throne of the Most High!

THE WAY TO PLEASE GOD.

BY THE REV. JAMES SMITH, CHELTENHAM.

"How he may please the Lord."—1 Cor. vii. 32.

THE Apostle, in replying to several questions sent him by the church at Corinth, teaches us that we should live detached from the world, holding all the things of time with a very loose hand. We are only here for a time, and it may be for a very short time; therefore the pleasures or pains, the acquisitions or losses of the present, will not affect us long. We should pass through the world as those who are not of it, keeping ourselves distinct from it. Influenced by other principles, walking by another will, we should aim at another end in all we do. The one end of the unmarried, according to the Apostle, was to please God; and this should be the great end we always keep in view. Nothing is worth a moment's consideration in comparison with this, "How I may please the Lord?"—the Lord who created me by his power, redeemed me by his blood, sanctified me by his grace, and promises that I shall dwell with him in glory for ever. Be this our subject, then, for a little season, and let us ask, "*How we may please the Lord!*"

If we would please God, we must receive right views of him into our minds. We must conceive of him as lovely. He has given us such a revelation of his nature, attributes, and perfections in his Word, and in the person of his Son, as will, if received into the mind and heartily believed, incline our hearts to seek to please him. Here he is represented as infinitely loving, and impartially just. The former inspires us with confidence, the latter fills us with reverence. Because he is love, I shall not slavishly fear him; and because he is impartially just, I shall not attempt to take undue liberties with him. Let us study the character of God as revealed in Jesus, praying the Holy Spirit to unfold that character to us, and we shall love him, and as a natural consequence of our love, seek to please him.

If we would please God, we must be reconciled to him, and live at peace with him. This brings us to the cross. At the cross alone can we be reconciled to God. Here it is that we see God in Christ, reconciling the world unto

himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. Here I hear God saying "Sinner, I want you to be reconciled to me, I will pardon all your sins, I will forget all your transgressions, I will treat you as a friend, if you do but surrender yourself to me. I only ask your confidence and your love. I have given my Son to suffer, bleed, and die in your stead; and now I am prepared to place to your account the merit of all he has done and suffered. "This subdues the heart, destroys the enmity, produces repentance, begets confidence, and draws forth love. Reconciliation is effected. The soul is at peace with God, and the way to maintain peace, is to have constant dealings with the blood of Christ. To view God as the God of peace, and make it the one business of life to please him.

If we would please the Lord, *we must exercise filial confidence in him.* God wishes us to call him Father, and treat him as a father. Nor will he be pleased with us except we do so. Hence he lovingly speaks to us, as if he were asking a great favour of us, and says—"Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth." "Call me Father, treat me as a father." Now the child has confidence in the father's wisdom, care, and kindness; just so should we. The child obeys his father without reasoning, and expects him to fulfil his word without gainsaying; so should we. The testimony of Paul is striking—"Without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

If we would please the Lord, *we must keep the eye directed to him in all things.* We must act as under his eye, and act as those who must give account to him. If we lose sight of God, we shall be sure to displease him. In all our ways we must acknowledge him, and then he will direct our steps. We must look to him for wisdom and strength, for will and direction, and do everything as in his presence. As the eyes of a servant are unto the hands of his master, and as the eyes of a maiden are unto the hands of her mistress, so should our eyes be constantly up unto the Lord.

If we would please God, *we must endeavour cheerfully to acquiesce in his will.* His will is like his nature, and his nature is like his law, holy, just and good. Now if God's will is holy, just, and good, then whatever God wills is so; and if whatever God wills is holy, just, and good, it is but reason that we should acquiesce in his will. The will of God is the law of the universe. The will of God not only rules the vast whole, but every, even the minutest part. He doeth according to his will in heaven, in earth, and on the seas. He wills to permit, or he wills to work, whatever takes place, and all with a view to the best interests of his people, therefore, it ought to be our daily aim to bring our wills to acquiesce with his will. Nor shall we ever be happy until it is so. God is pleased when we heartily wish him to rule, and desire that in all things he should have his way; and while God is pleased, we are both happy and holy.

If we would please God, *we must be clothed with humility.* God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Foremost among the things that God hates, is a proud look. When humbled under a sense of his goodness and our own vileness, we receive everything from him with gratitude, and lay low at his feet; confessing our sins, and admiring his grace, we please him. A deep sense of our unworthiness, connected with steady confidence in God, and expectation of all promised blessings from God, is pleasing in his sight. It is not humility to doubt, fear, and despond, these things more frequently spring from pride. True humility believes when God speaks, acts when God bids, waits when God commands, expects when God promises, and stands silent while God reproveth. It yields to God, is silent before God, and always justifies God.

If we would please God, *we must honour his beloved Son.* "This," said Jesus, "is the will of him that sent me, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father; he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth

not the Father that sent him." To "honour Jesus is to believe him, confide in him, imitate him, and worship him. If I would please the Father, I must think highly of Jesus, speak well of Jesus, and act becomingly toward Jesus. I must look to him as my Prophet to teach me, as my Priest to atone for me, and as my King to rule over me and in me. I must admit his claims, believe his doctrines, trust his promises, wear his robe of righteousness, rely on his atoning blood, practise his precepts, copy his example, and spread his fame. I must enthrone him in my affections, crown him in my songs, and prefer him in my heart of hearts. The more I honour Jesus, the more God is pleased with me, and the greatest proof I have of the work of the Holy Spirit within me.

If we would please God, *we must watch and strive against inward sin.* If sin has power in the heart, it will rule in the life; and if sin is not watched over, confessed before God, and daily pardoned by God, it will rule in our mental bodies. Nothing offends God but sin, and no sin offends him like the sin of his own children. If we indulge in any sin, we cannot please God, nor shall we be allowed to enjoy communion with God. But sin is always indulged if it is not sought out, dragged to the cross, and exposed before God's throne. In vain do we talk of pleasing God, if we do not watch against our easily besetting sins, and strive to overcome them in strength derived from God. O for more tenderness of conscience, more hatred to hidden sin, and more jealous watchfulness over the evils that lurk in our hearts!

If we would please God, *we must be zealous in his cause.* God identifies himself with his cause on earth. His honour is involved in it. He glorifies himself by it. He requires us to view it as he does, feel toward it as he does, and act in it as he does. He hates indifference and lukewarmness. He loves to see life, energy, determination, and zeal. How then can he be pleased with us if we think more of our own interests than his; do more for our own gratification than for his glory? If we are lively in the world, and indifferent in the church? If we are zealous for gold, but careless about godliness? It cannot be, Phineas was commended, and received the promise of an everlasting covenant, because he was zealous for his God, and Laodicea was threatened and punished because it was luke-warm, and neither hot nor cold.

If we would please the Lord, *we must carefully avoid what displeases him; especially, loving the present world.* This caused the apostacy of Demas, and has ruined thousands beside. Therefore the apostle John wrote to the brethren—"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." And what is in the world? Wealth, honour, pleasure. Christians are not of the world, *even as* Jesus was not of the world. They are therefore called upon to come out of it, and be separate from it. They should be influenced by other principles, walk by other rules, and seek higher and holier ends. When we are on terms of friendship with the world, imbibing its spirit, adopting its maxims, and enjoying its pursuits, then we displease God, for "the friendship of the world is enmity with God, if any man be the friend of the world, he is the enemy of God." So also, when *we grieve the Holy Spirit.* And the Holy Comforter is grieved whenever we indulge in any sin, encourage low thoughts of Christ, or lose sight of the great end of our vocation. Once more, when we *indulge in sloth, and self-indulgence.* How many are slothful now! How much self-indulgence prevails among professors now! How little mortifying of the flesh, putting off the old man, or being crucified with Christ, do we witness now! How many walk on the very margin of Christian liberty, and how many step over the boundary line. Yet it is said by the Apostle—"If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Finally, if we would please the Lord, *we must in all things aim at his glory.* For this purpose he created us at first, and for this purpose he redeemed us, at the expense of the life of his Son. Therefore he says to us—"Ye are not your

own, ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your bodies, and in your spirits which are God's." And to shew that this is to be carried out into all the circumstances of every day life, he says—"Wherefore, whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." God's glory is therefore to be consulted in everything. In the pleasures of the table, in the active duties of life, in our dress, in our pleasures, down to the minutest particular, we should aim at God's glory. This is the way to be holy, and this is the way to be happy. How many evils would be avoided, how many dangers would be escaped, and how many temptations would be overcome, if we were in the habit of asking before we act, "Will this glorify God?" determined if it will not, to refuse to engage in it. Then, yes then, shall we please God, when every purpose is formed, every plan laid, every purchase made, and every engagement entered into, with a view to the glory of God.

Observe, *God is easily pleased, if our spirit is filial.* As the parent in nature is pleased with a mere trifle from a child, if it manifests an affectionate disposition, and a desire to please, just so is our heavenly Father. *We cannot be happy, if the grace of God is in our hearts, unless our ways please God.* This is impossible, because there will be no sweet communion, no refreshing communications, no cheering smiles, no witnessing of the Spirit in our hearts. *The grand object to be pursued by us, is pleasing God.* On this our heart should be set. To this should all our efforts tend. For this purpose should everything be done. *If we have the inward consciousness that we are pleasing God, we need not fear anyone or anything..* What can harm you if ye be followers of that which is good. When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. Sweet must have been the satisfaction of Jesus when he testified to the Jews concerning his Father—"I do always those things that please him." Precious, also, was the testimony borne to Enoch before his translation, that "he pleased God." If God is pleased with me, let the world frown upon me, let Nature be convulsed around me, let the most terrible visitations be witnessed by me, my heart shall not fear, but with one of old will I say—"Therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;" for if God is pleased with me it must be well with me, and well for ever. But no unconverted sinner can possibly please God; for it is written—"So [then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God." No, there must first be faith in Christ, submission to the righteousness of God, reconciliation through the blood of the cross, and an entire surrender to a sovereign God. Regeneration is not only necessary to prepare and make us meet for heaven, but it is equally necessary to enable us to please God on earth. Reader, you must be born again, for if you are not, God is displeased with everything you do, and everything you say. Your very tears and prayers call for his just wrath. It is only by fleeing to Jesus and receiving Christ as God's free gift, that God will be pleased with you, listen to you, and richly bless you.

FAITH.

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"Your faith groweth exceedingly."—2 THESS. i. 3.

THERE is nothing, save the interests of his own soul, which so much delights the minister of the everlasting Gospel, as the spiritual progress and steadfastness of the people of his charge. If anything can produce emotions of gratitude in his heart; if anything can encourage him in his solemn work, and, if anything can impart real joy to his soul, it is to see his people walking in the truth, living in the love of the Spirit, and "walking in the comfort of the Holy Ghost." John says, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth," 3 John iv. The Apostles knew the importance of a vital acquaintance with, and also an abiding steadfastness in, the doctrines and institutions of

Christianity. They knew, however, that the love of many professors would wax cold, and that they would not bear sound doctrine, and that there would be a fearful departure from God's truth in the last days. When they saw any spiritual growth, any true steadfastness, they were (as all Christ-sent ministers are) truly grateful to the great Head of the Church. There is a strange latitudinarian feeling growing amongst professors of religion in our day, which makes out that if a man be sincere, it matters not what he believes. If this principle (or rather this want of principle) be carried to its full extent, it takes away all distinction between truth and error. It is in this way the fundamental, the vitalizing, and energizing doctrines of the New Testament are ignored.

The Apostle Paul rejoiced that the Thessalonian Church was more confirmed in the truths revealed in "the glorious Gospel of the ever-blessed God." They confided in Gospel promises, and looked hopefully for that immortality brought to light in the Gospel of Christ. He rejoiced in the growth of their faith in God. It has been a matter of wonder to many, that in the concern of a sinner's salvation, so much stress should be put upon faith. No man is saved because of his faith, that is quite certain; and it is equally certain that no man can be saved without faith, for "without faith it is impossible to please God." Right views of the being and perfection of God, are the foundation of all true religion. "He that believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." The faith to which the Apostle refers in the language of the text is not a mere historical faith, it is not a mere speculative faith, it is not the faith of miracles, it is not a mere belief of religious dogmas; that faith of which Paul speaks is of the operation of the Spirit of God. It is that faith which brings salvation, called the faith of God's elect. My fellow sinner, hast thou this faith? Hast thou faith? Examine its origin, its quality, its effects in thy soul. We propose to notice three points: the nature of faith, the growth, and the demonstration of faith.

I. THE NATURE OF FAITH. The Apostle defines faith in a most comprehensive manner—"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It is the firm persuasion of the mind under supernatural power, that what God hath made known in his Word is eternal truth. It is a powerful conviction of the truth of divine revelation. It is a confident reliance upon the meritorious work of Christ for salvation and eternal glory. Faith is not reason, yet men do not believe without reason. Faith is not an opinion. Faith is not an impulse. Faith is a firm confidence in the testimony of Christ. It is the recumbency of the soul upon the cross of Christ, for a free and full salvation. Faith is a divine gift. It is one of the graces of the Spirit. It is an evidence of relation to God, for "ye are all the children of God by faith." It comes by hearing; it works by love. Faith and love are twins. Faith looks exclusively to Christ for salvation. It lays hold firmly of Christ's priesthood, sacrifice, and intercession in heaven, as the ground of endless triumph, and dimless glory in the regions of the blessed. It draws all supplies from Christ's exhaustless fulness, and trusts in Christ's word of promise. Faith is a receptive, distinguishing, growing, conquering, and tranquilizing power. Faith apprehends clearly mysteries it cannot comprehend. The man of God believes in mysteries he can never explain. Faith remains sane where reason is maddened—

"Where reason fails, with all its powers,
There faith believes, and love adores."

That faith pleases God which is the fruit of his Spirit, and trusts in his faithfulness.

1. *It is an intelligent faith.* "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Then a man must know something of what he believes. God has given us an understanding to know that which is true, and hath enabled us to believe that which is true. In the days of the Apostles the people of God

believed in the doctrines of sovereign grace ; they believed in imputed righteousness ; in sovereign and personal election ; and in the absolute redemption of the church of Christ ; but these doctrines will not do for many professors now, in these times of so-called refinement. But I tell you if they were true, then they are no less true now ; if ever the doctrine of imputed righteousness was true, it is true, now ; if ever salvation by the cross was true, it is true now ; if ever it was right to preach that Christ made a full atonement for sin, it is right to preach it now ; if ever there was a time when it was necessary to preach distinctly and prominently the doctrine of the Saviour's atonement, it is truly and imperiously necessary now ; if ever it has been necessary to contend for the work of the Holy Ghost, it is essentially necessary now. There is no part of the Gospel of Christ that we should give up now, no more than any part of the Gospel was given up by the Apostles themselves. The Gospel of Christ is like gold and gold dust, it is all precious. The understanding and the heart are both engaged in the belief of the truth. The objects must be revealed ; the revelation must be known, then believed. This faith is not a presumptuous confidence, but an adoring belief. The Spirit of God makes known the truth of God to the soul, and then begets in the soul faith in the revealed truth. We are saved "through sanctification of the Spirit and the belief of the truth." Faith is not reason, neither is it opposed to enlightened reason. The Bible contains God's testimony. No man can believe without testimony ; no man ought to believe without evidence. My dear friends, what do we know of God, or of God's moral government, without the Scriptures ? The stars, those lamps of light, under the dark dome of heaven, and the grass of the field, all proclaim in voiceless eloquence—there is a God ; but the character and government of God is not learnt by these things. It is the Bible which reveals that "God is love." It is the Gospel which makes known Christ, his person, the mystery of mysteries—his sacrificial work as the foundation of the sinner's hope. Christ is the object, author, food, and finisher of faith, exhibited in the Gospel of his grace. The faith which God approves, is intelligent ; it is aided and strengthened by Scriptural knowledge.

2. *It is a working faith.* The graces of the Spirit are working graces. There are no drones in this hive. Faith works by love. Faith without works is dead. "So faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone," James ii. 17. There is an idle, dead faith, and there is a living and working faith. There is a faith which the world overcometh, and there is a faith which overcometh the world. "This is the victory whereby we overcome the world, even our faith," 1 John v. 4. There is a faith which will most assuredly perish, and there is a faith which lays hold of him who saves those who trust in him from perishing. "Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish," John iii. 15. Faith is a looking to Christ. It is a coming to the Saviour. It is a receiving of him. It is an "eating of his flesh, and drinking of his blood." How beautifully are the physical senses employed to illustrate the work of faith. Faith is the soul's eye, John vi. 40. Faith is the mouth, John vi. 54. Faith is the ear, John v. 24. Faith is the hand, John i. 2. Faith is the foot, John vi. 35. It is faith which overcometh the world. It is faith that converses with the invisible world. It is faith that deals in hidden traffic, and grows rich in treasures which are out of sight. It is by faith the mind feeds upon eternal verities.

It is thus that faith works. Abraham's faith was a working faith ; Noah's faith was a working faith. If thou wouldst see the exploits of faith, read that wonderful chapter in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the eleventh chapter. Abraham believed in God when he offered up Isaac, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness. Before God man is justified in the righteousness of Christ, by faith, but before man he is justified by works ; for instance, as we judge of the tree by its fruits, so may we judge of men by their lives, for by their deeds shall we know them. It is the work and honour of faith that it looks exclusively to Christ for salvation and heaven. Faith extracts honey from the

bitterest flowers, as sometimes we find that our sweetest mercies come through our bitterest sorrows.

3. *It is a clinging faith.* Where shall we find a Scriptural illustration of this thought? We have a most interesting one in the fifteenth chapter of Matthew, in the case of the woman of Canaan. Her's was clinging and great faith indeed. Wherein do we see the greatness of her faith? It is seen in her believing in the complexity of Christ's person. He was David's Lord, and David's Son. It is seen in her believing in the ability of the Saviour to have mercy upon her. It is seen in her surmounting all obstacles put in her way. She was in the deepest trouble; she believed that he was able to save her; but mark how he tried her faith—he answered her not a word. Only think of going to Jesus and not being answered a word. Would it not break your heart? But the disciples were for sending her away. Shame to such disciples; but, alas, alas, there are many such even now, who, instead of sympathizing with poor, sorrowing, and mercy-seeking sinners, are for discouraging them, and sending them away. She cried again, and Jesus said, "I am sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." She cried still "Lord help me." Jesus answered, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it unto dogs." She said, "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from the master's table, and if I am not as one of thy disciples, yet I need help. Lord help me." And Jesus answered, "O woman, great is thy faith. Be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Necessity makes the soul cling to Christ, and the clinging soul he will not send away without help. Look at the old worthies who are now without fault before the throne. I was reading lately of Ridley and Latimer, and when they were at the stake Latimer cries, "Play the man, Father Ridley, we shall this day light such a flame, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out." Thus these men, of whom the world was not worthy, triumphed amidst the destructive fires of martyrdom.

4. *It is a waiting faith.* Blessed are all they that wait for him. Soon we shall say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him and he will save us. This is the Lord, we have waited for him; we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation," Isa. xxv. 9. Simeon waited for the consolation of Israel. The saints wait for "the manifestation of the sons of God; they wait for the redemption of the body; they wait for the coming of the Lord; they wait with good authority; they wait for immense triumphs and interminable glory, and blessedness in the presence of the Great Jehovah. I have endeavoured to show that the faith of God's people, then, is an intelligent faith, a working faith, a clinging faith, and a waiting faith.

II. THE GROWTH OF FAITH. "Your faith groweth exceedingly." The faith of God's people is sometimes weak and sometimes strong.

1. *It grows in power.* There is a weak faith and strong faith. We read of some who were "strong in faith giving glory unto God." Have you not studied the mighty exploits of faith? What stunted Christians we are now. Where is that stalwart Christianity of the days of our Puritan forefathers? O God, increase, increase, our faith. One has said, "In Luther we see what faith can do, and in Melancthon we see what faith can suffer."

2. *It grows in liveliness.* It is a mercy to have a living faith, but it is a greater mercy to have a lively and rejoicing faith. Sometimes when all around seems against us, there is a steady and joyous confidence in God, as the prophet has said, "I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in my God. Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be on the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stall; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

3. *It grows in steadfastness.* What a mercy; what a blessing to others; and what an honour, to be steadfast in the Apostles' doctrine. Paul was most anxious that the people should grow in steadfastness in the truth. It gave him

great joy to learn that the saints were established in the Gospel, Col. ii. 5. It was said of some primitive Christians, that "they continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine, Acts ii. 43.

III. THE DEMONSTRATIONS OF FAITH. The faith of God's people makes no facts, although it receives many, and lives upon them. Faith creates no interest in God, but it is an infallible demonstrator of interest in God. Faith demonstrates our relationship to God—"Ye are all the children of God by faith." Faith doth not save us, although we cannot be saved without faith. Justification is by the everlasting righteousness of Christ, but faith is the infallible demonstrator of endless justification in Christ's righteousness. "He that believeth hath the witness in himself." Have you, my brother, this living faith, this gift of God? If thou hast, thou art a great debtor to mercy. If thou hast, thou hast immense possessions and glorious prospects. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16.

THE VOICE OF THE OLD PULPIT.

BY THE REV. J. ROBERTS, RUTHIN, NORTH WALES.

THE OLD PULPIT'S COMPLAINTS.

I complain because some very ungodly characters have taken the liberty of ascending my steps. My heaviest sorrow I tell first. After this I feel my bosom much relieved. The most unpleasant burden that ever stood behind my cushion was a wicked man. If I had known him when he was advancing, and had I had sufficient strength, I would have bolted my door in his face before the whole congregation;—yea, I would have stood against him, immovable as a rock, and left him on my steps, with his face towards the people, pulling at my door, till his head was covered with shame, and his tongue forgot all it intended to say. But the fact is, that some "have preached to others," and were themselves "cast away!" I have gloried in some who are now a disgrace even to drunkards! They used to cry to others to beware of sins which they themselves cherished! They called upon their hearers to embrace the Saviour, whom they trod under foot! They turned their faces from heaven, and run towards an abyss of woe, while they warned others of their great danger! They fought against God, and said in themselves, "Who is the Lord, that we should obey his voice!" while they cried unto their fellow-men, apparently with much zeal, "Be ye reconciled to God!" Yea, there are some sinking in the bottomless pit, who have ascended my stairs and polluted my carpets with their unclean feet! I have heard some inviting others to the waters of life, who are now pleading in vain for a drop of water to cool their own tongues! The leaves of my Bible have been soiled by the fingers of many whose hands are now bound in everlasting chains! Yes, alas! there are many crying aloud, "We are tormented in this flame,"—the echo of whose sermons is at this moment ringing in my ears! My hearers ought not to blame me for this; the shame is theirs. It is the world that furnishes the Pulpit and the Church with hypocrites. As soon as they are known, they are rejected. The wolves that come to the fold in sheep-skins are to be blamed, and not the innocent flock. The Church militant never said, neither did I—the Pulpit—pretend, that our walls are too high for hypocrites to climb over.

I complain, because some look at me as a mere workshop to make a living in. There may be a few, even among Welsh Dissenters, who do not look higher than this,—though I confess the temptation is not very strong. It would be a new thing in the Principality to see a minister, who depended upon the flock, living in a palace, driving his carriage, possessing a costly wardrobe and much wealth. My complainings to many a congregation should be,—“You muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.” You do not remember that “The

workman is worthy of his meat." You have forgotten that those whom you have chosen to be your pastors are men, reading, travelling, dressing, eating, and keeping families. But we hear of such things as "*fat livings*." One of the sons is fixed upon to make a living in the pulpit, on the same ground as his brothers are chosen to make their livings in the surgery, the solicitor's office, or the army. I have been often presented to the sons of warriors as a reward for the services of their fathers. When the most stupid in a family is settled in a good living, the anxiety of the parents respecting him is over,—for their utmost end is obtained. But I say to the aspirants for the pulpit, whether they be Churchmen or Dissenters—whether they trust to the compulsory system, or boast in the voluntary—If ye have not something higher in view than to make a living, I would counsel you to look somewhere else than to me. Turn to sea or land—to the army or the navy; inquire at the office of the lawyer, the manufacturer, or the merchant. It would be better for you to beat the anvil, to follow the plough, to break stones on the road, or to sweep the streets, than to have anything to do with me. Do not trifle with the Bible, the hymn book, and the prayer book, be it "common" or uncommon. Do this as you value your temporal and eternal happiness.

I complain, because I have been compelled to serve as a stage, to exhibit men, and not Christ. I have strong reasons to fear that many a prayer and many a sermon have been composed, long and rough journeys have been travelled, and great efforts have been made in the pulpit, while the preacher had nothing higher in view than to show himself. In that true portrait of Mr. Moffat, taken by the celebrated painter, George Baxter, we see in the far distance the hills and the sky, the trees and the cottages, the wood and the fire, the axe and the dagger, "the black Africans, and the senators of Bechuana;" but the *missionary* is in front. He is larger and more conspicuous than all the rest. To set him forth to a better advantage was the design in taking them. So I am willing—yea, I like—to see, in the far distance, the comely preacher and the graceful motions. I like to hear the sonorous tongue pouring forth its eloquence. All these are advantageous, to show my Master, if he is in FRONT. But I have been compelled to see the preacher and his talent made the subject of the artist; while Christ, his cross, his salvation, judgment, and eternity, were pushed to the distance, and used merely as a shade to set him forth. The preacher looked larger and more conspicuous than any of these great realities. Man was painted, and his portrait exhibited, while the Saviour was left far behind.

I complain because I have been too long used as a place of refuge for blind bigotry and prejudice. I almost envied the seats the day of the great assembly, because I saw that they were occupied by the good from every sect; while, until lately, very seldom a minister was allowed to ascend my steps, to utter a prayer or deliver a sermon, unless he belonged to a particular denomination. Was not this a just cause of lamentation? I have heard preachers intimating that their brothers of other persuasions were diffusing errors which they never entertained. Every one walked his own way—the farthest side from his neighbours. If each had taken a middle course, they might reach each other; and if they had bent a little to this and that side, they might go arm-in-arm. Such conduct made one pulpit appear at variance with the other, instead of all the pulpits to be fighting against sin and Satan. But this complaint may be numbered among the things that are bygone; which to me is a source of great thankfulness and joy.

I complain because many who have stood on my floor did not do my work with all their might. I do not mean that they had not a mighty voice to cry aloud. I have oftentimes too much of this—too much mere lung force and noise; but what I want is the profound thought, bathed in evangelic sentiment, conveyed in the most clear, condensed, and forceful terms. It is not requisite that my children should belong to a high aristocratic family. It is not true that I ever looked with contempt upon any, because he had been either a

weaver, or a blacksmith, or a ploughman, or a shepherd, or a fisher. The son of a tinker, who writes a "Pilgrim's Progress," is as acceptable to me as the son of a great king, who writes the "Song of Songs." It is immaterial whether my children had been studying the Bible and the book of nature at home with their parents, or had been regularly brought up in the academies and universities, under the most finished professors. When I recollect that my theme is the cross, and my great object the salvation of souls, I consider that I am worthy of the highest talents,—and those talents made seven times more refined than is required for any other calling. I once asked my great competitor, the stage, how he made more impression with his empty sound than I did with my realities? "O," said he, "my sons act fictions as if they were facts, while thy children handle facts as if they were fictions." This explanation pierced my heart. I am also forced to complain for the want of more originality. Believe me, O my children! rough nature is more beautiful and acceptable in the pulpit than the most refined art. The former will break more bones with its little sledge than the other with its most ponderous hammer. There is as much difference between the original thinker and the plagiarist, as there is between life and death. The words of others might be put into the mouth of a mere machine. Whoever is in the habit of adorning himself with the trappings of other men, is in danger of meeting with the fate of the jackdaw! That consequential little bird thought that he wanted nothing but a little more plumage to make himself appear as elegant as the peacock; consequently, he picked every beautiful feather he could find, and placed it among his own. Then he introduced himself to the peacocks, and was considered one of them. But in the course of time, while raising his wings to show his beauty, he was detected, and attacked by his company. They deprived him of his borrowed feathers one by one, and he was shown to be a contemptible jackdaw. He was then despised by the most degraded of his own tribe. I also mourn most sincerely that I hear more *reading* than I did. Even a child will tell his mother that *saying* an anecdote is better than reading it. If the weight of manuscripts continue much longer to press as they do on my front-board, I shall most certainly break down. I cannot—I will not bear the unnatural load.

I complain because there is not more attention paid me. Hitherto I have been beating my own bosom, and mourning over the plague of my own heart. But the malady is not entirely within. I often speak to all without being heard by any. I fear that no one labours more in vain than I do. I have talked many a Sunday till my mouth was dry, and even my tongue tired, but the audience might as well congregate themselves under the oak tree, to hear the branches clapping hands together at the bidding of the wild wind. When the family moved their habitation to the river side, the noise of the water first disturbed their night repose, but now they are accustomed to the sound, and like it;—it helps their sleep. My voice has become similar. I recollect the time when some were exceedingly uneasy, and acknowledged that they could not sleep while I uttered my voice; but now they can dream, and smile, and scorn, under my ministry. Had there been nothing in this but an insult to me personally, I might look at it with indifference; but, oh, when I think of the awful solemnity of my embassy, such conduct makes my heart turn within me.

To be continued.

POVERTY AND PEACE; A MEMOIR OF JANE HART.

BY THE REV. W. P. DALFERN.

"Where God abides, contentment is, and honour,
Such guerdon meekness knows;
His peace within her, and his smile upon her,
Her saintly way she goes."

It has been observed that there is | obscure, whose life, if properly writ-
no individual, however humble and | ten, would not be found to con-

tain much that is interesting and profitable; and this is especially true of the Christian, who is indeed an epistle of divine mercy, and intended by God to be known and read of all men. This was especially the case with the humble subject of this memoir—Jane Hart—who through a long period of affliction was a living illustration of the force and beauty of divine truth. She had been a sufferer for some time before she came under the writer's notice. She was observed to be gradually getting thinner and weaker, looking, indeed, very unwell, but as she never complained it was thought she could not be seriously ill, and would soon recover. We had long admired her general deportment, her meek and quiet behaviour among her associates. She seemed to breathe another air, and certainly she spoke a very different language from many of them. But now having missed her some weeks, we went to make enquiry as to the cause of her absence from her work, and found her very ill, suffering from a dreadful cough, and so much fallen away that we felt alarmed.

The particulars of her sad tale were soon told. Her wages were but sufficient to keep herself, but she had a mother, and in order to support her, she had all but denied herself the necessaries of life; and this she had done for many months past, and though she had taken a severe cold, and felt herself to be getting gradually weaker, she never complained nor burdened any one with the tale of her poverty. She had greatly suffered and deeply felt the need of better nourishment, but "How could I procure it?" said she, "I could not get into debt;" and so though weak and sickly, she was patient and uncomplaining; and tracing her rough path up to the Lord, she laboured on, until nature could bear no more, and she fell in the struggle. By the simple, artless manner in which she made known her troubles we were much affected, and expressed our regret that she had not revealed the cause of her trouble before. "O," she said, "I did not like to mention it; and,"

holding up her hand, while her eyes filled with tears, she exclaimed, "the Lord has been so good to me during my affliction; I see it to have been so needful, and I never enjoyed so much of his presence as I have in this room; I could not have believed it had I not felt it; I feel thankful to him for this affliction." As she thus expressed herself, we could but look at her; there she stood, a young woman just in the prime of life, but evidently wasting away beneath an insidious disease, and so weak, as frequently to be unable to avail herself of the much loved ordinances of God's house. We looked at the poor, mean little room which she called her home, and as we thought of what she must have passed through during the last few months, her hard labour, sickness, numberless privations, with no apparent prospect of relief, and her entire dependence upon the kindness of strangers, we thought that her quiet, peaceful, and resigned spirit to God's will, was no small achievement of divine grace, but to hear her express her thankfulness, and with tears of unaffected gratitude bless God for her affliction, filled us with joyful surprise, and constrained us with her to bless the Lord.

Arrangements were soon made to get her into the country for a change of air; she was away for a few weeks, but returned no better, but rather worse. She expressed no disappointment, however, but much gratitude for all the kindness she had received.

She now went into St. George's hospital, and was in-patient there for some weeks; during the whole of the time she continued there, the state of her mind might be described in two words—"perfect peace." She seemed to enjoy habitually a steady, quiet repose of soul upon Christ, and was quite resigned, as she said, to the will of God, whatever that will might be. She left the hospital rather weaker than she was before she entered.

On visiting her again, I found her in a very uncomfortable and badly-ventilated room, it was necessary to keep the door open to get air, and then the draught put her to serious incon-

venience; still she was cheerful and contented. How many, she said, were there, who would be glad to have such a room. On account of the dearth of provisions, Jenny found a difficulty in getting what she required but a peaceful, thankful spirit ever seemed to live in her heart, and was ever ready to shew itself on the smallest occasion. I once found her quite overcome with God's goodness. Winslow's "Midnight Harmonies" had been greatly blessed to her, she would never forget, she said, what she had felt while reading there of the sufferings of Christ; at this time a gentleman, unknown to her, had ordered her two-pennyworth of milk a day. How good God is, she exclaimed, it was astonishing that he should so provide for such a poor unworthy creature as she was.

An order was now obtained for her, to enter as an in-patient of the Consumption Hospital. For a time she seemed to rally a little, and entertained a little hope that she might recover. Her holy peace and submission to the will of God, was, however, still continued to her. "I know," said she, "that if I am kept faithful unto death, I shall receive a crown of life." From the hospital she returned much worse. On calling to see her this was painfully evident; still, though her sufferings were now great, and she was very weak, she had contrived to nurse her sister during her confinement, without making known her situation to her friends; and we found her nursing a child, when she was evidently so ill she could scarce hold up herself. She alluded to her great weakness, and to her sufferings during the time of her sister's illness, but without the slightest complaint, or the expression of a wish that circumstances had been otherwise. She now took to her bed and gradually got worse. She suffered greatly from the closeness of the room where she lay, and the heat of the weather, which was rendered the more trying to her by the stoves which were kept almost constantly burning down stairs—the persons with whom she lodged being laundresses. But she never alluded to it. "She is a

quiet creature," said the doctor. She was indeed, for the Lord kept her mind in perfect peace, stayed upon himself.

An allusion having been made to the physician's opinion respecting her, it was remarked to her, "What a mercy, Jenny, you do not wish him to deceive you." "O, no," she said, "I am quite willing to go or stay, whichever the Lord thinks best." Thankfulness having been expressed that the tempter was kept at a distance from her, she said, "He tried to distress me last night, but I ran to the Lord, and he took all my fears away."

Some friends having called to see her, whose conversation was not of the kind she wanted, and who held out hopes to her that she might recover, she expressed her disapprobation to a friend, exclaiming, "What have I to do with the world? I have done with it, done with it; it is nothing to me," flinging away the bed-clothes from her with her thin hands while speaking, to give emphasis to her words, and to show the spirit with which her soul put from her their delusive consolation. Seeing her so dead to the world, the words of the poet presented themselves—

"Sweet are the uses of adversity."

Through sanctifying grace, a holy severance had been effected between the soul of this dying girl, and those things to which fallen nature cleaves with so much tenacity. How marvellous is thy work, O Lord, and how illustrious do thy most humble disciples appear, while we behold them in the midst of weakness made strong, with sin and self, the world and death beneath the feet of their victorious faith. How bright thy chosen ones appear, even at the edge of the grave. We stand by their side, and often tremble at the open sepulchre which we behold ready to receive them, while they, catching upon the broad shield of their uplifted faith the effulgence of a brighter world, long to be gone.

But while Jenny's faith was thus strong, it was connected with

very great humility. It was this which so endeared her to all with whom she was brought into contact. All felt, in relation to her, the truth of the poet's language—

“Round lowliness a gentle radiance hovers,
A sweet, unconscious grace,
Which, even in shrinking, evermore dis-
covers,
The brightness of its face.”

Finding her very faint on one occasion, so much so that she could scarcely speak, she was asked how she managed now that she had lost all power of utterance in prayer. “O,” she said, lifting up her hand, and letting it fall listlessly down again, to illustrate her meaning, “I just throw myself upon him, and I am sure I cannot be in better hands.” But while she was so remarkably favoured in reference to her faith, she had a deep and abiding sense of her unworthiness. “I deserve,” said she on one occasion, “to be cast into outer darkness, but the blood of Jesus is all-sufficient to cleanse.”

It having been observed to her that her bodily sufferings were great, she sweetly said, “Yes, but there are none for the soul, for Jesus is with me; though I may have to pass through greater fires than these, before I am fitted for the place he is preparing for me.” “O, Jenny,” it was replied, “thank the Lord for the great faith he has given you.” “I do,” replied she, “it is a great favour indeed.” On one occasion when the sufferings of Christ were spoken of before her, she wept bitterly. “Do not weep, Jenny,” said a friend. “O,” she replied, to think that I should have pierced so blessed a Saviour.” “But what a mercy,” said the friend, “that he arose again.” This seemed to revive her, and she said, “Yes, he slept and so shall I, but I shall rise again in glory with him at the last day.” On another occasion, speaking of Christ, she said, “He is always with me, and how precious are his thoughts to me.” A friend sitting up with her replied, “I am delighted to hear you say so.” “O, yes,” she said, “while you sit here and watch me

he is here.” “And he will be ever with you,” it was replied. “Oh, yes,” she said, “I am sure he will; I have his promise to rest upon.” On being asked, on another occasion, if her hope was firmly fixed on Christ, she looked up and said, “I cannot possibly express my feelings, I feel I cannot, but I would not give up my hope in him for a thousand worlds; my hope in him is more precious than all worlds, for *he is mine, and I am his*. Her friend replied, “He is leading you in the way everlasting.” “Yes,” she said, “to fountains of living waters which will never run dry.” Speaking of death, she said, “Christ has taken away its sting, and is about to give me the crown of victory, and for this he is preparing me. My lamp is trimmed, and I am ready when my Lord shall come, but I have no oil to spare.” “Not a little?” it was asked. “No,” she said, “there is *enough*, but not any to give away. I am a brand plucked from the fire, and what glory is due to the Saviour. I will bless his name for ever and ever, for his unspeakable love.” On waking out of her sleep one night, just before she died, she called the kind Christian friend who for several nights had watched by her side, to hear her last words, and said, “Jesus is coming, I have heard his chariot wheels; he is coming, he is coming,” and again appeared to sleep, but awoke again, and said, “I am still here, but it will soon be over, and I will quietly await his time, which is best.” In this quiet frame she continued to the last, constantly referring to her death as “*that happy hour*.” She spoke to her sister most affectionately about her soul: warned her not to neglect eternal things. “You see, dear,” she said, “from me, what you can do upon a sick bed. What should I have done had I had to seek the Saviour now?” Just before her departure, she asked her sister to raise her head, while doing so, she heard her faintly say, “God bless you,” and she was gone.

Thus lived and died poor Jenny, as she was frequently termed by those who visited her, rich in faith, and now

a happy inmate of her Father's house above.

In endeavouring to trace a feeble outline of her character, and of those excellencies by which, through grace, she was distinguished, no attempt has been made to paint up a picture simply to excite admiration. The original of this draft was just one of those characters, which, in order to be fully appreciated, must be seen and known. She was, indeed, one of those exquisite samples of Divine workmanship, the spiritual loveliness of which, no mere verbal description can convey. Humble and obscure, she was known to but few. She was one of those lowly, drooping flowers in the valley of humiliation, which the Great Husbandman seems to take special delight in training for himself, but whose holy fragrance "tellecth its unseen neighbourhood." Though her path was so obscure, she did not live in vain; wherever she went, a sweet savour of Christ ever accompanied her, and those around took knowledge of her that she had been with Jesus. Numerous have been the testimonies borne by both rich and poor to the power of that simple, unsophisticated godliness which lived within her, and to manifest which, with most artless and endearing simplicity, seemed as natural to her, as to breathe the air and eat her food. It was, indeed, the *unartificiality* of her religion which gave to it both its charm and its power. It was impossible to converse with her for ever so short a period, without being persuaded you had a real character before you, whose every word in reference to her hope was *felt*, and might be relied upon. Her religion, indeed, seemed to be so completely herself, that under no circumstance it seemed possible to effect a separation; it *would* display itself, and with great power, while she apparently seemed unconscious of it. In her, simplicity of character and strength of faith were wonderfully united; for her it ever seemed to be sufficient that God had spoken. He had said it, it would therefore be done. But we must not further en-

large. From this little history; it is thought may be gathered—:

1. AN ARGUMENT FOR IMMORTALITY. Who can believe that a character thus formed and fashioned is lost for ever? That this precious stone, after passing through so severe a process to bring out its latent beauties, is to be for ever in the chaos of eternal night: that the jewel, just when its every ray most reflected the glory of the *Divine Artist* is to be destroyed. Is it not more consonant to reason to believe that the hand which made and polished the gem has but transferred it to another place, where it shall more abundantly reflect his praise.

2. CONTENTMENT. "Godliness with contentment is great gain," but how frequently do many of those who profess to be the people of God, display anything but a contented spirit, even though surrounded with all that they require. Should this meet the eye of such, let them think of poor Jenny, wasted by disease, surrounded with poverty, dependent upon charity, yet blessing God with tears of gratitude for her affliction, and to the last declaring practically, by word and conduct, that a *present Saviour* is a blessed portion, more than enough for his people at all times, and under all possible circumstances.

3. LIBERALITY. Let the rich, and those who have enough and to spare, seek out the hidden ones of the Lord's family, and out of their abundance minister to their wants. For any temporal good they may communicate they will receive ample reward in the spiritual good which will be ministered to them in return. Is it not a shame, that those whom the Lord so beautifies by his grace, and for whom he manifests such tender care, should be neglected, and allowed to pine away in want, while those who could so easily bring them efficient help carelessly stand aloof; and of such may we not ask, "How dwelleth the love of God in you?" O, let us see to it, that we do not squander away in useless extravagance that which would be of so much service to the suffering

members of Christ. If we have anything to spare, let us seek them out, that we may have the honour of ministering to their wants, as God shall help us. Is it not to be feared that the rich, and those who have time, leave their suffering brethren too much in the hands of cold, official charity, forgetting that one kind word or prayer from the lips of a warm-hearted brother, is frequently of more service to a sinking saint, than all the temporal aid which the world can command.

4. PRAISE. Let us praise the Lord, who, by his grace, forms a people to his praise, and imprints so much moral beauty upon them, that men are compelled to admit the workmanship to be Divine; let us adore him who is constantly selecting the poor and needy to make them the hallowed recipients of his grace, and the living illustrations of the power of his truth; who, in many a dark alley, and obscure room, has most illustrious representatives of himself, and is constantly forming those sacred vessels of the upper sanctuary, which are destined to reflect his glory for ever. O happy thought, that the work of Immanuel in the hearts of his people depends not upon human applause or appearances. He tends the gracious plant hidden in the valley of tribulation with as much care as though myriads were to be refreshed by its public appearance, and inscribes his own image with as much precision upon the dying pauper, as upon the man whose last words or movements are watched by thousands. O, how lovely to catch the trace of his blessed footsteps amid the lowly walks of life, looking after and tending his own: with inimitable solicitude bearing them tenderly amid all their sorrows, and finally gathering them to his bosom in glory. The busy world laughs on, unconscious of his hallowed ministrations, and of their close proximity to the King of kings; beholds not these products of his grace, or the spiritual beauty which ever follows his every step; but still he works silently on, gathers his own, and by the light he ever and anon throws

forth through them, discovers and condemns the surrounding darkness. Let us praise him for his grace.

5. DECISION. Should this meet the eye of those who are undecided for Christ; those who are persuaded of the truth of his word, and sometimes half inclined to give themselves into his hands, and become his disciples, may the history of this humble saint decide them. What! should it be for a moment a matter for consideration with us, as to whether it is desirable to possess such a religion as hers? a religion which makes the character so lovely, that all who gaze upon it admire it; a religion which gives purity and peace, patience and joy, and sustains in life and death; a religion which made a poor, artless girl, a moral heroine, and more truly illustrious in the estimation of the really wise, than thousands whose names are written in the temple of fame. O, let such hesitate no longer, but may they seek at once, as the one thing needful, at the hands of Christ, that religion which so beautifies the character here, and stands connected with happiness hereafter.

6. THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF THE SCRIPTURES. The faith of Jenny in the word of God was strong as it was simple. Does this meet the eye of any who question the truth of divine revelation; who look upon the religion of those who believe it as a delusion? They will at least admit that Jenny's faith in that book formed a very beautiful character. And it *was* her faith in that book which did it, for it was her constant aim to live under the influence of its teaching, in thought, word, and deed. The great truths it revealed were her meat and her drink. Now if God's book is worthy of contempt, her character is also, for it was under its influence it was formed. But can you honestly despise it? Can you despise her because she was not only resigned to affliction, but blessed God for it? Can you despise her for her purity, her peace, her cheerfulness, her joy, her love for all God's creatures, her grateful appreciation of every act of kindness, her simplicity and honesty, her solicitude

for the welfare of others, her patience in suffering, her self-denial, her triumphant hope, the joy with which she welcomed death? You cannot, you know you dare not, despise such a character: how, then, can you despise the book by which, through God's blessing, it was formed? Speak not then lightly of a book whose influence you are compelled to admire; impar-

tially, and prayerfully examine its evidences; but, remember, it is in the practical exemplifications of its principles as you behold them displayed in the life of this humble believer, or rather as you may contemplate them in the recorded life of the Saviour she loved, that your heart will fully realize and become persuaded of the divinity of their origin.

LITERARY NOTICES.

Why so Popular? An Hour with Rev. C. H. Spurgeon. By a Doctor of Divinity. London: William Freeman, Fleet Street.

A Tractate of eight pages, written in a loving spirit, and, if report speak truly, by one to whose literary judgment, taste, and good sense we have been accustomed to defer. It is likely to make some stir in the religious world. We may take exception to one or two doctrinal points mooted by the worthy Doctor in Divinity; but, passing this, the little *brochure* is calculated to do Mr. Spurgeon no small service, in removing prejudices from the minds of some objectors and opposers. We have made the following extracts, which will be acceptable to many of our readers:—

"Lend me a chair, my honoured brother, that, sitting by your side, I may discharge the duty and enjoy the privilege of presenting my warm congratulations on the ministerial eminence to which divine Providence has so speedily raised you; accompanied with such fraternal counsels as a knowledge of that position—as full of peril as it is of honour—may suggest.

Your ministry has attained the dignity of a moral phenomenon; you stand on an eminence which, since the days of Whitfield, no minister—with a single exception, if indeed, there be one—of any Church in this realm has attained. You have access to a larger audience than the magic of any other name can gather; you have raised a Church from obscurity to eminence—perhaps I might add (rumour is my authority) from spiritual indigence to affluence. You entered on a sphere, where—to use the mildest word—lauguor "held unbroken Sabbath;" and in less than three short years you have, instrumentally, gathered a large, united, zealous, energetic Church, second, in numbers, in burning zeal, and in active effort, to no other Church in the Metropolis. "The little one has become a thousand, and the small one a great" congregation.

Nor has God given you favour with your own people alone. Blessed with a vigorous mind, and with great physical energy—*mens sana in sano corpore*—you have consecrated all to your Master's service, and hence you have become an untiring Evangelist. East, west, north, south—in England, Wales, and

Scotland, your preaching is appreciated by the people, and has been blessed of God. No place has been large enough to receive the crowds who flocked to hear the "young Whitfield;" and on many occasions you have preached the glorious Gospel, the award of the green earth being the floor on which, and the vault of the blue heaven the canopy under which, you announced, to uncounted thousands, "all the words of this life." Your name has thus become familiar "as a household word" in most of the churches and many of the families of our land; and the young Pastor of Southwark has taken his place among the celebrities of our land—and, among the ecclesiastical portion of these, he is "higher than the highest."

On another, and much higher ground, I would offer my congratulations. Usefulness is the law of the moral universe. This, in relation to the Christian ministry, means the moral renovation, the saving conversion of human souls. Nothing short of this can satisfy the desires of any "godly minister of Christ's Gospel," and, therefore, all such will estimate the amount of their success by the number of well-sustained instances of conversion, which are the fruit, under God's blessing, of their ministerial labours. Subjected to this test, the ministry of him to whom my congratulations are now presented, is placed above all the ministries with which I have any acquaintance, or of which I possess any authentic information. He states—so I am informed—that more than one thousand souls have been hopefully converted to God, during the past year, by the instrumentality of his ministry; and that, as the result of his metropolitan and provincial labours, during the period of his short but successful pastorate, several thousands who had erred from the truth, or never known it, had been raised or restored to holiness, happiness, and God. "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." I know something of the state of religion in our British Churches, and I do not hesitate to avow my belief, that, among the thousands—and, happily, their name is legion—who now sublimely proclaim the fundamental verities of the Christian revelation, there is not one who can truthfully say, as you can, that, during three short years,

thousands—as the fruit of my ministry—have been added to the fellowship of his own Church, and of other Churches.

Now here, my brother, is a most singular fact. A young man, just over the line which social feeling, embodied in public law, calls his “majority,” having no pretensions to any amount, except what is common to his class and social standing, of educational training—holding no collegiate distinctions, no academic honours—whose only Gamaliel was his own father—that he should command in London—the metropolis of England, of Europe, of the world—a larger audience than the potent name of England’s Primate could secure—is a fact for which moral casuists may feel desirous to account, and which, let me add, without deep thought they cannot satisfactorily explain. Let me try whether I can succeed in casting any light on a theme as full of interest as it is of mystery.

It is true in moral as in mental science, that every effect must have a cause, and that the cause must be adequate to the effect. This may be admitted as axiomatic, and now comes the question—How shall we account for your acceptance and success as a minister of Christ? In your ministerial career you are subjected to not only the hostile attacks of the malevolent and prejudiced, but to the unintentional mistakes of the virtuous and wise. Keeping all your detractors before the mental eye, let me examine their statements, so far as I know them. I ask one, Why is he so popular? He answers, You have a large amount of dramatic genius, a melodious voice, and great eloquence as an orator. But we more than hesitate to accept this explanation. No dramatic genius, no popular eloquence, no melodious harmony has ever done this in the past history of human nature. Macaulay, Garrick, Jenny Lind, Rachel, Gough, have not done it. The theatre must change its “star” monthly—the singer must emigrate to other climes—and the orator must make “angel visits, few and far between,” to secure the audiences which the charm of your name will surely and speedily convene. And the phenomenon is more remarkable, because your gathering is around the pulpit, where no art wins and no pleasure stimulates. I bear you witness, that, judging by your published sermons, I know no minister who more emphatically denounces—and few, if any, who so emphatically denounce—the vitiated tastes, the degraded sensualities, and the immoral practices of our country and age. If we connected popularity with a disposition to pander to a vitiated public taste, you are almost—if not altogether—the last minister in England whom I would expect to secure popular applause. You not only condemn sin—you do it emphatically, and *con amore*.

But, says another, “he is so original—not in manner alone, but even in matter—that his originality makes him popular.” I know something, my friend, of the theology of those sainted men—now with God—with whose writings you are equally—probably better—acquainted than I am, and I do not hesitate to say, that your theological opinions harmonize—substantially—with those of Gill and Toplady, of Hervey and Lo-

maise; and that, in the tone and texture of that theology, I find nothing to account, to my satisfaction, for their or for your popularity.

I am fully aware, that if I asked yourself the question, “Why so popular, and why so useful?” you would reply, in a self-whelming, God-exalted spirit, “I am nothing: God is all; and to his sovereignty I ascribe all my popularity and all my success.” While admiring the spirit of this declaration, I decline to accept it as an answer to my question. God is a sovereign; and in his sovereignty—essential to his Godhead—he has a right to give his Spirit when, where, to whom, and in what proportion he pleases; but he has no caprice, no senseless, reasonless arbitrariness in his administration. He never acts without reason, though, in his sovereign right. He often withholds from his creature, man, the reasons which influence the Divine mind. This, and not caprice, is God’s sovereignty.

If I cannot discover the secret of your popularity in what you preach, can I find it in any peculiarity in your mode of preaching? Here is, in my judgment, the explanation of the secret. *You have strong faith, and as the result, INTENSE EARNESTNESS. In this lies, as in the hair of Sampson, the secret of your power.*

Go on, my brother, and may God give you a still larger amount of ministerial success. “Preach the Word,” the old theology, that “glorious Gospel of the blessed God” for which apostles laboured and martyrs died. In all your teachings, continue to exhibit the Cross of Christ, as occupying in the Christian revelation, like the sun in our planetary system the very centre, and imparting to all their light and heat. Tell the people that every doctrine, duty, and promise of the Scriptures stands intimately connected with the cross, and from that connexion derives its meaning and value to us.

Thus exhibiting the whole system of divine truth in its harmony and symmetry—judging even by your own antecedents—what a glorious prospect of honour, happiness and usefulness presents itself to your view! A star in the churches—a star of no mean magnitude, of no ordinary brilliancy, you may be honoured to diffuse, very luminously, the derived glories you possess, and, having run your appointed course, ultimately set—but far distant be the day!—as sets the morning star—

“Which falls not down behind the darkened west,
Nor hides obscured amid the tempests of the sky,
But melts away into the light of heaven!”

“What’s it all about?” or, both sides of the “Rivulet” controversy; with a Fourth Appendix for Mr. Binney’s Letter to the Congregational Union. By the Rev. B. Grant, B.A. London: W. H. Collingridge.

We cannot but feel gratified in finding our opinions concerning the “Controversy,”

as expressed in previous numbers, supported by so shrewd a casuist as Mr. Brewin Grant, who has pronounced judgment on the conduct of all parties engaged in this unhappy affair almost in our very words. Alas for great men; how little they sometimes are made to appear. From our hearts we pity both Mr. Binney and Mr. Newman Hall,

A review of "*Streams from Lebanon*" and other articles, are in type but they must stand over until next month.

whom Mr. Brewin Grant has handled with deserved severity. All persons who wish to know "what's it all about," should procure Mr. Grant's masterly *exposé* of the whole controversy, whose justification of his name, sake, Mr. James Grant, and Dr. Campbell, is most complete and triumphant.

DENOMINATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.

Hitchbridge, Somerset.—Rev. J. Wilshere, of Burnham, has entered upon the pastorate. *Stoke Newington, Church Street.*—The Rev. W. Dovey, formerly of Jamaica Row, late of Halesworth, has accepted the invitation to the pastorate in this place.

PRESENTATION SERVICE.

Uxbridge.—On Saturday, September 27, a very handsome Communion Service was presented to the Rev. G. Rouse Lowden, Minister of the Baptist Chapel, Uxbridge, at his residence, 12, Leinster Gardens, Hyde Park, by a few of his former friends, who have been associated with him formerly in religious societies, to testify to his exemplary character and moral worth, and as a small acknowledgment for the great service which he rendered upon the opening of the Bermondsey Branch of the Young Men's Christian Association.

SERVICES TO BE HOLDEN.

Bezley Heath, Kent.—The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon will preach (D.V.) two sermons in the above chapel, on Wednesday, November, 19. Afternoon at half-past 3, evening half-past 6. Tea will be provided at sixpence each. On the following Lord's day, Mr. T. W. Medhurst will preach in the afternoon and evening, on behalf of Mr. Spurgeon's New Tabernacle.

BAPTISMS.

Bath, Aug. 24.—In the river Avon, four by J. Wilkins, of Brighton, one of the candidates was brother to the administrator. *Birmingham, Henenge St., July 6.*—Four. Sept. 8.—Eight by Mr. Taylor. *Blindmore, Buckland, St. Mary, Sept. 7.*—A female, aged 70. *Bow.*—Three by Mr. Balforn. *Boston, Salem, Sept. 1.*—Two. *Breachwood Green, Herts, Sept. 7.*—Two by Mr. Parkins. *Brighton, Windsor St.*—Since the last report in July, twelve by Mr. Wilkins. *Desborough, Oct. 5.*—One by Mr. Turner. *Gladestry, Radnorshire, Aug. 31.*—One by Mr. Goslon. *Eynsford, Kent, Sept. 28.*—Three young men belonging to the Wesleyan connexion, by Mr. J. Whittemore.

Haddenham, Cambs., Oct. 5.—Three by Rev. J. Mostyn.

London, Borough Road, Sept. 7.—Seven by Mr. Keen.

—*Salter's Hall.*—June, 29, three; and Aug. 24, four, by our pastor, Mr. J. Hobson.

—*Shouldum St., Sept. 28.*—Two by Mr. Blake.

—*New Park St., Oct. 9.*—Sixteen by Mr. Spurgeon.

Langley, Essex, June 19.—Four, and July 29, three, by Mr. C. Smith, late of Burwell, Cambs.

Lynn, July 6.—Two; Aug. 3, one; Sept. 11, three.

Middleton, Cheney, Northamptonshire, Sep. 7.—Five by Mr. Medcalf.

Mildesmill, Pembrokeshire, July 27.—Four by Mr. Lewis.

Newtown, Sept. 29.—Two by Mr. D. Evans. *Newwelly, Montgomeryshire, Sept. 21.*—In river Severn, five, by Mr. D. Evans, from Newtown.

Penknapp, Westbury, Wilts, Sept. 7.—Ten, of whom three are scholars and two teachers in the Sunday school, by Mr. J. Hurlstone.

Pontlyŷn, near Caernarvon, July 21.—Two in the river by Mr. Jones, of Llanfilyŷn.

Poplar, Oct. 23.—Five by Mr. Preece.

Sarn, Montgomeryshire, Oct. 5.—Two by Rev. E. Owens.

Swansea, York Place, July 1.—Six by Mr. Hill.

Tenbury, Wills, Aug. 17.—Fourteen by Mr. Jones.

Whitehaven, Aug. 28.—Four by Mr. Wilson. *Woolwich, Queen St., Aug. 31.*—Seven. Oct. 28.—Twelve by Mr. Hawson.

DEATHS.

Jones, Mrs. E., widow of the late Rev. John Jones, and mother of the Rev. David Jones, of Folkestone, at Newtown, Monday, Oct. 6, in her seventy-first year.

Rogers, Mrs. Phæbe, relict of the late estimable Mr. John Rogers, of Footscroy, at Lewisham, of small pox, Sept. 27, aged 36.

Ball, Ann, many years a member of the Baptist Chapel, Hillsley, Oct. 3, aged 61.

Pitt, George, Hillsley, Oct. 16, aged 63. His end was peace.

MR. SPURGEON'S PROPOSED NEW TABERNACLE.

A meeting, crowded to overflow, was held in New Park Street Chapel, Sept. 29, to initiate proceedings in reference to the erection of what is intended to be the largest chapel in the world, to accommodate the hearers of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon. After prayer, by the Rev. J. Whittemore, of Eynsford, addresses were delivered by the Revs. C. H. Spurgeon, Drs. Leask and Alexander Fletcher, the Rev. H. Betts, Counsellor Payne, George Moore, Esq.—Vicker, Esq., and other gentlemen. Very liberal contributions were promised. We purpose from time to time to report proceedings respecting this mammoth undertaking.

SONGS IN THE NIGHT.

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,

Minister of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.

"But none saith, where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night?"—
JOB xxxv. 10.

ELIHU was a wise man, exceeding wise, though not as wise as the all-wise Jehovah, who sees light in the clouds, and finds order in confusion; hence Elihu, being much puzzled at beholding Job thus afflicted, cast about him to find the cause of it, and he very wisely hit upon one of the most likely reasons, although it did not happen to be the right one in Job's case. He said within himself—Surely, if men be tried and troubled exceedingly, it is because, while they think about their troubles and distress themselves about their fears, they do not say, "Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night?" Elihu's reason was very right in the majority of cases. The great cause of a Christian's distress, the reason of the depths of sorrow into which many believers are plunged is simply this—that while they are looking about, on the right hand and on the left, to see how they may escape their troubles, they forget to look to the hills whence all real help cometh: they do not say, "Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night?" We shall, however, leave that inquiry, and dwell upon those sweet words, "God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night."

The world hath its night. It seemeth necessary that it should have one. The sun shineth by day, and men go forth to their labours; but they grow weary, and nightfall cometh on, like a sweet boon from heaven. The darkness draweth the curtains, and shutteth out the light, which might prevent our eyes from slumber; while the sweet, calm stillness of the night permits us to rest upon the lap of ease, and there forget awhile our cares, until the morning sun appeareth, and an angel puts his hand upon the curtain, and undraws it once again, touches our eyelids, and bids us rise, and proceed to the labours of the day. Night is one of the greatest blessings men enjoy; we have many reasons to thank God for it. Yet night is to many a gloomy season. There is "the pestilence that walketh in darkness;" there is "the terror by night;" there is the dread of robbers and of fell disease, with all those fears that the timorous know, when they have no light wherewith they can discern objects. It is then they fancy that spiritual creatures walk the earth; though, if they knew rightly, they would find it to be true, that

"Millions of spiritual creatures walk this earth,
Unseen, both when we sleep and when we wake,"

and that at all times they are round about us—not more by night than by day. Night is the season of terror and alarm to most men. Yet even night hath its songs. Have you never stood by the seaside at night, and heard the pebbles sing, and the waves chaunt God's glories? Or have you never risen from your couch, and thrown up the window of your chamber, and listened there? Listened to what? Silence—save now and then a murmuring sound, which seems sweet music then. And have you not fancied that you heard the harp of God playing in heaven? Did you not conceive, that yon stars—those eyes of God, looking down on you, were also mouths of song—that every star was singing God's glory, singing as it shone its mighty Maker's well-deserved praise? Night hath its songs. We need not much poetry in our spirit to catch the song of night, and hear the spheres as they chaunt praises which are loud to the heart, though they be silent to the ear—the praises of the mighty God, who bears up the unpillared arch of heaven, and moves the stars in their courses.

Man, too, like the great world in which he lives, must have his night. For

it is true that man is like the world around him; he is himself a little world; he resembles the world in almost everything; and if the world hath its night, so hath man. And many a night do we have—nights of sorrow, nights of persecution, nights of doubt, nights of bewilderment, nights of affliction, nights of anxiety, nights of ignorance—nights of all kinds, which press upon our spirits and terrify our souls. But, blessed be God, the Christian man can say, "My God giveth me songs in the night."

It is not necessary, I take it, to prove to you that Christian men have nights; for if you are Christians, you will find that *you* have them, and you will not want any proof, for nights will come quite often enough. I will, therefore, proceed at once to the subject; and we notice with regard to songs in the night, *their source*—God giveth them; songs in the night, *their matter*—what do we sing about in the night? *their excellence*—they are hearty songs, and they are sweet ones; *their uses*,—their benefits to ourselves and others.

I. First, songs in the night—WHO IS THE AUTHOR OF THEM? "God," says the text, our "Maker." *He* "giveth songs in the night."

Any man can sing in the day. When the cup is full, man draws inspiration from it; when wealth rolls in abundance around him, any man can sing to the praise of a God who gives a plenteous harvest, or sends home a loaded argosy. It is easy enough for an Æolian harp to whisper music when the winds blow; the difficulty is for music to come when no wind bloweth. It is easy to sing when we can read the notes by daylight; but the skilful singer is he who can sing when there is not a ray of light to read by—who sings from his heart, and not from a book that he can see, because he has no means of reading, save from that inward book of his own living spirit, whence notes of gratitude pour forth in songs of praise. No man can make a song in the night himself; he may attempt it, but he will feel how difficult it is. Let all things go as I please—I will weave songs, weave them where'er I go, with the flowers that grow upon my path; but put me in a desert, where no flowers are, and wherewith shall I weave a chorus of praise to God? How shall I make a crown for him? Let this voice be free, and this body be full of health, and I can sing God's praise; but stop this tongue, lay me upon the bed of languishing, and it is not so easy to sing from the bed, and chaunt God's high praises in the fires. Give me the bliss of spiritual liberty, and let me mount up to my God, get near the throne, and I will sing, ay, sing as sweet as seraphs; but confine me, fetter my spirit, clip my wings, make me exceeding sad, so that I become old like the eagle—ah! then it is hard to sing. It is not in man's power to sing, when all is adverse. It is not natural to sing in trouble—"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name," for that is a daylight song. But it was a divine song, which Habakkuk sang, when in the night he said—"Though the fig-tree shall not blossom," and so on, "yet will I rejoice in the Lord, and joy myself in the God of my salvation." Methinks on the margin of the Red Sea any man could have made a song like that of Moses—"The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea;" the difficulty would have been, to compose a song before the Red Sea had been divided, and to sing it before Pharaoh's hosts had been drowned, while yet the darkness of doubt and fear was resting on Israel's hosts. Songs in the night come only from God; they are not in the power of man.

But what does the text mean, when it asserts that God giveth songs in the night? We think we find two answers to the question. The first is, that usually in the night of a Christian's experience *God is his only song*. If it be daylight in my heart, I can sing songs touching my graces—songs touching my sweet experiences—songs touching my duties—songs touching my labours; but let the night come—my graces appear to have withered; my evidences, though they are there, are hidden; I cannot

"read my title clear
To mansions in the skies;"

and now I have nothing left to sing of but my God. It is strange, that when God gives his children mercies, they generally set their hearts more on the mercies than on the Giver of them; but when the night comes, and he sweeps all the mercies away, then at once they say, Now, my God, I have nothing to sing of but thee; I must come to thee, and to thee only. I had cisterns once; they were full of water; I drank from them then; but now the created streams are dry; sweet Lord, I quaff no stream but thine own self, I drink from no fount but from thee. Ay, child of God, thou knowest what I say; or if thou dost not understand it yet, thou wilt do so by-and-bye. It is in the night we sing of God, and of God alone. Every string is tuned, and every power hath its attribute to sing, while we praise God, and nothing else. We can sacrifice to ourselves in daylight—we only sacrifice to God by night; we can sing high praises to our dear selves when all is joyful, but we cannot sing praise to any save our God, when circumstances are untoward, and providences appear adverse. God alone can furnish us with songs in the night.

And yet again: not only does God give the song in the night, because he is the only subject upon which we can sing then, but because *he is the only one who inspires songs in the night*. Bring me up a poor, melancholy, distressed child of God: I seek to tell him sweet promises, and whisper to him sweet words of comfort; he listeneth not to me; he is like the deaf adder, he listens not to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely. Send him round to all the comforting divines, and all the holy Barnabases that ever preached, and they will do very little—they will not be able to squeeze a song out of him, do what they may. He is drinking the gall of wormwood; he says, O Lord, thou hast made me drunk with weeping, I have eaten ashes like bread; and comfort him as you may, it will be only a woful note or two of mournful resignation that you will get from him; you will get no psalms of praise, no hallelujahs, no joyful sonnets. But let God come to his child in the night, let him whisper in his ear as he lies on his bed, and how you see his eyes glisten in the night season! Do you not hear him say—

“’Tis Paradise, if thou art here;
If thou depart, ’tis hell.”

I could not have cheered him: it is God that has done it; and God “giveth songs in the night.” It is marvellous, brethren, how one sweet word of God will make whole songs for Christians. One word of God is like a piece of gold, and the Christian is the goldbeater, and he can hammer that promise out for whole weeks. I can say myself, I have lived on one promise for weeks, and want no other. I want just simply to hammer that promise out into goldleaf, and plate my whole existence with joy from it. The Christian gets his songs from God: God gives him inspiration, and teaches him how to sing. “God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night.”

So, then, poor Christian, thou needest not go pumping up thy poor heart, to make it glad. Go to thy Maker, and ask him to give thee a song in the night. Thou art a poor dry well: thou hast heard it said, that when a pump is dry you must pour water down it first of all, and then you will get some up; and so, Christian, when thou art dry, go to God, ask him to pour some joy down thee, and then thou wilt get some joy up from thine own heart. Do not go to this comforter or that, for you will find them Job’s comforters after all; but go thou first and foremost to thy Maker, for he is the great composer of songs and teacher of music, he it is who can teach thee how to sing—“God my Maker, who giveth me songs in the night.”

II. Thus we have dwelt upon the first point. Now the second: WHAT IS GENERALLY THE MATTER CONTAINED IN A SONG IN THE NIGHT? What do we sing about?

Why, I think, when we sing by night there are three things we sing about. Either we sing about the yesterday that is over, or else about the night itself, or else about the morrow that is to come. Each of those are sweet themes, when God our Maker gives us songs in the night. In the midst of the night the most usual method for Christians is to sing about *the day that is over*. Well, they say, it is night now, but I can remember when it was daylight. Neither moon nor stars appear at present; but I can remember when I saw the sun. I have no evidences just now; but there was a time when I could say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." I have my doubts and fears at this present moment; but it is not long since I could say with full assurance—I know that he shed his blood for me; I know that my Redeemer liveth, and when he shall stand a second time upon the earth, though the worms devour this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God. It may be darkness now; but I know the promises *were* sweet; I know I had blessed seasons in his house. I am quite sure of this, I used to enjoy myself in the ways of the Lord; and though now my paths are strewn with thorns, I know it is the King's highway. It was a way of pleasantness once—it will be a way of pleasantness again. "I will remember the days of old; I will meditate upon the years of the right hand of the Most High." Christian, perhaps the best song thou canst sing, to cheer thee in the night, is the song of yesternorn. Remember, it was not always night with thee: night is a new thing to thee. Once thou hadst a glad heart, a buoyant spirit; once thine eye was full of fire; once thy foot was light; once thou couldst sing for very joy and ecstasy of heart. Well, then, remember that God who made thee sing yesterday has not left thee in the night. He is not a daylight God, who cannot know his children in darkness; but he loves thee now as much as ever: though he has left thee a little, it is to prove thee, to make thee trust him better, and serve him more. Let me tell you some of the sweet things of which a Christian may make a song when he is in the night.

If we are going to sing of the things of yesterday, let us begin with what God did for us in past times. My beloved brethren, you will find it a sweet subject for song at times, to begin to sing of electing love and covenanted mercies. When thou thyself art low, it is well to sing of the Fountain-head of mercy—of that blessed decree wherein thou wast ordained to eternal life, and of that glorious Man who undertook thy redemption; of that solemn covenant signed, and sealed and ratified, in all things ordered well; of that everlasting love which, ere the hoary mountains were begotten, or ere the aged hills were children, chose thee, loved thee firmly, loved thee fast, loved thee well, loved thee eternally. I tell thee, believer, if thou canst go back to the years of eternity—if thou canst in thy mind run back to that period, or ere the everlasting hills were fashioned, or the fountains of the great deep scooped out, and if thou canst see thy God inscribing thy name in his eternal Book—if thou canst see in his loving heart eternal thoughts of love to thee, thou wilt find this a charming means of giving thee songs in the night. No songs like those which come from electing love; no sonnets like those that are dictated by meditations on discriminating mercy. Some, indeed, cannot sing of election; the Lord open their mouths a little wider! Some there are that are afraid of the very term; but we but can lightly esteem men who are afraid of what they believe, afraid of what God has taught them in his Bible. No, in our darkest hours it is our joy to sing—

" Sons we are through God's election,
 Who in Jesus Christ believe;
 By eternal destination,
 Sovereign grace we now receive.
 Lord, thy favour,
 Doth both grace and glory give."

Think, Christian, of the yesterday, I say, and thou wilt get a song in the

night. But if thou hast not a voice tuned to so high a key as that, let me suggest some other mercies thou mayest sing of; and they are the mercies thou hast experienced. What! man, canst thou not sing a little of that blessed hour when Jesus met thee, when a blind slave thou wast sporting with death, and he saw thee, and said, Come, poor slave, come with me? Canst thou not sing of that rapturous moment when he snapped thy fetters, dashed thy chains to the earth, and said, I am the Breaker; I came to break thy chains, and set thee free? What, though thou art ever so gloomy now, canst thou forget that happy morning, when in the house of God thy voice was loud, almost as a seraph's voice, in praise? for thou couldst sing—I am forgiven; I am forgiven:

"A monument of grace,
A sinner saved by blood."

Go back, man; sing of that moment, and then thou wilt have a song in the night. Or if thou hast almost forgotten that, then sure thou hast some precious milestone along the road of life that is not quite grown over with moss, on which thou canst read some happy inscription of his mercy towards thee! What! didst thou never have a sickness like that which thou art suffering now, and did he not raise thee up from that? Wast thou never poor before, and did he not supply thy wants? Wast thou never in straits before, and did he not deliver thee? Come, man! I beseech thee, go to the river of thine experience, and pull up a few bulrushes, and weave them into an ark, wherein thine infant faith may float safely on the stream. I bid thee not forget what God hath done. What! hast thou buried thine own diary? I beseech thee, man, turn over the book of thy remembrance. Canst thou not see some sweet hill Mizar? Canst thou not think of some blessed hour when the Lord met with thee at Hermon? Hast thou never been on the delectable Mountains? Hast thou never been fetched from the den of lions? Hast thou never escaped the jaw of the lion and the paw of the bear? Nay, O man, I know thou hast; go back, then, a little way, and take the mercies of yesterday; and though it is dark now, light up the lamps of yesterday, and they shall glitter through the darkness, and thou shalt find that God hath given thee a song in the night.

Ay, says one, but you know, that when we are in the dark, we cannot see the mercies that God has given us. It is all very well for you to tell us this; but we cannot get hold of them. I remember an old experimental Christian speaking about the great pillars of our faith; he was a sailor; we were then on board ship, and there were sundry huge posts on the shore, to which the ships were usually fastened by throwing a cable over the u. After I had told him a great many promises, he said, "I know they are good promises, but I cannot get near enough to shore to throw my cable around them; that is the difficulty." Now, it often happens that God's past mercies and loving-kindnesses would be good sure posts to hold on to, but we have not got faith enough to throw our cable round them, and so we go slipping down the stream of unbelief, because we cannot stay ourselves by our former mercies. I will, however, give you something that I think you can throw your cable over. If God has never been kind to you, one thing you surely know, and that is, he has been kind to others. Come, now; if thou art in ever so great straits, sure there were others in greater straits. What! art thou lower down than poor Jonah was, when he went down to the bottoms of the mountains? Art thou more poorly off than thy Master, when he had not a place where to lay his head? What! conceivest thou thyself to be the worst of the worst? Look at Job there, scraping himself with a potsherd, and sitting on a dunghill. Art thou as bad as he? And yet Job rose up, and was richer than before; and out of the depths Jonah came, and preached the Word; and our Saviour Jesus hath mounted to his throne. O Christian! only think of what he has done

for others! If thou canst not recollect that he has done anything for thee, yet remember, I beseech thee, what his usual rule is, and do not judge hardly by my God. You remember Benhadad, when he was overcome and conquered, and Ahab was after him. Some said to him, "We know that the kings of Israel are merciful kings; let us send therefore unto Ahab, and it may be he will spare our lives." Benhadad sent to the king; he had received no kindness from Ahab before, he had only heard that he was a merciful king; so to the king he went; and what said the king? "Is my brother Benhadad yet alive?" Truly, poor soul, if thou hadst never had a merciful God, yet others have had; the King is a merciful King; go and try him. If thou art ever so low in thy troubles, look to "the hills, from whence cometh thy help." Others have had help therefrom, and so mayest thou. Up might start hundreds of God's children, and shew us their hands full of comforts and mercy; and they could say, "The Lord gave us these without money and without price; and why should he not give to thee also, seeing that thou art a King's son?" Thus, Christian, thou wilt get a song in the night out of other people, if thou canst not get a song from thyself. Never be ashamed of taking a leaf out of another man's experience book. If thou canst find no good leaf in thine own, tear one out of some one's else; and if thou hast no cause to be grateful to God in darkness, or canst not find cause in thine own experience, go to some one else, and, if thou canst, harp his praise in the dark, and like the nightingale, sing his praise sweetly when all the world has gone to rest. We can sing in the night of the mercies of yesterday.

But I think, beloved, there is never so dark a night, but there is something to sing about, even *concerning that night*; for there is one thing I am sure we can sing about, let the night be ever so dark, and that is, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, and because his compassions fail not." If we cannot sing very loud, yet we can sing a little low tune, something like this—"He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." "Oh!" says one, "I do not know where to get my dinner from to-morrow. I am a poor wretch." So you may be, my dear friend; but you are not so poor as you deserve to be. Do not be mightily offended about that; if you are, you are no child of God; for the child of God acknowledges that he has no right to the least of God's mercies, but that they come through the channel of grace alone. As long as I am out of hell, I have no right to grumble; and if I were in hell I should have no right to complain, for I feel, when convinced of sin, that never creature deserved to go there more than I do. We have no cause to murmur; we can lift up our hands, and say, "Night! thou art dark, but thou mightest have been darker. I am poor, but if I could not have been poorer, I might have been sick. I am poor and sick—well, I have some friend left; my lot cannot be so bad, but it might have been worse." And therefore, Christian, you will always have one thing to sing about—"Lord, I thank thee, it is not all darkness!" Besides, Christian, however dark the night is, there is always a star or moon. There is scarce e'er a night that we have, but there are just one or two little lamps burning up there. However dark it may be, I think you may find some little comfort, some little joy, some little mercy left, and some little promise to cheer thy spirit. The stars are not put out, are they? Nay, if thou canst not see them, they are there; but methinks one or two must be shining on thee: therefore give God a song in the night. If thou hast only one star, bless God for that one, perhaps he will make it two; and if thou hast only two stars, bless God twice for the two stars, and perhaps he will make them four. Try, then, if thou canst not find a song in the night.

But, beloved, there is another thing of which we can sing yet more sweetly; and that is, we can sing *the day that is to come*. Often do I cheer myself with the thought of the coming of the Lord. We preach now, perhaps, with little success; "the kingdoms of this world" are not "become the kingdoms

of our Lord and of his Christ." We are labouring, but we do not see the fruit of our labour. Well, what then? Try a little while; we shall not always labour in vain, or spend our strength for nought. A day is coming when every minister of Christ shall speak with unction, when all the servants of God shall preach with power, and when colossal systems of heathenism shall tumble from their pedestals, and mighty, gigantic delusions shall be scattered to the winds. The shout shall be heard, "Alleluia! alleluia! the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." For that day do I look; it is to the bright horizon of that second coming that I turn my eyes. My anxious expectation is, that the sweet Sun of righteousness will soon arise with healing beneath his wings, that the oppressed shall be righted, that despotisms shall be cut down, that liberty shall be established, that peace shall be made lasting, and that the glorious liberty of the children of God shall be extended throughout the known world. Christian! if thou art in a night, think of the morrow; cheer up thy heart with the thought of the coming of thy Lord. Be patient, for

"Lo! he comes with clouds descending."

Be patient! The husbandman waits until he reaps his harvest. Be patient; for you know who has said, "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be."

One thought more upon that point. There is another sweet to-morrow of which we hope to sing in the night. Soon, beloved, you and I shall lie on our dying bed, and we shall want a song in the night then; and I do not know where we shall get it, if we do not get it from the to-morrow. Kneeling by the bed of an apparently dying saint recently, I said—"Well, sister, he has been precious to you; you can rejoice in his covenant mercies, and his past loving kindnesses." She put out her hand, and said, "Ah! sir, do not talk about them now; I want the sinner's Saviour as much now as ever; it is not a saint's Saviour I want—it is still a sinner's Saviour that I am in need of, for I am a sinner still." I found that I could not comfort her with the past; so I reminded her of the golden streets, of the gates of pearl, of the walls of jasper, of the harps of gold, of the songs of bliss; and then her eyes glistened; she said, "Yes, I shall be there soon; I shall see them by-and-bye;" and then she seemed so glad. Ah! believer, you may always cheer yourself with that thought; for if you are ever so low now, remember that—

"A few more rolling suns, at most,
Will land thee on fair Canaan's coast."

Thy head may be crowned with thorny troubles now, but it shall wear a starry crown directly; thy hand may be filled with cares—it shall grasp a harp soon, a harp full of music. Thy garments may be soiled with dust now; they shall be white by-and-bye. Wait a little longer. Ah! beloved, how despicable our troubles and trials will seem when we look back upon them! Looking at them here in the prospect, they seem immense; but when we get to heaven we shall then

"With transporting joys recount,
The labours of our feet."

Our trials will seem to us nothing at all. We shall talk to one another about them in heaven, and find all the more to converse about, according as we have suffered more here below. Let us go on, therefore; and if the night be e'er so dark, remember there is not a night that shall not have a morning; and that morning is to come by-and-bye. When sinners are lost in darkness, we shall lift up our eyes in everlasting light. Surely I need not dwell longer on this thought. There is matter enough for songs in the night in the past, the present, and the future.

III. And now I want to tell you, very briefly, **WHAT ARE THE EXCELLENCIES OF SONGS IN THE NIGHT ABOVE ALL OTHER SONGS.**

In the first place, when you hear a man singing a song in the night—I mean in the night of trouble—you may be quite sure it is a *hearty one*. Many of you sing very prettily now; I wonder whether you would sing very prettily, if there were a stake or two in Smithfield for all of you who dared to do it! If you sang under pain and penalty, that would show your heart to be in your song. We can all sing very nicely indeed when everybody else sings. It is the easiest thing in the world to open our mouth, and let the words come out; but when the devil puts his hand over our mouth, can we sing then? Can you say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him?" That is hearty singing, that is real song, that springs up in the night. The nightingale singeth most sweetly, because she singeth in the night. We know a poet has said, that if she sang by day, she might be thought to sing no more sweetly than the wren. It is the stillness of the night that makes her song appear so sweet. And so doth a Christian's song become sweet and hearty, because it is in the night.

Again: the songs we sing in the night will be *lasting*. Many songs we hear our fellow-creatures singing will not do to sing by-and-bye. They can sing now a-days any rollicking drinking songs; but they will not sing them when they come to die. No; but the Christian who can sing in the night will not have to leave off his song; he may keep on singing it for ever. He may put his foot in Jordan's stream, and continue his melody; he may wade through it, and keep on singing still, until he is landed safe in heaven; and when he is there, there need not be a pause in his strain, but in a nobler, sweeter song he may still continue singing the Saviour's power to save.

Again, the songs we warble in the night are those that show we have *real faith* in God. Many men have just enough faith to trust God as far as they can see him, and they always sing as far as they can see providence go as they think right; but true faith can sing, when its possessors cannot see. It can take hold of God when they cannot discern him.

Songs in the night, too, prove that we have *true courage*. Many sing by day who are silent by night; they are afraid of thieves and robbers; but the Christian who sings in the night proves himself to be a courageous character. It is the bold Christian who can sing God's sonnets in the darkness.

He who can sing songs in the night, too, proves that he has *true love* to Christ. It is not love to Christ to praise him while everybody else praises him; to walk arm and arm with him when he has the crown on his head is no great deal, I wot: to walk with Christ in rags is something. To believe in Christ when he is shrouded in darkness; to stick hard and fast by the Saviour when all men speak ill of him and forsake him—that is true faith. He who singeth a song to Christ in the night, singeth the best song in all the world, for he singeth from the heart.

IV. For the sake of brevity, I will not dwell on the excellencies of night songs, but just, in the last place, **SHOW YOU THEIR USE.**

Well, beloved, it is very useful to sing in the night of our troubles, *first, because it will cheer ourselves*. When some of you were boys living in the country, and had some distance to go alone at night, don't you remember how you whistled and sang to keep your courage up? Well, what we do in the natural world we ought to do in the spiritual. There is nothing like singing to keep our spirits alive. When we have been in trouble, we have often thought ourselves to be well nigh overwhelmed with difficulty; and we have said, "Let us have a song." We have begun to sing; and Martin Luther says, "The devil cannot bear singing." That is about the truth; he does not like music. It was so in Saul's days; an evil spirit rested on Saul, but when David played on his harp, the evil spirit went from him. This is usually the case; for if we can begin to sing we shall remove our fears. I like to hear servants

sometimes humming a tune at their work ; I love to hear a ploughman in the country singing as he goes along with his horses. Why not? You say he has no time to praise God ; but if he can sing a song, surely he can sing a Psalm—it will take no more time. Singing is the best thing to purge ourselves of evil thoughts. Keep your mouth full of songs, and you will often keep your heart full of praises ; keep on singing as long as you can ; you will find it a good method of driving away your fears.

Sing in the night, again, because *God loves to hear his people sing in the night*. At no time does God love his children's singing so well as when they give a serenade of praise under his window. When he has hidden his face from them, and doth not appear to them at all, they are all in darkness, but they come under his window, and they begin to sing there. Ah ; says God, that is true faith that can make them sing praises when I do not appear to them ; I know there is some faith in them, that makes them lift up their hearts, even when I seem to withhold from them all my tender mercies and all my compassions. Sing, Christian, for singing pleases God. In heaven, we read, the angels are employed in singing ; do you be employed in the same way ; for by no better means can you gratify the Almighty One of Israel, who stoops from his high throne to observe a poor creature of a day.

Sing, again, for another reason ; because *it will cheer your companions*. If any of them are in the valley and in the darkness with you, it will be a great help to comfort them. John Bunyan tells us, that as Christian was going through the valley, he found it a dreadful dark place, and terrible demons and hob-goblins were all about him, and poor Christian thought he must perish for certain ; but just when his doubts were the strongest, he heard a sweet voice ; he listened to it, and he heard a man in front of him singing, "Yea, when I pass through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." Now, that man did not know who was near him, but he was unwittingly cheering a man behind. Christian, when you are in trouble, sing ; you do not know who is near you. Sing! perhaps you will get a good companion by it. Sing! perhaps there will be many a heart cheered by your song. There is some broken spirit, it may be, that will be bound up by your sonnets. Sing! there is some poor distressed brother, perhaps, shut up in the Castle of Despair, who, like King Richard, will hear your song inside the walls, and sing to you again, and you may be the means of getting him a ransom. Sing, Christian, wherever you go ; try, if you can, to wash your face every morning in a bath of praise. When you go down from your chamber, never go to look on man till you have first looked on your God ; and when you have looked on him, seek to come down with a face beaming with joy ; carry a smile, for you will cheer up many a poor wayworn pilgrim by it. And when thou fastest, Christian—when thou hast an aching heart, do not appear to men to fast! appear cheerful and happy ; anoint thy head, and wash thy face ; be happy for thy brother's sake ; it will tend to cheer him up, and help him through the valley.

One more reason, and I know it will be a good one for you. Try and sing in the night, Christian, for *that is one of the best arguments in all the world in favour of your religion*. Our divines now-a-days spend a great deal of time in trying to prove Christianity against those who disbelieve it. I should like to have seen Paul trying that! Elymas the sorcerer withstood him : how did our friend Paul treat him? He said, "O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" That is about the politeness such men ought to have who deny God's truth. We start with this assumption, that the Bible is God's Word, but we are not going to prove God's Word. If you do not like to believe it, we will shake hands, and bid you good-by ; we will not argue with you.

Religion is not a thing merely for your intellect, a thing to prove your own

talent upon, by making syllogisms on it; it is a thing that demands your faith. As a messenger of heaven, I demand that faith; if you do not choose to give it, on your own head be the doom. Oh! Christian, instead of disputing, let me tell thee how to prove your religion. Live it out! live it out! Give the external as well as the internal evidence; give the external evidence of your own life. You are sick; there is your neighbour, who laughs at religion, let him come into your house. When he was sick, he said, "Oh! send for the doctor;" and there he was fretting, and fuming, and making all manner of noises. When you are sick, send for him; tell him that you are resigned to the Lord's will, that you will kiss the chastening rod; that you will take the cup, and drink it, because your Father gives it. You need not make a boast of this, or it will lose all its power: but do it because you cannot help doing it. Your neighbour will say, "There is something in that." And when you come to the borders of the grave—(he was there once, and you heard how he shrieked, and how frightened he was)—give him your hand, and say to him, "Ah, I have a Christ that will do to die by; I have a religion that will make me sing in the night." Let him hear how you can sing, "Victory, victory, victory," through him that loved you. I tell you, we may preach fifty thousand sermons to prove the Gospel, but we shall not prove it half so well as you will through singing in the night. Keep a cheerful frame; keep a happy heart; keep a contented spirit; keep your eye up, and your heart aloft, and you will prove Christianity better than all the Butlers, and all the wise men that ever lived. Give them the analogy of a holy life, and then you will prove religion to them; give them the evidences of internal piety, developed externally, and you will give the best possible proof of Christianity. Try and sing songs in the night; for they are so rare, that if thou canst sing them, thou wilt honour thy God.

I have been addressing all this while the children of God, and now there is a sad turn that this subject must take, just a word or so, and then we have done. There is a night coming, in which there will be no songs of joy—a night in which no one will even attempt to lead a chorus. There is a night coming, when a song shall be sung, of which misery shall be the subject, set to the music of wailing and gnashing of teeth; there is a night coming when woe, unutterable woe, shall be the matter of an awful, terrific *miserere*—when the orchestra shall be composed of damned men and howling fiends, and yelling demons; and mark you, I speak what I do know, and testify out of the Scriptures. There is a night coming for a poor soul, and unless he repent, it will be a night wherein he will have to growl, and howl, and sigh, and cry, and moan, and groan for ever. "Who is that?" sayest thou. Thyself, my friend, if thou art Godless and Christless. "What!" sayest thou, "Am I in danger of hell fire?" In danger, my friend! aye, more, thou art damned already. So saith the Bible. Sayest thou, "And can you leave me without telling me what I must do to be saved? Can you believe that I am in danger of perishing, and not speak to me?" I trust not; I hope I shall never preach a sermon without speaking to the ungodly, for oh, how I love them! Swearer, your mouth is black with oaths now; and if you die, you must go on blaspheming throughout eternity, and be punished for it throughout eternity! But list to me, blasphemer! Dost thou repent? Dost thou feel thyself to have sinned against God? Dost thou feel a desire to be saved? List thee! thou mayest be saved; thou mayest be saved. There is another: she has sinned against God enormously, and she blushes even now, while I mention her case. Dost thou repent of thy sin? There is hope for thee. Remember him who said, "Go, and sin no more." Drunkard! but a little while ago thou wast reeling down the street, and now thou repentest. Drunkard, there is hope for thee. "Well," sayest thou, "what shall I do to be saved?" Then again let me tell thee the old way of salvation. It is, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou art saved." We can get no further than that,

do what we will ; this is the sum and substance of the Gospel. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and be baptized, and thou shalt be saved. So saith the Scripture. Dost thou ask, "What is it to believe?" Am I to tell thee again? I cannot tell thee, except that it is to look at Christ. Dost thou see that Saviour there? He is hanging on the cross; there are his dear hands, pierced with nails, nailed to a tree, as if they were waiting for thy tardy footsteps, because thou wouldst not come. Dost thou see his dear head there? It is hanging on his breast, as if he would lean over, and kiss thy poor soul. Dost thou see his blood, gushing from his head, his hands, his feet, his side? It is running after thee, because he well knew that thou wouldst never run after him. Sinner! to be saved, all that thou hast to do is to look at that Man? Canst thou do it now? "No," sayest thou, "I do not believe it will save me." Ah, my poor friend, try it, I beseech thee, try it; and if thou dost not succeed, when thou hast tried it, I am bondsman for my Lord—here, take me, bind me, and I will suffer thy doom for thee. This I will venture to say; if thou castest thyself on Christ, and he deserteth thee, I will be willing to go halves with thee in all thy misery and woe. For he will never do it; never, never, NEVER!

"No sinner was ever, empty sent back,
Who came seeking mercy for Jesus's sake."

I beseech thee, therefore, try him, and thou shalt not try him in vain, but shalt find him "able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him." Thou shalt be saved now, and saved for ever.

AN ANTIDOTE.

BY THE REV. JAMES SMITH, CHELTENHAM.

THE dispensations of divine providence are confessedly trying, and they are intended to be trying. God intends to try our faith, our patience, and our submission to his will. At times we forget this, and then we misunderstand God's design, are ready to complain of his dealings, and conduct ourselves improperly in his sight. God will not change his plans to please our fancies, nor alter his decrees to gratify our feelings. Our wills are to be subordinated to his will, and our feelings should be ruled by his Word. Trials we must have; evils we shall have. God's ways will never be our ways, until our wills are entirely swayed by his will. Yes; we may have peace. We may be happy. Let us therefore consider, **WHAT IS NECESSARY TO RECONCILE OUR MINDS TO GOD'S DISPENSATIONS?**

First, *We must be assured of our adoption.* If I realise that God is my father. If I know that I am his child. If I am persuaded that everything that takes place has been arranged by my Father's wisdom, is brought about by my Father's providence, and occurs under my Father's eye, I shall be reconciled to whatever occurs; I shall say, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." God is my father, and he will not allow his child to be injured. This event, however painful, is part of my Father's plan. It is by his appointment. It is for his glory. It is, all things considered, the very best thing than can be. Then, my soul, be silent, be content, be satisfied.

"With steady steps thy race of duty run,
God nothing does nor suffers to be done,
But thou wouldst do thyself, couldst thou but see,
The end of all events as well as he."

Second, *We must have an abiding sense of his love.* He "loved me, and gave himself for me." "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us—God is love." Thus primitive Christians felt, and thus they wrote. It was with them a settled point, that they were the objects of God's love. They

made their calling and their election sure. Just so should we. Never, for one day, should we be satisfied without knowing the love that God hath to us. And knowing it, we should keep the eye of the mind fixed upon it. The cross, as the expression and proof of God's love, should be constantly before us. In the Spirit, who sheds abroad the love of God in the heart, we should constantly walk. Communion with God, in which the love of God is realised and enjoyed, should be constantly maintained. If I believe that God loveth me—that he hath loved me with an everlasting love—that his love is infinite and eternal, so that he cannot love me more, nor will he ever love me less,—then I can meet trials, bear troubles, and bow to changes, because God loves me just the same; I am reconciled to all his dispensations; I see every trial labelled, "From a God of love;" I say under my heaviest cross, "God loves me still, therefore will I not fear." Oh, let us seek, and seek until we obtain the assurance of God's love to us; and having obtained it, let us keep ourselves in the love of God, praying in the Holy Ghost, looking for the mercy of our "Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Changes in providence do not indicate that there is any change in grace; God may vary his dealings, but he rests in his love.

"O, let me then at length be taught,
(What I am still so slow to learn),
That God is love, and changes not,
Nor knows the shadow of a turn."

Third, *A realisation of his presence.* God is always with us. He never leaves us for one moment. He goes with us step by step through the whole journey, and he wishes us to live, speak, and act, as in his presence. But alas! too often we forget that God is with us. That God, in all the glory of his nature and perfections, is with us, and with us as our God. With us, to hear our cries, to supply our wants, and perform his precious promises. My soul, never forget, God sees thee. God loves thee. God is with thee. Realise his presence, and whom will you fear, at what will you be alarmed, what will cause you to complain? If God is my father, if God loves me, if God is with me, what can I not do? What can I not bear? What can I not suffer? What shall harm me? What should disconcert me. O for grace to realise that God is with me in the darkest day, in the roughest path, in the longest night, in the heaviest trial, and in the severest conflict. For if God be with us we shall be strong to fight, patient to endure, and certainly overcome. Yea, if God be with us, God will be for us; and "if God be for us, who can be against us"? But the Lord is with us, and we may boldly say, "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord, Jehovah, is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation." Haste, my soul, thy God is speaking; he says, "Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not, desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

Fourth, *A persuasion that his power is overruling all things for our good.* This is so plainly stated in God's word, that there can be no doubt about it. "All things," the good and the evil, the bright and the dreary, the pleasant and the painful, the sweet and the bitter. God hath set the one over against the other. The one counteracts, to a certain extent, the influence of the other. The past prepared for the present, and the present is preparatory to the future. All that occurs is needful. The present is rendered necessary by the past, or it is to fit me for something just at hand. My good, my welfare, my benefit is secured. Grace and glory are given me, and no good thing will the Lord withhold from me. If Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and if Benjamin must go,

it is for our good; and as in Jacob's case, will procure us supplies, and enhance our happiness. Let us then freely give up whatever God sends for; and let us thankfully receive whatever God sends. All things are working for us, to-day; all things will conspire to do us the greatest possible good at the last. Let us, therefore, bow to the will of God, approve of the plans of God, and acquiesce in the providence of God. "Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him." "Surely it shall be well with them that fear the Lord, that fear before him." O my soul, seek meekness, seek righteousness, seek grace, and then in thy greatest trial thou wilt be able, in the confidence of faith, to look up to thy heavenly Father and say—

"All things on earth, and all in heaven,
On thy eternal will depend;
And all for greater good are given,
And all shall in thy glory end."

Fifth, *Faith in God's word, especially his promises.* The promises are at once the object, and the food of our faith. We are to believe them. To believe them as they are confirmed in Jesus. To believe them as made to us. To believe that God will fulfil them in our experience. The promises are so plain that we cannot misunderstand them. They are so comprehensive that nothing is left out of them. They contain provision for all our wants, and antidotes for all our fears. There is no one good thing that God could give us that he has not promised to confer upon us; nor is there one evil that could injure us that he has not promised to ward off from us. "The Lord will give us that which is good." "No weapon 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." There are promises for every day, every hour, every minute of our lives. Every promise is true, and its fulfilment is certain. But God requires of us faith. We must believe what he has said, place confidence in his veracity, plead his promises at his throne, and expect him to make them good. If I believe that God will supply all my needs, that he will give me strength equal to my day, that he careth for me, that he will deliver me in six troubles, and in seven not allow any evil to touch me, and that he will make his strength perfect in my weakness, shall I not be satisfied with his dealings? or, at least, be reconciled to his dispensations?

"Jesus, my Saviour and my God,
'Tis good to trust thy name;
Thy power, thy faithfulness, and love,
Shall ever be the same."

Sixth, *A correct estimate of the things of time.* "The things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal." The world passeth away. The things of time are limited by time, and, therefore, ought not to affect us too much. Sickness and pain are but for a season. Bereavements are known only in this world. Gold and silver are of little value on a death bed, and none at all to us when we lie in our coffin. Man's opinion changes like the wind, and popularity or persecution are both evanescent. "Wilt thou set thine heart upon that that is not? Do not riches make to themselves wings, and flee away like eagles towards heaven?" All that is of the earth is earthy. Hast thou sustained a loss, and wouldst thou estimate it at its true value? Lay it beside thy coffin, and look at it there. Are you deeply grieved by any occurrence? Try to realise how it will appear fifty years hence. "Brethren, the time is short; it remaineth, therefore, that both they that have wives, be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that use this world as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away. But I would have you without carefulness." That is, free from anxiety. Living a life of calm and holy dependence on God. Living

for eternity. Living for God. Living in the world as those who must soon leave it. My soul, whatever appears important now, if it is limited by time, will soon change in its appearance, and look very different.

“Transient as the hues of morning, earthly joys like shadows pass;
Forms, the brightest life adorning, fade and wither like the grass.
O may we our fetters breaking, cling no more to things below;
But to heavenly visions waking, more abiding glory know.”

Serventh, *A recollection of our origin and desert.* We should never forget what we were before God called us by his grace, what we might have been but for his sovereign mercy, and what we certainly should be if left wholly to ourselves. We were rebels against God's government, traitors to his cause, and doomed to an eternal hell. Everything short of hell is mercy. If I had my deserts, I should be in hell to-day. I should be feeling its fierce flames, enduring its scorching torments, and horrified by its dreadful associations. But I am rescued from it, and am going to heaven; shall I not, therefore, bow to whatever God has appointed, acquiesce in whatever God wills, and be reconciled to all God's dealings with me; seeing he hath saved me from such an awful doom, and is preparing me for such a glorious portion? I was enmity against God by nature. I should be enmity against God this day, if it were not for his glorious grace. I deserve hell most justly, and should have been in hell but for his kindness. Ought I not, therefore, to rise higher than merely being reconciled to the dispensations of his providence? and should I not be willing to do anything for him, suffer anything from him, and praise and bless his dear name, be my circumstances what they may? “Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.” Look at the horrible pit from which he raised you, and the miry clay from which he extricated you. Look, and admire! Look, and for shame, cease complaining! Look, and love him! Look, and praise his thrice blessed and most glorious name!

“Blest Lamb of God, thy sovereign grace,
To all around I'll tell;
Which makes a place in glory mine,
Whose just desert is hell.”

Finally, *Fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, as the Man of Sorrows.* If we call our lot hard, what was the lot of Jesus? If we talk of our privations, what are they compared with his? If we speak of sufferings, let us compare them with the sufferings of Jesus. Go to Bethlehem, and see the babe in a manger. Go to the mountain top, and see the Son of God at his devotions, under the starry heavens, and on the cold, dewy ground. Go to the streets of Jerusalem, and hear him say, “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.” Go to Gethsemane, and hear him groan, and see him sweat great drops of blood, while he offers up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears. Go to Gabbatha, see him stripped, buffeted, spit upon, smitten in the face, scourged, crowned with thorns, and condemned to die. Go to Golgotha, and see him hanging on the accursed tree, witness his agonies, hear his bitter cry, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani;” behold him die. Was ever sorrow like unto his sorrow? Were ever sufferings like unto his sufferings? And all for thee! All for thy salvation! My soul, in all thy toils and trials, in all thy griefs and woes, in all thy sufferings and privations, seek fellowship with Jesus in his sufferings, for if any thing will reconcile thee to the dispensations of thy heavenly Father, or make thee carry thy cross with patience, it is this. O my soul, expect not a path strewed with flowers, when thy Saviour's was strewed with thorns! Expect not to escape the cross, or avoid being conformed to thy suffering Lord! It cannot, it must not be—

“No, we must follow in the path,
Our Lord and Saviour run;
We must not find a resting place;
Where He we love had none.”

ASK YOUR OWN SENSES.

BY THE REV. JOHN COX, LATE OF WOOLWICH.

"Dost thou believe on the Son of God."—JOHN ix. 35.

A RELIGION which gratifies the senses is a dangerous and delusive one. Such was ancient Paganism; such Popery was, still is, and no doubt will continue to be. That delusive system provides beauty for the eye, melody for the ear, and incense for the smell. The imagination is appealed to, vanity is flattered, and taste gratified. But the intellect is not employed, conscience is not roused, the affections are not claimed for that which is spiritual; and thus the mind is degraded, the soul is enslaved, even by professed acts of divine worship. Man is a rational and intelligent being, and should be dealt with as such, in religion as well as in other things.

Thus it is that God treats man in his Word. He reasons with him, appeals to his hopes and fears, by the glories and terrors of eternity; calls upon him to read God's will in his Word, and to be influenced by it. No wonder that the apostate Church which has set up a religion of form and ceremony, should desire to hide the Bible. "He that doeth evil cometh not to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." But, though we must not be led by our senses in religion, nor let those organs by which the soul holds communion with external things take the lead in the things of God, yet we may and should use these senses. We may use them to detect imposture, and to illustrate truth. To the latter we principally invite attention; first, a word or two on the former.

The "lying wonders" by which false religions have been characterised, will not bear the test of our five senses. Such miracle-mongers work in darkness, and thrive by credulity! How different were the miracles of Christ. If he raised a dead person, those around him *saw* the man lately dead sit up on the bier, or come forth from the tomb. If he turned water into wine, those who drank it *tasted* that it *was* wine. How different the case with that professedly stupendous miracle, but in reality, lying cheat—transubstantiation. The priest, we are told, by speaking a few words turns the bread into the very bone, blood, and divinity of Christ. What say the senses to the professed change? The senses of seeing, tasting, smelling, and touch, all say this is bread and *nothing more*; it is not changed in any respect. The Papist appeals to the sense of hearing, and calls upon us to listen to the words, "This is my body;" but this sense replies, "I hear; and understand. I hear, also, the Lord say, I am the door, I am the true vine; and I know that in all these cases he would have us understand him as saying, these material objects are used by me to represent spiritual things, and to show you in familiar language, which all but learned pretenders and their dupes know how to read, the excellencies of my person, character, and work." Thus, Popery insults our five senses, while it professes to gratify them; and the whole system is as great an outrage on common sense as it is a flat denial of Holy Scripture.

We may use our five senses for another purpose. The most important of all inquiries is: *Do we really believe the Gospel? is our connexion with God's truth saving?* Let us ask our senses to help us to answer these questions.

The Gospel, or the facts and doctrines which we are called upon to believe, and the blessings which stand connected with believing the same, is set forth by various things, which are most acceptable to our senses, and with which we are daily having to do by means of our senses. First, There is the sense of *tasting*. The Gospel is spoken of under the figure of food. The following Scriptures are to the point: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and ye that have no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, buy wine and milk without money and without price."—Isa. lv. 1—2. Again, "I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready;

come ye to the marriage."—Matt. xxii. 4. In Isa. xxv. 6, we read also of "a feast of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined." Such scriptures set forth the riches of divine goodness, as seen in the variety, plente, adaptation and richness of the provision made. There is the sense of *smelling*. The Gospel is like precious fragrant ointment or perfume; it is most reviving, pleasant, and healthful, expelling evil odours and injurious smells. Assuredly, the substance of the Gospel is the name of Christ, which, as the spouse says, "is as ointment poured forth;" concerning it Paul also testifies, "Now, thanks be unto God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place." 2 Cor. ii. 14. Next there is the sense of *touch or feeling*. The Gospel presents a foundation on which to stand, a refuge on which to lay hold, and a house in which to dwell. Happy those who can say with beloved John, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life"—1 John i. 1.

A fourth and most important sense is *seeing*. "The Gospel is a heavenly light, celestial glory."—2 Cor. iv. 4—6. Like light, it is its own manifestor and witness, yet it is as full of mystery as of excellency. The Gospel is a friend on whose benignant countenance we may look with delight; yea, it it would be difficult to mention anything beautiful in heaven above, or in earth beneath, that is not used as an emblem to set forth the Gospel, its glories and blessings.

Lastly, consider the sense of *hearing*. The Gospel is good news, worthy to be listened to and heeded. This Gospel is called "the joyful sound." It proclaims peace, pardon, liberty, and life. It is called "the glad tidings of the grace of God;" "the glad tidings of your salvation;" "the glad tidings of peace;" "the glad tidings of Christ;" the "glorious glad tidings of the blessed God." Time would fail to quote the passages which bear upon the subject; one must suffice, and it is very gracious and sublime: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth."—Isa. lii 7.

This view of the Gospel in connection with our *five senses* teaches us five very important lessons; and a brief glance at them may assist to answer the important question, whether we have a saving connection with it or no.

I. We are taught that fallen man's remedy is entirely *out of himself*; and above his own power to produce. The things which we look at, listen to, taste, smell, and touch, so as to derive benefit from them, are out of ourselves, and were produced, not *by* us, but *for* us. Our looking at anything supposes its previous existence; the eye creates nothing upon which it gazes. The same observation applies to the other senses. In like manner, Christ's righteousness to justify us, and the Holy Spirit's strength to redeem us, are out of and above ourselves. But we must have a connection with both in order to be benefited by them. The ground of our hope is external to ourselves, even as the ground in which the anchor holds is out of the ship. Poor sinner—

"Thine's, alas! a lost condition,
Works cannot work thy remission,
Nor thy goodness do thee good,
Sins within thee and about thee;
But the remedy's without thee,
See it in a Saviour's blood.

II. Learn that the Gospel is most suited to man.—As simple as light to the eye, and as sweet as melody to the ear—as adapted as food for our hunger, and water for our thirst, is the Gospel to the soul of fallen man. The Gospel is designed for *sinners*; it conveys little meaning to, and contains no adaptation

for any other persons. Adam in innocence could not have understood it, but we may suppose and hope that Adam the sinner welcomed it; and we are sure that it is suited to and sufficient for the worst sinners of Adam's family.

III. *That the Gospel is most full and free.* How large the provisions which God has made for the employment and gratification of our senses! What a heaven to gaze upon! What an earth to inhabit! What sights to see, what sounds to hear, what odours to smell, what delicacies to taste, what wonders to handle. How various and numerous also are these objects of our senses. Who can describe them, or even reckon them up! And the most wonderful things are free for all to look upon, and the most necessary and valuable things are free for all to use. Just so is it with the Gospel. Here is abounding grace, everlasting mercy, "plenteous redemption;" "unsearchable riches," yea, riches of glory. And all is free; free grace, free pardon, free justification, free title to glory—all given by him who is love, given in honour of Christ and for the divine glory. Let no one ask, May I hope for mercy, may I look to Christ for salvation, may I hope to inherit eternal life? Do you ever ask, May I breathe God's air, may I walk in heaven's light, or eat of the bounties of God's providence? You may do so, yea, you must, in order to live; and as welcome are you, though most unworthy (and are you not unworthy of the least temporal blessing), to take home to your guilty heart all the pardon, peace, purity, and glory revealed in the Gospel. If a man would not use his senses he must soon die; and if a man does not come into contact with the Gospel, he must die eternally.

IV. We learn that our contact with the Gospel, if saving will be *real varied, and constant.* By our senses we come into real connection with material things, and that in various ways, and very frequently, and so will it be with our inner man (by which we mean the understanding, conscience, will, and affections) as regards the Gospel. The truth will appear wonderful to the mind, it will be harmonious to the soul, it will be grasped earnestly and held firmly. It is no make believe, no delusive dream; when we have to do with things by our senses, we cannot be persuaded out of them while using them. And it is the same when the name of Christ is fragrant, when we find "his flesh to be meat indeed, and his blood to be drink indeed." All self-righteousness, and self-dependence, all gratification of the senses and tastes in religion, however pleasant at the time, will yield no real profit. This is what the Prophet describes, "As when a man dreameth, and behold he eateth, but he awaketh, and he is faint.—Isaiah xxix. 8. (See also Isaiah l. 11.) Fearful awaking, indeed, for the superstitious, the self-righteous, and the self-deceived, who put ceremonies, works, or fine feelings in the place of Christ. But it is not so with the believer; he has neither followed a cunningly-devised fable, nor cheated himself with fond dreams. He has a true Saviour, and a real connection with him. Let him make constant use of that Saviour, looking at his glories, listening to his words, inhaling the fragrance of his sacrifice, grasping his friendly hand, and so eating his flesh and drinking his blood, so as to live by him as he lived by the Father.—John vi. 57.

V. *We learn that a real connection with the Gospel will be a source of great pleasure.* "Of how many cheap, yet exquisite joys, are our five senses the inlets." We see beauties and admire them; we hear sweet melody, and are enraptured with it; we take food, it is pleasant and nourishing. How delightful is the early breath of morn, and the fragrance of the fields. How pleasant to grasp the hand of a loved one, and to feel the kiss of tender affection. But what are these joys and pleasures to seeing Jesus when the Holy Spirit glorifies him; or what to the melody of his voice, saying, "peace be unto you." "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore." How happy is the soul in whom "the love of God is shed abroad."—Romans v. 5. "And to whom the name of Jesus is revealed."—Cant. i. 3. To feed on him is life eternal, and brings with it the blessed evidence of

mutual indwelling."—John vi. 55. While to feel his friendly hold, even in the dark valley, is heaven begun, and to be "kissed with the kisses of his lips."—Cant. i. 2, is the soul's richest solace, and an earnest of eternal felicity.

But is it so? *Reader, ask your own senses*; do you know anything of such a real contact, such a profitable communion with the Gospel? Does your conscience say, such is *not* my case? I have no spiritual senses occupied in heavenly things after this sort! Then think from what you are excluded. You pity the deaf, the blind, the palsied, and those incapable of tasting or smelling, who are shut out from the beauties and harmonies of nature, and the enjoyment of social life; but are not you to be pitied still more? Persons who have been deaf and blind, have had ears to hear and eyes to see in the highest and best sense. Some who have lost their taste relish God's precious promises, and can say, "How sweet is thy word unto my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth." But you hear not, see not, taste not those wonders, glories, and blessings which alone can satisfy and sanctify the soul. Yet to you is the Word of this salvation sent. O listen to it. "Look unto me and be saved, all ye ends of the earth." "Incline your ear and come unto me, hear and your soul shall live." "Eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."

THE JOYS OF JESUS.

BY THE REV. W. ABBOTT, OF BLUNHAM, BEDS.

"Jesus rejoiced in spirit."—LUKE x. 21.

THE history of Jesus is one chequered with tears and joys. We have in a previous paper portrayed the weeping Saviour, and we now attempt a sketch of the rejoicing Saviour. Jesus came from a world of joy, he came to a world of sorrow; he performed his mission of weeping and suffering here, and has long since returned to heaven to receive the crown of his joy. How many times he wept while on earth, we cannot say, but that he did weep, we know, and probably often. He also had intervening seasons of joy; now he weeps no more, but has entered into ceaseless joy.

I. THE SOURCES OF THE SAVIOUR'S JOY.—Joy is not a word of earthly origin, nor of earthly meaning; it is a word from heaven, it speaks of heaven, and leads to heaven. Joy has in it the beauty and blessedness of heaven. Joy is a ray, a stream, a blossom, a fruit of the celestial paradise.

We refer here to the joys of Jesus as the Saviour of sinners. That love, which is the source of salvation, is the spring of the Saviour's joy; the love of the Father to him as the Saviour, and through him the sinners whom he purposed to save by him, whom he invites and draws to him; his own love to the Father, evinced in his habitual delight in pleasing him; his love to sinners as seen in his efforts for their salvation; his prospective view of the Father's purposes accomplished, and his church eternally saved—these were sources of joy to the Saviour.

II. THE INSTANCES OF THE SAVIOUR'S JOY.

1. Jesus rejoiced in *anticipation of his coming on earth*—his coming on the mission of salvation. While voluntary love said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God," joy united with love in the expressed willingness. Love was the motive, and joy was the spirit and the result of the Saviour's mission. The Father delighted in him as the coming Saviour, and he was delighted with the errand of mercy on which he was coming.

2. Jesus rejoiced in *the exercise of his ministry on earth*. He said, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the

Gospel to the poor." The people gladly heard him, while he gladly preached the good tidings to them. He rejoiced in the prospective view of the success of the Gospel, and especially among the large class—the poor.

3. Jesus rejoiced in *the results of his cross*. "Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising its shame." In the depths of sufferings there were sources of joy open to him—the joy that should result from his cross—the joy that should reward his cross. His ardent love to his Father's glory, his love to precious souls, combined with hope of pleasing his Father, and of saving sinners—these were motives influencing the Saviour throughout his mediatorial course, and affording him joy and rejoicing.

4. Jesus rejoiced in *his coronation in heaven*. His resurrection and ascension were events of joy both to himself and to his followers. The tears occasioned by his sad cross subside, while the joys consequent upon his enlargement and exaltation abound. His life in heaven is one of joy. Anticipating this, he said, "Thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." All this he now realises, and all this, as their Forerunner, he assures his followers of. He rejoices in his Father's approbation; in the songs and services of angels and saints in heaven; he rejoices over repenting sinners on earth, in the devotedness of his church, and in the extension of his Spiritual kingdom. "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied."

5. Jesus rejoices in *the purpose of his second coming, and in the final presentation of his church to the Father*. He comes as the Blessed Hope of his saints; he comes to gather together his elect; he comes to perform all his great promises and designs, and to present the myriads of his saved people before the presence of his Father with exceeding joy. "He will rejoice over them with joy; he will rejoice over them with singing."

III. THE INFLUENCE OF THE SAVIOUR'S JOY.—The Saviour's joy is his people's joy. He has opened to them sources of peculiar, precious, and perpetual joy—joy that affords them strong and everlasting consolation. His tears soften their tears, and his joys soothe their sorrows. True, he does not weep now, yet he is touched with the feeling of their sorrows; he sympathises and succours them amidst all their tears. He says, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

His joy, his present joy is the pledge of his people's joy. His Father has received him to heaven, and rewarded him with unutterable joy; and the Saviour's prayer is, that his people may participate his joy. "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." In answer to this, at the last great day, they shall "enter into the joy of the Lord."

SELLING CHRIST.

BY THE REV. JOSEPHUS BAILEY, BAWDLEY.

THE immortal Bunyan, in recording his temptations says, "I could neither eat my food, stoop for a pin, chop a stick, or cast mine eye to look on this or that; but still the tempter would come, 'sell Christ for this,' or 'sell Christ for that,' sell him, sell him."

So tender was the conscience of Bunyan, and so strong his temptations, that he could scarcely do what was right and proper, without remorse. We cannot help thinking that it would be well for us if we had more of this spiritual sen-

sibility: not however, arising from satanic temptation, but from a greater love to Christ. Alas! the spirit of the age is more calculated to blunt the conscience and harden the heart, than to foster a deep sense of the awfulness of sin.

While we mourn over the world which "lieth in the arms of the wicked one," we have cause to be sad at the spectacle which the professing church presents. For much has the worldly spirit been imbibed by professors of religion, and painful are its effects. There are *few* who do right and question it, but *many*, who do wrong with unblushing face.

A glance at the church will prove this, men now-a-days seem to be aiming at an impossibility, *i. e.*, serving God and mammon at one and the same time! Instead of trying to "love not the world, neither the things of the world," they seem to be anxious to know how much of the world they may bury in their hearts, and yet retain their connection with the church of God. Like the coachman who boasted that he could drive within a foot of a precipice without falling over, so may professors of religion drive as near as possible to the spirit of this world, but wish to be thought the children of God. Is not this *selling Christ*?

In many instances it would be impossible to determine whether men belonged to the church or the world; mixed up with the vanities of the world, and differing from the men of the world only in name, it would not be thought that any difference existed. To say they were not Christians, would be thought an "unpardonable sin;" but to look to their lives for the fruit of the Spirit, would be to seek figs among thorns, or grapes among thistles.

Ah, thus it is that Christ is sold. The concert, the ball, the casino, the circus, and in some cases, the card table, are visited by persons who fill our chapels, and pass for the friends of Christ. The means of grace are neglected, and the doctrines of the Word disowned in order to meet the wishes, and retain the smiles of unchristian men.

Sell Christ, sell him, sell him, the friend of sinners, the Redeemer of men! Yes, men often sell Christ. Some, indeed, there are, who dispose of Christ as the sot does his coat. They put him in pledge on Monday morning, and never see him again till Sunday draws nigh. Pledge, yes, they pledge themselves to forget Christ all the days of the week until the return of the Sabbath; they dispense with that *form* of godliness, which during the sacred day of rest they put on; and as the sun rises to their eyes on the Lord's day, so do their *religious* garments rise from the depths of their forgetfulness; but alas! doomed to return at the close of the day.

Worse, indeed, is the case of others who, not content with selling Christ for worldly gain during the week, sell him on the sacred day of rest and worship, for a "trip by rail," or a feast at the house of a friend, SELL HIM for this! Yes, dear reader, there are many who lay aside thoughts of Christ for the trifles of a day, who, for a grain of earth, a moment's applause, or an hour's pleasure and recreation, will deny the God they profess to serve.

Such persons barter away the truth of God, impede the progress of the Gospel, place stumbling blocks in the way of the children of God, and cause many to halt therein, while an exulting shout issues from the lips of the vile, the sceptical, and ungodly. Sell him! oh never, nay

"Rather let life's expiring flame,
Desert this animated frame,
Than I forget to love thy name,
My Jesus."

THE VOICE OF THE OLD PULPIT.

III.—THE OLD PULPIT'S BOASTINGS.

BY THE REV. J. ROBERTS, RUTHIN, NORTH WALES.

I boast in the multitude of my sons. I have One whom I know not how to name, nor how to pass. When I look at the firmament, I find the planets disappear if the sun shows his face, and yet their brilliancy is owing to his light. So I hesitate to name One of my preachers, lest I should take too much liberty by classifying him with men; and yet I am unwilling to pass him, for he is the glory of the rest. Having determined to name the chief Object of my boastings, I know not what title to give him, or whether to place him first or last. The Person is JESUS CHRIST—the SON OF GOD—the GREAT TEACHER. Having named him, I care not who comes after. It is immaterial whether I take my list from the Bible, ecclesiastical history, or a mixture of both. My sons are Paul, Peter, James, John, Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin, Peter Waldo, Wickliffe, Luther, Zuinglius, Hooper, Melancthon, Bishop Hall, Archbishop Usher, Calvin, Knox, Penry, Dr. Owen, Caryl, Baxter, Charnock, Bunyan, Howe, Poole, Gill, Scott, Doddridge, Wesley, Whitfield, Philip and Matthew Henry, Watts, Dwight, Rowlands, Llangetho, E. and R. Erskine, Jonathan Edwards, Rees, and Tibbot Llanbrynmair; Williams Pantycelyn, Edmund Jones, Dr. Lewis, Jones Pwllheli, Jones St. George, Dr. A. Clarke, Robert Hall, Rowland Hill, Chalmers, Wardlaw, Williams Wern, John Elias, Christmas Evans, Dr. Carey, Dr. Morrison, Bishop Heber, John Williams, William Knibb, Jones Edyrn, Ebenezer Morris, Peters, and Breeze Carmarthen; Joseph Harries, Dr. Smith, Dr. M'Al, and Spencer. O! I am sorry that I should have commenced naming them. I could make a list of my sons that would fill volumes. I know something of the feeling of the parents who were called upon to make a sacrifice of one of their children. Reuben was the first-born, Joseph was the favourite of his father, Levi was like his mother, Judah was the image of both, and the next was little Benjamin. When I look upon those who are not named, I see that one is the profound author, the next is the eloquent preacher, the third is the heroic martyr, and the fourth is the true image of his heavenly Father. Blessed company! The happiness of heaven must be beyond description, for they are all there. But the rage of death is intolerable, for he has killed them all; and the rapacity of the grave knows no limits, for it has swallowed them all. But, ah! my children have a Brother in heaven, who wieldeth his sword and bendeth his bow to kill the murderer; and he will take the spoil from the hand of the grave. He says, "O death! I will be thy plague; O grave! I will be thy destruction. And I will redeem them from death, and ransom them from the power of the grave."

I boast in the fame of my sons. Their remembrance is like "the savour of good ointment." It fills islands and continents. The sweet fragrance of their names follow the Gospel wherever it goes. I might mention Bunyan and Whitfield as examples. Their biography appears to have been mixed with the air, and carried on the wings of the wind to every country. Tens of thousands have become acquainted with their characters unknown to themselves, for they never saw their productions, nor read their memoirs. "The martyr of Erromanga" is ten times more known after his death than before, and will be better known still to the millions of the Millenium. I might sum up the character of my sons in the language of my own book:—"Ministers of Christ,—in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by their own countrymen; in perils by the heathen, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea; in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness; in watchings often, in hunger, and thirst, in fastings often; in cold and nakedness; beside the care of all the churches. Who, through faith, subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped

the mouths of lions ; quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword ; out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens ;—of whom *the world was not worthy.*" I might challenge the earth to show a host of heroes to be compared with my sons—men possessing such strong intellects, high attainments, and fervent eloquence ; yet labouring so hard and diligently for such a small reward from men. There is no personal property more real than talent and genius. In whatever profession these are found—whether it be among merchants, physicians, lawyers, or engineers—they are certain of their reward ; but many of my sons have cheerfully scattered the fruit of their labours among their fellow-men without remuneration, died in poverty, and left their families to trust to the extensive and unfailing inheritance of the young ravens.

I boast in the greatness and glory of my themes. These are the *great* fall of man, the *great* scheme of human redemption, the *great* day of judgment, and eternity ; the *great* reward of the faithful, and the *great* punishment of the ungodly, in that *great* world. Each of these subjects would be too large for the grasp of an archangel. The fall of many in this world has been great. They tumbled over precipices and fell upon rocks till their bones were broken, their flesh torn, and life was extinct. But what is this to be compared with the great fall of man ? No one but God could see the depth of the abyss where he lay, and no arm but his was long enough to reach him. He found him dead. He gathered together his broken bones, breathed into his soul new life, and raised him to the elevation from whence he fell ; yes, infinitely higher. "God in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses," is one of my texts. This subject fills the mind of Jehovah himself. God comes forward, and awakens the eloquence of his holy men to preach this. The most stupendous efforts of creation are nothing to the Creator ; yet *he* calls my subjects great. "A thousand years are in his sight as yesterday ;" but *he* calls the contents of my book "The great things of his law." Boundless space is called small by him, for "he meteth out heaven with a span ;" but *he* pronounces my subjects immeasurable. Men call astronomy an extensive field, yet it is nothing to him, for "he knows the number of the stars, and calls them all by their names ;" but the Holy Ghost has pronounced the riches of his grace "unsearchable." We call the ocean great, but it is nothing to him, for he holdeth the waters of the sea in the palm of his hand. But while speaking of *love*, one of my subjects, the Spirit of God declares that it "passeth knowledge." When man seeks for something great to talk of, he says, "it is as large as the world"—meaning, this earth ; but God "can comprehend the dust of the earth in a measure," just as the sower does the seed." And when God looks for something great, he opens my book, and exclaims, *Great* over every subject, and "manifold wisdom" over the whole. He never speaks of a balance that would weigh these, a line that would mete them, or a measure that would comprehend them.

I boast in the extent of my influence in the world. While on one hand I mourn that it is so little, on the other I am surprised that it is so great. The torrent of wickedness flowed against me, but I withstood it for ages, almost alone. I made kings and their ministers tremble before me. I wish they had left me alone, and not interfered in their ministerial capacity. I did a little towards curbing the head and slackening the pace of the bloody horse of war, but I ought to have done more, especially lately. I brought civilization to to many a neighbourhood in England and Wales. I banished superstition and abominable practices from hamlets, villages, and cities. I have succeeded in converting many a drunkard to be sober, a proud man to be humble, a miser to be liberal, a swearer to pray, a sabbath-breaker to be a worshipper, a blasphemer of Christ to be a professor and a teacher in his house ;—and many a Saul, the persecutor, to be a Paul, the preacher. I have been the means of making a paradise out of many a pagan desert. I succeeded in persuading the Bushmen

from the wood to build for themselves habitations, and instead of bending their knees before idols, to be worshippers of the true God. They changed their covering of skin for a more decent garment: their souls were clothed in the white raiment, instead of the filthy rags of heathenism. I forbade mothers to sacrifice their children to false gods, and burn themselves alive with the dead bodies of their husbands. I have been the means of melting many a stony heart, of binding up many a broken bone, of humbling many a haughty spirit, and of raising many a drooping soul.

I boast in the preservation of my life in spite of numerous and powerful enemies. It was natural, in a world like this, that I should come in contact with enemies. My Master was not popular here;—"He was despised, and rejected of men." If I had engaged to defend the prince of darkness, I should have had more quietness. I was compelled to injure the traffic of some, and to take from them the "hope of their gains." These hired the scum of the earth to make war with me, and went out themselves with their armies. Wherever I go, I disagree with corrupt nature and sinful lusts. If I could have lived with these, I should not have the protection of my God. The whisperer and the backbiter had their eyes upon me, and their arrows after me, whenever they had an opportunity. I have experienced all the fiery darts of hell. They have been aimed sometimes at my face, sometimes at my side, and sometimes at my back. In the time of Nero, and bloody Mary, the bowmen were dressed in the clothes of enemies, and stood in my face; in after ages, they put on the garb of friends, and stood behind. The darts have been pointed by parliaments, heated in burning piles, and dipped in poison. But I am alive! and I venture to rest upon divine revelation, raise my hand to heaven, and swear that I shall live till the last day!

I boast that I am the great favourite of heaven. Not many, perhaps, would be offended if I were to call myself the "holy of holies" upon earth—the principal dwelling-place of God the Saviour—over which the cherubim spread their wings, and the cloud of glory remains. If I am not so, I deserve to be called the most worthless creature on earth. To erect me was the most extravagant waste of money, and the greatest insult to time is to come and hear me. But if I am what I profess to be, it is no mockery to ascend my stairs. Who, in former times, durst "venture to the thick darkness where God was," without putting "their shoes from off their feet?" I am often mentioned with thanks by the redeemed in glory. There are tens of thousands there, praising loud for the warnings of parents, for the family altar, for the admonitions of pious old mothers on the way to a house of prayer, and for the lessons of the Sabbath school teachers; but the hosannas for me are louder and more enthusiastic. He that sitteth on the throne looks at me with delight, for I have shown more of his glory on earth, and shaped more of the pearls of his crown, than all the rest put together.

And now, my dear hearers, I bid you farewell, having no expectation of meeting you again in this manner, till we appear at the judgment seat of Christ. "You appear before the judgment seat!" O yes; I must be there. I am bound to appear, whether I be willing or not. If the Judge did not call for me, the conscience and memory of the criminals would join to send for me. Every one of the hearers of the Gospel will imagine he sees me, exactly as I stood in his old place of worship. They will see my sons ascending my steps, one after another, and opening the Bible—the Book which is now before the Judge; and the echoes of my voice will be loud in their ears. I shall be the principal witness against them. My testimony will seal the fate of millions whom I love. The ungodly will understand, at that time, how I can be a "Savour of death unto death."

NOT JUSTICE, BUT PARDON.

ONE morning, a beautiful girl, fourteen years of age, presented herself alone at the gate of one of the palaces of France. It was when the first Napoleon was Consul. Her tears and woes moved the keeper, a kind-hearted man, to admit her. She found her way to the presence of Napoleon, as he was passing through one of the apartments, accompanied by several of his ministers. In a delirium of emotion the child rushed to her feet, and exclaimed, "Pardon, sire! pardon for my father!"

"And who is your father?" said Napoleon, kindly; "who are you?"

"I am Miss Lajolia," she replied, "and my father is doomed to die."

"Ah, Miss," said Napoleon, "but this is the second time in which your father has conspired against the state; I can do nothing for you!"

"Alas, sire!" the poor child exclaimed, "I know it; but the first time, papa was innocent; and to-day, I do not ask for justice—I implore pardon, pardon for him!"

Napoleon's lips trembled, tears filled his eyes, and taking the little hand of the child in both of his, he tenderly pressed it, and said: "Well, my child, yes! For your sake, I will forgive your father. This is enough. Now rise and leave me."

This beautiful historical fact may serve to illustrate the way in which sinners are saved. All this world, young and old, are condemned to eternal death by the great God, against whom we have all sinned.

The apostle Paul says: "Death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The evangelist John says: "He that believeth not is condemned already." You probably think, that as for yourself, such a doom is hard and unjust. But you would not think so if you saw what sin would do, if God did not punish it. It would overturn his government. It would make a hell of every place, and a devil of every rational being. God must punish sin for his own sake, and for

the sake of all good beings. There is, however, One who can save sinners from eternal death. One who loves them much more than this young lady loved her father. He did for us what she could not have done for him. He took our place and died in our stead that we might live. God forgives sinners for Christ's sake; but he does not forgive those who neglect to honour his Son by asking pardon in his name. It is true, that God will be strictly just with sinners, though they should remain away from Christ his Son, who has done so much for them. But, then, justice to them will be banishment from heaven for ever. Are you willing and prepared to receive justice? This young lady said: "I do not ask for justice; I implore pardon; pardon!" The Publican, "standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." And also the trembling jailor said: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Go, then, to the Saviour with something like the spirit which the young lady manifested in behalf of her father. Break through every obstacle, cast yourself at his feet, cry pardon, pardon for a guilty sinner.

"You can't but perish if you go,
Then be resolved to try;
For if you stay away, you know
You must for ever die."

And as none are pardoned, except in virtue of their relation to Christ by faith, and as such an approach is of the very essence of faith, you will be accepted as righteous in his sight only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to you. You will be received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God, and enabled more and more to die unto sin and live unto righteousness. At death you will be made perfect in holiness, and immediately pass into glory. "And all to the praise of the glory of his grace."

PASSING THROUGH THE WATERS.

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee," Is. xliii. 2.

"Save me, O God: for the waters are come into my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me," Ps. lxxvi. 1, 2.

THE roads in the east are through marshes and swamps, which during the rainy season are generally overflowed with water. Passing through these the traveller has often cause to say, "I sink in deep mire where is no standing; I am come into deep waters." They are intersected also with streams, over which there are no bridges, through which it is always difficult and often dangerous to pass. On the banks of these waters, persons station themselves to conduct travel-

lers through them; if mounted, they conduct them by taking hold of the horse's bridle; if on foot, they carry them across on their shoulders. I have often been carried "through the waters" in both of these ways.

What the guide does for the traveller in passing through these waters, God promises to do for the traveller heavenward, when passing through the waters of affliction, and the river of death.

A TRAVELLER.

LESSONS LEARNED AT JESUS' FEET.

TRIALS.

"TRIALS bring me to his feet." Is it not so, dear brothers and sisters of the one "family in heaven and earth"? Not often, perhaps, is it through trial that the impenitent heart is first made penitent—the proud heart humbled—the hard heart softened. Too often, at least, afflictions seem but to make such hearts harder, and prouder, and more bitter in their rebellion against the hand that smites them. But where there is already "a little strength," a little of the leaven of grace buried—though it be beneath indulged sin and unresisted temptation on the backslider's heart—doth not trial often fall as the windy storm and tempest on the barren, weedy soil, scattering the dead and useless plants; uprooting, perhaps, many a fair green thing, but striking deep into the roots of the drooping grain, and causing it to spring forth into new beauty and luxuriance?

Once taught this precious lesson, with what an accession of confiding love we look up to our God and Fa-

ther! How we bless him for his faithfulness, for the chastening of his love! How sweet is it then to recall all the way in which he has led us hitherto; to read, as illuminated by this light, the past lessons of his providence! No sooner is the thick cloud of sin and unbelief removed than we see him where he has ever been, a God *at hand*, waiting to be gracious! With low, deep repentance, and overflowing gratitude, we now turn to him, our Almighty Saviour, for whose sake alone we feel our Father has been thus long-suffering!

"What shall I render," is now the language of our swelling hearts; and prompt and decided is the response—"Ourselves! a living sacrifice!" Jesus! Master and Lord! thus be it henceforth! Permit us now to renew with thee our broken covenant-vows; and may they never be so basely broken more! Be it ours henceforth to sit at thy feet and learn of thee. "Teach us to do thy will!"

DISCIPULA.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

THE SAVIOUR'S PRAYER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOME LIFE," "SUNDAY THOUGHTS," &c., &c.

"Father I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me."—JOHN xvii. 20.

THY prayer, O Saviour, is again fulfilled,
 While no response has met *our* earnest plea!
 Yet the deep anguish of our hearts is stilled
 By the sweet consciousness that thou hast willed,
 That our departed ones should be "with Thee!"

"*With Thee!*" Too rough for them was life's steep way;
 Too fading for them were earth's fragile flowers;
 Our nights are dark,—they longed for perfect day;
 Nor could they feverish thirst like theirs allay
 At these unsatisfying streams of ours.

Oh, while with us they sojourned, they appeared
 As pilgrims passing through a land unknown;
 Their minds were in a "higher region sphered;"
 Their glowing spirits as their home they neared,
 Grew day by day more Christ-like in their tone.

"*With Thee!*" No more by sin nor sorrow pained,
 They dwell in thine all-gladdening presence now;
 The rest, so often asked for, is attained;
 The fellowship, so often sighed for, gained;
 And thine own hand has crowned their radiant brow.

And now thy promised glory they behold,
 And with enraptured gaze thy beauty see!
 But bliss like theirs, no mortal lips hath told:
 We cannot, if we strive, their joys unfold;—
 Enough for us to know, they are "*with Thee!*"

"*With Thee!*" Oh, how that thought our sorrow calms;
 We could not trust them to *an angel's* care!
 But we can leave them in thy loving arms,
 Folded from danger—safe from all alarms;—
 Nor wish them back, our chequered lot to share.

No, as with aching hearts afresh we gird
 Ourselves for conflict with the ills of life,
 We thank thee that for them thy prayer was heard!—
 And meekly wait till thine all-gracious word,
 Shalt summon us from scenes of care and strife.

SOWING TARES.

"But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way," Matt. xiii. 25.

STRANGE as it may appear, this is still literally done in the east. See that lurking villain, watching for the time when his neighbour shall plough his field; he carefully marks the period when the work has been finished, and goes in the night following, and casts in what the natives call the *pan-dinellu*; that is, pig paddy: this being of rapid growth, springs up before the good seed, and scatters itself before the other can be reaped, so that the

poor owner of the field will be for years before he can get rid of the troublesome weed.

But there is another noisome plant which these wretches cast into the ground of those they hate, called *perum-pirandi*, which is more destructive to vegetation than any other plant. Has a man purchased a field out of the hands of another, the offender says, "I will plant the *perum-pirandi* in his grounds."

PEN AND INK SKETCH OF JAMES GRANT ESQ.

MR. JAMES GRANT, with whose portrait we present our readers in this number of the *Messenger*, was born in Elgin, a small town in the north of Scotland. A work entitled, "Men of the time," fixes the date of that event in 1806; but we have reason to believe that he was born two or three years before that period.

In his earliest youth he evinced a taste for literature, and often when a mere lad, rose up early and sat up late to peruse the productions of the more popular authors. It was, however, not till 1820, that he made his *début* as a literary man in some contributions which appeared in the columns of *The Statesman*, an evening paper which was then in existence in this Metropolis. Two or three years later we find him writing a series of papers of a religious character, thirty-four in number, in the *Imperial Magazine*, a popular periodical then published at a shilling, under the editorship of the late Samuel Drew, who was one of the most distinguished metaphysicians of the present century. We believe that Mr. Grant and Mr. Drew never met; but there existed between them the most cordial friendship which was cultivated and sustained by private correspondence.

In the year 1827, in conjunction with a relative, Mr. Grant started a newspaper in his native place under the title of *The Elgin Courier*, which he conducted with remarkable success (considering that the population of Elgin at that time was only 5000), for a period of six years. The journal is still in existence.

Early in the year 1833, Mr. Grant came to London, and commenced his metropolitan literary career upon the *Morning Chronicle*, which was then a paper of the highest respectability, and of thoroughly liberal principles, whatever it may be at the present moment. In 1834 he became connected with the *Morning Advertiser*, on which paper he has remained ever since. Until 1839, his duty was to write one or more leading articles daily—often two or three—besides examining, altering, approving, or rejecting all the other

leading articles contributed by the regular staff of that journal. In October, 1850, on the resolution having been come to to enlarge the *Morning Advertiser* to a permanent double sheet, he was entrusted with the sole editorial management of that journal, which position he still occupies. This experiment of enlargement, when several of the other daily papers were declining, was felt to be a hazardous one, inasmuch as it involved an additional yearly outlay of nearly £10,000. Mr. Grant appears to have been deeply sensible of the heavy responsibilities devolving upon him in consequence of having committed to him the sole management of the paper at so momentous a crisis in its history. Mr. Grant exhibited all that industry and application which are so often the characteristic of his countrymen. He experienced, as he has often been heard to declare, an amount of anxiety for the first two years after the enlargement took place, of which it would be impossible to form any adequate conception. During those two years we are assured, by those who had the fact from himself, that he never was once absent from the office day or night, attending from a little after ten till two o'clock in the day, and in the evening from soon after six till nearly two, and often later, the next morning, which, we believe, are still his editorial hours. The success which crowned his indefatigable exertions, as the public are aware, was eminently great. The annual profits of the paper, arising from the increased circulation, and from the vast additions which were made to the advertisements, were nearly doubled in the course of three years, notwithstanding an increased amount of expenditure, as we have said, of £10,000. Out of the annual profits of from £10,000 to £11,000, which the *Advertiser* yields, about £5000 are yearly devoted to the support of the charities of the society to which the journal belongs. Under Mr. Grant's able management the *Morning Advertiser* has not only made the pecuniary progress to which we have above adverted, but it has risen from a circulation, which

though considerable, was still of a sectional character, to the position of a first class morning paper, second only to the *Times*, either in circulation or influence. It now enjoys a very large sale, and its original proprietors comprise not more than one half of its subscribers; and instead of its circulation being almost exclusively restricted to them, it is now read by every class of the community.

Mr. Grant was brought up in the Presbyterian Secession Church of Scotland; but, soon after his marriage, in 1825, he came to the conviction, after a long and careful inquiry into the subject, that Infant Baptism was without foundation in Scripture; and he therefore connected himself openly with those who recognized believers' Baptism as the only scriptural view of the ordinance.

Soon after he came to London, Mr. Grant became a stated hearer under the ministry of the late Rev. James Harington Evans, of John Street Chapel, Bedford Row, whom he always regarded when alive, and now regards when dead, as having been the most eminently spiritually-minded man, as well as the most able and faithful preacher he ever knew or expects to meet with again, even were his life to be prolonged to a much greater period than he has any reason to expect. Mr. Grant has often been heard to declare that he felt the death of Mr. Evans, in 1848, as deep as if he had sustained some family bereavement, and up to this time, as we can testify from our own personal knowledge, he cherishes the memory of that remarkable man with an affectionate regard too great to admit of expression.

Mr. Grant is still connected with the John Street Chapel, where he steadily hears the preaching of the Gospel by the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel, M.A., the successor of Mr. Evans.

Mr. Grant is a voluminous author. Thirty-two large volumes, published at half-a-guinea each, to say nothing of various smaller productions, and miles length, we may say, of leaders, and other articles, in the columns of the various journals during the past thirty years, have proceeded from his prolific pen. The works by which he is best known to the general public are "*Random Recollections of the Lords and Commons*," "*The Great Metropolis*," "*The Bench and the Bar*," "*Sketches in London*," "*The Metropolitan Pulpit*," and "*Records of a Run through Continental Countries*." The last-named work was published only three years ago, in 2 vols.

Some of his works have had a large sale, European and American. "*The Great Metropolis*" has been translated into both French and German. By each of the two first-named works upon this list, the first in 2 vols. and the second in 4 vols., the publisher cleared £1200, after giving the author £400.

For three years Mr. Grant conducted the *Metropolitan Magazine*, at that time a monthly periodical, published at 3s. 6d. This magazine was started in 1832, and was for some time conducted by Thomas Campbell and Thomas Moore. It afterwards fell into the hands of Captain Maryatt. Some time after the gallant Captain quitted the

helm, Mr. Grant became not only Editor but Proprietor of the *Metropolitan Magazine*; but finding, after the lapse of three years, that due attention to the Magazine was incompatible with his other editorial duties, and numerous literary engagements, he sold the copyright for the same sum which he had given for it.

Mr. Grant has written somewhat largely, though, for the most part, anonymously, on theological questions. His last avowed work of this class, is, in a variety of respects, in its nature, time, topics, truth, fulness, circumstances, and consequence, one of the most remarkable polemical productions which has ever appeared. It has raised such a storm in the Independent denomination within the space of a few months, as has never been equalled, and, perhaps, has not yet reached its crisis.

Its origin was as follows. A Mr. Lynch, who preaches to a few people, at the West End, issued a book entitled "*The Ritelet*," or Hymns for the Heart and Voice;" and in the conceit of the maudlin rhymester, not only introduced them into use at his own chapel, but sent copies to the periodicals for review. One came to the *Advertiser*, and Mr. Grant gave it a fair and respectful criticism, but at the same time pointed out the utter absence of the doctrines of the Gospel in any of its teachings, and the implied, if not clearly expressed, opposition to the fundamental principles of the Christian religion. The *Eclectic Review* not only vouch'd for its poetry and its theology, but for its deep Christian experience. "This charming volume," it said, "will refresh and delight the heart of the Christian." But we must be brief, though this is a tempting theme. Mr. Binney, Mr. Newnham Hall, and thirteen other ministers who are on terms of intimacy with Mr. Lynch, determined to extinguish Mr. Grant, and to nullify his criticism, which told forcibly upon their friend, and his sentimental effusions. To this end they took an entirely novel and unprecedented course; these grave and reverend leaders of the Independents actually drew up and sent in a formal "protest," to the *Eclectic* (how they have all regretted it ever since) which declared that they had read Mr. Grant's articles "with pain and shame." They declared they found in the book "a spring of fresh and earnest piety," and upheld the commendations of the *Eclectic*, as "maintaining the standard of true Christian reviewing." Such an absurd "protest" on the part of fifteen ministers, in a monthly periodical of a religious character, against an independent criticism in a daily secular paper, took all calm and thoughtful men by surprise. The thing was so wholly gratuitous, both in its intrusive commendations of this very nummy pambly production, and in its unwarranted attack upon the freedom of the critic in the person of Mr. Grant, that the amazement became general.

But so far from being thus extinguished by the "fifteen" would-be dictators to the impartial critic, Mr. Grant returned at once to the charge with redoubled vigour. A controversy ensued, as we have said, of the most remarkable character. Dr. Campbell,

Mr. Brewin Grant, Mr. Palmer, of Homer-ton, and a host of others now mingled in the fray. A terrible unmasking followed. The papers usually supposed to be the organs of orthodoxy, when they could no longer remain silent, disclosed the cloven foot, and corroborated Mr. Grant's charges as to the prevalence of heterodoxy. The *Banner* was almost the sole exception in London; the *Patriot*, *Nonconformist*, *Freemian* (as for the professed organ of the Baptist body) and the *Wesleyan Times*, declared for Lynch to the shame and regret of many of their subscribers. They have all, however, discovered their mistake, and have to regret its result in a decreased circulation.

Mr. Grant re-published his articles, with various interesting and important additions, under the title of "*The Controversy*." The *Tenth* edition is now before us, although the whole affair is barely eight months old. We dwell upon this subject at rather greater length because of its being of recent origin, of general interest, and by very much the most important event in the life of the subject of this sketch, more so even, we imagine than his appointment to the Editorship of the *Morning Advertiser*—on the advantages

of which, did space permit, we could say a great deal; for the presence of such a man at the head of such a journal, is an affair of unspeakable moment, in consequence of the immense influence which he exercises for good, by the insertion of religious matter, in which respect the *Advertiser* is a wonder unto many, as it often furnishes reports of important religious services which the religious journals themselves overlook.

No one can foresee the end of "*The Controversy*;" one immediate result is that the Congregational Union has not held its Autumnal meetings, and, when it does meet, (unless matters greatly alter, of which there is little prospect), will either split into two sections, and thus be shorn of half its influence, or utterly and for ever disappear, and

"Like the baseless fabric of a vision,
Leave not a wrack behind."

The last of Mr. Grant's theological productions is anonymous; but as a review of it appears in another column, we need not make further reference to this highly spiritual production of Mr. Grant's versatile pen in this place.

LITERARY NOTICES.

A Premillennial Manual. By the Rev. John Cox, author of "Our Great High Priest," &c., pp. 240. London: J. Nisbet & Co.

THIS work contains a statement of Premillennialism, with Scripture proof, and a history of the doctrine in all ages. Also, remarks on the principle of literal interpretation; on the restoration of the Jews; on the outline of the coming future; on the spirit in which prophecy should be studied; and on the practical tendency of the doctrine. Also, upwards of fifty hymns and poetic pieces, entitled "Songs of Hope," gathered from various writers: with a number of select extracts and suggestive sentences, from premillennial authors.

We had occasion some months since to notice another work on the Millennium, by a dear brother who takes a position adverse to that taken by our esteemed correspondent, the Rev. John Cox, who, in the preface to this elegant volume, has so well stated its character and the design of its publication, that we prefer introducing it to our readers in his own words, at the same time recommending them to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest its varied and important contents; for although we demur to the *theory* of the Millennium, upon which the "prophecies and counsels are based, yet all persons who are inquiring respecting prophetic truth, may find many practical directions. Its object is to draw the mind from things seen and present to those which are unseen and future. The "Songs of Hope," gathered from various sources, are very excellent. To some of these, possessing considerable merit, the author has appended his own initials. In the concluding paragraph to his prefatory observations, Mr. Cox very sensibly and

piously remarks—"We earnestly ask all who study this subject, and who plead for it, to do so in a spirit of devotion. *Controversy may be necessary, but communion is indispensable.* Let us study the Lord's coming under his cross, and in connection with his glory in heaven, and never be satisfied unless we realise a spirit of earnest prayer and joyful hope prompting to grateful praise and diligent effort."

The Brother born for Adversity; or, the Similarity of the Saviour's Sorrows and Suffering to those of his Followers. London: John Snow.

THIS handsome little volume, although his name does not appear, is by Mr. Grant, a sketch of whom is given in the preceding pages. This is of a more devotional character than any of his former productions, and is admirably adapted for presentation to the afflicted and sorrowful children of God, to thousands of whom it will doubtless prove a consolatory companion in the path of tribulation. We happen to know Mr. Grant's little work is highly esteemed by Dr. Octavius Winslow, to whose works in experimental divinity it bears a close resemblance.

History of the Baptist Church, assembling at Arnsby, Leicester, with a Memoir of the Rev. Robert Hall, sen., and biographical notices of his successors. By William Bassett, of Countesthorpe, pp. 84. London: B. L. Green.

MR. BASSETT'S little volume is replete with matter of great local interest, and may be read with profit by all who take an interest in the welfare of Zion everywhere,

Streams from Lebanon. By the Rev. William Reid, M.A. London: Partridge & Co. This is a volume of upwards of 560 pages, somewhat closely printed in clear type. It consists of an introduction on "the all-important question, and the danger of delaying the consideration of it;" and about 130 pieces of various length. The character and object of this work is best described by the author himself in the short preface which introduces it. "In pre-facing this work, I have specially consulted the urgent necessities of the perishing, the conversion of the awakened and the edification of the newly converted. The Gospel of the grace of God is its only theme, and the salvation of souls its only object." This is a true testimony, and we earnestly hope that this object may be at-

tained. The work appears to us particularly suited for occasional reading in family circles, where elder children and servants are in an unconverted or enquiring state. The various pieces are full of precious truth, many of them are illustrated by anecdotes and short histories, and much choice poetry is interspersed through the work.

If this work, and the British Messenger, were circulated and read instead of the many unawful tales now so prevalent in some religious periodicals, we think the exchange would be profitable. The British Messenger now circulating 92,000 monthly, and still rapidly increasing, proves that divine truth can be circulated among the masses, without having recourse to doubtful expedients.

DENOMINATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.

- Penzance.*—The Rev. J. P. Barnett, from Keighley, Yorkshire.
London, Vernon Chapel, Pentonville.—The Rev. S. Wills, D.D., of Norwood, has accepted the unanimous invitation to the pastorate of the Baptist Church; the Rev. Owen Clarke having been compelled, through an afflictive providence, to retire.
Hereford.—The Rev. W. Bontems, late of Whitechurch, Salop.
Norwood, Upper.—The Rev. S. A. Tipple, of Wolverhampton, has accepted the cordial invitation of the Church assembling at Upper Norwood Chapel, to become their pastor.
Newcastle-upon-Tyne.—The Rev. Isaac Davies has been compelled, through a throat affection, to resign the pastorate of the Baptist Church at New Court Chapel.

RECOGNITION SERVICES.

- Warminster, Wilts.* Oct. 30th.—Of the Rev. J. Price, late of Weymouth, when a social tea meeting was held, attended by members of various religious denominations. To accommodate the large company present, a temporary floor was laid over the pews of the chapel. After prayer by the Rev. J. Preece, Mr. Hardwick, one of the deacons, stated the object of the meeting. The meeting was addressed by Mr. Stent, deacon of the Independent Chapel, in the absence of its pastor, the Rev. H. M. Gunn, through illness, and by the Revs. Mr. Willis (Wesleyan), W. Barnes, of Trowbridge; C. J. Middleditch, of Frome; J. Bigwood, of Brompton; S. Manning, of Frome; J. Fuller, of Mellisham; and J. Sprigg, M.A. The Revs. C. Stanford, Devizes, J. Anderson, of Bratton, Z. Clift, of Crockerton, and J. Houlstone, of Penknapp, engaged in the devotional exercises.
Evesham, Nov. 13th.—Of the Rev. Thomas Michael, as pastor of the Baptist Church in Mill Street. In the morning the Rev. C. Vince, of Birmingham, delivered the introductory discourse. The Rev. W. Crowe, of Worcester, proposed the usual questions, the recognition prayer was offer-

- ed by the Rev. G. Cole, of Naunton. In the afternoon, the Rev. T. Thomas, D.D., president of Pontypool College, delivered an impressive charge to the pastor, and in the evening the Rev. J. W. Todd, of Sydenham, preached to the people. The Revs. F. Overbury, of Pershore; M. Phillips, of Alcester; J. Phillips, of Astwood; J. Green, of Upton; T. Young, of Morton; J. Morris, of Chipping Norton; J. Pike, of Broadway; and S. Dunn, of Atch Lench, conducted the devotional exercises.
Bewdley, Worcestershire, Nov. 11th.—Of the Rev. J. Bailey, late of Ragland, Monmouthshire, as pastor of the Baptist Church, in this place. After public tea in the evening, the introductory discourse was delivered by the Rev. J. Mills, of Kidderminster; the Rev. B. C. Young, of Coseley, delivered an impressive charge to the pastor, and the Rev. T. Swan, of Birmingham, preached to the people. Mr. Swan also addressed two newly-elected deacons, and concluded by presenting a purse of gold to the pastor, as a token of esteem from the Church and congregation, and other inhabitants of the town.
Arlington, Gloucestershire, Nov. 13th.—Of the Rev. G. W. Humphreys, B.A., late of Bristol College, as pastor of the Baptist Church. In the afternoon the Rev. J. Wassall, of Blockley, delivered the introductory discourse. In the evening the Rev. Professor Gotch, M.A., of Bristol College, delivered the charge, after which the Rev. J. M. Stephens, of Cirencester, offered prayer, and the Rev. James Smith, of Cheltenham, addressed the Church. The devotional services were conducted by the Revs. W. Reynolds, (Ind.), J. Frize, of Fairford, J. Stratford, of Cirencester, (Ind.), R. Breeze, of Swindon, and T. Brooks, of Bourton-on-the-Water.
Coventry, Oct. 20th.—Of the Rev. R. P. Macmaster, as minister of Cow Lane Chapel. The service was held in St. Mary's Hall. Upwards of 600 persons partook of tea refreshments. After which a public meeting was held, presided over by Mr. J. White, of Leamington; addresses were

delivered by the chairman, and by the Revs. T. Swan, R. G. Williams, J. Angus, A. Gordon, L. L. D., T. Lanvill, J. Taylor, T. Goadby, B.A., R. Macmaster, and others.

PRESENTATION SERVICES.

Merthyr Tydfil, Oct. 23.—An interesting meeting was held at the Temperance Hall, for the purpose of presenting the Rev. J. Davies, who for twenty years had sustained the pastorate of the English Baptist Church in this place, with a silver tea service and a purse of gold, on his removal to Haverfordwest. D. Joseph, esq., presided on the occasion. After an address by Mr. R. Jones, secretary of the committee, Mr. Davies, with deep emotion, acknowledged the handsome present. Gentlemen of various denominations subsequently delivered suitable addresses on the occasion.

Amersham, Oct. 28.—The Rev. W. A. Salter, on his retiring from the pastorate of the Church assembling in the Lower Meeting House, which he had sustained for fifteen years, was presented, by the Church and congregation, with a handsome bookcase containing ninety volumes of standard theological and other works.

NEW CHAPELS.

Uzbridge, Oct. 7.—Interesting services were held on the occasion of re-opening the Baptist chapel in this town, when a sermon was preached, in the afternoon, by the Rev. J. Hiron: and after tea, presided over by the Rev. G. H. Lowden, minister of the place, the Rev. J. Welsh, first pastor, gave a detailed account of the formation of the Church; and in the evening the Rev. H. Allon, of Islington, preached. Many ministers from the neighbourhood, and other places, took part in the services. On the following Lord's day sermons were preached by the Revs. E. Hunt, J. Robinson (minister of the Old Meeting House, Uzbridge, and secretary to the London City Mission), and G. H. Lowden; and on Tuesday evening the Rev. T. G. Horton, of Tonbridge Chapel, preached. The chapel has undergone great alterations and improvements; and a spacious school-room (with a vestry) has also been added.

Hanley, Staffordshire, Oct. 20.—A neat little edifice, erected for a congregation of Welsh Baptists, was opened for Divine worship, on which occasion sermons were preached by the Revs. J. Robinson, of Llanrhayadr, near Oswestry, and D. Hughes, of Garth, near Ruabon. Sermons in English were also preached by the Rev. L. J. Abingdon, pastor of the English Baptist Church, Hanley.

Melbourne, Cambs., Oct. 21.—A new and commodious Baptist chapel was opened for Divine worship in this populous village, when sermons, morning and afternoon, were preached by the Rev. Jabez Burns, D.D., of Paddington; and in the evening, by the Rev. H. Cornford, late of Jamaica. The devotional exercises were conducted by the Revs. A. C. Wright (Ind.), of Melbourne; R. Davies, of Sawston; F. John-

stone, B.A., of Cambridge; J. Besley, of Buntingford; C. R. Player, of Shelford; R. Davey, of Foulmire; J. Miram, of Chishill; J. Stockbridge, of Great Morde. On the following Lord's day, sermons were preached to overflowing congregations by the Rev. W. Robinson, of Cambridge, and the Rev. R. E. Fowlsith.

Dartford, Zion Chapel.—This chapel having undergone repair, the Church and congregation held a public tea meeting on Monday, October 3rd. The Rev. S. Miller, of Keppel Street, London, preached in the afternoon from John xiv. 23; after which about 140 persons sat down to tea, which was followed by a public meeting, over which Rev. J. A. Jones, of London, presided. Prayer having been offered by Mr. Roots, Mr. Neville addressed the meeting on the doctrines of the G-spel, and Mr. Flack, on the experience of those doctrines, and Mr. Hall concluded by prayer. A bible class is in course of formation.

BAPTISMS.

Abergeavny, Zion Chapel, Oct. 5.—Four by Mr. Young.

Audreth, Isle of Ely, Sept. 21.—Five by Mr. King.

Andlem, Cheshire, Oct. 5.—Two by Mr. Needham.

Angle, Pembrokeshire, Oct. 19.—One by Mr. B. L. Evans, of Manorbear.

Beaumaris, Anglesea, Oct. 5.—Five by Mr. S. Morgan.

Bewdly, Worcester, Nov. 2.—One by Mr. Bailey, after a sermon by the Rev. J. Mills, of Kidderminster.

Boston, Sept. 28.—Four by Mr. Matthews.

Brighton, Northamptonshire, Oct. 12.—Three by Mr. Davenport.

Bradford, Wills, Zion Chapel, Oct. 12.—Four in the river Avon, one of whom dated his first impression from a letter sent him by a friend of the Sabbath school.

Bristol, Counterslip, Nov. 2.—Fourteen by Mr. Winter, after a sermon by Professor Gotch.

Carmarthen, Tabernacle, Sept. 14.—Fourteen; and Oct. 12, Twenty-three by Mr. H. W. Jones.

Cefn Mawr, Denbighshire, Aug. 14.—Four. Sept. 14.—Seventeen, and Oct. 12.—Twelve by Mr. Roberts, of Plasymona.

Cheltenham, Oct. 19.—Seven by Mr. Smith.

Cowbridge, Glamorganshire, Sept. 21.—Two by Mr. Davis.

Donnington Wood, Salop, Oct. 12.—Two by Mr. Jones.

East Dereham, Norfolk, Sept. 26.—Four by Mr. Williams.

Fowshope, Hereford, Nov. 9.—Three by Mr. Mudge.

Dane Hill and Newick, Sussex, Aug. 21, two by Mr. Warren.

Great Grimby, Oct. 19.—Four by Mr. Hogg.

Haddenham, Bucks, Oct. 1.—Two by Mr. Hester.

Helmdon, Northamptonshire, Sept. 29.—Three by Mr. Hedge.

Ipswich, Turret Green, Oct. 2.—Two by Mr. Lord.

Keysoe, Beds., Sept. 21.—Three by Mr. Edwards.
Liverpool, Myrtle Street, Oct. 29.—Two by Mr. Hugh Stowell Brown.
 — *Great Cross Hall Street Chapel*, Nov. 2.—Six by Rev. B. Thomas.
 — *Soho Street*, Nov. 2.—Two by the Rev. Joseph Harvey.
London, New Park Street, Nov. 13.—Ten; and Nov. 20.—Seventeen by the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.
 — *Borough Road*, Oct. 5.—Three by Mr. Keen
 — *Trinity Chapel*, Oct. 23.—Rev. James Mules, for many years a minister of the Established Church; also Mrs. Mules, with four others, by Mr. Hettis.
Melbourne, Camb., Oct. 27.—Eight by Mr. Flood, five of whom were Sunday scholars.
Mendlesham, Suffolk, Aug. 1.—Six by Mr. Merrett.
Necton, Norfolk, Nov. 2.—Five by Mr. Baker.
Newark, Oct. 28.—Five by Mr. Bailey.
Poplar, near London, Zoar Chapel, Sept. 24.—Four at Cave Adullum Chapel, Stepney, by Mr. Bowles.
Reelruth, Nov. 9.—One by Mr. G. Slade.
Road, Newport, Oct. 26.—Three. No minister's name given.
Thame, Oxon., Sept. 28.—Two by Mr. Juguns, after a sermon by Mr. Reid, from Acts xviii. 37.
Torquay, Oct. 30.—Six by Mr. King; the first fruits of his ministry in Torquay.
Towersey, Bucks., Sept. 16.—Two.
Uzbridge, Nov. 2.—Four by Mr. G. R. Lowden.
Walton, Suffolk, Aug. 3.—Two. Oct. 5.—Two by M & Warren.

DEATHS.

Davis, Mr. E., Romford, Nov. 3, aged 47. One of the deacons of the Baptist Church in that town.
 Marshall, Mrs. Mary, at Girtford, Sandy Beds. June 21st, aged 27. She died in the hope of the Gospel.

Bago, Mr Thomas, at Liverpool, on Sabbath evening, Oct. 12, 1850, aged 53. The deceased left his home in the morning in his usual health, and went to Birkenhead to assist in the choir of the Baptist Church meeting in the Craven Rooms in that town. He spent the afternoon with some friends, a great portion of that period was devoted to singing, and in endeavouring to direct the minds of the younger portion of the family to him who said while on earth—
 "Suffer little children to come unto me."
 He left his friends in excellent spirits about five o'clock, and proceeded on his way to Soho St. Chapel, Liverpool, but when within one minute's walk of the chapel, it pleased the Lord to arrest him by the hand of death. He turned into a house where he received great attention, and suffered greatly for about twenty minutes; but amidst his sufferings he was enabled by the Holy Spirit to fly to the only refuge for sinners. Twice amidst his dying agony he turned upon his knees, and thus it pleased his heavenly Father to take him home. The last hymn he sang was that beautiful one in the selection, beginning, "When thou, my righteous Judge, shall come." He seemed to enter into the spirit of it thoroughly, so much so that he requested his friends to join him in repeating the last verse, which was done.

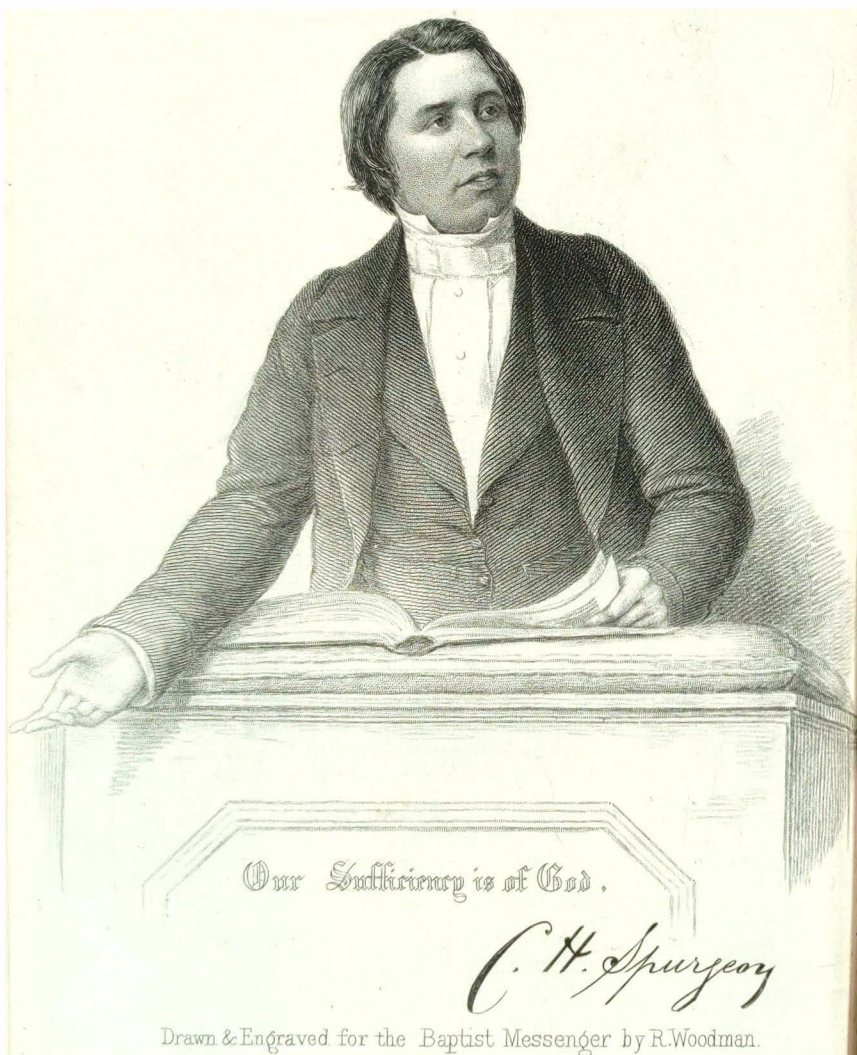
"Let me among thy saints be found,
 Whene'er the archangels trump shall sound
 To see thy smiling face.

Then loudest of the crowd I'll sing,
 While heaven's resounding mausoleums ring,
 With shouts of sovereign grace."

Instead of leading on that evening the singing at Soho St. Chapel, it pleased the Lord to call him to unite with the multitude before the throne, in singing salvation and honor, and glory be "unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever." The Rev. Joseph Harvey, in an earnest and powerful address, improved the solemn event, on Sabbath evening, Oct. 19th, at Soho St. Baptist Chapel, to a deeply affected congregation.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

WE close the year deeply in debt to those esteemed friends whose valuable papers have enriched our pages, as well as to numerous other correspondents, many of whose articles we have marked for insertion; these will appear in turn, as space and opportunity affords. We must beg our rhyming friends to desist from inundating us with their effusions, at least for a time; in nothing is our patience so severely tested as from this source. Mr. Bloomfield's paper, entitled the "Faithful Witness," has come to hand, and will be inserted in our January number. We trust our subscribers will be gratified with the portrait we have gratuitously given with the present number. The cost of the engraving and printing alone, would equal the produce of our ordinary monthly sales. We purpose, in an early number, giving another, executed in the same superior style of engraving. As heretofore, we shall spare neither trouble nor expense to make our "Messenger" welcome to its many thousands of readers; whose edification, and not our own profit, will continue to be our guiding principle in the editorial and proprietary department. We trust to providence to be reimbursed our previous unremunerated cost of production. All we ask of our friends is, that they will do their utmost to promote its circulation in their several localities.



Our Sufficiency is of God.

C. H. Spurgeon

Drawn & Engraved for the Baptist Messenger by R. Woodman.

CRIES FROM THE CROSS.*

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,

Minister of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.

‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me and from the words of my roaring?’ Psa. xlii.

WE here behold the Saviour in the depths of his agonies and sorrows. No other place so well shows the griefs of Christ as Calvary, and no other moment at Calvary, is so full of agony, as that in which his death shriek rends the air—“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” At this moment, physical weakness, brought upon him by fasting and scourging, was united with the acute mental torture which he endured from the shame and ignominy through which he had to pass; and, indeed, to make his grief culminate to the highest, he suffered spiritual agony which surpasses all expression, on account of the departure of his Father from him. “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” This was the blackness and the darkness of his horror; then it was that he penetrated the depths of the caverns of suffering.

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” There is something in these words of our Saviour always calculated to benefit us. When we behold the sufferings of other men, they afflict and appal us; but the sufferings of our Saviour, while they move us to grief, have about them something sweet, and full of consolation. Here, even here, in this black spot of grief, here it is we find our heaven, while gazing upon the cross. This, which would be thought a frightful sight, makes the Christian glad and joyous. If he laments the cause, yet he rejoices in the consequences. There are three questions to which I shall call your attention.

I.—“WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?”

By this we are to understand that our blessed Lord and Saviour was at that moment forsaken by God in such a manner as he had never been before. He had battled with the Enemy in the desert, but thrice he overcame him, and cast him to the earth. He had striven with that foe all his life long, and even in the garden he had wrestled with him till his soul was “exceeding sorrowful.” It is not till now that he experienced a depth of sorrow which he never felt before. We suppose that it was necessary that he should suffer in the stead of sinners, just what sinners ought to have suffered. It would be difficult to conceive of punishment for sin apart from the frown of Deity. With crime we always associate anger, so that when Christ died, “the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God”—when our blessed Saviour became our Substitute, he became for a moment, the victim of his Father’s righteous wrath, seeing that our sins had been imputed to him, in order that his righteousness might be imputed to us. It was necessary that he should feel the loss of his Father’s smile; for the condemned in hell must have tasted of that bitterness; and therefore it is that the Father closes the eye of his love, puts the hand of justice before the smile of his face, and leaves his Son to cry—“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

There is no man living who can tell the full meaning of these words; not one in heaven or on earth—I had almost said in hell; there is not a man can spell these words out with all their depth of misery! Some of us think at

[*Notes taken in shorthand of a sermon delivered in New Park Street Chapel by Mr. S., on Sunday evening, Nov. 2, 1856, the evening of his re-appearance after the fatal calamity at the Surrey Gardens Music Hall, that night fortnight.

“My friends,” said Mr. S., on commencing, “You must again this evening excuse me. I shall by no means be able to preach to you. The observations I have to make will be very brief, seeing that afterwards we shall have to partake of the Lord’s Supper. This is the less to be regretted, as it will give you an opportunity of hearing another sermon, those of you who go, as I shall close in time for this. I shall make no allusion to the recent catastrophe—that theme of my daily thoughts and nightly dreams, ever since it has occurred—for if I did, I feel that I must retire. I hope, however, to improve that event at some future period. At present, I shall talk to you on another subject.”]

times that *we* could cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" There are seasons when the brightness of our Father's smile is eclipsed by clouds and darkness. But let us remember that God never does really forsake us. It is only a seeming forsaking with us, but in Christ's case it was a real forsaking. God only knows how much we grieve, sometimes, at a little withdrawal of our Father's love; but the real turning away of God's face from his Son, who shall calculate how deep the agony which it caused him, when he cried—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

In our case, this is the cry of unbelief; in his case, it was the utterance of a fact, for God had really turned away from him for a time. Oh! thou poor, distressed soul, who once lived in the sunshine of God's face, but art now in darkness. Oh! thou who art walking in the valley of the shadow of death, thou hearest noises and thou art afraid; thy soul is startled within thee, thou art stricken with terror if thou thinkest that God has forsaken thee. Remember that he has not really forsaken thee, for

"Mountains when in darkness shrouded,
Are as real as in day."

God in the clouds is as much our God, as when he shines forth in all the lustre of his benevolence; but since even the *thought* that he has forsaken us gives us agony, what must the agony of the Saviour have been when he exclaimed—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

The next question is—

II.—WHY ART THOU SO FAR FROM HELPING ME?

God had helped his Son, but now he must tread the wine press alone, and even his own Father was not with him. Have not you felt that God has brought you to do some duty, and yet has apparently not given you strength to do it? Have you never felt that sadness of heart which makes you say, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But if God means you to do anything, you can do it, for he will give you the power. Perhaps your brain reels; but God has ordained you must, and you shall do it. Have you not felt as if you must go on, while every step you took, you were afraid to put your foot down for fear you should not get a firm foothold? If you have had any experience of divine things, it must have been so with you. We can scarcely guess what it was that our Saviour felt, when he said, "Why art thou far from helping me?" His work was one which none but a divine person could have accomplished, and yet his Father's eye was turned away from him! With more than herculean labours before him, with no strength but that of manhood, joined to the strength of his own Godhead, but none of his Father's might given to him, what must have been the strain upon him! As Hart says:—

"Bore all incarnate God could bear,
With strength enough, and none to spare."

The next inquiry is,

III.—"WHY ART THOU SO FAR FROM THE WORDS OF MY ROARING?"

The word here translated "roaring," means in the original Hebrew, that deep, solemn groan which is caused by sickness, and which sick men utter. Christ compares his prayers to those roarings, and complains that God is so far from him that he did not hear him. Beloved, many of us can sympathise with Christ here. How often have we on our knees asked, and thought we asked in faith, and when we have asked, it never came! Down we went upon our knees again. There is something withholds the answer; and, with tears in our eyes, we have wrestled with God again; we have pleaded for Jesus' sake, but the heavens have seemed like brass. In the bitterness of our spirits we have said, "Can there be a God?" And we have turned round and said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from the words of my roaring?" Is this like thee? Dost thou ever spurn a sinner? Hast thou not said, "Knock and it shall be opened unto thee?" Art thou

reluctant to be kind? Dost thou withhold thy promise? And when we have been ready to give it up, with everything apparently against us, have we not *groaned*, and asked, "Why art thou so far from the words of my roaring?" Though we know something, it is not much that we can truly understand of those direful sorrows and agonies which our blessed Lord endured when he asked these three questions, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?"

Let us now say something by way of answer to these three questions.

1. The answer to the first question I have given before. Methinks I hear the Father say to the Son, "*My Son, I forsake thee because thou standest in the sinners' stead.*" As thou art holy, just, and true, I never would forsake thee. I would never turn away from thee; for even as a man thou hast been holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. But on thy head doth rest the guilt of every penitent, transferred from him to thee; and thou must expiate it by thy blood. Because thou standest in the sinners' stead, I will not look at thee till thou hast borne the full weight of my vengeance. Then I will exalt thee on high, far above all principalities and powers.

Oh! Christian, pause here and reflect! Christ was punished in this way for thee! Oh! see that countenance so wrung with horror; those horrors gather there for thee. Yes, thou art the most worthless of the family, perhaps, in thine own esteem; certainly, the most insignificant; but the meanest lamb of Christ's flock is as much the object of purchase as any other. Yes, when that black darkness gathered round his brow, and when he cried out "Eloi, Eloi," in the words of our text, for the God Omnipotent to help him; when he shrieked that awful solemn shriek, it was because he loved thee, because he gave himself for thee, that thou mightest be sanctified here, and dwell with him hereafter. God forsook him, therefore, first, because he was the sinner's Substitute.

2. The answer to the second question is: "Because *I would have thee get all the honour to thyself*; therefore I will not help thee, lest I should have to divide the spoil with thee." The Lord Jesus Christ lived to glorify his Father, and he died to glorify himself. God says, "No, my Son, thou shalt do it alone; for thou must wear the crown alone, and upon thy person shall all the regalia of thy sovereignty be found. I will give thee all the praise, and therefore thou shalt accomplish all the labour." He was to tread the winepress alone, and get the victory and glory alone to Himself.

3. The answer to the third question is *essentially the same as the answer to the first*. To have heard Jesus' prayers at that time would have been inappropriate. This turning away of the Divine Father from hearing his Son's prayer is just in keeping with his condition; as the sinner's Surety, his prayer must not be heard; as the sinner's Surety, he could say, "Now that I am here dying in the sinner's stead, thou sealest thine ears against my prayer." God did not hear his Son, because he knew his Son was dying to bring us near to God, and the Son therefore cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," &c.

In conclusion, I shall offer you a word of expostulation and of affectionate warning. Is it nothing to some of you that Jesus should die? You hear the tale of Calvary, but alas! you have dry eyes. You never weep concerning it. Is the death of Jesus nothing to you? Alas! it seems to be so with many. Your hearts have never throbbed in sympathy with him. Oh! friends, how many of you can look on Christ, thus agonising and groaning, and say, "He is my ransom, my redeemer?" Could you say with Christ, "My God!" Or is God another's, and not yours? Oh! if you *be* out of Christ, hear me speak one word, and it is a word of *warning*. Remember, to be out of Christ is to be without hope; if you die unsprinkled with his blood, you are lost. *And what is it to be lost?* I shall not try to tell you the meaning of that dreadful word "*lost*." Some of you may know it before another sun has risen. May God grant that you may not! Do you desire to know how you must be saved? Hear me: "Whosoever believeth on the Lord Jesus, and is baptised,

shall be saved." To be baptised is to be buried in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Have you professed faith in Christ? Faith is the grace which trusts in Christ, and rests alone on him. Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he should feel himself to be lost—that he should know himself to be a ruined sinner—and the only thing necessary to salvation is to believe this. "It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, even the very chief." You want no mediator between yourselves and Christ. You may come to Christ just as you are—dirty, filthy, wicked, poor—just as you are, Christ will take you. There is no necessity for washing beforehand. You want no riches; in him you have *all* you require, and will you bring anything to "*all*?" You want no garments; for in Christ you have a seamless robe which will amply suffice to cover all, yea, even the biggest sinner upon earth, as well as to the least. *Come, then!*

Do you say you do not know *how* to come? Come just as you are. Don't wait to *do* anything. What you want is to leave off doing, and let Christ do all for you. What do you want to do, when he has done all?

"All the labour of your hands,
Cannot fulfil what God commands."

Christ died for sinners, and you must say, "Sink or swim, I will have no other Saviour but Christ." Cast yourselves wholly upon him,

"And when thine eye of faith is dim,
Still trust in Jesus, sink or swim;
Still at his footstool humbly bow,
Oh, sinner! sinner! *prostrate now!*"

He is able to pardon you at this moment. There are some of you who know you are guilty, and groan concerning it. Sinner! why tarriest thou? "Come, and welcome!" is my Master's message to you. If you feel you are lost and ruined, there is not a barrier between you and heaven. Christ has broken all of it down. If you know your own lost estate, Christ has died for you, believe, and come! Come, and welcome! Sinner, come! Oh, sinner, come! Come! Come! Jesus bids thee come! and as his ambassador to thee, I bid thee come, as one who would *die* to save your souls if it were necessary—as one who knows how to groan over you, and to weep over you—one who loves you even as he loves himself. I, as his minister, say to you—in God's name, and in God's stead—"Be ye reconciled to God."

What say you? Has God made you willing? Then rejoice! Rejoice! for he has not made you willing without giving you the power to do what he has made you willing to do. Come! Come! This moment thou mayest be as sure of heaven as if thou wert there, if thou castest thyself upon Christ, and hast nothing but Jesus for thy soul's reliance!

PERFECTION IN CHRIST.

BY THE REV O. H. SPURGEON,

Minister of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.

"Perfect in Christ Jesus."—Col. i. 28.

PERFECTION! What do we know about it in Scripture. Perfection in Jesus Christ! What effect ought it to have upon our hearts if it really is ours? Perfection! What do we know of it from Scripture? We know that it is a word so large, that while it takes us little time to say it, yet it comprehendeth all words within its meaning. There is no good word of any description which can be applied to any creature, but this word perfection takes it in; and, though it be easy to pass it from the lips, I question whether there is any mortal mind capable of grasping the idea of perfection, any more than it can the idea of eternity. When we once begin to think of eternity without

beginning, without end, we are lost in it, because we are finite; and when we once endeavour to conceive perfection—without fault, without flaw, entire and perfect—we are lost because we are imperfect; and therefore we cannot understand perfection, any more than the finite can grasp the infinite. Perfection, indeed, seems to be the sole prerogative of God. He is perfect in everything. In all his attributes there is no lack; in whatever point of view we regard him, he is without blot or blemish; and no man speaking truthfully of God, can say that there is aught of imperfection in him. If we speak of majesty, his glory is unsurpassed; if we talk of power, his is omnipotence, and that indeed is infinite power; if we speak of wisdom, his is the wisdom of the Godhead, who knows all things, from the most minute to the most immense, who comprehends all secrets, and grasps all knowledge in his mighty mind. It does seem, at first sight, as if perfection could belong to the Creator, and to the Creator only; but we remember that the works of God also are perfect; all his works are perfect, and so are all his ways. When he made the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, he looked upon them and said, "They are very good." Written on the face of nature, there was then this one word, perfection. All God's works were perfect, without a flaw. The great Artificer completed all his workmanship, and left nothing undone. There was no rough and crude matter which he had not formed; there was no substance he touched which he did not turn into the gold of perfectness. All things were good, yea, very good. All was godlike, all divine, and therefore all was perfect.

There is one thing on earth even now which is perfect. Albeit that perfection was blasted by the fall, and that ever since the garden of Eden was devastated by the sin of man, perfection has gone; yet there is one thing on earth which we possess which is perfect. You will all know what that is, it is the perfect will of God contained in the sacred Scriptures. He who would be able to spell perfection in mortal language, must read the Bible through, for he will find it perfect in all its parts—perfectly true, perfectly free from all error, perfect in everything that is necessary for man to know, perfect in all that can guide us to bliss, perfect in all that can warn us of dangers on the road. There is still left something of perfection here, but when we come to look within, where is perfection then, beloved? I shall not stop to prove the depravity of mankind, I will not talk much about the fall of Adam, and how it injured us, and destroyed the perfection of our nature; but I would ask this simple question of you—Do you not feel in your own souls that perfection is not in you? Does not every day teach you that? And though there are times when you are striving to be like Christ, when you are seeking to serve him, yet in the very seeking to serve Christ, you begin to forget that you must live on Christ, wholly, when you serve him; that you must trust him as well in your duties to sanctify them, as in your sins to forgive them; and then you begin to set up a little perfection of your own, whilst you have so often had your bulwarks taken down, and too frequently have had a view of your own heart, to dream for a moment of any perfection in the creature. Without making it a doctrine, I simply state it as a fact which you will not deny, that in you—that is in your flesh—there is not only not perfection, but there dwelleth no good thing. Honestly, from the depths of your soul, you confess that whether Adam lost perfection or not, whether you ever had perfection when you were born or not, you have not it now. It is not to be found in you now, in your conduct, conversation, or life. You only wish it were there. Daily experience makes you bemoan the lack of it. Every tear that trickles from thine eye, says "imperfection;" every sigh which comes from thine heart, says "imperfection;" every harsh word which proceeds from thy lips, says "imperfection;" and every duty which is not done with the most holy, strict, and rigid observance of God's law, cries out "imperfection." You sit down like the captive daughter of Zion, and confess that the crown of perfection is gone from your head, and departed from your hearts. Guilty you must lie before God, for perfection is not in you.

But, then, while speaking of the doctrine of perfection, we must remember that according to the sacred oracles, perfection is absolutely necessary for all who hope to enter heaven. We may have lost perfection, but that does not alter God's demand for it. It may be impossible that we should ever be perfect in ourselves, but recollect God demands we should be. The law was given to us, and if we wish to be saved by it we must keep it perfectly: and no man who is not perfect can ever hope to enter heaven through his own works. Unless he can find perfection somewhere—in another if he cannot in himself—he must be irretrievably ruined, and driven from God's presence. No man under the sun can ever walk the starry plains of heaven, or tread the golden streets of bliss, until he gets perfection somehow or somewhere. Let me tell you why. First of all, it would be unjust in God if he did not punish man if he is not perfect. God required of all men, originally, that they should keep his law entirely. Now, if a man is not perfect, it stands to reason that he must have broken God's law, otherwise he would be perfect. Having broken it, God has said, "I will punish sin; the soul that sinneth, it shall die." And—with reverence to the Most High God—if he does not punish every sin, he is not a just God; if he does not exact the punishment for every transgression, there is a stain upon his escutcheon, the whiteness of his throne is tinged with stains, and he is no longer that awfully, severely just God which we have considered him to be. I tell thee, man, the very essence of God demands that thou shouldst be punished if thou art not perfect. If but one sin has been committed by thee, thou hast broken the tablets of God's commandments, and thou art guilty of all. Ah, but it is not one sin thou hast committed, but ten thousand times ten thousand. Thou art far from perfection, and unless thou canst get perfection somewhere—in Christ or in thyself—thou art lost beyond all hope of remedy, for perfection God must have, as a just God, or else he must punish thee for thy sin.

Moreover, remember that we must be perfect, or else we shall never be fit companions for men who are perfect in spirit, and stand before the throne of God. Are not the angels perfect? Hath sin ever stained their purity? Once, it is true, the third part of the stars of heaven did rebel, but they are rolled to the depths beneath, and the spirits now before God's throne, are spotless and pure even as God is. Hath God any stain in him? Will any dare to say there is imperfection in him? Nay, God and the angels are perfect, and would men be fit companions for angels and God if they had imperfection? If men should have sin when they come to die, would they be fit to live with those spirits who know no sin, and in whose breasts there has been no guile? Could I hold acquaintance and familiar converse with the man whose lips are always guilty of profane swearing? Could I live in peace with the man whose character is not akin to my own conduct? And surely there is not so much difference between me and my fellow creatures here, as between the sinner and his God. Unless you are perfect you cannot enter heaven. If you do not get perfection somewhere—it is in Christ—if you do not get it there you must get it somewhere else, you cannot get to heaven. Perfection you must have, for God hath sworn that whatsoever defileth shall in no wise enter the gates of Paradise.

"Those holy gates for ever bar,
Pollution, sin, and shame."

None but those washed whiter than the snow, and pure as the Almighty, can hope to be companions with divinity, and co-heirs with the celestial spirits. Ye must have perfection, not only from the nature of God, but from the very nature of heaven itself; otherwise, ye would be unfit to enter it, and you would not be happy were you there.

"Where then is perfection to be found?" again the creature cries. We find a multitude of persons ready to tell us with a hundred fancies—"here is perfection," and "there is perfection." The ceremonialist says, "I

will give you perfection ; here it is. Thou shalt come, and in thy early infancy sacred drops shall fall upon thy forehead, and hallowed words shall be pronounced over thee, and thou shalt be regenerated. In thine after years thou shalt kneel before the sacred table, and hands shall be solemnly laid upon thine head, and it shall be said, We thank thee that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this, thy servant, by the Holy Spirit. In after life thou shalt sit down and take the sacramental bread and wine. And when thou comest to die, the priest shall sit by thy side, and he shall give thee in thy last expiring moment some drops of goodly cheer called wine, and give thee a piece of bread, and that shall be thy passport to heaven ; and so thou shalt be perfect." Ah, poor ceremonialist, thou wilt find thyself mightily mistaken and much deceived, when like a dream when one awaketh, God shall scatter all the baseless fabric of thine hand ; when all that thou hast done, and all those pretty garments thou hast woven, shall be rent in sunder, and cast into the fire, and thou shalt stand naked before him, while a voice shall say—

" Not all the outward forms of earth,
Nor rites that God has given,
Nor will of man, nor blood, nor birth,
Can raise the soul for heaven."

Then comes the *speculative perfectionist*, and he tells you that you must believe in Jesus Christ, and then by a rigid system of devotion, and constantly observing religious duties, you will attain to three or four stages. You will get, in the first place, to justification, then to sanctification, and go on by degrees until you will be perfectly sanctified, and come to the highest degree men can have in the body. I have met with some of these "perfectly sanctified" gentlemen myself, but really I thought I could have spoiled their perfect sanctification by treading on their corns ; and I believe I have done so, for they seem to be immensely cross if we deny them their proud boast. I have heard of a particularly perfect man who came to John Berridge one morning. John very rudely treated him, whereupon the man turned round at once, and began to speak all manner of evil words. John said to him, "Pretty perfection was thine, that I could spoil in so easy a manner." You will always find these boasted "perfection" gentlemen are none too perfect after all. They may seem to be pretty tolerably decent ; but if you watch them narrowly, if you go after them, you will find them soon ruffled. I could not trust the man who called himself "perfect" in anything whatever, for I know he that "saith he hath no sin is a liar, and the truth is not in him." If he is a liar, and God says it, it is not for me to think him true. Ho that says he is perfect, mistakes God's word and himself, and is ignorant of the matter altogether.

Where, then, is perfection ? The text tells us that all Christians are perfect in Christ—that the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty are perfect in Jesus. Let us explain the meaning of this, "Perfection in Christ."

I. Now, we must consider HOW GOD'S PEOPLE ARE "IN CHRIST."

We remark, First, That *they are all of them in Christ in the covenant of election*. When God chose his people he did not choose them one by one, separately, but he chose Christ ; and all his people were chosen in him. Just as when I choose the acorn, I choose all the unborn forests that slumber in the acorn cup ; so, when God chose Jesus, he chose all the people that were in him : all those whom Christ had taken to himself by an eternal union, and had made them one with his person. We were in Christ by election.

Secondly, *We are all put in Christ also by redemption*. When Jesus died each one of us that believeth in Jesus died in him ; when he suffered, we suffered in Christ. Christ suffered for us, our sins were on Christ's head ; so that now Christ's merits are laid on us. The great atonement of the cross was virtually the atonement which all the elect made to God. Although they made no atonement in *propria persona*, yet Christ did for them ; and each one of the elect in the person of Christ hath made an atonement for his sins through the blood of Jesus Christ our Saviour. We were in him when he died,

we were in him on the cross, we were in him when they laid him in the grave, we were in him when he rose and led captivity captive, and we are in him now.

3. *But we become in him actually, positively, and to our own knowledge, when we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.* It is then, when faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, that we become one with Christ. We were in Christ before, but we did not know it; we were in Jesus, made secure from before the foundation of the world, but we could not know it, we had no evidence of it whatever. Just as with a man who is under age; the possessions his father will give him when he is twenty-one, or which have been left to him, are positively his, but then he cannot touch them until he comes of age; so all the possessions of the covenant belong to the elect, even before they believe; but they cannot touch them before the appointed time comes, when by sovereign grace they believe. A man who has not attained his majority cannot get much comfort from what he is to have when he comes to full age; he cannot live on it, he cannot be supported by it. So the Christian cannot feed on what he has not got. When we have faith, then we come into our inheritance; the moment we believe, we have attained full age; we are no longer under tutors, and governors, and schoolmasters, but we are brought to Christ; we are of perfect age, and then we are said to be "in Christ." The moment a sinner believes, then he is "in Christ;" and no man whatever has any right to make any pretence that he is in Christ until he believes, until he has surrendered himself to Christ, until he has given himself to Jesus to be saved by him, to serve him, to live for him, with the hope that at last he shall die in him and live with him for ever.

II. The doctrine of our text is, that EVERY MAN WHO IS IN CHRIST IS PERFECT. Does not this startle us? The majesty of our text demands some one who could discourse with eloquence; yea, it wants an angel to proclaim its glorious meaning. Believers are, in Christ, perfect—every one of them. There is a new born child of God! It may be only ten minutes since he put his faith in Jesus Christ. Before that time he had been a drunkard, a swearer, a curser, a blasphemer, but yet I tell you if that man has really believed and is in Christ, he is perfect in Christ. There is another man who has been a backslider! Once he walked in God's ways, but he has been suffered to wander from the faith. Now God is bringing him back; he is laying hold on him, and the man is weeping, and repenting, and crying out; his bones are broken through the fall, his soul is sore and sick even unto death: see him as he stands with tears of penitence coursing down his cheeks! I tell you, that man, backslider though he may have been, though he has sinned even as David, is perfect in the person of Christ. There is another! A greyheaded old man. Long has he fought his master's battles, and the scars he has received, the troubles and trials of this mortal life have weakened him. If you ask him whether he is perfect he tells you, "Nay; from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot by nature I feel diseased. In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." He disclaims all righteousness of his own, all trust in himself, all hope out of Christ. I tell you that old man is perfect in Christ. I care not what may be his frailties, what may be his weaknesses, he is perfect in Christ. And then, O Christian, what though thy sins are many, what though infirmities beset thee, though thou hast a hasty temper, and perhaps the lusts of the flesh sometimes rise, and only preventing grace saves thee from going astray; what though evil thoughts cross thy heart, and to-day thou art bemoaning the sinfulness of a wretched spirit, crying out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I tell thee, Christian, thou art complete in him, thou art perfect in Christ Jesus, being clothed with his righteousness, washed in his blood, united with his person, thou art this moment perfect in him. There is one passage in Solomon's Song, which once flashed on my mind with great brilliancy when reading that blessed Canticle. It says, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." That is Jesus Christ talking to his Church. She has been confessing, "I am

black, but comely; I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me." She acknowledges her own infirmities and her want of beauty, but Jesus Christ says, "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee." And looking at his Church from the crown of her head to the sole of her foot she has not a blemish, because she is in Christ. She does not stand in herself. Her divisions are not a blemish, as she is considered in Christ. The sins of her members and of her ministers are not blemishes, as she is considered in Christ. They are sore blemishes if you look at her with the eye of the world, or with the eyes of Christians; but if you look at her in Christ, all blemishes are gone; she is covered with a robe that makes her shine like a queen. Though her garments may have been those of beggary and ruin, she hath now the garments of majesty and light. "Ye are complete in him," yea, ye are "perfect in Christ Jesus."

Methinks it would be very hard to make some who are the Lord's people believe this. Some of you are drudging on in bondage, because you do not understand justification by faith completely; and I believe that the great fault of the ministry of our day is, that a complete justification in the person of Jesus Christ is not preached in all its length and breadth. Because there are some ministers who, while preaching it, say things which have a tendency to lead men to licentiousness, therefore we are forbidden to say anything about it at all. But, beloved, I am sure that all I can say to you about our perfection in Christ will never lead a Christian to licentiousness; for though he is "perfect in Christ," he will long to be more like him in himself, and he will seek more and more, day by day, to have the sanctifying influence of the Holy Ghost exerted upon him to keep him from sin. Many go to Arminians and Semi-Calvinists to hear this, that, and the other; they have all kinds of divinity conglomerated into one; little bits of Pelagianism tacked on to small scraps of Arminianism, these hooked on to Calvinism, and that again joined to Socinianism, all kinds of strange combinations—all sorts of things mixed up into one kind of curious medley for you to drink; whereas they want, instead of that, the pure unadulterated milk of God's word in the shape of the doctrinal preaching of justification by faith. Now, how are we justified? that is the question. Are we justified by works, or by grace? Every true Christian says, "we are justified by faith, and we are saved by grace through faith, and the faith is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God." Well then, if we are saved by faith in Christ, can we be said to be saved by works? If I had no good works at this moment, and if I have faith, am I not as completely justified as though I had ten thousand good works? I know if I am justified by faith good works will always follow; but then good works have nothing to do with justification. They are the handmaidens, not the mistress. Faith in Christ is the foundation, the corner stone, and top stone of justification; good works have nothing in the world to do with it, except as evidences; they have nothing to do with promoting it. The poor thief who died, hardly ever having been able to do a good work, went to heaven just as well as the man shall who lives eighty years in the service of his Master. It is not my standing in myself, it is not my position considered in myself that saves me; it is Christ wholly. Is it not so? If I feel myself the most loathsome of all creatures, even though I hate and abhor myself, yet if I know I have faith in Christ, if I have cast myself on his person, he has not altered though I have, he is the same though I am different, he is as perfect as ever, he has not changed his perfection, in him there is no sin, and therefore I, standing in him, am perfect this moment notwithstanding all my corruptions and frailties.

III. Now, I come very briefly to consider THE INFLUENCE OF THIS DOCTRINE when it is once laid to the heart—"Perfection in Christ Jesus." I know what some will say at the outset. They will say that this doctrine, stated so broadly, must necessarily lead persons to imagine that good works are of little service. I ask them if they ever read any of Luther's writings whether they have seen how broadly Luther speaks concerning good works and the righteousness of the flesh? If they have read them they will find that if we are Protestants now,

and followers of Luther, I have not overstepped the mark. And if they will turn to sacred Scripture they will see how Paul declares that "If it is of works it is not of grace; otherwise grace is no more grace, and work is no more work." If they turn to the Romans and read through the other Epistles, they will find that I have not been strong enough. I deny that this doctrine has any tendency to lead men to sin. I can speak for myself. So far as my own life is concerned, I always find myself most holy when I know myself to be most unholy; I can live most like Jesus when I live most on Jesus and most out of myself; but when once I begin to say, "Now I must be holy, I must be pious," then I find I have no strength to do anything, the Holy Ghost deserts me, and down my schemes of reformation fall. When neglecting that, I say, "I must live on Christ alone, I must rest on him solely for salvation, and believe that, however unworthy, I am saved in Jesus;" then there rises up as a motive of gratitude this thought—"Will I not live to Christ; will I not love him and serve him, seeing that I am saved by his merits?" That is the strongest tie to virtue, and the greatest bond to all to a holy life.

Then let me tell you the next effect. It will always give a Christian the greatest calm, quiet, ease and peace. How often are the saints of God downcast and sad? I do not think they ought to be. I do not think they would if they could always see their perfection in Christ. I know you have your corruption-men who always preach corruption and nothing else, telling you about the depravity of the heart, and the innate evil of the soul. I like to read their works and to hear them; but I like to go a little further, and to remember that I am "perfect in Christ Jesus." I do not wonder that those men who always dwell upon corruption should look so sad and seem so miserable; but I do think if a man could always see his perfection in Christ he would be happy. What though distresses afflict me I am perfect in Christ; though Satan assault me I am perfect in Christ Jesus; though there are many things to be done before I get to heaven, those are done for me in the covenant of divine grace; there is nothing wanting; there is not a stone to be lifted; Christ hath done it all. On the cross he said, "It is finished!" "It is finished." Hark! the dying Saviour cries. And if it is finished, then am I complete in him, and can rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Poor Christian! thou art perfect in Christ. Tried Christian! thou art perfect in Jesus. If the Holy Ghost does but lay this to thy soul, if thou wert in the very caverns of the ocean, it would be enough to carry thee up to the stars for joy to think that thou art perfect in Christ. There are some who are conscious that they have no perfection, but are covered with sin from head to foot. There is a poor wretch who has crept into this chapel to-night, and has felt that he would crawl down a mousehole or stay in any corner of the chapel if he might but hear the sermon. He felt it was too hallowed a place to sit down in; he felt ashamed to sit or stand in the company of the saints; and he believed himself to be a poor unworthy sinner. I tell thee, if thou art a poor, stript, law-condemned sinner, thou shalt yet be able to see thyself "perfect in Christ Jesus!" Man! doth not this make thine ears tingle? Doth not thy heart leap for joy at the thought of it? Black as thou art, thou shalt be white one day; filthy as thou art, thou shalt be clean; evil as thou art, thou shalt be made good. Yea, however enormous thy transgressions, how awfully black thy crimes; thou mayest have been a murderer—Christ's blood can wash the blood off your hands; you may have been a thief—Jesus Christ restored that which he took not away, and he shall forgive you even your sin; you may be the vilest one that ever disgraced this earth, you may be a walking nuisance in the very streets—yet I tell you if you believe in Jesus Christ this night you shall go away perfectly clean. O, it is marvellous salvation this! Christ takes a worm and transforms it into an angel; Christ takes a filthy thing and makes it into a cherub; Christ takes a black and deformed thing and makes it clean and matchless in its glory, peerless in its beauty, and fit to be the companion of seraphs. O, my soul! stand and admire this

blessed doctrine of "Perfection in Christ Jesus!" What though thou shouldst become more pure and pure every day, yet perfection would still be beyond thee. The heights say perfection is not in them; the depths say, "Perfection is not here;" the caverns in the bowels of the earth tell us, "Perfection is not in us." Perfection is in the person of Jesus Christ. O, Christian! think of this. The robes of Jesus are put on thee; the royal crown Christ Jesus wore is now in God's eyes on thy head; the robe of azure which once he wore upon his shoulders is now on thine; the silver sandal is thine; the zone, the belt of glory is thine; the matchless purity of a sinless life is thine; everything that Christ has is thine; thou art perfect in him; there is nothing thou canst want which he cannot give thee! If thou goest to his storehouse with a large bill, saying, "I want this," or "I want that," it is all there! Dost thou want sanctification? it is there! Dost thou want redemption? it is there! and more than thou wilt want is there. Dost thou want strengthening grace? it is there! Dost thou want preservation? it is there! Man, art thou standing to-night poor, naked, blind, miserable, desponding? I say, Be not so foolish as to remain in all thy poverty and wretchedness when thou mayest be rich! Why, Christian, dost thou see the hole in the wall? Thou art now poor, thou art stript, thou art ragged, thou art crying out "Oh, that I knew where to find a hole." Dost thou see the hole in that wall? It hath a mark upon it—the shape of a cross. I will lend thee the key called "Promise." Go; insert it in the keyhole, and when thou openest it, whatever thou wantest thou shalt find. First, There is a bath of gold; in it thou shalt be washed and become white. Further on there hangs a robe, and though thou art now naked, thou shalt put it on. Here is a crown for thee to wear, and there is everything else thou canst want. If thou wantest bread thou shalt find it, for it is said, "Bread shall be given thee, and water shall be sure." If thou needest comfort, it is there; for Christ is "the consolation of Israel." If thou wantest forgiveness, it is there. All things are wrapt up in Christ. This morning my eyes were dazzled when I saw the queen's plate. I am not much of a believer in the queen's plate, nor anybody else's plate, but when I saw things of so much value—the precious jewels that sparkled here and there—I wondered at their amazing costliness, and could not guess how much they would come to if they were all melted down and given to the poor—which I rather felt inclined to wish they might be. But if I once were to get to see all the riches of Christ, could I by any possibility tell you how large his riches are? I should have to hold my hands and say as I took up one mercy, "What! this a golden mercy! how much is this?" And as I took up another—"This a golden mercy, and how much is it worth?" And I should be unable to tell you the value of any one. "Ah," the angels would say, "Do not try to estimate these precious things, for they had to be bought with blood; and until you know the value of blood divine, you cannot tell the value of these mercies." Christian, it matters not what thou wantest, thou hast all in Christ, for the text says, "Perfect in Christ Jesus."

Now, to wind up our discourse, let me inquire who of you can take to yourselves this blessed doctrine? How many of you are "perfect in Christ Jesus?" Some man says, "Aye, I think I am perfect in myself. I am as respectable a gentleman as anybody living, and I am not going to be insulted by any of your nonsense. You talk to sinners. That is all right. I am no sort of sinner. True, I may sin—a little bit perhaps; but then I am as good as other people, and rather better perhaps. And I do think, if heaven does not go by favour, I most certainly shall get in, for I feel myself to be very good and righteous." Then hear the voice of God: "Ye whitewashed sepulchres; outwardly ye are painted and washed, but inwardly ye are full of dead men's bones. O, ye Pharisees! hypocrites! for a pretence ye make long prayers, and in secret ye devour widows' houses. Woe unto ye Scribes and Pharisees! hypocrites! ye strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. Ye lay heavy burdens

on men's shoulders which ye do not bear, and which they cannot bear; and those that are seeking to enter the kingdom of heaven ye hinder. Verily I say unto you, publicans and harlots shall enter into the kingdom of heaven before you." Another says, "Perfect in Christ Jesus? No, sir, that I am not; I know I have no interest in the blood of Christ; and if I were to say I had, it would be a barefaced falsehood, and my conscience would cry out against me; there is something in my heart which would forbid my lips to say it." Then, pray do not say it, dear heart, for I would not have you say what is not true. If you feel that you have not any interest in Christ, say it to your own souls. It is the best thing for you to look the matter in the face. You say you do not know Christ died for you; you say you are sure that you will sink into eternal torments if you die to-night. Well, take that thought home to thy heart, and for half an hour think it over—"I am out of Christ; I am a condemned sinner; and if I were to die I feel I should sink into hell." Do not be afraid of the thought. Look at it. Do not be as most men, who say, "I won't have that thought any more." But be honest with yourselves. What is the good of cheating yourselves? Do look at the thought and deal fairly with your own souls. Look well at yourselves. It never does a man any hurt to examine his books, and see if his accounts are right. If he is a bankrupt he wont lose anything by knowing it; if he is insolvent he will get none richer by hiding it from himself. You may say, "It is true I am a lost and condemned sinner." Well, the thought will bring you to your knees, and you will cry, "O God, give me an interest in Jesus Christ." And that mighty God who always hears prayer, and who has said, "Whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord, shall be saved," will save you, and you shall go on your way rejoicing and triumphing in Christ. Then there are some who, when I ask the question—Art thou "perfect in Christ Jesus?" will reply, "Ah, I hope I am. By humble faith I lay my hand on the head of Jesus, and I hope to-night that I stand perfect in him." Then, my brethren, give me your heart, let us shake hearts to-night! Oh, it is a sweet brotherhood, the brotherhood of the "Perfect in Christ Jesus." Ye are perfect in him. Then, my brethren, just wipe those tears away. You are perfect in Christ. Do you know what you poor sinner says? He says, "O Lord, if I could say that, I would not care about health, would not care whether I was in poverty or whether I was rich." He thinks, if he only knew himself to be "perfect in Christ," he never would be miserable as long as he lived. Then, why, beloved, are you down in your spirits, while you are "perfect in Christ?" Get up with you. Why do you lie on the ground? It is time for you to take your harp from the willows; and if you are "perfect in Christ," I can see no room for sadness. Suppose that you are going to a poor house where you have not a bit of fire; never mind, you can say, "I am perfect in Jesus." Perhaps you will scarcely know where the next meal will come from—let this thought cheer you, "Perfect in Jesus." Though the wind may come and blow between the rags that cover you, if you can say, "Perfect in Jesus," you will be content with poverty; though you are in pain and tossing about in your bed, if you can say "Perfect in Jesus," it will be like a medicine to soothe your spirits; and when grim death appears you only need look him in the face and say, "Perfect in Jesus," and in that moment death will change into an angel, pain will be turned into bliss, and sorrow into immortal glory. God give all to realise this that you are perfect in Jesus, in Jesus only, in Jesus for ever! Bless his precious name! Hallelujahs to his person, glories to his throne! Seraphs, sing out his praises! Ye rocks, ye hills, burst forth in song! Cherubs take up the note! All ye Christians sing praises to him who loved us with an everlasting love, and who will carry us safe home to glory