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THE

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THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JANUARY, 1880.

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

ADDRESS TO OUR SPIRITUAL READERS.

Dear Friends,—It has been no small weight upon our mind when we have thought of having to write the annual Address in the present January number of this magazine. Many things, for weeks before taking pen in hand for the work, have sunk our spirit low in the dust, and made us cry at times from the bottom of our soul, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Conscious as we are of our inability to address you as we feel you need to be addressed for your spiritual edification and instruction in righteousness; and stripped, as we feel to be, and especially so after all that has transpired in connection with the magazine during the past year, of all ambition for mere editorial reputation, or mere prominence of position as a writer in its pages; we can truly say we have felt more trembling of spirit in approaching the work of writing this Address, than what we can remember ever to have felt before when similarly engaged as your servant in the gospel of Christ. The cry, "Lord, help me," has often been poured out with the work in prospect; and now that we have taken pen in hand to do the work, we trust we can say the same cry is leaving our soul. With no stored-up manuscript material to fall back upon, and with a mind barren of spiritual thought, we do indeed feel to need divine help and guidance, and especially a little of the unction of the Spirit. So that, whilst our Address *must*, as emanating from us, lack the ability which has characterized others of former years, yet that it may be commended to the readers of the magazine for its sincerity and faithfulness, and as being written in a good spirit, is our chief concern and prayer about it.

Well, dear friends, we shall venture, in the first place, to express our sincere desire that neither you who read the magazine, nor we who write for its pages, nor any others in any way connected with it, may ever know another year, as pertaining to our periodical, like the past. We trust that no such occurrences as God, for wise ends, no doubt, suffered the past year to bring about, will ever be repeated. Often, as the year was month by month rolling away, we had, with a bewildered judgment, to

ponder over matters, and consider, as best we were able, how "the walls of Jerusalem might be built in troublous times;" and often it put us about more than a little to know how. However, after the painful disturbances which have taken place of late in the atmosphere of our denomination, and which have caused grief to so many, it is no small mercy to be able to feel that we have not been forsaken of our God; and that, troublous as the times have been, yet that the work of conducting the periodical has not ceased, but that it still goes on. And sure we are, that we have no other wish, hope, and prayer about it, but that it should continue to go on; and whether it be under our management, or that of others, that, with God's help and blessing, it will continue to maintain the same truth in doctrine, experience, and practice which it ever has done since its commencement.

A periodical, like a poor soul in deep spiritual trouble, may either, through bad management or indiscretion on the part of its friends, be brought to the very brink of destruction; and whilst we are thankful to say this has never been the fate of *this* magazine, yet the magazine, and those immediately connected with it, have been driven into a corner close enough to jeopardize to a considerable extent the growing prosperity of the one, and to greatly try the faith, and wound the minds of the others. It has in fact been a time of real trial to many; and such will have occasion to remember the past year as having been a somewhat notable epoch in the history of the periodical.

But then, dear friends, what we need chiefly to be concerned about *now* is not so much the painful occurrences of the *past*, but the peace of Zion for the *future*. Not to have made the least mention in this address of what, during the past twelve months in particular has so much affected the interests of the magazine would, we think, have betrayed an unjustifiable silence. Besides, the little reference we have made to certain recent events only makes our way the more clear to embrace the opportunity we seek in writing this address, to let the longings of our heart flow forth, that our gracious God would henceforth bend our minds, our thoughts and desires, more exclusively towards his own honour and glory. O that, with our eyes raised up through the divine power to such high and holy aim, and as fellow-workers in the gospel of Christ, and "heirs together of the grace of life," we might have grace given us, whereby to trust one another for integrity of motive, purpose, and object, and so go on maintaining the discriminating truth of God, and publishing it either by tongue or pen, and each one according to his own gift, for the good of many! O that the blessed God would come amongst us more than ever in the power of his Spirit, and rather than let us disagree, break our bones, and bruise our spirits, and lay us in the dust together, and so crush all mere trifling differences between us; that we may be constrained to feel that through his unmerited grace, we are one in Christ, and of the same mind and

judgment in the gospel. What we need as a Christian denomination is not new doctrines, nor any lopping off or trimming down of old ones, but more of the Spirit's power and anointing with the truths we hold, and which we trust many of us hold as dear as our lives. O that our gracious God would bestow upon all his people more of this rich gift, and especially give them a larger measure of that charity which "thinketh no evil"! Unity of action, Christian forbearance one towards another, oneness of spirit in contending for things that are right, and concord and agreement among themselves, are blessings which the children of Zion need to beg of God, and especially in a day like the present, to produce among them in greater abundance. They are, we can truly say, the blessings we wish for them, and especially for our readers, and all that part of the household of faith with which we stand more particularly identified. With heart, as well as with pen or lip, we can desire for every church of truth, that peace may be within its borders; and for our brethren and friends who stand connected in any departments of Christian work apart from their respective churches, our real desire is that they may be enabled to go on in peace, harmony, and concord, and without a jostle among themselves.

We enter upon the "New Year" as being greater sinners than what we were twelve months ago. Our sins and follies during the past year have been very many, and in degree, as well as number, equalled by nothing but the mercies of a covenant God. His goodness and mercy have followed us through the year; he has preserved us in sickness and in health, supported us in trials heavy and crushing in themselves, strengthened us in weakness, succoured us in temptations, comforted us in afflictions, and helped us under our various difficulties; and yet withal we have often rebelled against him, and rewarded him evil for good; and his very mercies have aggravated our guilt. O what obstinacy and ingratitude have at times possessed us! and what strange spots our souls have sometimes been in! How stubborn and perverse in spirit, and how corrupt in thought and imagination! How pride, and lust, and unbelief, and that stump of Dagon-self have plagued us sometimes from morning till night! And yet, again, what blessed moments we hope we have found at times to come in between,—moments when atoning love, and blood, and righteousness, have melted us down in our feelings, and proved a blessed plaster to the very wounds which stunk, and made us feel so corrupt before God. So that we, one and all who have passed through such experiences, enter upon the "New Year" under greater obligations to God than ever before. May he enable us to enter upon it with warmer hearts, with hearts constrained by his own love and mercy, to bless, and thank, and love him more, and serve him better.

But, then, we enter upon the "New Year" with remarkably solemn times passing over us as a *nation*. The occurrences of the past year have fallen upon the nation with peculiar weight.

The calamities occasioned by the aggressions of foreign belligerents; the stagnation of business, and the alarming agricultural depression; the failure of banks, and large commercial firms, and of merchants and citizens; and the thousands in consequence thrown out of employment, and the many more who have been brought up in affluence, but who during the past year have been made through bank failures utterly dependent, are events which bespeak something far beyond ordinary adversity. And when we add to such calamities as these the horrid din of war, and the wailings of those whom it has rendered widows and orphans, and the universal disorder that prevails in human society, who is there among those who have thoughtful minds that will deny that the "New Year" finds the nation groaning under a deal of pressure and distress?

And yet, with such portentous signs as are discernible of still more perilous times coming upon the world, the things we have spoken of may be but the beginning of sorrows. But, then, it is not wealth, nor conquest, nor victories won over barbarous foes, nor territorial annexation, nor any thing of that kind, that exalts a nation; but, as we are told in Scripture, it is "righteousness." Hence, England's troubles at the present time are, we believe, more through the casting off of righteousness than through any other cause; for in casting off the mantle of her Protestantism, as she has long been doing, and giving bit by bit her power to the pope, she is casting off God, and with God her national prosperity; and instead of rising, as in former years, in greatness and moral glory, she is dwindling in strength, retrograding as a Protestant country, and drifting into the same whirlpool of libertinism and lawlessness towards God that other nations that have never been blessed with her light and privileges have long been sunk into. We need not, then, wonder at such national depression and distress as exist at the present time. The wonder is that the infliction of judgments at the hand of God is not of a heavier nature. With the defiling hands of the Romish Hierarchy stretched towards the throne, and its fingers already touching the constitution of the nation; with such a gigantic source of iniquity as the present awful uprise, development, and spread of infidelity and scepticism, and which is corrupting with its pestilential breath the social relationships and morals of the nation, quite as much as popery with its pollutions and blasphemies in doctrine; and with other colossal forms of evil, such as a vast amount of hypocrisy and delusion under a profession of Protestant truth; it must be more for the sake of the godly, and for the accomplishment of his purposes in reference to Zion than anything else, that God makes his judgments upon the nation as light as they are, and so slow in their execution.

Well, our mercy is, if we are *among* the godly, and a *part* and *parcel* of God's Zion, for whose sake the Lord will not rest, until "the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

Leaving, then, the nation, and all that concerns it, to the wisdom of Him whose counsels are wise and just, we will turn our thoughts again to Zion herself, and to matters which lie more particularly within her own walls.

And, first, it will be only a passing remark or two that we shall make in reference to *Zion at large*. She is the one "church of God;" not merely the professing church, which in the present day is grown unto a huge cumbrous pile of "wood, hay, stubble," with comparatively little "gold, silver, precious stones" to be found in the motley heap; but the real mystical "body of Christ," which is made up of silver and gold, without an atom of wood and stubble to disfigure and mar the beauty of the precious metal. And although it forms no part of our finite prerogative to attempt to draw the line, and pronounce with decision of judgment between the gold and the wood, and between the silver and the stubble, as they lie in the pile together, yet it is an easy matter with the Lord, whose eyes are as a "*flame of fire*." Great as is the amalgamation, and confounding as it is to our judgment, and much as there is, moreover, that will be burnt up when "the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is," yet the good and the bad, the true and the false, are even *now* as distinguishable unto God as if all the good lay in one heap, and the bad in another.

Whilst, then, to the one true Zion of God, in all her heaven-born race, in all her bonds, ties, relationships, and associations, and in all her length, breadth, and dimensions throughout all lands, we wish well; and wish "grace and peace" to be multiplied unto her, "through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord;" yet it is to those parts of her more particularly where this magazine finds its way from month to month that we must bend our remaining observations in reference to Zion.

There are the various churches of truth with which no doubt the largest part of our readers stand connected, either by way of membership or otherwise; and we may say of all the gospel churches in the Strict Baptist denomination, or of any of them taken apart from the rest, that their prosperity or adversity, their increase or diminishment, must ever depend upon the blessing which the Lord sees fit to give or to withhold. If he give his blessing, prosperity in greater or less degree will be sure to follow upon its bestowment; but if in any church there should be at any time, either through the misconduct of the minister, or any of the deacons or members, things sufficiently flagrant to provoke the holy righteous God to withhold his blessing, nothing but strife and confusion, blight and decay, will be sure to follow its withdrawal; and without a purging of such church of evil, and a renewal of the blessing of God, it may fall to pieces, and come to nothing.

Next to the breaking out of deadly error, no worse calamity can befall a church than immorality of conduct, sin showing itself in the church in gross flagitious acts; and for this reason

alone there is nothing more needful to be prayed for, for all our churches in a day like the present, if the Lord would only lay it with solemn weight on his people's minds, than that they may be kept by the power of God, not only sound in sentiment and pure in doctrine, but from becoming a reproach in the eyes of the world through the follies and falls of any belonging to them.

Neither do we make these remarks as if we thought the churches whose interests we espouse were fast sinking down into the mire of Antinomianism. Indeed, we have no such thought; but knowing too well how every church, whether Baptist or Huntingtonian, that contends for the truths of free and sovereign grace, is scanned with critical and malignant eye by general professors who hate such truths; and knowing quite as much how the slips and falls of any who are connected with churches of that character are blazed abroad, and blabbed over a thousand times more among the enemies of truth than what the same inconsistencies would be in reference to persons connected with other churches of another faith; it makes us on this account the more to dread anything transpiring, either in our own denomination or the Huntingtonian, to give rise to scandal *outside* our walls. And for the same reason we can the more earnestly desire, and at times cry to God, that every church where discriminating truth is maintained may be kept from everything that would expose the cause of God to shame. O that all who are connected with the visible church of Christ, and especially our own section of it, ourselves and all, may be enabled to walk over the ground of our profession with "fear and trembling," and with a consciousness that because of the world around us, the flesh in us, and the devil watching us, nothing is too base, too ungrateful, or too destructive to the honour of God and our moral reputation for us to commit, should we be left to ourselves for a single moment. And with the felt consciousness of such weakness, may the cry be kept alive in our hearts: "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe."

That solemn exhortation of the apostle's applies to all of us who make a profession of Christ. We mean where he says, "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." (Heb. iii. 14.) If we are real believers in Jesus, then God sees us in our profession according to what his own grace has made us; he sees us with all that security and certainty of final perseverance on our side which pertains to all really gracious souls. But for all this he warns and exhorts us in his Word with as much solemn solicitude as if that final perseverance depended upon our compliance with his warnings and exhortations. The apostle, after speaking of the awful way in which so many of the congregation of Israel fell in the wilderness, and respecting whom God "swore that they should not enter into his rest," gives the following solemn warning to the Hebrews, and as much to us in our profession of Christ as to them: "Let us therefore fear, lest a pro-

mise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it."

So it is with regard to the exhortations before mentioned. (chap. iii. 14.) God knows to a man who among us will be saved, or whether any will be left to turn back in their profession. He knows who have a root in them to keep them, and any that may have no root, and who for the want of it will wither away. But, says the apostle, "For we are made the partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." Our professed confidence at the beginning of our profession was, at least with some of us, that if we were not saved as poor lost sinners by Christ's atonement, we must perish; we professed to feel what ruined and undone sinners we were, and that nothing but free and sovereign grace could ever save us. Suppose, then, after making such profession at the "beginning," any of us should be left to let our confidence go, and instead of continuing to go on professing as heretofore, that our salvation must be *alone* by the grace of God, we should henceforth be left to believe the lie that we could be saved in some other way, either by our own works, or partly by works and partly by grace. Well, such departure from the truth of God would be the most solemn proof that we could give that the confidence we professed at the "beginning," was a rotten thing, and not what we had ever received from the Lord through being taught the truth by his Spirit.

In order, then, that we may give continued proof that our first professed confidence was a divine reality, we need, by the Lord's gracious help, to go on *holding it fast*, to go on professing as much as we did the first day we were brought to cry for mercy, what poor guilty, weak, and helpless sinners we are, and that nothing but infinite, sovereign, and almighty grace can save us *now*, and keep us from falling, and enable us to endure unto the end.

May the Lord, then, ever keep his people steadfast in his own most blessed truth, and bless them in their church relationships with much real union and communion among themselves, and with much Christian forbearance towards one another, and especially in all those matters wherein little differences of judgment will sometimes exist, and may do so without in any way affecting any vital points of doctrine.

But then, again, many of our readers are not connected in the way of membership with any gospel church at all. Some, through a fear of acting presumptuously were they to join the same, keep themselves aloof; others are kept outside through other causes; and perhaps some, like the "strangers scattered throughout Pontus and Galatia," and other places, are so located in the order of providence, that they are unable practically to avail themselves of the privilege of meeting with the saints for divine worship, and in the "breaking of bread, and in prayers." So that, putting all our readers together, those that are members

of churches and those that are not, they form a wide circle; but so far as they are the real children of God, and hence *spiritual* readers of the magazine, we can desire, without the least partiality, the spiritual welfare of all such without exception, and can especially desire that our magazine may continue to prove, through the blessing of God attending its publication, a medium of spiritual edification, comfort, and blessing to all their souls.

And as for any that may occasionally look into this periodical, but may nevertheless be strangers to the saving power of the truths which it contains, we can only hope and pray that it may be the sovereign will of our covenant God to make a something in the magazine a means of their spiritual conviction, by causing it to pierce through "the joints of the harness" of their spiritual death-state, their darkness, ignorance, and unbelief, and bringing them unto "the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ."

Neither can we restrain giving a little vent to our feelings in the concern we bear towards the eternal welfare of the host of little ones, youths, and maidens, that constitute the families of our godly readers and friends. O that the Lord our God may condescend to hear and answer the many prayers of godly fathers and mothers for their children, by putting his fear into their hearts in early life, that our churches which are so wasted in numbers by death, may be as fast replenished with living souls, called out by divine grace from the rank and file of the rising race of the present generation. May the many Sunday-schools connected with the various causes of truth, and where so many of our young meet on a Sunday, have the blessing of Almighty God resting upon *them*. Whilst it is most desirable that the children in our Sunday-schools should grow up to be good in the morals of life, yet O that it may please God to make numbers of them good in the best sense, by giving them a spiritual knowledge of his Word in their own souls; so that our Sunday-schools might prove more than ever to be sources from which God takes many of his elect, for the lengthening of the cords and strengthening the stakes of Zion.

Well; after such matters as we have already touched upon, and in reference to which this magazine seeks to wield an influence for good, we may ask again, in coming to the *last part* of our address, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Who is able to make the magazine answerable to the particular ends for which it is published? We answer, None can do it but the Lord; and if he use such poor "weak things" as we to bring it about in any measure, it must be nevertheless through his power and grace alone that we serve him and do his work to any good purpose. Neither the editor nor those who assist him in his work have so learned Christ, as to think that their sufficiency is of themselves, but can say, and often with a deal of burden on their spirits, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." But so far as the

Lord may be pleased to enable them to do the work of conducting the magazine for his own honour and glory, and for the spiritual advantage of the many gracious souls who read it, so far will their one object in undertaking such work be attained. But nothing is more important, than that their object, and motives, should be fairly recognized, that misunderstanding may as much as possible be avoided. When it is *known* that the different writers in the same religious periodical are not only agreed in sentiment between themselves, but that they are as much agreed with the particular sentiments which that periodical has always been an organ of advocating, and hence that their one object in contributing to its pages is, with the Lord's help, to maintain those sentiments in their purity, and because they believe them to be God's truth and nothing else, then such little differences of mere words and phrases, and modes of speech, as a plurality of minds, and distinct gifts, will be sure to give rise to, ought never to be made an occasion for contention, either between themselves, or among those who read their writings. The best of men, and the best of saints, are nothing but poor fallible creatures; and so much do we feel our own fallibility, and liability of inadvertently allowing mere inaccuracies in word and expression to creep into what we write or preach, that if we knew that a detection of defects of that kind in this poor address would make it a justifiable reason for any to start up and resound against us the cry of heresy, then we should have no confidence in suffering it to go forth. But, knowing that we write the address, not for the amusement of critics, but simply as being willing to drop a few practical hints and kind words to the children of God whom we love in the bowels of Christ, and having reason to hope that they will bear with the much weakness and deficiency, which we deeply feel are traceable in it, we let it leave our hands, much more in the way of throwing ourselves on the kind sympathy and forbearance of our brethren and Christian friends, than with any other feeling pervading our mind.

We desire, then, dear friends, in closing our remarks, to "commend you to God, and to the word of his grace." We trust whether it be ourselves or others that, in the providence of God, shall occasionally speak to you through these pages, that the Lord will teach the writers what to communicate, and make the same a word in season to your souls. Especially do we desire that "Jesus Christ, and him crucified," may be the burden of the magazine, that whether what is published be sermons, or experiences, or obituaries, or letters, or whatever else, yet that the substance of all may be for the exaltation of Christ, and your own real spiritual edification. We have but few more years at the most to abide in the flesh; and as there is nothing which as children of God we shall more need for our peace of mind in a dying hour than a sweet felt reliance upon the atoning merit of the sacrifice of Jesus, so neither is there anything in our life, and in the prospect of our departure

out of the world, that can bring more solid comfort into our minds, when applied by the Spirit, than that same most precious sacrifice. And for this reason above all others, we particularly desire that our magazine may, through the blessing of God, savour much of Christ and little of the creature. "The Lord of peace Himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all."

A VISION OF GLORY.

REV. XXI., XXII.

A VISION I had of a scene most bright.
Language must fail to describe it aright;
Of a fair city bathed in unearthly light,
Through which a pure river ran.

Its mansions sparkled with glistening sheen,
Of amethyst, topaz, and emerald green;
Such dazzling rays never surely were seen
Since the world and time began.

There were trees with fruit and foliage rare
Full of healing balm for the nations. There,
On a radiant throne all bright and fair,
Sat One like the Son of man.

Its streets were of gold like a molten sea;
Its walls were of jewels most rare to see;
And its gates of pearls shone gloriously,
In light from the jasper throne.

In the quivering waves of the ambient air
Flew ethereal forms of angels fair,
Who encircled the steps of the throne; and there
Bright burning seraphim shone.

Now a countless multitude caught my sight,
Who walk'd in those realms of infinite light,
In robes which were wash'd and perfectly white
In the blood of the Lamb once slain.

And now, in this paradise safe shut in,
They are free from pain, and sorrow, and sin;
And the terrible burden of guilt within
They never will feel again.

They are those who were chosen by sovereign grace
From the number of Adam's fallen race,
To behold in glory that Saviour's face
Who was crucified for them.

How I long to be there, in that land of the blest,
In the glorious robe of Christ's righteousness drest,
To spend an eternal Sabbath of rest
In the New Jerusalem!

J. W.

A FEW THOUGHTS ABOUT CHURCHES AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

“That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God.”—1 TIM. III. 15.

“Happy the church, thou sacred place,
The seat of thy Creator’s grace!”

“Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.”—2 TIM. II. 7.

CHURCHES of God are sacred things; and church membership is a solemn matter. We fear these are truths too little considered, and therefore too much lost sight of. Persons often enter into churches without due reverence and anxiety, and then conduct themselves in a way quite unbecoming the position they have assumed. Ministers, perhaps, hardly dwell at all upon these points in their preaching; or at any rate very inadequately insist upon them. This, where the case, is to be regretted, as church disorderliness robs God of his glory, and his people of much profit.

We will try and write, then, a few things upon this subject, in order to bring it before the minds of our readers, and thus, if the Lord’s will, stir them up to thought, reflection, and a proper diligence.

We need hardly remind our spiritual readers that a union subsisted between all the elect of God from all eternity, as in the mind, will, and purpose of God. They were all viewed as one body in Christ, and chosen in him before the foundation of the world.

This union was further effected, so far as the removal of obstacles to its manifestation and enjoyment goes, by the personal work of Christ when upon earth; as in Eph. ii. This union is further manifested and brought into experience by the work of the Holy Spirit upon the hearts of the elect family of God. By this the members of Christ’s mystical body are made known to themselves and declared to others to be such; and by this they are brought into an experimental union one with another.

But it is plain from Scripture that it is the will of God that this union should be openly displayed by the living God-taught members of Christ being united together in a visible church fellowship; or, in other words, that the saints of God should be gathered together into such bodies as churches.

These churches, then, are properly the outward manifestation and expression of an eternal and spiritual union existing amongst the members. Where such union exists not, church fellowship is an acted falsehood, the expression of that which has no actual existence. What a view of the sacredness of church fellowship we get immediately from the simple consideration of these things! Churches are properly the true, holy, and indeed heavenly places of God upon earth, into which are gathered together, according to his will and by his Spirit, the true saints or holy ones of God in Christ.

Now look again. What is the design of God, what the end to be answered, by this visible church union? We must again take our readers back into a past eternity, if such an expression is lawful. We have reason to believe that God's design in respect to the church was twofold. Primarily, that the elect, as one body in Christ, should be to the eternal declaration of his glory; that they should as one body show forth his praise, and be to all eternity to the setting forth of the riches of his grace. Secondly, and subordinately to this, that they should all be united in one body to the mutual advantage and blessedness of the whole. Thus Paul writes: "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." Here, then, are two great ends to be attained by this counsel of God: The manifestation of his own glory; and that which in his wisdom and love he has inseparably bound up with it,—the blessedness of the elect of God.

Well, then, to descend from these heights, we can at once see in the light of such truths what must be the great end of church fellowship as upon earth, or what the institution of churches exists for;—the collective and united declaration of the glory of God; and the mutual edification of the members. We use the words *collective* and *united* because we want to show that not only is each individual Christian called to show forth God's praise, but churches as bodies are formed that the members in union and as united together for this end, should be to the glory of God.

Here, then, again we see the dignity, glory, and sacredness of church membership. Sanctification, we know, is the separation of a thing to the service and glory of God. Saints are thus separated; but not only as so many individuals. No! They are in God's design separated from an ungodly world, and collected, not only into one great body upon earth, but into particular bodies as well; and as such bodies, set apart and consecrated to the service and glory of God.

Here, then, we have a most instructive view of the churches of God. They, properly considered, are bodies of persons separated unto God, and ordained to show forth his praise; the members of which are also called to mutually edify one another.

These thoughts seem to throw a particular light upon the words of the Lord Jesus addressed to each of the seven churches: "I know thy works." We do not understand this expression here to refer merely or principally to the individual acts of saints; but their collective conduct as churches of God. Of course, the eyes of the Lord are upon his people as individuals. He knows our downittings and uprisings, and understandeth our thought afar off. "His eyes are upon the ways of men, and he pondereth all their goings." But something more is meant when Christ says, "I know thy works." He refers to the churches as wholes; he considers how we are acting and conducting ourselves as churches. Are we as such answerable to God's designs? The church of Ephesus, we know, was in a declining state in this re-

spect; the church of Sardis sadly defective; and Laodicea was in such a miserable condition, whilst boasting of her prosperity, that Christ says, "I will spew thee out of my mouth."

Who knows how many once flourishing churches have been unchurched, as we may say, because ceasing to answer the ends of church fellowship; or how many churches may at this instant be on the verge of such a condition, whilst very possibly boasting of prosperity and orthodoxy of sentiment?

But now let us look for a few moments a little closer into this matter, and see some at any rate of the things comprehended under these two great headings:—The showing forth of God's glory; the mutual edification of the saints; or, in other words—In what ways does a church, as such, in its collective capacity, show forth the glory of God, and edify itself in love, and thus answer its very ends as a church? The question seems one of vital consequence to the churches of God as such.

We suggest the following things in reply to the question, not as attempting in a writing like this to exhaust the subject, but merely to give hints.

I. The first great thing which a church should attend to is *the ministry of the word*. This is of vital importance. If a church neglects this, and degenerates in respect to the ministry of the word in its midst, it is indeed degenerating. Now four things should be carefully maintained in the preaching of the word.

1. *Truth in its purity*. That which is spoken should be in harmony with the Word of God: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." Churches should diligently endeavour and pray and strive earnestly that no admixture of error may be introduced; for "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Both the churches of Pergamos and Thyatira seemed to have failed here; the former allowing an Antinomian, the latter an Arminian, leaven to be brought in. Ephesus, on the other hand, is greatly commended for the vigilant opposition to error in its various forms. They detected the false legalising apostles; they also detected and abhorred the licentious leaven of the Nicolaitanes.

2. *Grace in its freeness*. As Hart says:

"God's grace is free
To Paul, to Magdalene, and me."

If the bestowments of God in Christ are made ultimately to depend upon anything but the good pleasure of his own eternal will and everlasting love to the elect, grace ceases to be grace, and is spoilt. All really depends upon the eternal counsels of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As the following lines express:

"But as for man's merit, 'tis hateful to me;
The gospel, I love it, 'tis perfectly free."

The gifts of God in Christ do not depend upon any goodness, merits, or self-preparations for receiving them in the elect. Necessity is the only fitness for receiving, and this necessity, as to the sense of it, is itself the beginning of the receiving. To feel our need is God's gift, as well as it is of God's free goodness that

the necessity is supplied out of Christ's fulness. The needy man is the one welcome to Jesus. He loves the poor. Therefore, to make anything of man's wisdom, strength, goodness, righteousness, or to put any stumbling-block or hindrance in the way of the needy, is to spoil the doctrine of grace. All is of God. Whosoever truly wills is welcome. Grace is free, or it is no longer in existence.

3. *Truth in its fulness.* There is a rich variety in the Word of God. We read of the "manifold wisdom of God." Truth should be preached in its rich fulness and variety. There are truths which are to be *believed*: doctrinal truths for establishing the judgment in the things of God. There are truths to be *practised*; or preceptive words indicating what is a conversation becoming the gospel of Christ. There are precious promises, precious warnings, precious reproofs, precious counsels, precious invitations, precious exhortations, precious histories with their lessons of divine wisdom, precious prophecies with their sweet unfoldings of the future, as well as warning voices. Now, all these branches of truth, in which the riches and fulness of the grace of God are set forth, should be noticed in the ministry. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

4. *Truth in its power.* The Lord's people have an experience of the truth of God. It has a mighty, because a divine, influence through the Spirit of God upon their hearts. The grand experience is the experience of the proper effects of the truth of God upon us. To find the law working wrath, a sense of our liability to the wrath of God; to find the gospel working hope, and a fleeing to the Lord Jesus; and then a blessed consolation, as through it we learn what Christ is, and are brought by grace to call him ours;—this is experience. We fear some so-called experiences fall sadly short of this. They are not Word-produced experiences. They are not experiences of what the truth of God produces in the hearts and lives of the elect and living children of God. Well, then, genuine experience must be preached, or truth as to the power and practical effects insisted upon. The "grace of God which bringeth salvation" must be declared as teaching the saved to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world. Of course, much might be added; but we pass on.

ii. A church should see that *the ordinances are properly and duly administered.* These are the laws of Christ's house. Having abolished in his church with a Kingly authority the old observances of the legal dispensation, he has given to his churches the two great institutions of believers' baptism and the Lord's supper. These are designed, the first to show forth the believer's standing in Christ, as dead, buried, and risen again in him; the second, as Paul states, to "show forth the Lord's death till he come." The ordinances are, then, to be carefully

observed, in obedience to the command of the King of Zion in his church, and are to be performed in a proper manner, answerable to the meaning of each institution, and in accordance with the mind of him who ordained them. We study brevity, and therefore do not go into particulars here. We merely insist upon the importance of a church attending diligently to these things. We must refer our readers to the Word of God and other writings for fuller information and directions how in these matters they may be answerable to the commands of the Lord Jesus.

iii. There should be *frequent assemblings of the saints together in public*. This Paul particularly enjoins: "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together." And the Lord Jesus points to the same thing when he says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them." This appears principally to refer to the public or collective assemblies of the saints, as the context indicates. Now, these assemblies may be of three kinds, all of which should be attended to, and also attended diligently, by church members:

1. Meetings in which the Word is preached.

2. Meetings more especially for prayer and praise.

3. Church meetings, in which, of course, only members of the church are present. These are meetings for the carrying on of church affairs. They are public meetings of the saints, so far as being open to all the members; but not meetings in public as open to all the world. Consequently, things done in church meetings should be kept private amongst church members, and not by gossiping tongues be made known to everybody.

Now, of course it is not for us to dictate how many meetings shall be held of one kind or another during the week, or how often what are strictly church meetings shall be held. Scripture plainly indicates that meetings for preaching, prayer, and praise should be frequent, and diligently and constantly attended by the members. Christ, in Song vi. 1, is represented as gone down into these gardens; and especial mention is made of the beds of spices, or the saints collected together, as in prayer-meetings. We cannot think it at all answerable to the Word of God that such public meetings should be confined to the Lord's day, or that prayer-meetings should be neglected; nor do we think that such a state of things would answer to the necessities of the case. We want stirring up again and again in the ways and things of God. We live in a seducing busy world; we bear about with us bodies of sin and death. Things within and without us all naturally work against the new man of grace in the soul. Surely it is desirable, then, to have frequent meetings; that the spouse may often have the opportunity of feeding her kids, as is said in the Song of Solomon, beside the shepherds' tents. Of course, the frequency of church meetings must be regulated by the state of church matters. It is desirable to have them from time to time to bring the members thus together for special and mutual intercourse. Also, church affairs

will demand this; for they should be diligently attended to, and not in a slovenly manner. But, on the other hand, they should not be too frequent, lest they afford an irresistible temptation to a certain active-minded class of persons, whose prolific brains, and over busy meddlesomeness, may create trouble.

(To be concluded.)

SHORT PAPERS.

ON THE INIQUITY OF TRAFFIC.

TAKING up an old magazine, we were struck with the above words as the title of one of the Articles. The author's own mind had been led to the subject through reading Ezek. xxviii. 18, where these remarkable words occur in God's judgment concerning Tyre: "*The iniquity of thy traffic.*" In the present paper we shall give some extracts from the Article, interspersed with remarks of our own. The writer very properly says:

"I feel no disposition to suspect any class of men, as though they were more corrupt than the rest of our species; much less shall I aim, by what I may advance in this paper, to improperly expose any individual to the censure of others. Having a high opinion of the integrity and religion of many professors of godliness who are engaged in trade and mercantile concerns, I am persuaded that it is their constant aim to depart from all iniquity. I have no suspicion, therefore, that there is any iniquity in traffic itself, but I conceive that, like other things in which sinners are concerned, it is often the occasion of calling into exercise the evil dispositions of the heart. 'The ploughing of the wicked is sin;' and so, I doubt not, is their traffic."

He then asks the question: "Wherein consists the iniquity of traffic?" and answers his question by replying truly, "Some branches of traffic are in themselves absolutely unlawful." He instances the sale of playing-cards for the purpose of gambling. But may we not greatly enlarge the list? What shall we think of keeping public-houses, or opening and supporting places where poor wretched creatures are encouraged to squander their money in reducing themselves to a state and condition lower than that of the beasts? where a livelihood is obtained by the death of all that is morally and physically good in poor fallen human nature? We read that a part of the traffic of mystical Babylon is in the "souls of men." But is there no traffic in the souls of men nearer home than Babylon? Do not those who keep public houses for the most part share in so odious a traffic? And shall the Lord's people have their hands defiled by this "iniquity of traffic"?

But must we not in all fairness go farther? Are we to spare the high, and strike the low? No! The wisdom that is from above is "without partiality." Well, then, if in the generality of public-houses, and places where strong drink is sold over the counter, is to be found in a hideous revolting form "the iniquity of traffic," what shall we say of those who gain a livelihood or grow rich by supplying such places with that which they traffic

so iniquitously in? Are we to turn with abhorrence from the death-producing stream, and contemplate complacently the death-dispensing fountain? Is there not something of the "iniquity of traffic" in those who supply such public-houses? Shall, then, professors of godliness be contaminated therewith?

Our author takes a further view of this particular branch of traffic. Mind, we have not said that even the traffic in liquors, which may be abused for intoxicating purposes, must of itself be an iniquitous traffic. We dare not say that the duly moderated and temperate use of such liquors is in itself iniquitous, and, therefore, of course, we dare not say the sale of them necessarily is so. It is not traffic, but the iniquity which comes into traffic, we notice. But our author points out the danger in this particular traffic, not only to the customer, but the vendor. He properly says:

"Some trades, though not positively unlawful, yet are attended with such great temptations as should cause all those persons to decline them, who are conscious of a constitutional tendency to fall into the snares wherewith they are connected. On this account some ought wholly to decline the selling of strong drink or of spirituous liquors."

May we not justly add to this that there is not only the danger to the man himself, but that he may be exposing others who are in his employ to temptations which their moral characters cannot withstand, and to dangers which may issue in their ruin? Can a man professing godliness look up to heaven with a clear conscience, and stretch forth in his prayer clean hands, who sends forth the young or the unstable, perhaps even members of his own family, into public-houses to hunt up and get orders for strong drink from customers? God reprobated amongst the Jews their sacrificing their children to Moloch. May not a more dreadful sacrifice be offered up at the kindred shrines of mammon and strong drink in this land of ours? Our author is very suggestive in a remark he makes in reference to the traffic in weapons of war:

"A Christian who attempts to support his family by making weapons of war will need peculiar sincerity and self-denial to make him sufficiently earnest in prayer for the peace of mankind."

We will now give some nearly verbatim extracts from the author of this Article:

"Some trades, though not unlawful, yet are often carried on in an iniquitous manner; *e. g.*, by adulteration, which must in many cases tend to the great injury of health, as in the article of drugs especially. This often leads to falsehood, and, I fear, in too many cases to absolute perjury."

These remarks are, in the application of them, very far-reaching. The immorality of adulteration extends to all cases in which an article is sold to a customer for one thing when it really is another, and when under such false appearances it is made to bring in to the tradesman a price which otherwise it would not command.

Our author then points out the iniquity of traffic in all cases where the Government of the country is defrauded of its demands, contrary to the Word of God: "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's;" and again, pay "tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom;" properly pointing out that it is impossible to plead in justification of the breach of God's command the superiority of the Government of a Tiberius or a Nero over that of our beloved country. He proceeds:

"If I mention exorbitant gain as certainly one of the iniquities of traffic, it will not be with the design of leading your readers to censure others, in cases wherein they have only an uncertain guess at their profits and losses; but with a view, the Lord willing, to excite those who fear the Lord and would depart from all iniquity to look carefully to themselves."

"Let him who would keep himself from idolatry seek for grace to watch against the inordinate love of gain, which may exceedingly injure the soul, and deaden the heart to God, even where the profits are not so exorbitant as to render a man chargeable with injustice to his customers. The iniquity of covetousness may offend the Lord, and cause him to hide himself from your soul, O Christian man, though worldly prudence should keep you from falling into those temptations which would injure your character for probity and fair dealing."

"The extravagance and discontent of many among the poor may frequently induce them to murmur at their employers without cause; but let not richer professors on that account disregard all charges of oppressing the poor, by beating them down in their wages, while they are making vast fortunes, perhaps, by their labour. Such iniquity, wherever it exists in its fulness, is very heinous in the eyes of JEHOVAH, and the cries of the needy will assuredly bring down a curse on those that grind the faces of the poor; even a terrible curse which cannot be averted by an orthodox creed, nor by occasional donations in support of the gospel; for the Lord 'hateth robbery for burnt offering.'"

"I will now add but one branch more of the 'iniquity of traffic,' from which I am afraid some professors of godliness are not universally clear. . . . I refer to the case of monopoly and injurious competition. If God be displeased by those who 'join house to house, and lay field to field till there be no place, and they have their dwelling alone to themselves in the midst of the land,' must he not also be displeased with those overgrown traders who labour to get profitable articles so entirely into their own hands as to command what price they please. . . . I profess not to enter into particulars. . . . I only throw out hints grounded on an expression contained in the Scriptures of truth."

"It well becomes all persons professing godliness to be on their guard against any approach to the iniquity of traffic."

"Those have need, too, to be the most careful whose gains are the greatest; for though I have heard of curing slight disorders of the eyes by rubbing them with a small piece of gold, yet I suspect that a large quantity of that metal will have a very opposite effect upon the eyes of the mind."

Thus our author concludes a paper which certainly contains many suggestive remarks upon an exceedingly striking and suggestive expression in the Word of God. There is much, too, in his remarks worthy of consideration by the Lord's people. The

question is asked in Ps. xxiv.: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?" The answer points primarily, and so far as perfection of title goes, to the Lord Jesus, the King of glory; but it also indicates the characters, as after the Spirit, of the seed of Jacob generally, when the reply is given: "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart." Now, we know that the heart in which covetousness reigns is not pure; and the hands defiled by the "iniquity of traffic" cannot be counted clean. It will be the mercy, then, of the Lord's people if, in these dark and dangerous days, these days of luxury and pressing competition, they are enabled by divine grace to take heed to themselves and to keep themselves undefiled by the "iniquity of traffic." "Be not conformed," says Paul, "to this world." And James, giving the character of true Christianity, declares, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this . . . to keep himself unspotted from the world." To the furthering, if the will of the Lord be so, this good and profitable end, may the Lord give to his people a gracious acceptance of these hints about the "Iniquity of Traffic."

BAPTISMAL EXERCISES AND DIVINE LEADINGS.

A SERIES OF FIVE LETTERS.

My very dear Friend,—Your letter was very welcome. The reading of it brought tears to my eyes.

Now to the subject you spoke of. I do most earnestly desire what I am about to put on paper may be done under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and in the fear of the Lord. It has been the wish of my heart, if ever the Lord would permit such an unworthy creature as I am to tread in his footsteps, by going through believers' baptism, that you might be one with me. The longing desire I have had at times to honour that God whom I trust has done so much for me, by making a public profession of his Name, I am sure you are not a stranger to; and we want to partake of the privilege of the children of God. We do not like to be shut out from them. But I know what you say is right,—there is a searching to find the right *time* and *place* for these things.

It was with mingled feelings I read yours. Something seemed to say, "It is the Lord's doings." And on the other hand, fears arose: Suppose I am mistaken. Some time ago I thought of telling you of some words I had during my stay with you. I have been tried about them since. I thought I would wait and see if you should mention the subject; and as you have done so, I do not think I ought to withhold it any longer. Do you remember the evening Mr. Piper visited you? Whilst you were engaged with him, my soul went out in earnest pleading to the Lord that he would make it plain to me what his will was

respecting it, and what was right for me to do, by giving me some word. The following words came, but they were not what I wanted: "Watch unto prayer." After our walk, these words came with more sweetness than power (which has tried me not a little): "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." The words had an abiding with me; and the next day these followed: "I will work, and who shall let it?" But something seemed to say, "How can these things be?" When these words dropped into my heart:

"When, and where, and by what means,
To his wisdom leaving."

I felt, if that was really from God, nothing would prevent me going forward. I felt a rest, believing the Lord would in his own time make a way for me. After my return, I decided it would not be right for me to make a move under present circumstances.

On the following Sunday, a line of a hymn that was sung came home to me:

"Patch up no inglorious peace."

It seemed to say to me, You shall not shelter yourself under that. I felt so tossed about in mind that I did not know what to do. It appeared to me the Lord paid no regard to my supplications, as I did not find that rest in giving it up that I hoped for; and to my shame I say it, I felt such rebellion rise up against him that it made me tremble, knowing that he might have cut me off, and spurned me from him for ever. If he was not a long-suffering and forgiving God, he would not bear with me as he does. I looked forward to the time when it would be over, thinking then I should have a little respite. How I did wish I was one with them at the last baptizing; also on the Sunday when they were received into the church. My cry was, "Do thou, dear Lord, enable me to follow in thy footsteps; for thou knowest I have no strength of my own." Once, when sorely perplexed, not knowing what to do, these words came:

"Trust him; he will not deceive you,
Though you hardly of him deem."

But the sweetness of these things is gone. I believe there was too much great I about me, and what I would do if the Lord would only show me what his will was. Peter did not speak with greater vain-confidence when he told his Lord and Master, though all men should deny him, yet would not he, than I did.

I think the Lord is now dealing with me as he did with the children of Israel. (Deut. viii. 2.) I hope he is humbling me, proving me, to know what there is in my heart, and whether I will keep his commandments or no. How gladly would I, but I have no strength of my own; and I often fear whether it is not the pride of my heart that prompts me, that I may be thought something of. And yet how gladly would I give up all thoughts of it if I could! Sometimes I do for a short time; but it is sure to return again; and I am so exercised about the pro-

mises which I thought had been applied. Was I mistaken? And have I presumed by laying claim to things which do not belong to me? It is suggested to me, if I am wrong in one thing, may I not be in another? And I am so anxious about the outward ordinances of God's house, when I am not satisfied I am the character for them. This has cast me down:

“What if my name should be left out?”

But it is not always so. There is at times a springing up of divine life in my soul, and “I know whom I have believed;” and do feel most assuredly the Lord will fulfil all his pleasure concerning me. I know unbelief too often prevails, and presents to my view this and that high mountain; and high indeed they are when I look at them in my own strength. But I know the Lord is higher than all; and I cannot think the Lord will keep me longer than he sees is good for me. “For he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.” And I know I am the character that fears God, though so changeable in my feelings. I often think of these words:

“Ashamed of Jesus? that dear Friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend?
No; when I blush, be this my shame,
That I no more revere his Name.”

I am afraid I shall tire you; but knowing that you are exercised upon the same subject has emboldened me to say what I have, though you must think there are great contradictions. I much like what you have said upon the subject. It has found an echo in my heart, especially when you spoke of a “venturing faith.” If that is brought forth into action, I am sure the Lord will honour it. May it be given to each of us, and then we shall not go wrong. What love, that he, though King of glory, should condescend to visit such sinful worms of the earth as we are! How it ought to humble us, and lay us low! How true what you have said about pride! It too often creeps in, tells me there must be something in one self to be thus favoured. Surely you are not so puffed up with it as I am. It has so many ways of showing itself; a subtle foe indeed.

“’Tis hurtful when perceived;
When not perceived ’tis worse;
Unseen or seen, it dwells within,
And works by fraud or force.”

Have you read the piece in the “Gospel Standard,” “Thoughts on the Song of Solomon”? I have enjoyed it much. There is so much in it that suits me. I think it has not only been instructive, but reproving to me; and I do desire to hold up my conscience to reproof, as well as all other things. It is said in the Psalms, “If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless (O how sweet that word sounds!) my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.” It is well to feel a Father's

correction when we can view it as such; for we know it comes in love.

I thank you for writing to me as you do. I esteem it a favour to be had in remembrance with God's dear people; I who feel so unlike what they are. But I do hope and believe we are fellow-travellers together towards the heavenly Canaan; and may we have grace given us to walk worthy of the profession we make by honouring the Lord in all things. Accept of my warmest love.

Yours affectionately in Christ Jesus,

February, 1871.

M. A. SHOESMITH.

My very dear Friend,—When I heard you so soon thought of visiting Brighton, I thought I would leave yours unanswered till I saw you; but on reading it again, I felt I must send you a few lines to tell you it does me good to hear the many exercises you have upon baptism. And I cannot help thinking the thing is of the Lord, or you would not be so uneasy about it; for have you not tried again and again to get rid of the subject? And if you have in any measure succeeded for a time, has it not returned to you with greater force than ever? I know difficulties too often arise, and present themselves as mountains before us; then we think it would be presumptuous in us to try and surmount them. And so it would, if we set about it in our own strength. Last evening, as Mr. Boorne was speaking about serving the Lord, he said, "Many good men are much exercised about the ministry. I know of several at the present time; but I believe the Lord never intended them for the work." That came home to me in this way: How do you know the exercises you have had about following the Lord in baptism have not been all from nature? But Mr. B. went on to say, "Those the Lord has designed for the ministry have a great deal to do with God in secret about it; and sometimes beg that he would remove it from their minds, for they greatly fear running without being sent."

This encouraged me to hope the step I am contemplating is of the Lord; for I have desired him again and again, if it was not in accordance with his will, to remove the desire from me. And even now, if not right in his sight, I hope he will prevent it; for I tremble at what lies before, fearing when I come before the church I shall not be able to say anything. I know I cannot speak of such a clear work of grace upon my heart as many can; and this is constantly with me: The Lord has appeared thus far for you; but it is only to make manifest to the people of God what you really are; and they will see how far you are gone in a profession without possession.

But, to be honest, it is not always so. Sometimes for a few moments a sweet confidence arises that God, who has appeared for me in times past, will still be with me in every time of need. But the ordinance itself will be nothing to me, unless he blesses me in it. It is often presented to me as an absurdity to go into a pool of water, and to be put under it by a fellow-creature as a

spectacle before a number of people. Can you wonder at hearing it ridiculed? This is when sense and reason get to work, which is too often the case. What I want is to be led more into the spiritual meaning of it, as being emblematical of the sufferings of Christ, of his being overwhelmed with the wrath of God against sin, which he so willingly endured for his people.

“And shall my pride disdain the deed
That’s worthy of a God?”

My heart says, No; but thinks it an honour to be counted worthy to follow in his steps; for I feel myself most unworthy.

Since I have been writing, I hope I have felt a little of the goodness of the Lord, that he should ever notice such a vile sinner as I am; with a hope springing up that he will never leave nor forsake me.

I can quite understand the objection you feel rising within, that you should be the first in your family to take such a step. Reason will argue, They were good people; and why should you wish to make yourself peculiar by chalking out a fresh path for yourself? But do you not believe, if it had been laid upon them with the same weight it is upon you, that they would have followed it? I do not think the Lord opens to his people’s view a smooth and easy path, free from things that disturb the flesh; and in our right mind we do not wish it; for it is said, “Through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom.” And however rough our path may be, when we are brought through it, we shall look back, and see that it hath been a straight and a right way.

I cannot do justice to your letter in answering it in any way. The very tenderness with which you write, and the fear you speak of, convince me there is much beyond nature in it; and the objections you have named are so tottering, that one word with power from the Lord would throw them all down; and I earnestly desire that may be given you. Yours very affectionately,

March 6th, 1871.

M. A. SHOESMITH.

(To be Concluded.)

AN ADDRESS BY MR. COVELL,

AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, CROYDON, BEFORE THE SERMON;
JAN. 1ST, 1860.

My friends, we have now entered upon another year, with all its unforeseen future before us; with all the troubles, trials, and vexations that may occur, as well as the mercies, comforts, helps, blessings, and tokens that are laid up. How many of us may see the end of this year the Lord only knows; and I question whether there are any among us who desire to see the dark lines or the bright things that may await us. But God promises

“The men that fear the Lord
In every state are blest.”

Whatever trouble may attend our path, distress and perplex our

minds, God promises that "all things shall work together for good to them that love him, to them who are the called according to his purpose." We know not indeed what a day may bring forth. Sufficient for you and me is the evil thereof. We may now be in comparative ease, blessed with many mercies, comforts, and blessings; but, my friends, ere this year closes upon you and me, we may be sitting, like Job, bereft of everything, and have to say with him, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb: and naked shall I return thither." What an unspeakable mercy if, like him, you are enabled to feel and say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;" to be able to feel, under all and in all, "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." What a mercy if you are able to feel that this is not your rest! And though God may be pleased to strip you of everything, which he can do, however secure you may think it is made to you, if he is determined to bring you down, if you can still say, "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?"

Whatever trials may lie before you, O that you may be enabled to feel you have himself! If not spared to see another year, can you feel, have you got some evidence, some testimony, something in your conscience (I ask you before Him in whose presence you now sit) that for you to die will be gain? It is heaven or hell. If death closes thine eyes ere another year, have you that in your heart, have you that in faith, have you that in hope, that you can feel that "though after death worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God"?

"A hope like this will trials well endure."

Without this, if the year closes upon you in death, eternity alone will open up into what misery you are plunged. Hear what God saith by Paul. May it sink into thy heart, that nothing may extricate it but love and blood. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life." Canst thou, on the opening of this year, whether spared to see the end or no, feel, "This is my Beloved, and this is my friend." Mine eyes have seen his salvation. I have a home to go to?" Ask thy conscience. What does that testify? How does it speak? In thy favour?

While another year has opened up, the past year has gone; all its sorrows, all its trials, all its temptations, all the things we have felt in it, mourned over in it, been grieved at in it, have sunk into oblivion. No more are these things to be felt; they are passed and gone for ever. And blessed be God, we are a year nearer home; the years that are passed are so many less we have got to contend with. Then blessed be God for a good hope! Blessed be the Lord that hath maintained our way, and thus brought us through what, perhaps, at the beginning of the year, we feared. But we have realized the truth of this,—that as our days, so has our strength been; and amidst all our fears and castings-down, we have proved what a loving God we have, and that he hath not suffered us to be tempted above that we are able; but hath with the temptation

made a way to escape. So, "having obtained help of God, we continue unto this day."

Dec. 4th, 1879.

W. G. C.

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

"Whilst the long cloud of witnesses Shows the same path to heaven."

My dear Brother in the Kingdom and Patience of our Lord Jesus Christ,—Grace and peace be with you.

I have long been thinking of writing to you, and now I make the attempt; and the proverb is, Better late than never. I hope that both you and your dear partner are well in body, and above all that your souls prosper. Through mercy I and my family are well in health; for which I hope I feel truly grateful to the God of all my mercies; but I feel I am still in the wilderness, yet leaning on my Beloved. For I can say that

"I have nowhere else to flee;
No sanctuary, Lord, but thee."

O what a mercy that ever the Lord should look upon such poor vile sinners as you and me; so as to remember us with the favour that he beareth towards his people, and visit our souls with his salvation in quickening our souls when dead in sin, putting his fear in our hearts, and circumcising our hearts to love him, his people, and his ways when so many of our poor fellow-sinners are left to fill up the measure of their iniquities. Truly he has done great things for us, whereof we have abundant reason to rejoice and be glad. And he still goes on doing great things for us, in preserving us from day to day; so that, like the bush, we are unconsumed amidst the fiery trials we meet with from the world, our own evil hearts, and the devil's fiery darts. 'Tis alone through the goodwill of him that dwells in the bush, whose compassions fail not, that you and I, as poor helpless worm Jacob, are not consumed. "Fear not, worm Jacob," saith the Lord; "I am thy God. Though like a worm, naked, I have provided a robe to cover thee. Though helpless, I am thy strength. Though exposed to the crush of the foot of many enemies, I am still thy God to shield and protect thee. Though many birds of prey seek the poor worm to devour him, yet I am thy God to watch over thee, and keep thee night and day, lest any hurt thee."

O how sweet has that word been to me at times: "The Lord is thy Keeper." "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore." Ah! my dear brother and sister, how many have been my fears, trials, and temptations in the wilderness, whereby I have thought my feet were almost gone, and my steps had well nigh slipped. (Ps. lxxiii. 2.) Satan and unbelief have often thrust sore at me, that I might fall; and, like David, I have often thought I should one day fall. Yet, blessed be the Lord, who, though we believe not,

still abideth faithful in keeping the feet of his saints. "When I said, my foot slippeth, thy mercy, O Lord, held me up."

"But have been upheld till now;

Who could hold me up but thou?"

We are not out of the wilderness yet. Trials and crosses, fires and waters, still may be before us, and death itself in the end. Yet "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" is the promise of him that cannot lie. You and I can say, with the apostle, "He hath delivered, he doth deliver; and in whom we trust he will yet deliver."

May the dear Lord increase your faith and mine, and grant us patience to run the race set before us, looking unto Jesus; who for the joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of God; where he ever lives to carry on his people's cause above. The Lord shall perfect that which concerneth us.

Mrs. Chivers and Mrs. Milford, with the friends at Calne, desire to be kindly remembered to you. Give my very kind and Christian love to Mr. and Mrs. Newbury, when you see them. Likewise to Mr. Freeman and his, and all inquiring friends. I shall be very happy to see you at Sutton if at any time you can make it convenient to come when you are in this neighbourhood. Let me know when you come, and I will try and be at home to take a walk with you into Draycot Park, &c. Shall be very glad to have a line from you. Yours in the best of bonds,

Sutton Benger, April 1st, 1858.

JAMES HUGGINS.

Dear Mr. N.—You say it is a long time since I saw your handwriting. It did indeed seem a long time from Nov. 6th till Feb. 14th. Still I feel that four letters in a year are more than I ought to expect from you, knowing that your time is so filled up, and that you have so many better correspondents. I really feel sometimes such a poor nothing that I wonder I should ever presume to write to you or any one else. But it did me good to hear you say that I had not been forgotten by you. I have often been ready to say, "The Lord has forsaken me," as I have been in strange places of late. I was in a very bewildered state of mind for a fortnight, and what made it more trying was that it was just when I was so poorly. I could neither read nor pray. I had no power to move a thought heavenward. I seemed as it were set fast; and really felt the truth of the dear Lord's words: "Without me ye can do nothing." But on the Sunday morning, as I was putting away my breakfast things, there came over my spirit such a sweet gentle influence, which softened my heart, and caused tears to flow; and these lines of dear Hart's came so sweetly:

"O that closer we could cleave
To thy bleeding, dying breast!"

They just suited my feelings.

But this did not last long. I soon got back into the same place. I could feel no power, and felt dumb before the Lord. In

that state I went one night to bed; and, feeling much distressed, I said, "What shall I do?" When the Lord spoke these words: "Look unto me, and be ye saved." How it gladdened my heart to get a word from *Him*! I think I felt a little of the same gladness which the disciples did when they saw the Lord.

You speak of my having much to make my path a trying one. Indeed I have; and often am obliged to cry to the Strong for strength to enable me to hold on my way. But my chief troubles now are of a different nature to what they were a few years back; as we then had such sharp trials in providence, arising chiefly from losses in different ways. Now, although we still have to struggle hard, yet we have much cause for thankfulness, seeing what we have been brought through, and little else than the labour of our hands to get on with. I feel sure, if the Lord had not been on our side, we could not have got through as we have done. But I have reason to hope those trials were sanctified to my soul; as I had many sweet and precious times in the midst of them, when pleading with the Lord. One circumstance comes to memory—one that will never be forgotten or erased. It was just when we were at the worst. We were indeed greatly distressed in our feelings, as we knew not what to do. My heart was continually going up to the Lord. One morning, as I was walking about the house, still pleading, these words dropped into my heart: "I will bring the blind by a way they knew not." I felt much comforted, and said, "Choose *thou* the way; but still lead on." In a little time a friend came in and said, "You are in trouble?" I replied, "We are." He said, "We have a little money we do not want to be using at present. If £20 will be of any service, you shall have it." This we gladly accepted. An agreement was made for us to pay it back in four years, which we were able to do.

It would take too much space to tell you my feelings. We must be brought into close and trying places to *prove* how good the Lord is to us. One says,

"Trials make the promise sweet."

This I have often proved, and am still proving.

I have been reading again the piece in the "G. S." on "Grieving the Spirit," and have found it very instructive. It led me to see in how many ways I have been led to grieve that Holy and blessed Spirit. O Mr. N.! What a debtor I am to sovereign grace! If I am saved, what a wonder of all wonders it will be! As dear Rutherford says, "I want to be sure it is *Him*, and no other that I have;" as I know every other refuge will fail me when I come into the swellings of Jordan. In another place he says, "Let me forfeit all, providing I may anchor my tottering soul on Christ."

I must close, or I shall weary you. I don't know how it is, but I mostly feel some freshness on my spirit when I try to scribble a line. Still, there are so many ifs and buts put into my mind, that I have enough to do to stand against them. But since I

have been writing, it came to my mind how the enemies tried to hinder Nehemiah from building the wall at Jerusalem. This gave me some little encouragement.

I do hope the Lord will be with you. I believe some here feel a spirit of prayer for you. My kind love to Mrs. N.

Yours very truly,

R. D.

INQUIRY AND ANSWER.

Is it correct to say of a Christian man that he has and does come to Christ? Or should it rather be said that he has been and is brought to Christ? I have heard it positively affirmed that the first of these forms of expression necessarily implies creature-power. Is this the case? B. P. C.

REPLY.

THE question has certainly the advantage of being stated in a precise and definite manner; and therefore admits of a brief and definite reply. We believe that both of the forms of expression are in themselves perfectly sound, and that the first is in reality the most in harmony with the expressions of the Bible. Each of these forms of words may be rightly used by a godly man. Each in the lips of one really taught by God may convey pure truth; and each may in the lips of one who is erroneous, whether his error lies on the side of free will, or of the letter without the power of truth, convey an erroneous impression. The one no more than the other necessarily implies creature power.

Our answer might have ended here; but we shall dwell upon the subject a little more fully.

In the heart and experience of the man well taught of God, these two expressions are really united together. In those of the erroneous man they are dissociated one from the other. If the man thus taught of God speaks of the sinner coming to Christ, he never for a moment means coming without being brought by a divine power. If he speaks of him as being brought, he never means that he is so brought as a man would convey an inanimate thing, such as a stone, or a piece of wood; but that he is brought as an intelligent and voluntary agent. When the Scripture tells us that Andrew brought Peter to Jesus, we do not understand him to have carried Peter in his arms like an infant. It was the moving force of his words concerning Christ which influenced Peter's will; and therefore he came. When, on the other hand, we read that the leper came to Jesus, we always believe that he thus came as brought to him through the blessed Spirit influencing his mind to believe in Christ's power and even willingness to heal him. When a man who is not really emptied out of self-ability before the Lord speaks of coming to Christ, he associates with the words creature-power. When the man who holds the truth improperly speaks of a man being brought, he has some idea of a mere impulsive influence, of an acting upon

the man merely as from without, or of such a bringing as is not connected with a working in the man's own heart to will and to do according to God's good pleasure. The one makes the man work and act without the Lord ; the other makes the Lord work and act without the man. The one makes the man take without the Lord's giving ; the other the Lord give without the man taking. In neither case is it the Lord working in and by the man through a revelation of the truth to his soul, whereby the heart is changed, the affections won over to the side of Christ, and the will blessedly and sweetly influenced. Thus both these persons, in using their several expressions, will convey the state of their own minds to the reader ; the one will convey legality, and the other the chilling, uninfluential, deadening letter.

There are, of course, forms of expression which in themselves are positively erroneous. Give them a fair and honest construction, they do properly convey some erroneous sentiment. But there are others which in themselves are perfectly innocent and correct. The former, if they proceeded from an angel's lips, would be wrong. The latter derive from the state of mind of the man who uses them their true signification, and partly depend thereupon for the impression they convey to others. We say *partly* depend, for this is not altogether the case ; as they will also depend upon the reader's or hearer's state of mind, and his way of handling them.

There are two ways of dealing with expressions the most innocent and correct in themselves, whereby they may be entirely perverted and corrupted, and made to signify something as different as possible from what was in the mind of the speaker or reader.

1. They may be isolated from all that goes before or after them. A sentence may be mangled, and only a portion of it taken ; or it may be severed from the context, and in this way a few words may be made to say anything. Thus Paul might be made to say that it is right to do evil that good may come. See Rom. iii. 8 ; where the words, " Let us do evil that good may come," isolated and by themselves may be made to command vile iniquity ; whereas, taken in their proper connection, they are used to stigmatize such iniquity, and to declare that the damnation of persons so saying is just. But we must think that no man with the fear of God in his heart, or, at any rate, in exercise, will designedly so mangle the words of a writer or speaker.

2. They may receive a most false colouring from the mind of the person who reads or hears them. Halyburton, in his *Memoir*, well points out how the mind will conceive of things in accordance with its own character. Two men may thus form entirely different opinions of the same writing. The mind sweetly and blessedly imbued with gospel grace, and under the influence of that gospel, will conceive gosselly ; the legal mind legally. The former, for example, will find the gospel precept sweet ; the latter will, through legalizing it, count it bondage.

Thus we see that not only is it necessary for a godly writer and speaker to convey his meaning in proper expressions; but those expressions must be rightly dealt with, and properly conceived of, or the reader and hearer may utterly corrupt them, and make the most harmless and even correct expressions vehicles for the conveyance of erroneous opinions.

To sum up, then, we may say—1, that when the Scriptures describe the spiritual acts of God's people as acts proceeding from them, we must always understand that they are their acts as intelligent beings and voluntary agents; but that the Holy Spirit is the original source of them, as enlightening their understandings, and effectually influencing their wills. So, again, when the Scriptures speak of the same acts as the works of the Holy Spirit, we are to understand that they are thus his acts as guiding and governing the godly in the performance of them, through a gracious influence upon their wills and understandings. He acts, in respect to the godly, with a regard to and not a disregard of their faculties, in a way of preserving, renewing, and elevating those faculties, not to the destruction of them; in fact, to the preservation and not the destruction or annihilation of their souls.

“The Spirit all the motion gives
By springs of fear and love.”

2. Such expressions, then, as those in the question are in themselves perfectly correct; neither of them necessarily conveying any erroneous impression. Men come to Christ when they are brought by a divine influence upon their hearts. They are thus brought when they come.

3. The same expressions in the lips of one man may convey erroneous impressions which in the lips of another convey truthful and life-giving ones.

4. When words are used by the godly in a right manner, the preacher seeking out acceptable words, different hearers and readers, according to the different states of their own minds, may either rightly conceive of their meaning, or wrest and pervert them.

5. We should fear that error or carnality in some form or other must be prevalent in the mind which would as a rule object to either of the forms of expression under consideration. If a man showed an incessant repugnance to it being said that men are brought to Christ, we should suspect the presence of unbroken creature ability, and a consequent denial of the need of a gracious, effectual, divine power. If he showed a similar repugnance to it being said that men come to Christ, we should have our fears as to whether he was really sound in respect to the way in which men are brought. We should suspect some ignorance, or at any rate forgetfulness, of the manner of the divine working; as if it was a working apart from and independent of the renewed faculties of the soul, instead of a work of a new creation and in and by those faculties. Or at any rate we

should fear that through carnality of mind there was a mere adherence to the letter, connected with a stumbling at the spirit of things. In short, that there was a bonding, deadening narrowness of mind, disabling a man from forming a true and just conception of the meaning of a writer or speaker, even when he clothed the purest truth in perfectly correct and suitable expressions. (Isa. xxviii. 20.)

6. To these things we must add one more remark, which may be of importance to the truly seeking coming person. As the Holy Spirit works upon, draws, and leads a man by internal effects produced upon his own heart, moving him by means of his own understanding, will, and affections, yet in a supernatural, life-giving, and gracious manner, he may be really coming to Christ, as under the influence of the Spirit, really acting as led by him, and yet not have a distinct consciousness and perception that such is the case. There are operations of the Spirit in our hearts which we ourselves cannot understand and rightly interpret. Thus he maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Thus the hearts of the disciples burned within them as Jesus spoke; but they knew not the source of that divine ardour. Thus the godly may often fear they are destitute of the Spirit when they are really being led by him. Thus a Heman may cry out that he is abandoned by God, and free amongst the dead. And thus it is that ignorance and notions of divine things combined may do what they can to quench and hinder and impede the Holy Spirit's operations; may not enter the kingdom of God themselves, and those who are coming to Christ and seeking to enter in may sorely hinder.

May we, then, remember that, although we cannot possibly pray aright unless the Holy Spirit enables us, we may pray aright and yet not be able to see clearly and say positively that he does so enable; and this may encourage us to seek and pray on in uncertainties. So it is with other actings of the renewed soul under the influence and operations of the Holy Spirit. We cannot possibly act aright, or so much as think a good thought, unless the Holy Spirit gives us the ability. Of every godly motion in the soul, of every godly speech or action in the life, he is the ultimate Author; but it by no means follows that we shall always be conscious of this Authorship. No! as Hart says, we must often "War in weakness; dare in doubt."

Under the divine leading of the Holy Spirit, we shall take many a step aright, and yet not clearly see it to be so; come to Christ, and yet question whether we are properly coming; walk by faith, and yet question whether we have any; and, as halting Jacobs, carry off the prize, when those who run in unbroken natural strength, without a feeling of their need of the Spirit, and those who, Quakerlike, "stand still, and never move," until they are quite certain that they are moved by the Spirit, and have from him some very powerful sensible communications, will find themselves sadly mistaken and woefully wanting.

A FEW PARTICULARS OF THE LAST DAYS OF MR. F. COVELL.

KINDLY FURNISHED BY HIS SON, MR. WILLIAM COVELL.

FOR some time past Mr. Covell appeared to be in failing health. He complained of pains in the stomach, and of being very tired and languid after his usual morning walk. When preaching at Brighton anniversary in September, the friends then noticed a great change in his appearance. On Wednesday evening, Nov. 19th, he read in his chapel the 5th chap. of 2nd Corinthians, and preached a remarkable sermon from 5th verse of Psalm cxx.: "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech," &c.; none of his hearers imagining that it would be the last time they would ever hear his voice or see his face in the pulpit, and that he would so soon cease to be a "dweller in Mesech." He appeared, however, tolerably well until the morning of the 21st, when, after getting up, and coming downstairs, he felt symptoms of an intestinal displacement, attended with shivering and violent retching. His usual medical attendant and much-attached friend, Mr. Evans, was immediately sent for, who recommended him to return to bed, from whence he never arose again. In the evening, the doctor, feeling alarmed at the symptoms which had developed themselves, called in another medical gentleman (Dr. Lanchester); and, after consultation, they decided that an operation must be performed that night. They at once telegraphed to Guy's Hospital for the chief operating surgeon, requesting him to telegraph back whether he could come at once; but before he could reply the telegraph office was closed. He therefore came down immediately. In the meantime, not having heard from London, and the case being urgent, the operation was performed by Dr. L., assisted by Dr. D. and Mr. E., the sufferer being placed under chloroform.

Before undergoing the operation, Mr. C. spoke very affectionately to his children, and kissed them; and when the doctors came into the room, he put up a short prayer that the Lord would give the doctors skill and wisdom, and himself strength to undergo the operation, if it was his will; but that it might be according to his will in any case. Then he said, "Now, gentlemen, I am ready!" The operation was successful. The system recovered from the shock, and all the symptoms were favourable, but the pulse continued very feeble.

Mr. C. remained in a state of extreme prostration the whole of the 22nd and 23rd, and no one was allowed to see him excepting his senior deacon for a few moments on Sunday morning.

On Monday morning, for the satisfaction of Mr. C.'s friends, it was thought advisable to have further advice; and Dr. L. was again summoned, who, after seeing him, said to his family, that Mr. C. was evidently sinking, and all that could be done was to try to get more nourishment into the system, providing his

stomach could retain it. Food was then administered every ten minutes for about three hours, but the stomach could not perform its office. Mr. C. passed a very restless night, and was much distressed with retching.

About five o'clock on the morning of Tuesday, Mr. C. appeared to be sinking, and the doctor was sent for, who said when he came that his life was in the balance, and it was then even possible that he might rally.

It was then deemed advisable to let him see his family, two or three old friends, and the other deacon of his church. Although in too weak a state to say very much, Mr. C. spoke very affectionately and suitably to each individual case, but the exertion of talking produced great exhaustion and violent retching. During the day, Mr. C. gave instructions as to his private affairs and funeral, and said what he would like written on his tomb. Mr. C. after this prayed for his church and people, and exhorted those around him to tell them to be kind one to another, to bear with each other's infirmities, and not to look for perfection in the flesh; to "take care that they fell not out by the way;" but to be "kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake had forgive them." "Tell them," he said, "I have the comfort of it now. I never tattled from one to another." He also said, "If any one likes to say anything about me, they might speak from these words (if the Lord should lead them to do so; I have no wish to dictate to any one): 'Remember them which have the rule over you; who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.' I love a private religion more than making a show, but if it will encourage any, and honour God's dear Son, and his grace and truth, they might speak a little about me; and may some poor sinners be comforted by it."

A short time afterwards he said, "The Lord is so good. I am so blessed."

"'No horrors make me weep.'

"'There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign.'

"'Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's streams, nor death's cold flood,
Could fright us from the shore.'

"I had a sight of it a fortnight or three weeks ago in the chapel, and I thought my body would have dropped in the pulpit then, and my soul gone to heaven." Some time after, he said, "I am a poor sensible wretch, and have nothing to rest in but the finished work and obedience of the Christ of God; and I fall into his arms, who I believe is taking me to heaven to sing his praise."

During the day, he said, "How is it I have had so many see me to-day? Did they announce it last evening at chapel

He sent a message to his old friend Mr. Smart, of Cranbrook, by Mr. M., saying, "Give my love to Smart, and tell him I thought he would get to heaven before me; but I have got the start of him."

In the afternoon he was so weak and exhausted that the doctor, who had remained with him, said that no one else must see him; but so anxious were his friends to have his parting blessing, that many forced their way through to his bed-room; and when he saw them, he would speak to them; but said directly they were gone, "I am exhausted; I am exhausted; *do not let any more come in.*" One more friend called to take leave of him early in the evening, to whom he spoke very affectionately, inquiring after his wife and children, and sending a message to them; but after he was gone, Mr. C. said, "I seemed just going into heaven; but these people drag me back again to talk to them."

Some time after this he said, "Take me sweetly, lovingly; don't leave me now, Lord; the waters are ankle deep. It is hard work going up the hill.—Lord Jesus, pull me into heaven.—O that I were there to see Him as I have longed to see him, and serve and know him better.—Lord, perfect all that concerns me, and crown thy grace with eternal glory.—Don't leave me now, Lord, or I should sink; if thou shouldst withdraw a moment, what misery it would be!—I am a poor sinner, Lord; grace alone is of any use to me now. I have loved to speak of and exalt thy grace; and was never more happy than when encouraging sinners to trust in thee.—I have loved the place where thy honour dwelleth."

Several times during the day Mr. C. asked the time, and was very solicitous about those who were waiting on him. During the evening he asked if there was a fire in the room; and being told it was burning nicely, he said, "I lighted it when I came to bed on Friday, and it has been burning ever since." A friend asked him if he would like to see it, when he said, "I have had a sight of Jesus, and that has tarnished all earthly objects; I do not want to see any earthly object again." A short time afterwards he said, "All my faculties are failing. I cannot see nor speak so well as I did." Once he said to some of the friends that had been downstairs for meals, "You have been feasting, and I have had nothing to eat all day; but I have had the best of it," meaning he had the Lord's presence.

After a time he became very restless, and wished continually to be shifted in his position on the bed; and every time he was laid down, said, "That's beautiful;" or, "That's nice." He never once murmured or complained; but several times spoke of the goodness of the Lord in taking his afflicted son home before him.

Early on Wednesday morning, the 26th, he said, "What a long night it has seemed! I thought I should have gone before this." Mr. E. asked him if he felt any pain. He said, "No." Then he asked him if there was any conflict (as he was so very

restless and seemed troubled); but he answered, "No. I had a little in the night; but the Lord enabled me to stand my ground."

The last word he could articulate plainly was, "Hallelujah." The struggle between soul and body was painful to witness at last, although Mr. E. said he probably felt no pain whatever. About ten o'clock in the morning an evident change took place. In a short time his pulse ceased to beat; and although he kept on trying to speak, nothing could be understood; and at a quarter past eleven he drew his last breath, and his ransomed spirit left the body to be "for ever with the Lord."

In conclusion we give an extract from one of Mr. Covell's own sermons: "'Mark the perfect man.' Mark him in his going out with his face towards God, and his back to the world! What opposition he meets with! What trials he meets with! His friends oppose him; his relations are against him, he is likely to lose his business and be brought to beggary; and the devil is against him. Look at the opposition he meets with from all these; but God is his Friend. Mark him in his after day. Through much tribulation he enters the kingdom. Look at the trials that beset him, the things that oppress him, the doubts and fears that gather about him, that make it a thorny and trying path. 'Mark the perfect man.' Look at his *end*. The end of a thing is what we must look to. '*The end of that man is peace*,'—peace of conscience, and peace with God. So he dies in peace. Amen."

A pamphlet, containing jottings of other sayings, &c., by Mr. Covell, will be published in a few days by his friends at Croydon.

W. G. C.

THE FUNERAL OF MR. COVELL.

WE announced in our last issue the serious illness and departure out of this world of our dear friend and brother Covell. We now give an account of his funeral, which took place on Tuesday, the 2nd ult.; his decease having taken place on the previous Wednesday.

Our dear friend's mortal remains were interred in the churchyard at Addington, upwards of three miles from Croydon, Mr. Rolleston, of Scruptoft, assisted by the vicar, officiating on the occasion. The greatest respect was shown to the memory of our dear friend, about sixty carriages following the hearse from Croydon to Addington; the funeral procession extending for nearly one mile. At Addington, we may here say, is a family vault, in which have been placed the remains of our departed brother's wife and son, and his ancestors for above two hundred years. This will explain why our brother chose to be interred at Addington rather than in the Croydon Cemetery. We have no wish to express disapproval of our friend's choice under these circumstances, even if our own might have been somewhat different.

Previous to the body being conveyed to its final resting-place

upon earth in Addington church-yard, a service was held in the chapel where his own voice had so often been heard testifying of the goodness and love of God and the preciousness of the Lord Jesus. This, we think, was quite right; and it was a source of satisfaction to us that we were privileged, according to the wish of friends, to take a part in that service. We felt that our dear friend was one who loved to honour the Lord, and whom the Lord delighted to honour. This made it a true gratification to see and join in the manifestation of affectionate respect paid to his memory. He now, as to his mortal remains, rests in the grave until the morning of his resurrection. Then that which was sown in weakness will be raised in power. The body which his attached friends and relatives followed mourning to the grave, no longer a natural but a spiritual body, will rejoin the already rejoicing soul in eternal glory, and for ever unite with the immortal spirit in singing the praises of the Lamb once slain;—the Lamb once served by body and soul together on earth, then praised by body and soul together in glory.

We proceed to give a very full account of the service held in the chapel, feeling sure our readers will be deeply interested in all that refers to one so well known and loved in the churches. Though the chapel was crowded, there was no disorder; but everything was carried on in a seemly and becoming manner.

After the body was brought into the chapel and placed in front of the pulpit, Mr. Hazlerigg, who opened, as was arranged, the service, commenced by saying:

Dear Friends,—We have met together on a very solemn occasion,—to place in the ground the mortal remains of one of whom I may say that by his death the entire church of God has suffered a great loss. He was a man who had a closet religion,—a secret religion between God and his own soul. He was a man whom I may justly characterize as one mighty with God in prayer. So thus it is not only the dear people who meet here in this place of worship who have sustained a loss; not only the members of his family; but, as I said before, the entire church of God. We are all here with one feeling in our hearts,—that we have each one, as well as the church generally, suffered a great loss. We desire to-day to pay every respect to his memory; but at the same time I may say our dear friend and brother in Christ would have wished us to look beyond him;—to that God who gave him all that grace which made him a bright and shining light in his day and generation.

May we resemble him, that so, when our change comes, we may have nothing to do but, like him, to die. May our hearts be, as his was, in heaven before our dying season. May our last end be like his,—perfect peace; and when we depart hence may we go to live with God in glory. Who can describe the unutterable joy our dear brother now partakes of? He had many sweet draughts of bliss upon earth; but now he drinks at the fountain-head in heaven. You his hearers, and we his friends generally,

must mourn our loss; but if he were here now, his language would, I think, resemble his Master's: "If you loved me, ye would rejoice." He, too, is gone to be with his Father up in heaven. O to be with God! Shut in eternally with God! His immortal spirit is now in bliss and blessedness; and no one can fully understand that blessedness but those who enjoy it.

But I will not detain you any longer with these prefatory remarks, but will read a portion of Scripture.

Mr. Hazlerigg then read 1 Cor. xv. 26-58, making a few brief comments. On verse 26 he said: It may be lawful to say that the wicked will have no last enemy. The believer has. He conquers this last enemy—death—as to its terrors in his conscience, before it comes. This he does through the divine application of the blood and righteousness of Christ. So it was with our dear departed friend and brother. He dies in faith. His body is sown in corruption; it waits a while in a grave; but at the resurrection it rises incorruptible; and then, as the apostle says, all death to the believer is swallowed up in the victorious life of our Lord Jesus Christ.

On verse 35: "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up?" He said that such questions proceed from man's ignorance of the Almighty power of God. He wills things into existence, turns them to destruction, and wills them back into re-existence again. He says, and it is done. He commands, and it stands fast.

On verse 51. He briefly remarked that all God's saints would not be laid, like our dear brother, in the grave, but all would be changed. An equivalent change must pass upon all; for flesh and blood and that which is merely natural cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

Mr. H. observed that he must not detain them longer by his remarks, and after finishing the chapter, said, Our dear friend Hull will now take a part in this service in prayer.

Mr. Hull then engaged in prayer as follows: Gracious and ever-merciful Lord God,—Thy people assemble together from time to time under a variety of circumstances. And thy saints who worship in this place have often gathered together here to the joy of their hearts, to the refreshing of their souls, to the strengthening of their faith, to the confirming of their hope, and to the brightening of their spiritual evidences, under the ministry of our dear friend whose lips are now silent in death. But never before have they gathered together under like circumstances to these. O Lord, thou seest the many sorrowing hearts in thy presence. Many hearts are deeply grieved because they feel they have lost a friend,—an earthly, but a spiritual, friend; and many here this morning sympathize with them. We hope a goodly number of those now before thee have felt to be one in heart with our departed friend who is now taken from us. And mourning for him as for a beloved brother, feeling we too have

lost a dear friend, we have come up on the present occasion feeling a deep sympathy with his bereaved people in their present affliction.

And now, Lord, our prayers and supplications we present at the throne of thy grace. We beg that thou wilt bless the souls of these thy people, and grant unto them the rich consolations and tokens of thy love. Give them to feel this morning that though they have lost their pastor, they have not lost their God; that though their late dear friend is numbered with the dead, yet their King liveth. O that the eye of their faith may look to thee; and may they be so filled with thy sweet consolation as to feel persuaded in their souls that thou art still their Friend. Thou rulest and reignest over all, and doest all thy pleasure. Thou performest all things after the counsel of thy will: and what thou doest is right. Give thy people to discern thy wisdom and love in this bereavement. We thank thee for the grace conferred upon our dear friend during his life. Thou didst so make it to abound in him that his life and conversation richly savoured of Christ, and by thy power thus made manifest in him, thou didst enable him to stand on the walls of Zion to faithfully proclaim the gospel of thy grace for many years. And his labours were not in vain; for thou didst seal his testimony in many hearts. And many here present can testify of the power of God as realized in their souls under the ministry of our dear friend. We bless thee for what thou didst do for him, in him, and by him, in his life; and now he is gone we thank thee for comforting him in his dying hours, that he felt thy kind embrace, that he enjoyed the light of thy countenance, and that he had a blessed experience of thy favour which is life, and thy lovingkindness which is better than life; and thus death to him was spoiled of its terrors. And now, though he has gone down to the grave, yet he lives, and lives to die no more. He has done with sin, has done with care, has done with woe, and is for ever at rest, for ever with the Lord.

Look, then, upon his sorrowing people, and remember his many heartfelt prayers for their welfare. Regard the deep anxiety he felt for their spiritual welfare continually. And, O Lord, we do earnestly beseech thee to preserve them in thy fear, and to grant unto them much of the spirit of grace and of supplication, and much of the spirit of Christ. Sanctify this bereavement to their good. And as thou hast taken their Elijah from them, manifest thyself as their living Head in all their assemblies. Bless them with the unction of thy Spirit, with love, with the meekness and gentleness of Christ, with humility of soul. Bless them with peace and unity as brethren; and may they dwell together in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. May no root of bitterness spring up amongst them. Save them from party strife and division, that the work of thy servant in connection with this cause may not become as water spilled upon the ground through the devices of the enemy. Bless them

with much of thy Spirit; and in all things be thou their good Guide and Saviour.

Bless the family. Thou hast taken a godly father from the children. O that they may know their father's God! May they have an interest in the grace he received, and in the Saviour he loved. Bless them with like precious faith, that they may know thee to be their Friend, and be favoured to abide under the shadow of thy wings. And do thou graciously perform all that concerneth them, in providence and in grace.

And now, Lord, bless Zion. Thou hast taken a faithful witness from off her walls; and something in our hearts says, Who will fill his place? Thou canst do all things, for there is nothing impossible with thee. O may this dispensation be a merciful one to Zion! May it lead us to deep searchings of heart; and may the blessing for which thy servant frequently prayed be bestowed upon us. And in answer to the earnest supplications of some of us now before thee, let there be an outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon thy people. O that this may be the time when the reviving of thy good work shall begin; and may we thus see thy hand mercifully manifest in this dispensation.

Be with thy servants in all their labours; grant them grace, and make them useful to thy flock; and do thou bless their word to the ingathering of thine elect. And as thou seest the lack of faithful under-shepherds in thy church, may many be raised up, qualified, and set upon Zion's walls, to fill the places of those whom thou art calling for from our midst. O Lord, we beseech thee, remember Zion for good.

Hear us in these things, accept us, pardon us, and be unto us all we need, for the Redeemer's sake. Amen.

Mr. Hatton then went up into the pulpit and delivered an address to those present as follows:

My dear Christian Friends,—We are now this morning gathered together as those who are sorrowful on account of their Lord's dispensation in removing from our midst a beloved friend and servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was said once that "Barnabas went down to Antioch, and saw the grace of God." Now, we have before us to-day the remains of a dearly-beloved servant of the Lord Jesus Christ; and I fearlessly say, that you might in him see the grace of God. But I am far from going to attempt to speak anything that would be offensive to his ear were he alive. Were I to say our friend Covell was a good man, and leave it there, he would say, "Hatton, don't say that a second time." What, then, would he say? "By the grace of God I am what I am. To grace be the honour, to grace be the glory." Our beloved friend before us without that would only have been a sinner estranged from God.

You may ask me, What is there so marvellous in true religion? What is there so marvellous in it? Our beloved friend is known to most of the townspeople here, and indeed to a very great many

friends far and near. What is the distinguishing feature of his life? The substance of the Bible, written and implanted in his heart. Here is our rule; here is our faith; here is where we profess to find the foundation of our sentiments. Godliness is the superstructure; and all must be crowned with "grace, grace unto it!"

What we want is this,—the word of God written upon a new heart in man and woman; and its powerful effects in the life and conversation.

But let me bring before you our friend as an example. What says the word of the Lord? "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." We have before us a living example of that in a man of whom, speaking within compass, I may say that he gave away a pound a day. But it was known only to the poor, and as it may have oozed out through the poor. He never proclaimed it himself; and why? Because the Word of the Lord said in his heart, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." You have heard him express himself to be a sinner, a worthless worm, an unworthy sinner deserving condemnation. You look at his actions; you might have supposed that they would have lifted him up. No; he felt what he expressed. His words about being an unworthy sinner were not hypocrisy. His words about being a loathsome sinner were not got-up words; they were the real sentiments of his heart. God had given him, God may have given you and me, grace to be liberal, grace to live to his honour and glory, grace to be honest and upright, grace to maintain his truth, grace to hold on our way; and a proud thought may rise in our minds. But grace will cause us, as it did our friend, to think, "Was it I that did that thing? Was it I that moved my own heart? Was it of myself that I have been enabled to live to God? No; then abhorred be the thought of pride in my heart. Abhorred be the very thought that would claim the least glory, claim the least honour, claim the least praise for any good I have done. 'Crown him, crown him Lord of all.'"

Now I may just correct perhaps the strange notions that people get, that when we speak of ourselves as being unworthy sinners, it is a mere pretence. I may tell you it is not so. God's people, indeed, are not base, vile, and polluted sinners, as to their actions, after being called by grace, before their fellow-creatures. They do not mean that; and you cannot prove it is so, taking them as a rule. It is for what they feel themselves to be in secret before God that they have such self-loathing and self-abhorrence. It would not be true if others said the same things of friend Covell as he said of himself as in the presence of God. Measuring himself by the Scriptures, measuring himself by the precepts of the gospel, measuring himself by that which he knew to be true, he felt his own failings and shortcomings. Thus he humbled himself before God, and said, "Behold, I am vile." Truthfully, really, and solemnly before God he said this.

As regards speaking in his praise, we say, Let his works follow

him; they speak more eloquently than I can speak. But you may say to me, What was there that made the people so attached to him? Surely it must have been a strange infatuation for people to feel so attached to Mr. Covell. What was he? Was he an eloquent man? No! It is not eloquence we seek. It is not the eloquence of words that makes a minister amongst us. It is not that. What is it? The grace of God in a man's heart, and the utterance from that heart of words of grace clothed with the power of God. There is a power that attends the preaching of the gospel that never attends mere human eloquence. There is a power with which the Holy Spirit carries his word unto the hearts of his people; as the apostle says: "I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power; for the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." If God himself sends forth a servant of his to preach his gospel, he has promised to attend it with power, lacking which, it only falls upon the ear of a man. It is the power of God that conveys it to the heart. It is the power of God that arrests the sinner. It is the power of God that brings repentance and compunction into the sinner's heart. It is the power of God that conveys the sense of pardon; even if this sense is conveyed by the ministry of the word. Those people who have felt their burden of conscience removed, felt their guilt of conscience taken away, felt their hearts encouraged in the rough and thorny road they travel, these cleave unto that ministry of the word which effects all this through the power of the Holy Ghost.

There are, I know, persons who say that Mr. Covell had such peculiar sentiments. He did not associate with other ministers. He associated with God's people, God's living people, those he believed to be such; and God's people associated with him. I must not here go into foreign matter; I must keep myself, as well as I can, to the religion that made the man what he was, as a husband, as a master, as a pastor. I must only speak about what he was as a Christian man. I will tell you, then, that as a Christian man, like many that are here, he has bowed his knees in secret, and prayed for his sovereign, prayed for his country, prayed for his fellow-men, with tears running down his face. They knew nothing about it; but God knew it. And why was not all this known to the public generally? Because it is said, Thou shalt not stand at the corners of the streets, and pray before men; but thou shalt pray in secret before thy Father which is in heaven; and he that "seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Persons charge God's people with many unbecoming charges that are untrue. We may not mix much with those about us, but we pray in secret. We bear our sovereign and our country on our hearts in secret; we plead before God for our country's welfare; and yet we labour under many charges that we take no interest in it. We do so before God; and our friend was a lively example of this. Our friend Covell had not an ostentatious, but a secret religion.

Now I will tell you a truth. All the religion that ever a man has that will take him to heaven, is that which he has between God and his own soul. All the rest will fly away from him when he comes to die. All real religion begins between God and the soul. There is where it begins. What, too, a man has between God and his own soul, if he is a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, he can declare. There is an authority about his words. He lives in what he speaks, and it lives in him. His religion lives in his heart. His religion lived in our departed friend's heart; it lived in him; that is why he lived in it. If it does not live in you and me, depend upon it we are not living in it. Let God write his law in our hearts, and we shall live it. There is no one hates and abhors sin more than a God-fearing person. That is why they abhor themselves,—because they are sinners.

I knew much of our departed friend's religion. I have talked with him, and wept with him many times when talking about the things of the Lord; so I know that he was a very great deal in secret with God. Oftentimes he has said to me, "O to be right! O to have a religion to die with! Some days my religion is not as I should like it to be. I should not like to die on any of those days." But sometimes, when we have been together, he has said, "O! my heart has been in heaven. How good God is to me! He has been a good God to me. I do love him, and I love his truth."

Now, I know that was true; he loved his God. If he had not loved his God, he would not have loved his fellow-men as he did. Let a man love God, and he will love his fellow-men. He did not love merely those of his own particular denomination, as it is called, so as to be kind only to them. O dear, no! He did not simply ask a person, Do you come to our chapel? before he relieved him. No! But he asked, Is this a poor creature? Is this a needy fellow-creature? What is it to me how he worships and where he worships? He is a suffering fellow-creature; and as far as it is in my power, disregarding any profession that he may make, I will relieve his suffering necessities. Those are our sentiments; and we have a shining example in him whose remains are before us. He did not ask, Do you come to my chapel? Grace does not teach us to do good merely to a few. We love our fellow-men; and we love them and pray for them. Prayers in secret go up to God for his blessing on our fellow-creatures, that God might convince them, and bring them from the error of their ways, that they might walk in the ways of truth and righteousness, and enter heaven at last through our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing delights us more than to hear of some poor sinner bowing his knee before God. Nothing becomes more glorious in our ears than to hear that the Lord is working by his Word, and that a rebel's heart is broken, that some poor sinner is raised from the dead. It is cheering; it is good news.

But we want a man's religion to be right. We want it to be real. Our friend would say, "But is thy religion *real*?" O! It

is important, my friends, most important that your religion should be real. It is important that God should begin a work of grace in you; because you must be born again. It is important that you should have something that will face death, for death will most certainly come.

I must now draw to a conclusion because of time.

You will perceive I have not lifted up our dear friend as an example simply as a man, but as a Christian man I do, and as an example of God's grace. I do not say, O! look at our friend Covell. Look at *him!* No; I say, Look at the grace of God in him! I would not offend his ear, were he present, by attributing to him that which grace made him. I am speaking of the grace of God; and we see the grace of God; we saw it in him. The Lord grant you and me more of that grace! That grace will make a good man; it will make a good woman, a good husband, a good wife, a good child, a good conscientious man.

As regards the church and congregation, they have suffered a loss. They know that they shall hear the tongue no more of him whose tongue was moved from a living warm heart. They know that they shall have his prayers no more. But they have got his God; and that God who warmed his heart and moved his tongue can also hear their prayers. May the Lord grant you his people a blessing in your sorrows. May the Lord help you in your prayers. May the Lord give you grace and patience, and everything else requisite under present existing circumstances, and sanctify the event unto us all. May the Lord come upon us with his spirit of prayer and supplication. Give us, Lord, more grace, more zeal, more prayer, more love, more fervency for thy truth and for thy gospel's sake.

Let me only add one remark. If any are present who, because of his works, speak in his praise, and yet despise his religion, let me tell them this:—it was that religion which made him do those works. Therefore to despise his religion is to despise the cause by which he was led to be good to others. It is to despise the source from which the man shone in the presence of God's people. That source was the influence of divine grace.

We shall now close this service by singing a hymn.

Mr. Hazlerigg then gave out the following hymn, saying, It is by particular request that this hymn is sung. It peculiarly embodies the feeling of our dear friend's heart upon his death-bed.

Tune—*Martyrdom.*

“ At length he bow'd his dying head,
And guardian angels come;
The spirit dropp'd its clay and fled,—
Fled off triumphant home!

“ An awful, yet a glorious sight,
To see believers die!
They smile and bid the world good night,
And take their flight on high.

“ No guilty pangs becloud the face,
 No horrors make them weep;
 Held up and cheer'd by Jesus' grace,
 They sweetly fall asleep!

“ On death they cast a wishful eye,
 When Jesus bids them sing,
 ‘ O grave, where is thy victory?
 O death, where is thy sting?’

“ Releas'd from sin and sorrow here,
 Their conflict now is o'er;
 And, feasted well with heav'nly cheer,
 They live to die no more!”

The above was a favourite hymn and tune of the late Mr. Covell's.

Mr. Hazlerigg pronounced the benediction.

“ THE LAW IS GOOD IF A MAN USE IT LAWFULLY.”

The law is holy, just, and good,
 A transcript of the will of God;
 But I am carnal, sold to sin;
 Yet still the law can't make me clean.

As masters whip their boys at school,
 So the law whips the legal soul;
 This pedagogue implacable
 Commands: “ Do this, or go to hell.”

But what the law could not attain,
 God sent his Son like sinful man;
 And he for sin condemn'd all sin,
 And perfect righteousness brought in.

The law, the devils, sin, and death
 Give way unto the law of faith;
 No other law do I now see
 Besides the law of liberty.

The law of works no more takes place,
 For I am in the law of grace;
 I joy in Christ; I stand by faith;
 And I will be thy death, O death.

With Jesus I am crucified;
 And in his death the law has died;
 From condemnation I am free;
 The law, the law is dead to me.

Since I am wash'd in Jesu's blood,
 I am not without law to God;
 I'm in a law to God's dear Son:
 Christ is my law, and Christ alone.

And peace shall be to every soul
 That walks according to this rule;
 Peace of the Israel of God,
 Who live by faith on Jesu's blood.

Obituary.

ANN BRABBINS.—On April 9th, 1878, aged 69, A. Brabbins, of Liverpool.

The following account of her call by grace and of a little of her subsequent path, I took down from our dear friend's lips at intervals during the painful and protracted illness which ended in her removal from this vale of tears.

"I was born February 13th, 1809. When very young I had a great fear of death, but did not know that I had an immortal soul. As I grew up the fear of death wore off; yet at times, in the midst of my greatest pleasure, which was dancing, the word 'Eternity' would rush into my mind so as to fill me with trembling, and prevent me enjoying my pleasure as I wished. But having a God-fearing father, I was kept from many outward evils.

"I married when very young, and soon removed from Birmingham to Manchester with my husband. We now could run on in folly just as we wished. Our Sabbaths were spent in pleasure; but there was a bitterness I could not get from.

"Thus time went on till the year 1837, when I went with a dear friend to hear Mr. Gadsby; but he was from home; and Mr. Philpot was supplying for him. Mr. P. spoke from Jer. xlvi. 11. I listened with pleasure, and admired him as a clever man, till he came to Moab's not being emptied from vessel to vessel, when I began to feel uneasy, and was glad when the service was over. Notwithstanding this feeling, I went with my friend to hear Mr. Philpot again on the following Tuesday evening. He spoke from Lev. xiii. 45, 46. At the commencement of his sermon, he remarked that he had intended to speak from the words on the previous Lord's day morning, but they were suddenly shut up to him. He then began to open his text, and had only been speaking a few minutes, when he said, 'Many boast of what religion they are, and all say they are right. One says, "I am a Calvinist;" but I say there are thousands of Calvinists in hell, and thousands more will go.' O, the terror that fell upon me, for I had boasted and said the very words: 'I am a Calvinist.' At once all my vain hopes fled, and I feared I should go down to perdition before I could leave the chapel. I would have left at once, but fear seemed to fix me to my seat. So there I sat, expecting to hear my doom. Mr. Philpot went on to describe the leper. Then he spoke of the cleansing. I found I knew nothing about it; and when he said, 'You must be made clean by the blood of sprinkling,' how I wished I had never entered the chapel, then I should not have heard his voice. On the next Lord's day I went to hear Mr. Gadsby, whose text was Rom. viii. 30. When he described justification, I was so cut off, and became so angry that I vowed I would never hear that man preach again while God gave me common sense.

"The Lord permitted me to keep that vow for three years. I soon got amongst the Independents, and the minister wished me to join them; but as my father was a Baptist, I must first be sprinkled. My mind was full of confusion, and I worked hard for life. Thus 18 months passed. Then I became so wretched I knew not what to do. I felt I wanted something I had not, but which I must have, or be lost. In this distress I one day opened my Bible at Gal. vi., and my eyes fell on the 7th and 8th verses, and in a moment I saw I was a mocker of God, and that all my good works were of the flesh, and that I should of the flesh reap corruption. I fell on my knees, and cried, 'O thou Saviour of sinners, have mercy on me!' How long I remained begging for mercy I know not; but no help came. Then I went up stairs, and

again begged for mercy; then I walked across my room and thought I would ask no more, as it would only sink me lower in hell. I stood a moment, and said, 'Yes; I will ask once more.' I kneeled down by the bedside, and covered my head with the bedclothes. Then in a few moments I felt a softness coming over me, and promises came to me, which I pleaded before the Lord; and suddenly I had such a glorious manifestation of the Lord Jesus Christ as I cannot describe. I threw away the bedclothes, believing he was there; but he was not. But all my sin was gone: I had no guilt, no sorrow; all was gone. I said aloud, 'Is this real? What if I should die now? How would it be with me?' I answered, 'Die now, or when I may, where Christ is there shall I be.' But this happiness did not last long, for suddenly the thought came into my mind: 'Why, no scripture came to assure me it was of God. I answered the question myself!' I felt my happiness grow less. I tried to say it was of God, but could not. Then the temptation came: It was only excitement, and I had tried to take refuge in blood that was not shed for me. O the terror that came upon me! I shall never forget it.

"However, I felt I must leave the church of which I was a member; so I put my Bible, collecting book, visiting book, and other papers, together with the money, into my collecting bag, wrote a hasty note to the minister, and sent all by my little boy to Mr. G., feeling I would not sink my soul lower by such deeds. What an outset I felt myself to be! Yet at times a feeling of hope would come upon me; but I put it away. Very soon the Independent minister was at my house. He saw how sad I was, and said, 'This comes of your reading that bad man's (Huntington's) works.' I said I only wished to be like that man, then I should be happy. He said he should expect me to continue my duties; but death was stamped upon them all in my soul, and I renounced them. Now self-pity came upon me, and I gave way to my lost feelings, believing none could be so wretched. Sometimes I thought I would go to George's Road, but I dared not, because of my vow.

"Thus time went on till March, 1840, when a friend asked me to go to hear Mr. Nunn's funeral sermon. I went; but when in the crowded church I felt unable to remain; so with much difficulty I got out, and strayed I knew not where till I stopped before a chapel. It was Mr. Gadsby's. I went in almost mechanically, and found a stranger, a young man, preaching there. After the service I said, 'Why, my reason is not taken away;' and I inquired when Mr. Gadsby would be at home. Then the thought came, 'Ah! it was not Mr. Gadsby who preached. You will lose your reason if you go when he preaches.' However, I ventured. As the chapel keeper was placing a book before me, I said, 'Can I see Mr. Gadsby after the service?' He said, 'Yes; but you had better see him now, he is alone.' I was shown into the vestry, where sat the dear old servant of the Lord with his Bible before him. He kindly held out his hand, and said, 'Sit down;' and looking in my face, said, 'What ails thee?' Then I told him my tale of sorrow; only I kept from him my vow, and also that I had once believed my sins were forgiven. Mr. G. spoke very kindly to me for a time, and wished me to see him again on the following Tuesday evening. I went accordingly, but Mr. G. was prevented coming before the service. His text that evening was: 'He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.' This was a time never to be forgotten by me; for though I had not the experience of the text, a sweet feeling of hope was be-gotten in my soul that the Lord would bring me to his banqueting house, and spread over me his banner of love. And this hope the Lord has not put to shame.

“Another sermon which Mr. G. preached soon after the above was made a great blessing to me; the text was Deut. xxxiii. 6.

“After that, I was obliged to seek union with the church. Visitors were appointed to see me. On the 23rd of April, 1840, I went before the church; and on the 25th of the same month, was baptized, with four others, by Mr. Gadsby. In the following June, Mr. G. took for his text, one Tuesday evening, the words: ‘Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength.’ (Isa. xlv. 24.) Under this sermon, all that I had received two years ago was powerfully brought back to me and confirmed, and I now felt sure it was a reality.

“About this time I came into a temptation that much distressed me. It was this: As soon as I kneeled down for prayer, such dreadful thoughts came into my mind that I feared I should curse God in his Trinity of Persons; and I have sprung from my knees fearing I should become an infidel and die mad. For three weeks I did not touch my Bible for fear that I should burn it. Just then Mr. Tiptaft came to supply, and under his ministry my soul was delivered; for he told us that he had suffered from the temptation that when he went on his knees for prayer he should curse God and go mad.

“About this time also the pre-existerian heresy was much talked of. Now I was driven to my Bible. Many times has day broken upon me before I have gone to rest. O what bitter tears have I shed before the Lord for light upon these things! And I believe my prayer was heard, and my feet set fast in the truth. This question was hardly settled when the controversy about the eternal Sonship of Christ began. Was I not again driven to my wit’s end! I had but one refuge; that was my Bible; and the Lord did not forsake me.

“During all this time my husband was a bitter persecutor. He told me that if I did not give up chapel, I should drive him to destruction. How I begged of the Lord to open a way for me, that I might not give up chapel. But all was dark. Then my husband’s language became so bad, he seldom spoke without an oath. At last I determined to leave him. I prepared a small parcel, and turned to leave the room, when the following word was spoken so loudly: ‘But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart.’ I stood fixed to the spot, when the voice said again: ‘For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband?’ I burst into tears, threw my parcel from me, and begged of the Lord to be with me.

“Now I began to think my captivity was about to be turned. But no; it was not yet. One Lord’s day evening, my husband went out to get intoxicated, and then come and abuse me as I left chapel. But though he tried, as he afterwards told me, to get drunk by drinking a great quantity of spirits, he could not, for it was no more to him than water. He met me at the chapel, and was pleasanter than usual. Thus God brought his evil device to nothing. Soon after this, he went to work at a very dangerous place, where a tunnel was being made; he saw several of his fellow-workmen killed, yet he was preserved. None knew the anguish and travail of soul I experienced on his behalf at this time. At last he came home. I was struck with his care-worn countenance, and he was kinder to me. Little did I think that ‘judgment was laid to the line, and righteousness to the plummet.’ The next day, being Lord’s day, I was up early in the morning, as I had some distance to walk to chapel; and I was much surprised to see my husband down for breakfast. Thinking he was not well, I wished him to lie down after breakfast, but he said, ‘No; I intend to walk to chapel with you this morning.’ He went with me, and sat with his head down during the service; and from that time he never forsook the truth. I have not said

this to show what a sinner my husband was, but to magnify the grace of God in saving him with an everlasting salvation."

Here our friend's account rather abruptly ends. Increasing weakness and great suffering prevented her saying more in a consecutive manner. With regard to her husband, he walked in bondage for a long time; but before his end he was favoured with a clear deliverance.

After giving the above account, Mrs. Brabbins did not continue long in the flesh. But, before her departure, she had one more fiery dart to receive in her soul—a dart more fiery and dreadful than any she had received before. One day, as she was thinking of Christ, Satan suddenly and powerfully injected the thought and the words: "Say you don't want him; let him go." And though, as she told me, she put her hand to her mouth and prevented the utterance of the words, yet both the thought and the words were distinctly perceived and felt within, and got a strong hold; then the adversary turned accuser with such fury, that she was plunged into the most dreadful state of grief and dismay. "Ah!" said the accuser, "you are an unbeliever, an apostate; over you the second death will have power."

The same day I went to see Mrs. B., and never shall I forget the expression of grief and anguish that was settled on her poor wan face, nor the cry with which she met me as I entered her room: "O! I did not say it! I did not say it!" Her grief was such that I felt it was kinder to leave her, and go and try to pray for her; and the Lord was pleased to grant a spirit of prayer for a tempted suffering saint. The evening of that day being the evening for our prayer-meeting, I felt constrained and encouraged by Matt. xviii. 19, 20, and particularly by Acts xii. 5, 17, to mention our sister's case, and ask the friends to pray for her. During the whole of that night, until three o'clock in the morning, I was unable to sleep, and could do nothing but lay the poor tempted one's trouble before the Lord. As early as was prudent the next day I went to the sick chamber; but what a change! It was no longer a "house of mourning," for Jesus had come, the "accuser of our brethren" was cast down, and the dear saint was once more as a "hind let loose." Mrs. B.'s account of her deliverance was, in substance, as follows:—"About three o'clock this morning the Lord's words to Martha (Jno. xi. 25, 26) came to me, and to the question: 'Believest thou this?' I felt enabled to reply, 'Yea, Lord; I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.' Then light began to break in upon me, and I pleaded with the Lord. I told him that I *did want him*; that I believed in him and loved him. Then I felt the power of God increasing in me, and the temptation break; and the Lord sent that word—"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power." O what glory I saw in Christ! He is the Son of God. I do believe in him. I shall be with him. But O! that dreadful thought! I can never forget it." Truly the Lord had made the storm a calm, so that the waves, which had lifted themselves up, were still. After this, the Lord preserved our dear friend in a good measure of quietness and peace to the end. She would often refer to the temptation, and the breaking of its power by Christ. "O," she would say, "what I saw in the Son of God I can never describe." Down to the last the dear saint suffered much pain. She would exclaim, "O for patience to bear this pain, and wait the Lord's time!"

At length the summons came; and after a long and chequered pilgrimage, our sister fell asleep in Jesus, and went beyond the cruel archer's reach, and left for ever the sad, grievous, and grieving companionship of a body of sin and death.—"The memory of the just is blessed."

J. K. POPHAM,

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

FEBRUARY, 1880.

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

SERVING JESUS.

NOTES OF A SERMON PREACHED BY MR. COVELL, AT CROYDON, ON SUNDAY EVENING, OCT. 1ST, 1865.*

“If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be. If any man serve me, him will my Father honour.”—
JNO. XII. 26.

IN the morning we took a little notice of this blessed Lord Jesus that his poor people are brought to serve. We just hinted at what a compassionate, loving, gracious, and glorious Lord Jesus poor sinners are brought to serve in him. We noticed that those who have been brought to serve him were formerly servants to sin and Satan, but by the power of his grace they have been brought to bow to his sceptre, and in heart and affection have been won over to him. We noticed that they served him so willingly that they did not, however the flesh might rebel, in the spirit desire to recant or turn back. Then we took a little notice of the way in which they serve him. We noticed that they serve in humility, in sincerity, and in faith. We noticed also that they serve him in fear, filial fear; and he has told them, and they find it true, that “though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely it shall be well with them that fear God, that fear before him.”

“If any man serve me.” They serve him in love; that is the spring. We noticed in the morning it was from an inward principle they serve him. Unless this is the bottom, unless obedience takes its rise from this root, all your serving is worth nothing.

“’Tis love that makes the cheerful feet

In swift obedience move;

Devils believe and tremble too,

But Satan cannot love.”

What faith they have in God’s justice, love, and power! Here the child of God outsteps the devil and all his servants, whether

* Our readers will remember that the morning sermon from this text was inserted in the number for last August. Our friend no doubt is now fully realizing the fulfilment of the words of his text. A servant and follower of Christ upon earth, doubtless he is with him in the eternal glory. “There shall also my servant be.”

Pharisees, scribes, or calling themselves of the seed of Abraham. When Jacob went down to Laban, and had been with him a month, Laban said to him, "Appoint me thy wages, for though you are of kin it is no reason you should serve me for nought." "Well," says Jacob, "I will serve thee seven years for Rachel." And it seemed but a few days for the love he had to her. I remember reading of the dear martyr, Bradford, that when sitting at dinner on one occasion his friends saw tears falling on his trencher, and they said, "Master Bradford, what is the matter?" He said, "O! I love Jesus so little." If your love and mine does not rise very high, what a mercy if we know something of that feeling, if there is a grain, atom, or drop in our hearts. When you talk of serving him in love, say you, My religion will all fly away, it will not stand. I verily believe it will. If I come into the company of those that love or hate Jesus Christ, I cannot speak as I would, say you. I have enough, too, to do to keep the wolf from the door, so I have got nothing to give to his people or cause, so how do I serve the Lord? We shall find by the Scriptures that your heart is right, and that you serve him in love; although you are not able to speak for him as you would, and give to his people and cause as you would like.

We will see what real love is like, and see if your heart does not echo to it. What a mercy I often feel it is, when reading or hearing God's word, that there is an echo in my heart; and I say, "I know that. I have felt that; and have been in those places." What a mercy to feel an echo in the heart, and for the soul to say, That is me. Poor, anxious soul, that art fearing whether you have got any love, and questioning the truth of your religion, hearken to this. When David had to fly from Absalom, you read that Ziba, Mephibosheth's servant, and many others, followed after him. David said to Ziba, "Where is thy master?" And he said, "Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem, for he said, To-day shall the kingdom be restored to me." David said, "If that is his love, I give thee all the land." By and bye, David came back to Jerusalem, and Mephibosheth came before him. And David said, "How was it thou wentest not with me?" "Thou knowest that thy servant is lame," he replied, "so I said to my servant, Saddle me the ass, that I may go to the king; but he deceived me, and he hath slandered thy servant to my lord the king. For all my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king; yet thou didst set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table." Now you will see his love. It is said that he neither trimmed his beard, washed his clothes, nor dressed his feet, from the time the king went till he came back again. See his inward affection; he could not go to him; but O his grief and sorrow, to think that his lord and master was driven out, and that he could not go with him! The king said to him, "I have said, Thou and Ziba divide the land." "Yea, let him take all," says he, "now that my lord the king has come again in peace."

Now see whether you have not got some of this love. You are lame; you cannot go so fast as you would. Your soul longs to speak of Jesus, and do something for him, but you are ready to halt. How many times have you gone to his house to catch a glimpse of him? And because you cannot love him as you desire, and you feel a dead, barren, or worldly heart, how it makes you grieve! You can take no satisfaction in other mercies God has blessed you with; you have no quiet, because you cannot realize and feel what you want. Is not this love to be found in your heart, so that you can say at times when you see him scattering temporal mercies hither and thither, "Give me Christ. Let them have all, so I can have his loving-kindness?" If you know what this is, you serve him in love; see how it goes forth and moves your affections. "O if he would but put the great question out of question," say you, "that would be more to me than all the world calls good or great." Then you have got the spring of it in your heart. That love will never fail. It may come down very low, but it will never be quenched. It will go with thee to prison or to death, bear thee up in afflictions and trials, and carry thee through Jordan to the bosom of that Love from whence it issued.

Here, again, are some who serve him in love. When you come into the company of professors or deceived souls, you will try to speak of what he has done, you will try to undeceive the deceived. How you will speak a word in love to their souls, and in love to the truth, that Christ may be glorified! What is it that moves you to speak? "O," say you, "I do wish there were more would fall in love with Jesus Christ, if I could but bring people to see his beauty." Let a sinner but know Christ, he must love him; you cannot love him unless you know him; and you cannot know him without loving him. The children of God will often get a hard word or contemptuous saying from mere professors or worldly people, for trying to pull their religion to pieces. This love to the Lord Jesus has got hold of their hearts, so they want to speak well for him.

Again. How pleased they are when they speak to those that fear God, and they talk of his goodness, beauty, and condescension, what righteousness he has got for sinners, and blood to cleanse them, and how he has helped them and borne with them! They speak of him in this way.

There are others, too, that serve him in love. They not only can just drop a word now and then, but they will serve him in love, to speak plainly, by taking a little wine or giving a little pudding to a sick man, by giving him a trifle in money, or speaking on his behalf to a friend. "O," says the Son of God, "because ye did it to the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." They thought nobody knew about it. What they did in secret he will have proclaimed on the housetop,—that this man gave something to one of his children. O my friends, when there is love in the heart, it will work out.

“When on the boughs rich fruits we see,
'Tis then we say, A goodly tree.”

Now, it is not enough for the tree to bear blossoms; the husbandman will cut it down with all its branches and root if it does not bear fruit. You hear the great apostle say, “The love of Christ constraineth us.” This love is better than life; the soul will care more for that than life itself. When this love of the Spirit moves in his soul, he will not think his life dear; as you read, “They loved not their lives unto the death.” You will see what this love will do. When the proud Babylonish king commanded Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to worship his image, up rose their love: “We will not bow down and worship thine image.” “Well; there is but one decree for you; you shall be cast into the fiery furnace.” “Our God,” say they, “whom we serve, is able to deliver us; and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king; if not, we can die for his blessed Name.” As I just said, this love

“Makes the cheerful feet
In swift obedience move.”

It was a little thing done in love, when the poor woman dropped two mites into the treasury, that so gained the heart of the Son of God. So the other poor woman that broke the box of ointment (the most precious thing she had got) on his head. Though the others murmured and grumbled about it, it was no waste; he had saved her soul, and she could not do too much for him. Therefore he says, “They shall seek me, and find me, when they seek for me with all their heart.” He tells us this is what he looks at. “I the Lord search the hearts, and try the reins of the children of men. All the churches shall know that I do it.” What a mercy to be able to say,

“Here’s my heart, Lord, take and seal it,
Seal it from thy courts above;”

and to feel, at times, “Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.” It is that love that has brought you out of the world, and constrains you to every good word and work. That is a true worshipper, and that is the man that serves God in spirit and in truth. If you know these things, as sure as God’s Word is true, you will be found at his right hand above; you will find this love will bear all things, endure all things, carry thee through all, and bring thee, indeed, to sing,

“Oh, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I’m constrain’d to be!
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter
Bind my wandering heart to thee.”

“If any serve me, let him follow me.” Now what a long way men will go in profession; yet when the Son of God comes, and puts something to try their love, what a baulk there is! There came one to the Son of God, and said to him, “Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.” Now the Son of God said to him, “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have

nesses, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." We never hear any more about him; his love went spark out. Some here present may say, We will follow him. Has your love been tried? When there is true love, it will follow him; it will make a man leap over father and mother to go after Jesus Christ. Therefore says the Son of God, "If any man forsake not his father and mother, he cannot be my disciple." But cannot we charitably believe that though he followed at a distance, he was a disciple, and hope he has gone to heaven, and send him there, and preach a nice funeral sermon? Christ replies, "*He cannot be my disciple.*"

The Son of God went on the lake of Gennesaret, and said to the disciples, who were fishing, "Let down your nets for a draught;" and they could not bring it to the land for the multitude of fishes, so they beckoned to their partners to help them. But as soon as they got their fishes to land they left them, and nets and all, and followed Jesus Christ.

Now, when the blessed Son of God leads the man, he will lead him sometimes into the garden of Gethsemane. As he follows him there, what weeping, what sorrow, what contrition flows from his eyes and heart! Now you will see what real sorrow will flow, as the Son of God leads him into the garden. What filth and guilt the man sees in sin, as he sees the bloody sweat fall from the face and body of the Son of God! What a wretch, what a vile creature he feels he is!

"O thou hideous monster sin,
What a curse hast thou brought in!"

He hears the Son of God crying out, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." As he follows the Son of God into the garden, what love and grief compound the unction! I shall never forget, when he led me there, how I sorrowed over him, how I loved and grieved. O the hatred of sin that rose up in my heart, and the filth which I saw in it! And I felt, "Never let me sin against thee, Lord." Now, it is said, "They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him, and be in bitterness, as one that mourneth for his first-born." There you will find the true affection, cleanness of heart and motive. It is not said, They shall look on him, and mourn as a son for a father; for there may be somewhat of self in that. When it is said, "mourning for his first-born," there is no self-interest or motive. So it is here; "let him follow me." His bowels run and melt for the Lord Jesus; he grieves for grieving him.

Not only does he lead him to the garden of Gethsemane, but he leads him to the cross. The soul sees him putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself, he sees him dying for his sins, and rising again for his justification, and he feels,

"Here he'd sit for ever viewing,
Mercy's streams in streams of blood;
Precious drops his soul bedewing,
Plead and claim his peace with God."

O my friends, here he follows the Son of God, and feels, It is finished! God has made an end of sin. Now he serves the Lord in newness of life. God has called him and justified him; and as he has justified him, so he will also glorify him. Therefore, "Who shall separate him from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?" O what blessed following this is, while Christ says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." O the joy, the comfort, the delight, that flows into the soul as Christ leads the man into these blessed things! How he feels that

"True religion's more than notion!"

What beauties the soul sees in Christ!

"He no more at Mary wonders."

"If any man serve me, let him follow me." It is not following him in doctrine; it is following him in truth and feeling. So also, my friends, the Son of God will lead the soul into truth. He will follow him into the glorious truths of the gospel, and feel, "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul." He will lead him on the high mountains, and beside the rivers of water in his truth; and the soul will feel "O how love I thy law!"

Have you been able to follow the Son of God in any of these things? What a mercy if you have! I will tell you one thing; if you have, you will never forget it. It will leave such an impression on your soul, such feelings were wrought in your heart, that if you were to live for a hundred years you would remember it. Your soul would run back to it again and again. O that blessed night! O that solemn time! when I saw the Lord Jesus putting away my sins by the sacrifice of himself. I remember when reading that chapter, that psalm, or that gospel, the blessedness that dawned in my heart as he opened mine eyes and let me into these things. The man never forgets it. So you see there is something in religion. My desire to God, and prayer too, is that you, my hearers, may know it and realize it; that you may not merely come and hear it, but that you may say, He hath led me (poor, simple, ignorant me) into such things that I can see the emptiness of all religion short of the power of things.

The Son of God will not only lead in these things, but he will lead in the way of temptations and trials. Some find the way more crooked than others; but all walk in that way. It matters not how easy a chair they may have at home, or what downy bed they may lay their head on, if they are going to heaven. I believe many that are going to heaven have got these things. Let them have these things, yet they will find it is a wilderness the Son of God will lead them through. Neither poverty nor riches are any insuperable bar to going to heaven. Paul had been into heaven, and had seen things so great and glorious, but there was the thorn in the flesh. Abraham was exceedingly rich in gold and cattle, but there was an Ishmael. David was wonderfully

blessed by the Almighty, but there was an Absalom. "O Absalom, my son, my son! would God I had died for thee."

"Let him follow me." Now the baulk comes here. "Let him deny himself, take up the cross, and follow me." This will stumble mere professors at the very outset; they all look back, like Lot's wife, and they become monuments of the righteous judgments of God. What self is to be denied? There is *sinful* self. There is *civil* self, too, to let go; the good name and what people may think of us. Then there is *righteous* self; all the man's own righteousness must go to the moles and to the bats. In following the Son of God you will have the contempt of fools; that is not very pleasant; we are flesh and blood, and we feel it. What! go to that chapel, hear that man, be mixed up with that people? They are only poor sort of folks; and the man knows nothing of grammar; he does not know Greek; surely you must be bereft of your senses. "Take up the cross and follow me." The man has to let go his reputation, and go to that chapel, the worst for his reputation, perhaps, he could possibly go to, where the people say such shocking things, according to the ideas of some. Now that will try the man. As sure as God liveth, he will kiss the cheek like Orpah, and say, I wish you well; but will go back unless he has got God's religion in his heart. If you can truly say in your heart, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his. Lord, if I am to have the scorn of the foolish, I will bear it all;" what love you have got in your hearts towards him and towards the truth you hear! Do not flatter yourselves that you are going to heaven with your light under a bushel; it is to be put on a candlestick, that others may see the light. If you turn back here, God will say to you at last, "Depart, ye cursed; I never knew you," with all your talk. What I say is true. I am in earnest, my hearers. I want you to get to heaven, and to be saved. The devil will try to deceive you, but see, my friends, what the Scripture saith of Caleb: "Because he had another spirit (that is, the right sort of spirit; he had got this feeling,—I will venture), he followed me fully." Says God, "Him will I bring into the land, and he shall inherit it." The people talked of stoning him, but he stood fast to God and the truth; he followed the Lord fully. What became of the others? Their carcasses fell in the wilderness, and were as dung on the face of the earth.

The Son of God says, "Let him follow me." He will lead the man through trials; he will lead him through things that will make him feel—

"O what a narrow, narrow path,
Is that which leads to life!"

God grant that you may be found true followers of his Son. The man that thus follows does so even amidst all discouragement, and without at times any seeming encouragement. No man follows the blessed Lord Jesus for nought. How it will bring us to say, What, all this? Have you not wondered at

times that men and women can be so besotted as to follow other things, when the Lord Jesus has so much to bestow? Just in the same way as Ruth followed, Naomi put every difficulty in the way. "The hand of the Lord is gone out against me. Go back to thy people and thy gods; and the Lord deal kindly and truly with thee, as thou hast dealt with the dead and with me. I have no encouragement to offer you to follow, and no prospect of anything I can do for thee." "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following thee. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; let nought but death part thee and me. I will take thee; I will follow thee through affliction, contempt, and scorn, and we will live, die, and be buried together." In the substance of it, that is just what the soul means that follows God; and he says what he means. If this is the feeling of thy heart, Christ says to thee, "There is no man that has followed me but shall receive manifold more at this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting."

"If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am"—Where is he? Crowned with glory, in the eternal love of the Father, at the Father's right hand, hell trembling before him, while saints are basking in his smiles, and rejoicing in his presence—"Where I am, there shall also my servant be." Is not this enough to whet thy soul, and make thee cry out, "Lord, give me grace to follow thee, that I may die to be with thee, and sing of that grace that has brought me through?"

"If any man serve me." If he serves me in love, my Father is so pleased with it, "him will my Father honour." "With long life," says God, "will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation."

THE WISE AND FOOLISH BUILDERS.

"Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built a house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it; for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built a house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great."—LU. VI. 47-49.

THE Lord Jesus in these words compares spiritual things with natural. He supposes two men about to build each one his house. Now, the first thing in building of course is to have a good foundation; one sufficient to bear the weight of the building, and also one which will remain a good foundation in spite of those trials which it may be put to.

One of the supposed builders proves his wisdom and foresight by building his house upon a rock, digging deep in order to obtain a solid basis for his house. The other proves his folly and want of foresight by raising up his habitation on the sand. Consequently, when the rain descended, the floods came, and

the winds blew, as might have been surely expected, the wise man's house stood, and out-stood the trial; but the foolish man's fell, and great indeed was the fall of it.

In this ruined house we see before us the failing falling hopes of all false and foolish professors, for the Lord Jesus compares to one or other of these men the world of those who are exercised about making some provision for their souls. To the wise builder he compares those who are wise in this most momentous business; and to the foolish builder those who are false-hearted and foolish.

In considering these two sorts of persons, according to the comparison of our text, we must a little further enlarge upon their employment, and what is meant by building their houses. There are numbers of men and women who entirely and obviously neglect making any provision for their souls in respect to spiritual and eternal things. They spend their days in sin, God-forgetfulness, and pleasure, and maybe in a moment go down to the grave. Even though, in words, they may allow the importance of the matter, their actions are entirely inconsistent with their words; and instead of proving that they think one thing to be supremely needful, clearly signify that that one thing is last instead of first in their minds. These persons, then, are evidently building on the earth and for the earth, and are not those intended in the words of our text.

But there are others who do really feel the importance of eternal things, and who are practically affected with the thoughts of God, the soul, and eternity, and they do begin to seek to have some provision against the wrath of God. But of these, part are only temporarily and superficially affected with divine things. There is a degree of influence produced upon their minds by the powers of the world to come (Heb. vi.), but not a deep, thorough, abiding influence, such as is alone produced by the regenerating work of the Spirit in the child of God. Hence they never make thorough work of anything; but build on the sand, and rest in the flesh, and never come up to the mark of a real work of conversion. These are the foolish builders of our text.

The wise, on the other hand, having the Spirit of God in them as a principle of new and divine life, and heavenly wisdom, cannot rest short of that which will prove a solid and sufficient basis for their souls' hopes. Hence, while the former build upon the sand, the latter dig deep, and build upon the Rock.

Here, then, we have two sets and sorts of builders. Now, a man in natural things builds a house for himself that it may be his home, that he may rest himself there, and find a shelter in cold, and heat, and storm; and so it is in spiritual things. A man who is somewhat practically affected with eternal things seeks to make some provision for his soul. He wants a place of soul-rest, a spot for soul-comfort and satisfaction, and a shelter in cold, and heat, and storms of a spiritual nature. This seeking to obtain such a spiritual soul-provision is a man's building his

house; and what a man trusts to and hopes in, as it respects his soul, is his house, his habitation. It is the house of his faith and hopes; for this he trusts to and hopes in that it will prove his rest and refuge in time and eternity. It is the house of his affections, for here he expects his soul will be eternally happy.

But now, how solemnly important it is that this house should have a good foundation! one able to bear so great a weight as the man is resting upon it; one, too, not only able to bear the weight of the present moment, but which will still prove sufficient when there are rains, and floods, and storms! Hence Wisdom, in this business, makes her children wise; and they imitate the Lord Jesus,—the truly wise Man, the Head of the Church, and First-born among these many brethren; of whom it is written: "His foundation is in the holy mountains;" or, "the mountains of his Holy One." (Ps. lxxxvii. 1.) But folly leaves her children to their foolishness; and so they take no sufficient heed in this business, but build foolishly and improvidently upon the sand, which, even if able to bear the weight in pleasant circumstances or during some slight trial, will never stand it when there are undermining floods and overwhelming tempests. And here observe that Wisdom will not even leave her children to build half on the Rock, and half on the sand. For a house thus divided against itself can never stand; and the sand shifting and sinking, the entire house will be sure to come down altogether.

But it is time to consider the foundations, and to point out what is a good foundation, and what is not so.

In the first place, it is to be observed that there is no sure foundation unto a building unless it rests upon God; being based upon and upheld by the Divine attributes and perfections. If a man's supposed knowledge of God is not founded upon the truth concerning God, then it is only for truth to be made manifest, and this structure of ignorance must come down. If a man's faith towards God, and confidence in him, is not based upon his Word and promise, and that which the Word and promise declare to be in God, it has no real foundation; and it is only for God in his perfections to shine forth, and for his Word and promise to be declared in their true meaning, and this house of false confidence must come down. If a man's hope in God is founded upon what the Lord describes in the 50th Psalm,—the thinking him such an one as ourselves, instead of infinite in holiness, justice, truth, and grace,—then God has only to appear as he is, and this false hope must fall into confusion. If a man's fancied love to God is founded upon what is not real in God, then he loves not God, but an idol; and it is only for the true God to appear, and this house of false love must sink into the confusion of a ruinous and dreadful enmity. Nothing, in short, can stand in the end in any condition but as it is supported in that condition and upheld by God. The Lord him-

self is the Rock, immoveable and immutable; infinitely firm in all his holy purposes and decrees, and the carrying out of his holy will; unchangeable in all his attributes; immutable in justice, holiness, truth, and love. Therefore, the knowledge, confidence, hope, love, based upon him in reality, and grounded on what he is, will stand firm amid floods and storms; while those based upon anything short of these will certainly, in the end, sink into ruin and perish for ever.

This consideration will prepare us for understanding the wisdom of the wise in the choice of their foundation, and the folly of the foolish in the choice of theirs. The wise man's foundation, or rock on which he builds, is God in Christ, and the foolish man's, somehow or other, is really the creature. The Person, work, and offices of the Lord Jesus Christ afford the wise builder a solid and satisfactory foundation for his confidences, his hopes, his peace, his joy. In the knowledge of Jesus, or God in Jesus, which is the same thing, for Jesus is God, his understanding is built up in true wisdom; and no floods of error or storms of truth shall make foolishness this only true and eternal knowledge. In the confidence of Jesus' blood and righteousness his conscience is built up in a true peace, which is called the peace of God, derived from a divine perfection. To the wisdom of Jesus—the wisdom of God—he looks for guidance; on the arm of Jesus—the power of God—he leans for support and salvation. On the love of Jesus he relies; and being the love of God, it is invariable, and from it nothing shall ever separate him. In the pleasures of God's right hand, flowing forth to him in Jesus, his heart finds food, satisfaction, and delight. Thus on Christ he builds all his confidence and expectation; and his hope shall never make him ashamed. Having its foundation in all the attributes and perfections of God, it shall stand fast, and never sink into ruin. If Christ were not very God and very man, then his hope might fail, his house fall; because he would not have been a sufficient or proper Redeemer. Unless God, not sufficient; unless man, not proper; but as God-Man, both mighty to save, and proper to save; being the Mighty God, and the near Kinsman. If Christ had not lived a life of all righteousness, and died a death of bitter suffering, and risen again in token of his having made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness, his hope might fail, his house might fall; because the law would still live, God's justice not being fully satisfied; but Christ, having lived and died and risen, has evidently magnified the law and made it honourable, so that God can be just, true, and holy, and yet justify the sinner who comes to Jesus. Lastly, did Jesus not sit for ever at God's right hand, for ever to intercede, for ever to plead his blood, for ever to claim the fruits of his righteousness, for ever to be a King, Prophet, and Priest, Father, Husband, Brother, Friend to his people, his hope might fail, his house might fall; but not so now, as Jesus ever liveth to make intercession for him, to uphold him in righteousness before God's

throne, and to save him in infinite wisdom and by Almighty power, even to the uttermost. Therefore, as Christ lives, he shall live also; and his hope shall never disappoint him, or his house fall into destruction.

But if the wise man's foundation-rock for the house of his hopes is Jesus, the foolish man's is sure to be not Jesus, but the creature. If the foolish man professes the name of Jesus, protests that all his hope is in him, this never is really the case. He neither knows Jesus nor himself. He frequently deceives others, and always is himself deceived. His hopes are not really grounded upon a true knowledge of God as revealed in and by the Word, and upon a true understanding of the promises of God as contained in that Word. If he has some thoughts of God as a just Being, then he thinks, in part at least, to propitiate him, and win his favour by something in or of himself. His abstinence from sin is to atone for the past; his alms deeds and good deeds are to win God's approbation of his person. He vows and resolves amendments, and rests on his vows and good resolutions. He breaks them, and becomes desperate, or vows and rests again; or keeps them and becomes built up in self-righteousness. He thinks to borrow grace of Christ to keep his supposed gospel-law with, and then trusts to such keeping as part at least of his title to eternal life. He professes perhaps to believe in election, but it is conditional and creature-election. He never truly hopes in God as having chosen him before the foundation of the world. He professes to believe in an atonement; but it is only a conditional atonement, its efficacy after all *still* dependent upon his *own* obedience to Christ, and his gospel. He professes to rely upon the Spirit's work, but it is a work which ultimately depends for its being carried out upon the creature's will, not upon the will of the Holy Spirit himself, who, as the heavenly wind, bloweth where he listeth.

Thus, in these persons the creature is really the foundation, though Christ may be professed to be such. Creature-wisdom, creature-strength, creature-holiness, creature-righteousness, creature-endurance, and creature-perseverance, these are the real things. The heart has never been thoroughly unbottomed from these; so that it does not really rest in its hopes on the Rock Christ Jesus. Or, if these persons think of God as gracious and merciful, they forget or are unmindful of his holiness, justice, and truth. Thus they profess to hope in a free-grace God, eternal election, special redemption, final perseverance, and so on; but, then, their free-grace God is an idol, not the *Holy One* of Israel. He elects, forsooth, but not to holiness; rather to sensuality, worldliness, wrath, pride, continuance in sin, and not separation from it. He redeems, they suppose, not *from*, but *to*, the former vain conversation. He works, so they profess, all; but the entire work is just nothing at all in reality. Thus these persons are resting on sandy notions, without God in them; as the others are resting in sandy creature-righteousness without God in it.

Neither party rests in truth upon Christ, and builds for life, death, and eternity upon the just God and Saviour; the Redeemer and Holy One of Israel.

Thus, the wisdom of the wise, the folly of the foolish, are manifested respectively by the choice the former make of Christ, spiritually and really received, for their foundation; and by the resting of the latter on something or other short of a complete Christ, spiritually and livingly realized.

But we are told something about the way in which the wise discover, and, so to speak, reach the Rock, so as to build and be built up upon him. It is by *digging deep*. The foolish, on the other hand, being superficial characters in religion, do not dig deep. Indeed, dig deep they cannot; for they lack that spirit of wisdom and understanding from the Lord which alone could enable them to penetrate into the depths of divine things. In natural things a person, in digging deeply into the ground to find some fitting foundation for his house, would come first to one sort of soil, then another; but until he came to the suitable strata, the rock, he would go on digging, rejecting first one thing and then another as unsuitable. So it is in spiritual things. The child of God, the wise man, as he searches and inquires, has first one plausible foundation-ground offer itself, then another. His own obedience to the law; his own fidelity to the gospel; Christ as a law-giver; Christ as a help; Christ as a half-Saviour; Christ as no Saviour, but a licenser of sin. All these things, may be, come before him in time, but are found quite insufficient to rest his soul upon. He digs deep into the knowledge of God in his law, and sees him not to be such an one as he naturally presumed him to be. His views and apprehensions of his infinite holiness, justice, truth, power, majesty, and eternal dominion continually deepen. He digs through his false and God-dishonouring views of him in these respects; no longer thinking him to be one who will neither do good nor evil, or one who will clear the guilty, or justify the ungodly, without the requirements of his justice being complied with.

Again. As he digs deep into the true knowledge of God in his infinite justice and holiness, and severity in the law, so he digs deep into self, and finds the heart deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. He makes fresh discoveries constantly of the utterly ruined condition of human nature, and of himself as involved in the sin and apostacy of Adam. The whole head is found to be sick, and the whole heart faint. There is guilt that he cannot atone for or remove; darkness that he cannot enlighten; unrighteousness that he cannot cover; corruption that he cannot subdue; weakness and instability which he cannot strengthen or rectify. Thus he digs deep into self, and learns that flesh—his flesh—is not to be trusted in. Thus, too, by digging deep into the knowledge of God in the law, and self in his sinfulness, he digs fairly through all hope in God in the law, and all hope in self. He digs through all reliances in the flesh and the creature.

Fresh and fresh discoveries of God and of self being arrived at, all former and natural hopes in God and self are rejected. They are seen to be based on that which is shifting sand, and on that which will never suffice to support the soul in the hour of trial.

(To be concluded.)

A CORDIAL IN SICKNESS, A FOUNTAIN OF LIFE.

Dear Friend in the Lord,—I have had a desire to send you a few lines, but through my illness have not been able. But now, through mercy, being considerably better, I will make the attempt.

I thank you very much for your kind inquiries after me, and also for the two nice flannels; and I feel grateful to all the friends who have contributed towards them; and may the Lord reward you and them a hundredfold.

You will be pleased to hear that the dear Lord has been very kind to me in this affliction in giving me strength equal to my days; and as afflictions abounded consolations have abounded also; so that for his correction I have been enabled to “render praise,” as given me for my good. The lash was steeped he on me laid, and softened in his blood. At the beginning of my illness I was very comfortable in my mind. The following verse was very sweet to me:

“He that hath help’d me hitherto
Will help me all my journey through,
And give me daily cause to raise
New Ebenezers to his praise.”

And also the hymn commencing:

“Thrice comfortable hope
That calms my stormy breast!
My Father’s hand prepares the cup,
And what he wills is best.”

This made me feel willing to endure anything the Lord might be pleased to lay upon me, for I felt sure he was too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. But soon after the dear Lord withdrew his sensible presence and support from me, which made me cry mightily to him, “O leave not my soul destitute.” And soon came the following verse into my mind with sweetness:

“His grace shall to the end
Stronger and brighter shine;
Nor present things, nor things to come,
Shall quench the spark divine.”

I knew the good Shepherd’s voice, and felt a little comforted and encouraged; but still wanted his sensible presence. But my dear Lord’s time was not yet come. Therefore I was kept crying on; and not very long after, these words came into my heart with power:

“Though his kind hand thou canst not feel,
The smart let lenient patience heal.”—*Luther.*

I felt so sure they came from the Lord that I said to Mary words to this effect: "I am sure the Lord will come again, and will not tarry long." And I soon proved I was not mistaken. For early one morning, soon after, my Saviour came powerfully into my soul. I felt the love of God shed abroad in my heart, the peace of God to rule and reign in my mind, and my soul was filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory; and the Holy Spirit bore his witness with my spirit that I was a child of God. I said to Mary, "Now I can, without one check from conscience, and in the sweetest confidence, call God my Father, Jesus Christ my Redeemer, &c., and the Holy Ghost my Comforter, &c. &c."

"My eyes were sweetly drown'd in tears,
And melted was my frame."

My heart overflowed with gratitude, and my mouth was filled with the high praises of my God. And in meditating on the following lines:

"He sighed, he pray'd, he groaned, he cried;
In awful floods he sank and died,"

I had such a view of the dear Saviour in his suffering circumstances, that my heart was broken, and I wept, and could say:

"'Twas Jesus, my Friend, when he hung on the tree,
Who opened the channel of mercy for me."

Thus has the good Lord, I believe, given me to experience the fulfilment of the following scripture: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Truly I was enabled to feed by faith upon the broken body and shed blood of a crucified Christ, who has said, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." Praise the Lord, O my soul; and forget not all his benefits. Surely his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed.

But I must now conclude this very imperfect communication, and beg you will excuse all defects, as I am still very weak. I am very glad dear Mr. H.'s health continues to improve, so that he can do his ministerial work; and my earnest prayer to the Lord is that he would continue his servant's health, and make him a great blessing to his church and people for many years to come, if his holy will.

Please give my kind Christian love to Mr. H., in which my dear wife joins, and accept the same yourself; and hoping you and family are well, and wishing you every new covenant blessing, believe me to be,

Yours truly for Christ's sake,

Quarndon, Nov, 19, 1879.

R. T. HACK.

God, who dwelt in the temple in visible glory, now dwells in the church in the Spirit. (2 Cor. vi. 16.) There is here a marked progression; the church is not only a state, but a family; not only a family, but a temple.—*Owen*.

A FEW THOUGHTS ABOUT CHURCHES AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

(Concluded from p. 20.)

iv. *Church order should be maintained.* By this we mean that each member in a church should have his proper place, keep it, be submitted to in it, and conduct himself becomingly therein. Thus Peter says: "Yea, all of you be subject one to another." The minister of the church should be respected and submitted to as the minister; the deacons as deacons; each keeping his own place, and not neglecting his own office, or intruding into that of another man. The minister should be diligent in preaching the Word, administering the ordinances, and, so far as time and opportunity suffice, visiting the sick and afflicted. The deacons should attend actively and conscientiously to the more secular affairs of the church, and also to visiting the sick and the poor; should be friends and confidential helps of the minister, and not supplanters. Members, too, should keep their places, and be diligent in attendance upon the means of grace, and very careful to be punctual in that attendance, lest by a sort of slovenly conduct they disparage the means of grace, discourage their minister and fellow-members, and disturb, by their late and sometimes noisy entrance into the place of worship, those who have come more punctually with the hope and desire of sweetly and quietly worshipping God.

In churches some must have one office, some another. Churches elect to these offices; and this should be done in the fear of God, with dependence upon his Spirit to direct according to his Word, and with therefore a due consideration of fitness and qualification. Those in office should consider diligently what their offices call for; those who are not in office should still consider what becomes them as members. It is indeed a good and pleasant thing when brethren thus dwell together in unity, each having his proper place, and each diligently attending to it, and all bound together in the bond of love.

v. There must be *the maintenance of a proper and gospel discipline.* Paul is express upon this point: "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." He reproveth the Corinthians for their negligence in this respect, and gives them plain directions as to the way in which they should proceed in the solemn separation of a sinning member of the church. In other cases he says, "Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all authority." And again: "Warn them that are unruly." And all this answers to our Lord's own directions in Matt. xviii.

Now, when we refer back to what we have said is the design of church fellowship, we see the absolute necessity of a careful, proper, loving discipline. If sin is not reprov'd, if those who conduct themselves unbecomingly are left unnoticed and unadmonished, if those who sin and act contrary to moralify or uprightness are not dealt with in a way of discipline, and, if the case demands

it, of separation or suspension, the glory of God, as a sin-hating and holy God, is darkened, and the people of God are injured. By such a remissness the church is virtually making light of sin and evil, and little of obedience and what is pleasing to God. This is very dishonouring to God, and brings a reproach upon his cause and truth, as if it was not the cause of honesty, purity, and morality; but a cause compatible with that which, as Paul signifies, is not even tolerated amongst the heathen. The maintenance, then, of a strict and godly discipline is one grand essential in the churches, that they may be answerable to God's design in church fellowship.

We are persuaded that one symptom of the decay of vital godliness in the churches in the present day is the laxity as to church discipline. Instead of churches acting upon Scriptural principles, and according to righteous and well-defined rules, respect of persons, and sometimes the merest caprice, are allowed to govern. This should not be. Saints are members one of another. Those in church union are professedly but one body in Christ. Each member owes to the body generally a proper allegiance, and is bound in conscience and by the Word of God to submit to church authority, and to seek the welfare of that body of which he forms a part. On the other hand, the body generally has its obligations with respect to each particular member, as well as to the body as a whole. From this state of things arises the necessity of a godly discipline; a discipline characterized by justice, moderation, tenderness, and love. There should be no winking at what is positively sinful and contrary to the Word of God; no caprice; no partiality; no harsh and unbecoming severity; but such a carrying out of discipline in a just and loving way as shall be for the glory of God, the good of the church generally, the illustration of the pure and holy truth we profess, and the real advantage of even an offending member.

vi. There should be a due church provision and systematic organized church efforts for the help and relief of the poor, the sick, and the afflicted within the church. The relieving the poor and visiting the sick and afflicted should not be left to chance, or to mere individual efforts and bountifulness. It is well for members individually to visit the sick, assist the poor, and manifest in various other ways the love of the brethren; but what we would point out is this, that all these things should not be left to individual efforts; but these matters are to be looked after by the churches, and proper provision made of a pecuniary kind for relieving distress; and also it is well in many cases that persons who are qualified should be formally appointed to assist the minister and deacons in these matters. Churches as churches are bound to look diligently and carefully after their poor, their sick, and their afflicted.

Under this heading, we would suggest the expediency of having Dorcas Societies connected with the churches, though we would not limit them in their usefulness to church members. They may,

when properly managed, be of great use in the church's work of self-edification and comfort; and also be extended further in their beneficial influences.

vii. Lastly, we must name, having considered the action of the church within itself in a way of maintaining orderliness, discipline, and proper attention to the poor, the sick, and afflicted, *its action without towards those who do not constitute a part of the church*. No doubt a church should be forward in any act of benevolence to lend a helping hand where possible. This is answerable to Paul's words: "Do good unto all men." Neither as individuals nor as collective bodies do the saints glorify God by anything like an indifference to the welfare of their fellow-creatures. For the most part, the people of God are poor, and consequently can do but little in a pecuniary way as to aiding their distressed fellow-men; but from time to time great calamities or special occasions, such, for example, as the well-known Lancashire famine, may afford churches an opportunity of displaying a God-honouring spirit of general benevolence. But more especially churches should seek not only to maintain amongst themselves, but spread abroad the pure truth of God. In this sense a church should not be without a kind of missionary work and efforts.

Of course, each particular church must judge for itself what opportunities it has for spreading the knowledge of the truth of God. We are only giving a few hints, and putting matters before our readers in a very general and brief form. We might instance such things as these: The frequent preaching of the truth in the public assemblies of the saints; the distribution of sound tracts, under the supervision of the church or a Society in harmony with it, which should see that the tracts are truthful, plain, and suitable; the opening of rooms in villages destitute of the pure word of God. We only throw out suggestions in illustration of our point. There seems a tendency, particularly in some minds, to go into extremes, and on account of the freeness of grace to neglect what may be perfectly proper means for the propagation of the knowledge of the truth. The cry sometimes is, "The Generals do this or that;" but it cannot be wise in us to abstain from doing right things in a right way because others do the same things in a wrong one. We may go to injurious extremes, and be thoroughly crippled in our energies by listening to a not very wise cry of, "O! the Arminians say this; the Arminians do that." Because my neighbour is a drunkard and a glutton, it does not follow that I, in the fear of God and a dependent thankfulness, must not eat my dinner. We know, indeed, that in offering these suggestions we have been treading upon tender ground. A mere fleshly forwardness and carnal efforts are very repugnant to the spiritual mind. The flesh, too, is always ready to intrude into everything. Here is the danger. But then God's people need not shrink back from the leadings of the Spirit because too many are only led by the flesh.

But we will mention more particularly one way in which churches may be endeavouring to spread the knowledge of the truth of God; and that is by *the institution and support of Sunday Schools*. A Sabbath school should not be a sort of independent society, a kind of *imperium in imperio*, a kingdom within a kingdom, in which, as in Isa. iii., “the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable,” and the church be set at defiance; but an institution in close connection with the church, in which minister, deacons, and members take an interest. Sunday schools are not nurseries for the church, in the Arminian or fleshly sense, as though we could train up children into saints, independent of any work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration; but it is a very possible case, and indeed one of frequent occurrence, that God may bless the efforts of a church in thus teaching his word to the young, and raise up in our Sunday schools a generation to call him blessed. There are, and we cannot deny it, evils and dangers in connection with Sunday schools. All human things are attended with drawbacks. We ourselves are from experience quite conscious of these drawbacks and dangers. As there must necessarily be young and inexperienced persons amongst the teachers, there will be a constant tendency to introduce novelties, something or other of a more flesh-pleasing and popular character, into the teaching, or way of conducting the schools, something or other inconsistent with the position of strict Christian separation proper to the church. There is an irksomeness to the flesh about carrying the cross, and it is always seeking to get rid of it. This tendency has to be vigilantly watched in all church efforts, and especially in our Sunday schools. But probably if Sunday schools were more looked upon as church institutions, by which the church was seeking to fulfil the designs of God in church fellowship, what is evil and annoying might be much mitigated. Thus, too, the godly in the church might be more inclined to aid the Sabbath school efforts. It must be right to teach the young the pure Word and truth of God. We believe, then, that this is a matter well becoming the attention and united efforts of churches.

We have thus attempted to give our friends and readers a few thoughts about the sacredness and design of the church and churches of God upon earth. The church generally, and every church in particular, ought to be as the moon, “a faithful witness in heaven;” shining with a borrowed but pure light, reflecting on earth the glories of the hidden Sun of righteousness,—the Lord Jesus. As he represents his people at the right hand of God, so they are to represent him upon earth. They are at one and the same time in the heavenly places as one with the Head, and on earth as to their actual position. There should be, then, a separation from the world, and yet an action towards it, and a witnessing to it. As Christ was upon earth, so should his people desire individually and collectively to be. Christ, the Holy One of God, was in the world, yet not of it; holy, harmless, undefiled, and

separate from sinners; yet he went about doing good, teaching, and healing. He was the true Light, shining as in a dark place; for "the Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." Here is the pattern, not only for individual saints, but churches. Separate from the world in sentiment, in speech, and often in action, indeed always with respect to the motives and principles influencing action, separate from error, separate from sin, separate to God, and separate for God. The bride who expects the Bridegroom will thus, as the Scripture writes, seek to make herself ready. (Rev. xix. 7.) The light shining in and from the church should be the truth in its purity. But, then, that light will not be merely notional, but the light of life; a light enlivening as well as enlightening.

"To warm as well as light."

Thus it will be a light of an experimental nature, producing genuine and sanctifying effects. Thus, too, it will be also practical; leading God's people, whether as individuals or as formed into churches, to walk in God's holy Scriptural ways; and thus the members will "grow up into him in all things who is the Head, making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

**"FOR THE CHILD SHALL DIE A HUNDRED
YEARS OLD."—ISA. LXV. 20.**

ELIZABETH STOCK was born at Leicester, on Dec. 7th, 1858; and during her childhood attended Ebenezer Chapel Sunday school, where she was taught the Scriptures.

The last few years of her life she attended Zion Chapel Sunday school, where we have reason to hope the teaching and lessons were made a blessing to her soul, although nothing particular was heard of this until she was unable to leave her room, because she was naturally so very reserved.

In the early part of 1877 she suffered from a violent cough, which at times kept her away from the Sabbath school; and she gradually got weaker, until she was obliged to give up going there altogether. All means were tried to restore her health, but were of no avail. During the latter part of the summer of last year, 1878, she began to spit blood. This became worse; and on Tuesday evening, Nov. 12th, she was obliged to take to her room, when she had a very severe attack, her friends thinking for a few minutes she was dying; but she revived again.

On the following Saturday, her father told her the doctor said there was not the slightest hope of her getting better again. She then expressed her great thankfulness at not having been taken away suddenly by the attack on the previous Tuesday evening. Hymn 380 in Hawkins' school hymn-book, which she learnt whilst attending the school, commencing:

"Lord, what is life? 'Tis like a flower
That blossoms and is gone.

We see it flourish for an hour,
 With all its beauty on;
 But death comes, like a wintry day,
 And cuts the pretty flower away,"

was at this time very much impressed upon her mind. On Sunday afternoon, her late teacher (Mr. Baker) called to see her, and asked her several questions with reference to the state of her mind, but she seemed almost afraid to say anything. He afterwards engaged in prayer, asking the Lord to reveal himself unto her, convincing her of her state by nature as a lost and ruined sinner.

Several other friends called to see her during the week; and on the following Sunday Mr. Baker called again to see her, and asked her if there was any particular thing she asked the Lord for; and she replied, "The pardon of my sins." He had a little more conversation with her about some of the hymns she had learnt when at school, and then prayed on her behalf.

On the next Wednesday morning the Lord appeared to her in the following words: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matt. xxv. 34.) She then asked for her mother, and expressed how very happy she felt in her mind. The hymn 977 (Gadsby's selection) commencing:

"Deep are the wounds which sin has made;
 Where shall the sinner find a cure?
 In vain, alas! is nature's aid;
 The work exceeds all nature's power;"

a hymn which she had learned at the Sabbath school some years before, was made very sweet to her, and she then felt the sting of death was taken away. At another time the 103rd Psalm was very much blessed to her soul; also the 28th verse of the 11th chapter of Matthew: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Several other hymns in Gadsby's selection she enjoyed very much; such as 385, 477, 483, and 728.

After the Lord had so manifested himself unto her, she thought the time for departing this life would not be long; but this was not the case, as she lingered nearly a fortnight in great bodily suffering; but the Lord enabled her to bear it with patience. At times, indeed, she felt as though her patience was almost exhausted. She said she could not have borne it had not the Lord supported her.

On Tuesday evening, Dec. 3rd, several friends called to see her; and although she was a great deal worse, she repeated, to the astonishment of those present, with great expression, another hymn she had learnt whilst attending the Sunday school, commencing:

"Here the Christian meets with trials,
 Oft immersed in human woe;
 Fierce temptations, various sorrows,
 Are his portion here below," &c. &c.

The evening before she died she felt quite happy, and helped her sister to repeat those lines:

“Tho’ painful at present, ’twill cease before long;
And then O how pleasant the conqueror’s song!”

feeling at the same time she was going home to glory. She died early the next morning, Friday, Dec. 8th, 1878.

The above account was furnished by Mr. John Stock, the brother of the deceased. We add a letter received from one of the deacons of our church, who was deeply interested in, and watched closely, the case of this young person. We also add some lines written upon the occasion by one of our members, who was for a time a teacher in the Sabbath school; one of the scholars in her class being Elizabeth Stock. Many were the prayers offered up by this teacher on behalf of her scholars at the throne of grace. Fearing God herself, she taught as one who felt a deep interest in the eternal welfare of her scholars; and her prayerful work was not in vain in the Lord.

“Dear Pastor,—According to your request, I have put together what may be of some use in setting forth the exercises of mind of Elizabeth Stock. Her mother and sister say she had been very thoughtful and quiet for some years; showing evident marks of a tender conscience. Months before her severe illness came on she had been seen with tears running down her face whilst reading in her room. The school hymn-book and Gadsby’s selection, together with the Bible, were her favourite books. Her mother speaks in the highest terms about her having been truthful, dutiful, and affectionate.

“The first time I called to see her I took her Huntington’s ‘Kingdom of Heaven taken by Prayer.’ She was too timid to converse. The next time I called by her request. I asked her what she wanted most, and what she prayed for; she replied, ‘For the Lord to pardon my sins.’ This was to me very encouraging, and I tried to encourage her to ask for it, telling her of the promise that they who ask for such things, feeling a want of them, have a promise of finding. Afterwards I heard of her singing, but had my fears as to whether she felt her need rightly.

“Having been asked to go again, I did so. I asked her plain questions about her state, and whether the Lord had answered her prayers and spoken words to her heart. Not receiving answers which satisfied me, I tried to explain the necessity of our having a Substitute. I told her that the Lord Jesus Christ was provided for poor helpless sinners who saw their ruined condition and felt to long after him in their hearts; and that the Bible called this fleeing for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us in the gospel. I also pointed out the extreme danger of building our hopes on our own doings, prayers, and tears; the Bible (Matt. vii.) telling us that a good foundation is the Rock, meaning Christ; and our own works are the sand, which foundation is deceitful and will not stand.

“On my next visit, she told me the 8th verse of 103rd Psalm had been made very sweet to her. She had comfort from it more or less the rest of her brief life. She was encouraged to press on, and still ask for the great blessing,—the pardon of her sins.

“Before my next visit, which was about three days after, she had had the blessed visit which entirely removed doubt from the application of the words: ‘Come, ye blessed of my Father,’ &c. I asked her what she wanted the Lord to show her now? If she wanted him to tell her her sins were forgiven? She replied, ‘I have not a doubt about that;’ and was as full of the Lord’s blessing as she could hold.

“She had some darkness afterwards; but it was of short duration. The Lord spoke other words, and renewed the two texts again and again, and blessed the 103rd psalm and several hymns, as stated by Mr. John Stock in his account. The verse,

“‘Sin, like a burning fever reigns,’ &c.

appears to have been seed sown years before, and she felt its solemnity, and indeed all the hymn; and the one commencing,

“‘Lord, what is life?’ &c.

“I hope you will be able to read this without trouble. I have had so many interruptions, I must ask you to excuse its rough style; and I remain,

“Yours in Christian love,

“THOS. WEBSTER.”

REST AT LAST.

At last the weary journey's o'er;
 The soul hath found its rest;
 Hath done with pain for evermore,
 And is with Jesus blest.
 The storm-tossed barque at anchor now,
 Is safe within the veil;
 For it no more shall tempests blow,
 Nor furious storms assail.
 We may not with these mortal eyes
 That heavenly home behold;
 Yet faith almost with glad surprise
 Can see its gates unfold.
 We know that they who love the Lord,
 And through him overcome,
 Shall find at last the sure reward
 In that eternal home.
 The bitter comes before the sweet;
 And labour first, then rest;
 To make us for that land more meet,
 A thorn disturbs our nest.
 The fighting makes the warrior prize
 The peace, when danger's past;
 And so we heavenward lift our eyes,
 Where we shall rest at last;—
Shall rest at last; O! joyful thought!
 It cheers us on the road;
 Each loss and pain we count as nought;
 We're travelling home to God.
 We drop our hold of creature-things,
 To grasp the substance there.
 Christ is our Friend, the King of kings
 What else have we to fear?
 Jesus, thou art our firm defence,
 While here our hope and stay;
 We trust thee still to guide us hence
 Forsake us not, we pray.
 Thee as thou art we long to see,—
 To know as we are known;
 And sinless as thyself to be
 Before thy holy throne.

Leicester.

E. HENSER.

We have reserved this account of Elizabeth Stock for insertion in

the same number of our periodical as contains an article which refers to Sabbath schools in their connection with our churches. It appears to us very confirmatory of the remarks made in that article. This young person never joined the church; but had she lived, and been led so to do, who could have refused to recognize the Lord's hand in her conversion? His blessing, too, upon Sabbath school instruction in her case was very manifest. The work was the Lord's; the principal instrumentality, Sabbath school instruction. To him is all the glory; but for officers and teachers in Sabbath schools there is great and sweet encouragement.

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

“Whilst the long cloud of witnesses Shows the same path to heaven.”

Dear Sir,—Please excuse the liberty I have taken in addressing these few lines to you.

Dear Sir, I feel an intense and sincere desire to inform you that the good Lord has taken unto himself the soul of my dear mother, Elizabeth Butler. On Wednesday, August 22nd, she was seized with a stroke, which took the use of one side, and affected her speech. She appeared quite sensible at times, and lay very composed. On Saturday evening she began to speak of the corruptions of the heart, and of our best performances being nothing better than dross, and of the emptiness of all goodness in ourselves; and positively declared that Christ was All and in all. After this, in the night, she tried to sing those words:

“A sinner then, a sinner now;
I still remain the same.”

Also these:

“How vast the love that Him inclined
To bleed and die for me!”

The former hymn begins:

“O Lord, how many days are pass'd
Since first I heard thy Name!
A sinner then, a sinner now,
I still remain the same.”

The hymn is in Daniel Herbert's first volume. She died as she lived, exalting the Saviour and debasing the creature, and looking to nothing but Jesus. She has often told me of late that the sting of death was drawn, the dart had lost its force in Jesus's side; the sting was lost in his crucified body. Death stung itself to death when it killed him.

Dear Sir, how often have I heard her make mention of your name in love and sincerity because of the truth, and speak of the union, oneness, and Christian conversation you once had, and lament those bygone days. She often expressed a sincere desire that she might not lie long upon the bed of affliction for fear she might be left to be impatient. Her Lord granted her request. She never was heard to murmur or complain. She departed this life on Sabbath evening, Aug. 26th. I greatly feel the loss; but it is a matter of rejoicing to me to think of her being gone to eternal rest.

I feel at times discouraged because of the roughness of the way. I have none other but the Lord to look to. Blessed be his Name, hitherto he has helped me, and thus far hath he led me on. I feel desirous for submission to his sovereign will, and for the grace of trust, that I may trust him where I cannot trace him.

Having but little time to spare for writing, I must conclude. I beg to remain

Your most humble and obedient servant,

Great Ponton, Oct. 29th.

JOHN BREWIN.

Dear Friend and Brother in the love of the everlasting Gospel of the Son of God,—May the grace, love, and peace of Jesus ever pervade your mind and spirit.

I hereby acknowledge the receipt of the books you sent me; and should I be spared to follow my present occupation, I hope to find them very useful. I do feel grateful for your kindness to me, such a poor, unworthy, sinful creature as I often feel myself to be. O what a mercy there is a fountain open for sin and uncleanness. A few weeks since I was so beset with sin, that I felt myself too vile and filthy to dare to name the Name of Jesus, or to make mention of that holy blood spilt on Calvary's cross. Thus I mourned in spirit my sad condition; when suddenly the thought dropped sweetly into my mind: If there had never been any sin and uncleanness, *that* blood would not have been shed. It was shed for sin. That fountain was opened for sin and uncleanness. O how that thought made my heart leap for joy; and, in the spirit of contrition I could confess my sin and guilt, and humbly plead that precious blood by which my soul was relieved from the burden I felt. Under the influence of affection and love to the dear Redeemer, I blessed the Name of a sin-pardoning God. O, beloved, when in the spirit of holiness I think of the distinguishing grace of a Triune Jehovah in saving me, and leaving so many thousands to perish in their sin, I drop my vile head in the dust, and solemnly lie adoringly at his feet, praising him for such superabounding mercy. It is a mercy indeed to be redeemed from the kingdom of Satan, and brought into the kingdom of God's dear Son. What a mercy to have been stopped in our career of sin in early life, and to have had the fear of God implanted in the heart, whereby we were kept from the thousands of snares laid for our feet by the great destroyer of souls, and to have been made to love God, his Word, his ways, and his people.

The last Sabbath-day you were at Milton was a special time with my soul in the love of those things, and also with many others of the dear saints of God amongst us. O what a blessing conferred upon a poor sinner, that ever one should be brought to love the good things and the great things of the everlasting gospel! I often appeal to the Lord, when about to go to hear his word proclaimed by his own sent servants, and say, "O Lord, thou knowest what I need, and what is my desire. O that I may

have a circumcised and listening ear, a softened and receiving heart, that thy holy truth may drop with saving power, unction, and sweet consolation on my exercised soul. And to this end bless the soul of thy dear servant, and endue him with power from on high, that we may rejoice together in giving glory to thy Name." But O! when He sees fit to withhold his gracious love and power, what poor, doubting, distressed, gloomy creatures we are! What an aching void is then felt! What deathliness is experienced in the soul when any other motive prevails in the service of God than the glory of his great Name, and the good of our own souls! I find and feel sin in my heart to be a daring, unwearied foe; ever confronting me in every attempt to serve and praise the God of all my mercies. O how needful is Jesus as the great Captain of our salvation! May he in mercy lead the way for you; and, if it be his divine will, bring you often amongst us, and shed abroad his love in our hearts, that we may rejoice together from time to time, while passing through this vale of tears in holy hope and expectation of eternal bliss with him at last.

May the blessing of the Lord rest on you and yours. So prays
 Yours most unworthily for the truth's sake,
 To Mr. A. Smith, Chelmsford. J. GARDNER.

My dear Brother,—I was glad to have a line from you the other day, and thank you much for its contents. I could not see my way to make use of the advertisement, as I am not at all in a fit state of health to undertake anything at present. The day your letter came I was not up until eleven o'clock, and for the last fortnight I have been almost laid up with lumbago, to which I have been very subject for a long time; scarcely going out of the house for days together, except to church; and last night I could not even do that, though intending it to the last moment. This, with rheumatism in the hands, which is so bad sometimes that I cannot even lift a saucer to my mouth, and my old-standing complaints, is, I think, enough to show you that I am in no condition for work. Indeed, I sometimes think that I never shall be again. However, that is with the Lord.

You too, I find, are not without your heavy trials; but I am thankful to find you testifying to the goodness of God in sustaining and supporting you under all. Truly he is faithful to his promises; and after all we shall be enabled to say, "Surely, goodness and mercy *have* followed us all the days of our life; and not one thing has failed of all that the Lord our God has promised; yea, and of all that we have needed too." How sweet it is to reflect that our cases and circumstances are all in the hands of One who cannot err, and whose dealings with us are *all*, whether apparently prosperous or adverse, regulated by infinite love to our souls.

"Still let this truth possess my mind,
 Thou canst not err nor be unkind."

And then, with dear Hart, may we say,

“The lash is steeped he on thee lays,
And softened in his blood.”

The longer I live the more do I see the necessity of the rod of correction for God's dear children. How much do we see in the Proverbs of Solomon about this! For, whilst the outer shell of those Proverbs may be good and salutary for even the natural man, there is a deep spiritual instruction underneath; and we need not wonder that the apostle (Heb. xii.) takes it up in that view. Where would you and I be likely to run to if it were not for the weights that we have to carry? How would self-sufficiency, pride, vain glory, ingratitude, and independence carry us away as with a flood! I know not, my brother, how you find things; but if you are like me you find that there is no limit to the depravity of the human heart; and it is only as God is pleased to restrain it, that it is kept within any bounds at all; and he is pleased to make afflictions and sorrows among the principal instruments in his hands for doing this. Nay, more, what an endearment these methods beget in the heart of a child of God! Do they not make Jesus precious as a good Physician to heal? And do they not open the way for him to become known as the Brother born for adversity, to sympathize, and the Friend that loveth at all times, who shows in them the constancy of his love? Yea, more, as the man of sorrows, to be one with his suffering people, and now to be their great High Priest, touched with the feeling of their infirmities? As, too, they look on him as having conquered all and come out of all, are they not encouraged to believe that they shall conquer also? and at last be victors over death itself and all the powers of darkness, yea, hell itself?

“We shall be conquerors all ere long,
And more than conquerors too.”

And

“Meantime that foe can't boast of much
Who makes us watch and pray.”

“Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to *suffer* for his sake.” (Phil. i. 29.) And that is suffering for his sake when the rod of God is laid on to accomplish his purposes of grace in our experience in order to bring forth praise and glory to his sacred Name. “If ye are without chastisement, whereof all [God's children] are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.”

“Bastards may escape the rod,
Sunk in earthly, vain delight;
But the true-born child of God
Must not, would not if he might.”

After all, Moses' choice is the best, to rather suffer affliction with the people of God, &c. And if God has given us grace to make this choice, we may well wait for our best things last, and esteem it no small mercy that he has not left us to take up even

with mere doctrinal notions, without a living experience of them in the heart.

But, dear brother, after all do you not find "the body of this death" the greatest and most constant affliction? Does not it often make you groan? It does me. And does not it often make you forget all your other afflictions and trials for the time, and long for escape from the flesh and its corruptions and lusts? Does not it make you pant to realize again and again the preciousness of that robe which covers all our deformity, and long again for the application, the sensible application of that precious blood which atones for sin and purges the conscience, so that for the time being there is no "more conscience of sin"? (Heb. x. 2.)

"And if guilt removed return and remain,
Its power may be proved again and again."

That, as Christ's precious blood, when shed, overcame the powers of darkness, so that blood by faith in the conscience might purge from dead works to serve the living and true God. "Through death he overcame him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." And though we may be, and are, vanquished again and again, yet is our reliance not placed upon our victories, but upon *his*.

I also would have liked to have seen you and a few besides the other day; but it was not so to be. I *did* see a friend or two of yours at Devizes, and would have liked to have had more time with them; and there were some at Trowbridge I wished to see, and could not. However, our steps are ordered by the Lord.

I have written to Mr. A., which I dare say you know before this, unless he is from home, as I did not know what you meant exactly by his going out. As I said before, I could not bind myself to anything of a permanent nature; though I manage to go and speak when called upon to do so, though often in much pain, and yet I seldom think of it after I have begun speaking, until it is over, and then sometimes find a difficulty in reaching home. But what a dead pull-back it is, dear brother, to see no fruit to one's labours! There may be fruit; for God has said *his* word shall not return unto him void; but if we do not see it, we get discouraged, at least I do. I know this is sense and not faith, and that we should plough in hope; and yet we want to be partakers of the fruit, even in this sense. What a comfort to know that whether we see anything or no, God will have his own! Not one shall be lost. Not one slip through his fingers; for none is able to pluck them out of Jesus' or his Father's hands. Therefore not one shall be added over and above the covenanted number. There is no residuum of grace for goats, as some teach. No, every stone shall be in the spiritual building in its place. The height, breadth, length, and depth of that city are equal. Nothing out of place; no overplus materials. No Where shall I put this? nor What shall I do with that? Every

son will have a seat there. "I go to prepare a place for you." "Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." (1 Cor. xii. 27.) "Here am I, and the children which thou hast given me." "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." (John xvii.) What? An uncertain number? How could that be? No; blessed be God. "I know my sheep," says Christ; and "other sheep I have, them also I must bring," &c.

But I need not go on; though it seems to spring up. May the Lord the Spirit keep us in the truth, and keep us also firm in the persuasion of his own omnipotent will and power to bring, by his own divine operation, the many sons to glory whom the Father hath chosen, and the Son hath redeemed; that thus Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—one God—in all things may be glorified in bringing the many sons unto glory.

Please remember me kindly, when you see them, to Miss Blackwell and her friend whom I saw there, also to the young man whom I also saw at the station. I don't know the name of either of them. I had a nice interview with Mr. Hemington.

You lament the darkness which surrounds you. Well, it amounts to this: "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." See Rom. ix. 9, a passage I spoke from a short time since; and there we see how ineffectual all our own mere efforts are. We are living in a day of much profession, but even in that almost every man is doing what is right in his own eyes. If they are religious, they will be so in their own way, not God's. It is still abundantly manifest that there are two seeds,—the true church and the world. The one to be the object of God's love and mercy, the other of his justice and wrath. (Rom. ix. 22, 23.) And who hath made us to differ? And what have we that we have not received as a free-gift mercy?

"Pause, my soul, admire and wonder;
Why, O why, such love to me?
Grace hath put thee in the number
Of the Saviour's family."

But I must leave off. And now, with best Christian love to Mrs. L. and yourself, I remain, dear brother,

Yours in one hope,
W. W.

57, Raglan Street, Somers Road, Southsea, Nov. 13th, 1879.

Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ,—I have often thought of sending you a line, but now I sit me down to do so, and to answer thine, which brought good tidings; for if it said anything about Jesus it was sure to be good, very good. His Person, grace, love, and compassion are all good to poor sinners such as I feel myself to be; his blood to wash my poor polluted soul; and I want to feel its power to cleanse me from day to day, because I sin through the infirmity of the flesh. But there is an

atonement for that sin, and I feel my need of this washing daily. O could I but live beneath that cross whereon was fixed that dear body of the Lamb of God, and by precious faith view him there for poor worthless me, dying in my room and stead, and draw life from his death, healing from his stripes, pardon from his wounds!

“Here it is I find my heaven;”

and heaven it is indeed when we can look on him whom we have pierced. O that word *pierced*! I do want the blessed Spirit to take of those things that belong to Jesus and show them unto me; according to the precious promise: “He shall take of *mine*, and show it unto you.” My very soul longs and thirsts, begs and cries, at times, to know more of these things in my daily experience, for I cannot do without them. On these very things depends my everlasting salvation. Therefore blood and love have been my song in the house of my pilgrimage for many years; and if you knew half about me that I do about myself, you would not wonder. What a poor, vile, lost, ruined, and undone sinner I am! I can never look within but I see and feel some vile sin lurking there. Nay, it is a cage of unclean birds; and at times they seem all alive; and I have no power to tame, no, not one of them. And if they are still for a little time, there is sure to be something come and set them all alive again. Then they make me sigh and groan, and sometimes long to be delivered from them; for the dear Lord has fixed their everlasting doom; for I have read there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord. Indeed, my dear brother, thou dost know that the inward Canaanite, the old man of sin, has been put away, and made an end of on the cross; but he is left for a plague. Now this is the reason why I stick so fast to the everlasting love and blood of Jesus. I must sink without them, and I do desire to think more of his love to me than of my love to him. His was from everlasting; mine but of yesterday. His is so great; mine so small. His the same from everlasting to everlasting, never more nor less; mine ebbing and flowing; sometimes hot, and then faint and cold. So to think of mine makes me sigh and groan, and casts me down; to think of his aright cheers, revives, and strengthens my poor weak mind. Indeed, this love of our precious Christ has done all that has been done, is done, or ever will be done for my poor soul, both in time and to all eternity. It bears with all my crooked ways, heals all my backslidings, brings me back again when I wander from him, lifts me up when cast down, raises the poor out of the dust, and lifts the poor beggar from the dunghill, and sets him among the princes of his people, and makes him to inherit the throne of glory. That same love has to support me under all trials, temptations, losses, and crosses; to enlighten me when dark, and to give beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. It has to feed me when hungry, clothe me when naked, and take me in when a stranger, provide me a home when homeless, even a Father’s house. And he who loves has gone to get (shall I say

it?) my place ready in it. But what manner of love it is I cannot say; but to crown all that it has done is to make *us* sons of God; and it does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when our best Beloved shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. I would not part with my hope of this sight, no, not for the world. O sweet sight! transforming sight! May we by faith behold him as in a glass darkly now, but then face to face. O may I sing of blood and love in life, in death, and to all eternity. Blood pays all the debt which I contracted, sends the poor prisoner out of the pit in which there was no water to quench his thirst. It is a token of the Passover; brings us as well as makes *peace*, and seals the covenant with all its promises, and so makes them sure to all the seed.

The Lord bless thee with all needful grace. This is the prayer of
Thine in love,

Malmesbury, Jan. 24th, 1865.

D. SMITH.

BAPTISMAL EXERCISES AND DIVINE LEADINGS.

A SERIES OF FIVE LETTERS.

(Concluded from p. 27.)

My dear Friend,—It rejoices my very heart to read your letter. The sweet persuasion you felt that you were in possession of that living faith which entitles every believer to the privilege of following the Lord in the ordinances of his house could not have come from nature. That you wrote that letter to the friends at Galeed in faith I do not doubt; and also that unbelief kept you from sending it. I am not surprised after this that you durst not ask the Lord for another token, it was what I dared not do for a long time. I used to beg of the Lord either to give me strength to come forward, or remove the desire from me altogether. Well do I remember once opening upon the very text you speak of in Peter, and how it condemned me; for I felt I had not the answer of a good conscience. And on another occasion, when so tried I did not know how to bear it, I opened the Bible upon these words (Acts xxii. 16): “And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized.” I had more than once said, if I knew the Lord’s will, I would do it in spite of everything. I fear it was spoken in too much self-confidence; for I painfully had to feel I had no strength of my own. How well I can understand your feelings when you say you must go forward, and honour him by walking in his commandments! It is your desire to be an obedient child. And on the other hand, unbelief of the heart prevails, and tells you it is too sacred an ordinance for such a polluted being as you are to enter into. Thus you are tossed about like a wave of the sea, and know not where the scene will end.

I have just seen something which strikes me as being suitable to our case. It is this: “That is no love which is not productive

of *obedience*, nor is that worthy the name of obedience which springs not from *love*. Pretensions to love, without obedience, are glaring hypocrisy; and obedience without love is mere slavery." I am almost sorry I have written these last words down, lest you should think I am casting any reflection upon you. No, my dear friend, it is no such thing; for I am satisfied your desire for obedience springs from love; and it is the fear of presuming that keeps you back. May the Lord enable you to

"Venture on him, venture wholly,
Let no other trust intrude."

For I know he will honour that faith that he himself is the author of.

I feel much greater confidence that the Lord will be with, and bless you in following him, than I do for myself; and yet I know how wrong it is in me to doubt him, after the way he has appeared for me. Last evening I was much tried after I got to chapel, that when I came before the church I should not have a word to say; my mouth would be closed, and I should be put to shame before them; and I felt it would be no more than I justly deserved. The question then arose: Can I go under such a feeling? To my surprise, Mr. Freeman took his text from Mark xvi. 15, 16. He spoke much upon baptism, and of the right characters for it,—those that had been baptized with the Holy Spirit. Also that it is the command that Christ left behind, that his people should observe. He spoke of Christ's own baptism, and how his Father honoured it. Also his words to John: "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Also of the desire for obedience that was found in the hearts of his people, springing from love. He answered many objections that were brought forth by those who opposed it, plainly proving from the Word of God that it was the right way to the Lord's table. He spoke of some good men who did not hold with the ordinance, but said, Was it right in those that did see it to justify the omission of others? He spoke of the Reformers; though good and gracious men, yet they were not all clear in everything; and because they were good men, were they to be justified in what they held wrong? He also spoke of Open Communion. Some would say, Where is your charity in denying others the Lord's table because they have not been through the water? To those he would say, How dare you to set aside a command of the Lord? I wished you had been there. To me it was most encouraging and confirming.

And now I feel I can answer the question that arose at the commencement of the service; and say,

"I'll go, depending on my Lord,
By faith, and not by sight."

For if the Lord sees fit to put me to shame before his people, I am sure it will be for his honour and glory, and for my good. I know I have not had one exercise too many. They have been profitable to my soul; and I am thankful the Lord has not

allowed me to enter into this solemn ordinance without some deep searchings of heart, to know what his mind and will was concerning it. Those truths that are burnt into our hearts we shall not very readily part with. I feel disappointed you are not able to come to B., and hope the time will not be long before you do. May the Lord be your Guide and Director in all things, incline your heart to do his will, and grant you much of his sensible presence. Love to Mrs. P. and yourself.

Your affectionate, though unworthy Friend,

March, 1871.

M. A. SHOESMITH.

My dear Friend,—Words fail me to convey to you the pleasure I feel, also the confirmation it is to me, that the Lord has revealed to you his will, and has given you strength to go forward depending alone upon his almighty power to bring you through to his own praise and glory. The substance of these words has in some measure been sweet to me: "And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken." Those that are enabled by God's grace to throw themselves upon the Lord Jesus, for him to do with them as he sees fit, will have a broken and contrite heart given to them, that the Lord himself will not despise. I cannot tell you how much I have wished that we might honour the Lord, who has done so much for us, by making a public confession of his Name, and in being baptized together. Had it been anything relating to natural things, I should have urged my wish with you; but I well knew that no persuasion of the creature would cause you to go forward without a "Thus saith the Lord." We must have the command from God himself; for if we attempt to move without it, the ground beneath our feet will give way, and bring upon us shame and confusion. And it often causes much exercise with a living soul to know what comes from the Lord, and what does not. Still, there are times when we are at a point about it, from the effects that it produces.

Have we not, my dear friend, much cause for thankfulness, that the Lord has not turned a deaf ear to our supplications, but has thus far appeared for us? Ought we not to speak well of him? Would that I could do this more, and not feel so much unbelief working. But difficulties will at times present themselves to my view, with a How will you overcome this and that? But faith will some times triumph; and at such times I believe it will be well even if I should be rejected by the church. And I do trust I am sincere in saying, if it is not for the honour of God and my own good, I hope the Lord will prevent it. And yet I feel I dare not, I cannot, of my own will keep back; but am often longing for the time to come that I may be permitted to follow in the footsteps of the Lord of life and glory, though one most unworthy of it, with an earnest desire that he will grant me his sensible presence whilst passing through the ordinance, and to my dear friend also; that the Lord would give us another testimony that the step we are taking is a right one.

“The way I walk cannot be wrong
If Jesus be but there.”

As I said before, your going forward is very confirming to me; for had it not been made plain to you, after what you had received, that it was right in you to do so, it would not have been right in me. I think the Lord has given you a remarkably strong venturing faith, surrounded as you are at the present time with difficulties; but I believe it is to assure you the step has not been taken in your own strength.

I often think of the first letter you wrote to me on the subject. Though you thought it not worth the postage, yet you could not withhold it after reading it. It carried such a strong conviction to my mind that the hand of the Lord was in it that I could not get away from it; and yet my nature wished it otherwise. For some time previous to this, my friends were almost, or I may say entirely, silent to me upon the subject. I used often to wish they would speak to me upon it; for I thought it would be a relief to speak of some of my exercises; and I wanted also to convince them there was no probability of my going forward at present; for I thought their feeling was that I should be obliged to come forward very soon. I did not feel it was from want of sympathy; but the Lord kept them from it, that I might not take refuge in anything short of himself. I very much liked what Mr. Godwin said last evening, when administering the ordinance of the Lord's supper. Speaking of those that kept back from various reasons, he said, “Some might do so for fear they should slip or fall, and so bring a reproach upon the cause of God. But,” he said, “is the Lord less able to keep you *in* the church than *out* of it? And is not the path of obedience the safest path to walk in? For in keeping his commandments there is great reward; not *for* keeping them, but *in* keeping them.”

It has often been a fear with me whether I might not be left to bring an open reproach upon the cause of God; but I think it is said in one of your letters, church membership would have a tendency to make us walk more tenderly; for I believe the honour of God is dearer to me than my own life.

I feel truly sorry to hear so sad an account of your dear brother. It must be a great trial; but I believe one that will work for your good. And I trust you may have reason to bless God on his behalf, that ever he should have laid his afflicting hand upon him. Still, I know such things are painful to flesh and blood. But I do not think you can be altogether without hope of him. From what I have heard you say, he must possess a tender conscience. I think the following lines which I read just now are suitable to you: “Murmur at nothing which brings thee nearer his own loving presence. Be thankful for thy very cares, because thou canst confidently cast them all upon him. He has thy temporal and eternal prosperity too much at heart to appoint one superfluous pang, one redundant stroke. Commit, therefore, all that concerns thee to his keeping, and leave it there.”

I am also equally glad to hear of poor dear Mrs. Crouch waiting for her dismissal in such a happy frame of mind. What a testimony she is leaving behind of the faithfulness of her God down to the river of Jordan! If still alive, give my kind love to her; and I would also crave her blessing. I think your situation an enviable one, in being privileged to attend the dying bed of a dear saint of God. It is also very encouraging the way she has spoken of believers' baptism. The charge she gave you was very solemn. It is indeed a very solemn thing we are about to enter into. I have great confidence the Lord will bring you through; and I trust he will me also. May we be enabled to bear each other at the throne of grace. I am sure we are often in each other's thoughts. With much love, yours very affectionately,
 April 3rd, 1871. M. A. SHOESMITH.

My very dear Friend,—Yours of this morning came to me with life, power, dew, and unction, communicating afresh to my heart some of the sweetness which I hope I have lately experienced. I do not wish to convey I have entirely lost it, for I feel it is still well with me; but I have not that constant communing with the Lord which I hope I have had. But, in looking back, I know he hath led me by a right way, and sweetly hath he confirmed me in the step I have so lately taken, by going before me, and making darkness light, and crooked things straight, and granting me the very desires of my heart beyond what I could have hoped for. And, above and beyond all, that he should have given me his own approbation, by blessing me as he has done, and giving me, I hope, in some small measure to hold communion with Christ, as my Saviour, my Lord, and my Redeemer. And I know my dear friend can witness to the truth of what I say in her own experience, having herself felt the Lord's goodness towards her in the same step. Ought it not to call forth much thankfulness in our hearts that the Lord would not suffer us to enter upon so solemn a thing without deep and painful exercises upon the subject, seeking unto him again and again to know his will in the matter, and, knowing it, to be able to follow it? I often think of Mr. Hazlerigg's prayer on the Sunday morning,—“That we might never be ashamed of the step we had taken in following the Lord; but that we might be ashamed of how little we could love and praise that God that had done so much for us.” O that I could praise and adore him more for his great goodness towards one so utterly unworthy of the least of his favours! It is true, I have at times such thoughts as these: Now, are you quite sure what you think you have experienced comes from the Lord? Do you not think you may have worked yourself up? And may it not be nothing but natural excitement? One thing I do know; I cannot rest satisfied with what I hope I have attained to; but there is a pressing on to know more of Christ. And what you said about Mr. Covell's prayer on Sunday, where it suited you so, was so similar

to Mr. Hazlerigg's in the morning. How we want renewed tokens of God's love towards us! And, having grace, how we want more of it! I do hope I have been enabled to say,

"In faith, from doubting free,
How sweet his fruit and shade to me!"

And yet I am looking forward to the future with trembling, knowing well where I shall get to if left to myself. At the same time shrinking, I hope only in the flesh, from the path of tribulation.

I do rejoice indeed that the Lord has broken in upon your soul by removing every doubt and fear, and blessing you again with his sensible presence, thus assuring you he was with you in what you have so lately passed through. I hope, in my own case, I have not been too self-confident, for I know "the Lord trieth the righteous." And where as yet has been my trial in the matter? But why should I wish for it, when I can say in my own conscience I believe the Lord has been with me, and enabled me by his grace to "esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt"?

I am very glad you have told me what you felt about the broken bread at the table, for it was exactly what I had felt respecting it. But I should not have told any one my first thought had you not spoken of it in the way you have. It speaks loudly to me we were each led by the same Spirit into a little of what that bread represented. On looking upon the plate of broken bread I had this thought, which was only natural; but I believe it led me into the spiritual meaning of what it set forth: How badly you have broken this bread! I never saw any one do it in such a way before. It is broken and crumbled into all sorts of shapes; and I should think some of it could scarcely be called pieces. Then my thoughts were led in this way: What is the bread an emblem of? Does it not set forth the broken, bruised body of Christ, and the suffering he endured for his people? And was I one of them? And the *cause* of so much suffering, —it was sin. These two lines of Hart's followed:

"Thy bruised, broken body bore
Our sins upon the tree."

The next morning, upon my bed, my mind was much in meditation upon the way Mr. H. had broken the bread, and how forcibly it set forth the intense sufferings of the Son of God, and what sin must be to call forth such sufferings; when these words came to me:

"Brethren, this had never been,
Had not God detested sin."

As your letter has called forth these remarks respecting the Lord's table, I should like to tell you a little of my feelings at the baptizing; though I am afraid I shall fail to convey to you exactly my meaning; and my views upon the subject may not be right. Did you notice, in going down into the water, Mr. H. did not move a step towards us? He did not to me, but took hold of us when we came to him in this way: I do not mind

what you feel in a natural way, I am now going to put you under the water. (I do not mean to say those were his feelings; but it conveyed that to me.) This is what I felt in it, in a spiritual sense. Going down into the water was an emblem of the overwhelming sufferings of Christ; the pool represented the grave of Christ; and as Justice and Death seized upon him, and laid him therein, so, as a sign, Mr. H. took us, and laid us under the water, that we might be buried with Christ in baptism, and rise again with him to a newness of life. I think I shall never forget my feelings at that time, nor at the Lord's table.

We thought and talked of you on Sunday, and I was glad to hear the Lord made a way for you to go to Croydon. We had a good day. I don't know that I ever heard a more heart-searching discourse. Very many felt it so. The text was: "And the door was shut." Mr. H. spoke of the wise and foolish virgins; and why they were called virgins,—because they professed to leave all for Christ; and they all took a lamp of profession. He spoke in such a solemn way of the foolish; of their shining profession, to outward appearance, and that they became members of churches; but being destitute of oil, not having the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, their lamps would go out at the day of death. It made me tremble, and say to myself, I have just made an open profession. Am I one of the foolish virgins? But, as he traced out the wise, I felt I was one of them. He made a nice distinction between the slumbering and sleeping. He said they all did one or the other. The wise slumbered; though they got into a sleepy state, they were not satisfied with it; there was a principle within that wanted it different. "I sleep, but my heart waketh." The foolish slept in carnal security. He spoke of the Bridegroom coming: "And those that were ready went in with him to the marriage; and the door was shut." They were shut in with Christ and his holy angels, with the spirits of just men, casting their crowns at his feet; shut in with God to all eternity; shut out from pain, sickness, sorrow, the world, and Satan. And the foolish were shut out, the Lord telling them that he never knew them. I never knew thee in the sweet manifestations of my love. You despised communion with me. Then again I was lifted up, for I knew I did not do that. He put such solemn questions to the congregation, as to what their religion was founded on, and that the cry of the Bridegroom would assuredly come to every one of them at midnight, the hour of death. But I cannot do justice to anything he said. The evening discourse was upon the grain of mustard seed; and sweetly he traced out the work of the Holy Spirit upon a sinner's heart. What a highly favoured people are the Lord's! They possess durable riches and righteousness.

Yours in love,

May 25th, 1871.

M. A. SHOESMITH.

A SINNER truly convinced is not only convinced of this sin or that sin, but of the evil of all sin,—*Gurnall*.

FORGIVENESS BELIEVED IN AND SOUGHT FOR.

THIS (a discovery that there is forgiveness with God) makes men to hearken after it; it makes the soul like the merchant who hath great riches, all his wealth in a far country, which he is endeavouring to bring home by ships safe to him. If they come, he is well provided for; if they miscarry, he is lost and undone. This makes him hearken after tidings that they are safe there; and, as Solomon says, "Good news," in this case, "from a far country," is "as cold waters to a thirsty soul" (Prov. xxv. 25),—full of refreshment. Though he cannot yet look upon them as his own absolutely, because he hath them not in possession, he is glad they are safe there. So it is with the soul; those riches which it so values are, as to its apprehensions, in a far country. So is the promise that he shall "behold the land that is very far off." (Isa. xxxiii. 17.) He is glad to hear news that they are safe; to hear forgiveness preached, and the promises insisted on, though he cannot as yet look upon them as his own.

The merchant rests not here, but he hearkens with much solicitude after the ships that should bring home his riches, especially if they have in them his "*all*." Hence such ships are called "ships of desire." (Job ix. 26.) Such a man greatly desires the speeding of them to their port. He considers the wind and weather, all the occasions, and inconveniences, and dangers of the way; and blame him not; his *all* is at stake. The soul does so in like manner. It hearkens after all the ways and means whereby this forgiveness may be particularly brought home to it; is afraid of sin and of temptation; glad to find a fresh gale of the Spirit of grace, hoping that it may bring in his pardon from the land of promise. This prepares the heart for a spiritual sense of it, when it is revealed. It so prepares the soul, by giving it a due valuation of the grace and mercy desired. The merchantman in the gospel was not prepared to enjoy the pearl himself, until it was discovered to him to be of great price; then he knew how to purchase it, procure it, and keep it. The soul having, by this acting of faith upon the discovery of forgiveness insisted on, come to find that the pearl hid in the field is indeed precious, is both stirred up to seek after possession of it, and to give it its due. Such a soul saith, "How excellent, how precious, is this forgiveness that is with God! Blessed, yea, ever blessed are they who are made partakers of it! What a life of joy, rest, peace, and consolation do they lead! Had I but the evidence of an interest in it, and the spiritual consolation that ensues thereon, how would I despise the world, and all the temptations of Satan, and rejoice in the Lord in every condition!" And this apprehension of grace also exceedingly prepares and fits the soul for a receiving a blessed sense of it, so as that God may have glory thereby.—*Dr. Owen.*

THE CROOK IN THE LOT.

“Consider the work of God; for who can make that straight which He hath made crooked?”—ECCLES. vii. 13.

THERE'S a crook in my lot; how attractive to me
Would this world with its soft, lying vanities be,
If a thorn were not placed in the midst of my nest,
To teach me to long for a permanent rest!

There's a crook in my lot; but shall I repine
When many have sorrows far greater than mine?
Then what are temptations, and sickness, and loss,
To the anguish of Him who was nail'd to the cross?

There's a crook in my lot; yet loud will I sing,
That out of the dust no affliction can spring;
The tempest and whirlwind obey his command;
And he holdeth the waves in the palm of his hand.

There's a crook in my lot; the straight became curved
As soon as from righteousness sinners had swerved;
No curse will appear, neither sorrow nor pain,
When we are restored to perfection again.

There's a crook in my lot; but the crooked is straight
With the purpose of God; then I'll patiently wait
Till, sanctified wholly, admitted above,
I sing that my woes were commission'd by love.

Obituary.

ELIZA GRACE.—On Jan. 1st, at Brighton, aged 69, Eliza Grace, the relict of John Grace, for many years minister at West Street Chapel in that town.

Mrs. Grace was so well known and esteemed by many of our readers, the memory also of Mr. Grace is still so blessed, that we feel sure some account of her last days will be acceptable to them. Several of our ministers who sojourned, when supplying the pulpit at Galeed, in her house, will feel that they have sustained a painful loss. There was something so genial in her disposition, so genuine in her character, that she won not only the esteem of those who knew her best, but their affection. For our own part, we can only say that we feel to have lost, what is so valuable in such a world as this, a sincere friend. Mrs. Grace could not get out to the public means of late as much as she desired. We believe her heart was at the chapel when, through severe bodily infirmity, she had to remain at home. We have seen her ready to weep, and almost to feel rebellious at being kept from the place of worship where at times she had heard with sweetness and power. She dearly loved experimental preaching, and to have the way the Lord had led her these many years in the wilderness clearly traced out. When this sort of preach-

ing was accompanied with the Lord's power to her heart, it seemed for a time to make her well in body and soul.

But we must say no more. Many at Brighton and elsewhere will feel that they have sustained a great loss in the removal of Mrs. Grace. Her children especially will feel what a gap is left in the family circle. It is their privilege to reflect that they have two beloved parents now in heaven. May they find the God of those parents an all-sufficient help to them in troubles. We add a short account, written by one of Mrs. Grace's daughters, which, we are sure, will commend itself to our readers from its naturalness and simplicity. Those who know Mrs. Grace will see the same unselfish, kindly disposition, the same affectionate regard for those dear to her, displaying themselves on a death-bed which were so unostentatiously manifested in her life.

On Thursday, Dec. 18th, I came from London to help nurse our dear mother, whom I found very ill, though not worse upon the whole than I expected to see her, and able to take an interest in many things. But as each day passed she got worse, so that we did not once have reason to hope or believe that she would be restored to us. It was indeed comforting to me to find how glad and relieved she was to have me to share the nursing. She often said, "How wonderfully it has all been arranged! How I did beg of the Lord to direct you! And it has all been done without my saying anything." This she said many, many times. It seemed as if a great load had been taken off, for she had feared that the strain upon my sister Rhoda would be too much. One night, when I had put her straight, and was going to the chair to rest, she said, so affectionately, "Good night, my dear child; the Lord reward you for all your kindness to me."

All through her illness she was wonderfully sustained and very patient, and so fearful that we should be tired out. Her favourite hymn was:

"Does the gospel-word proclaim
Rest for those who weary be?"

(856 Gadsby), and she wanted me to read it to her the morning after I came. She seemed to enjoy several hymns, and asked often for a hymn or two and a psalm to be read to her. On reading

"O Zion, afflicted with wave upon wave,"

she said, "That is just the hymn I wanted. I was trying to think of it this morning." In the night, seeing Rhoda crying, she said, "I have thought so much about leaving you, but I feel that God will be a Father to the fatherless." And on Rhoda saying, "I feel quite reconciled to parting with you, seeing you such a sufferer," she answered, "*I am so glad;*" and then, as if thinking aloud, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

"Confirmed by one soft secret word,
I seek no further light,
But walk, depending on my Lord,
By faith, and not by sight."

And, "Cheer up, desponding soul;
Thy sins are all forgiven."

One afternoon she said,

"I asked them whence their victory came;"

and wanted it finished for her; and then wished to have read:

"Gold in the furnace tried;"

and the next hymn:

"Happy the man that bears the stroke."

When washing her one morning, she said,

"And pass the river telling
The triumphs of my King;"

and when we had found and read the hymn, she said, "I don't think I can have been deceived, and have deceived so many good people." At another time she said, "It does not signify to me what any one thinks of me; I want to know from the Lord if I am right."

Last Saturday she was quiet for some time, and we thought she was asleep; but she said, "I have not been asleep; I have had a sweet visit. I wish I could tell you about it. Perhaps I ought not to say 'sweet;' but I thought Jesus came into the room, and some one asked, 'who is that?' And I said, 'Don't you know? It is Jesus!' And he said to me, 'My peace I give unto you; my peace I leave with you. 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.'" Sitting by the side of her one day, she said, "I can't think; but the Lord thinks it all for me. I don't think I can be deceived."

She got worse and worse; her breathing was so distressing, and she suffered so much, that talking was a great difficulty; and the last two days we had to go quite close to her to hear what she said. Her sufferings lasted to the end of her life; so that we could rejoice and thank God when the last breath was breathed, and we knew that her sufferings were at an end, and she had entered that rest that remaineth for the people of God.

Jan. 2nd, 1880.

SARAH BUTLER.—On Sept. 22nd, 1879, aged 66, Sarah Butler, of Horton, Gloucestershire.

The loss of this Christian gentlewoman is generally felt in these parts, as she was respected and loved by a large number of God's children. She certainly was a remarkable person, of strong mind and judgment. She stood in a most important position in respect to the church of God for about 16 years, having opened a small cause attached to her house at Horton, and a Sunday School connected with it. At the commencement, the cause waded through much opposition; but the Lord honoured the means with his approbation and blessing. There were 16 members, the greater part of them brought to acknowledge the truth between the opening of the place and her death. The case of one was very remarkable. He was 75 years of age when he came to the room. He was convinced of his state as a sinner and brought into gospel liberty through the preaching there. He did not know his letters; but our dear sister taught him week by week till he could read the Scriptures, which was no small

comfort to him in his last days. I knew him well. He was the first in the room on Sundays, some time before service, with the zeal of youth; and he died in holy triumph, speaking very sweetly of the blood of the Lamb. Many others might be mentioned to whom the place was used in a very signal manner in leading and comforting and establishing their souls.

Many of our labourers in the vineyard knew the subject of this obituary, having preached at Horton from different parts of England. They came there through her instrumentality, and were well persuaded of her love to them and to the cause of truth. She had much grace given her, which she manifested by devoting both herself and her substance to the promotion of that cause.

Space forbids me to mention many events of interest which might otherwise have been related, especially about some individuals in whom Satan worked powerfully to oppose our dear friend; but our gracious God knows how to prepare instruments for his work. Having a firm persuasion of the Lord's mind, and her soul at the time flourishing in the things of God, she was enabled to stand, and one after another were brought down and silenced. To her this was so sweet a mercy that she often repeated it, and was much humbled that the Lord should cause the place to yield any living fruit.

She was favoured with a godly mother's influence, and was the subject of some convictions when a child. But in the Lord's appointed time, when in business in London, she was especially wrought upon by the Spirit, and brought by deep exercise to seek the Lord. I have been surprised to hear her relate the distances she would go in and about London to hear the preached word, attending some place most nights in the week after her business was over. She had a trying path to travel in for some time, having been made spiritually tender and upright, and having the fear of God in her heart. She was made to seek him with an earnest spirit, and also to acknowledge him and his truth, which cost her not a little. She saw what a barren land this world is, and was brought to hunger for heavenly food. To hear the Lord's servants was the strong desire of her soul; and like the escaping of a bird, she hastened away from business employment to the means night by night. O how excellent to her were Christ's ambassadors and their work!

It was in the year 1844, after hearing Mr. M'Kenzie at Eden Street, as she left the chapel and went home, that the Lord sealed home the truths she had heard and her interest therein. This was the time of her deliverance, and joy, and gladness.

She was baptized in the neighbourhood of Horton; and in the face of ridicule from some was enabled to make a public profession in that ordinance, being baptized in an open piece of water; one gentleman designating it a ditch, she said, "Bless God for the ditch, then."

She was made an object of painful interest on account of a malignant cancer that seized the whole of the upper part of her body. We can only say her sufferings were great. When this commenced, some six years ago, there was united prayer on her behalf, various ministers and friends from different parts attending at a special meeting on her account. It was the Lord's purpose to show his power in supporting her mind in this long affliction, and graciously carrying her through instead of removing it. The Lord continued to supply her with the same warmth of attachment to and lively interest in the truth which she had previously manifested, and helped her to prepare herself to hear the preached word up to the last Sabbath, though the pain of body must have been great. She calmly rested upon the wisdom that appointed this path of long suffering and pain, and had abiding comfort in the truth that had been manifested to her.

A few hours before she died, in answer to a friend who was with her, she said, "The Lord gave me this promise this morning: 'I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice;' and this joy no man shall take from me." This promise was often repeated. Apparently without any pain, she at length fell asleep in Jesus. She was borne to her grave by godly men. Fifty others, among whom were many ministers, followed, and saw the remains of their valued sister laid to rest. When I remember her self-sacrifice, her whole-heartedness and uncompromising boldness, truly her life has said, "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth." JOHN LITTLETON.

JAMES HUDSON.—At Oakham, on Sept. 17th, 1879, James Hudson, aged 62.

He was formerly a member of the church at Gornall, under the charge of the late Mr. Burns. In 1864 he came to Oakham to work in his trade as a tailor, and was received as a member of the church at Providence, July, 1865. He took a part in prayer and giving out the hymns at our meetings; and there was a solemnity and reverence in his approaches to the throne of grace which commended itself as being of the Spirit.

He became bereaved of all his family ties which were near him; and for several years before his death his sight failed somewhat, so that he could not wholly support himself. He had several serious illnesses.

In the opening of this year his health began gradually to fail. He wasted perceptibly, but was able to get out amongst us, being always constant in his attendance under the word until within a few weeks of his death. An extract from the last prayer which he uttered in our assembly, and which was spoken in much weakness, was taken down by one present, and is as follows:

"Let us praise thy Name for thy precious care, and thy mercies, and thy benefits bestowed upon us. Let those, O Lord, who know thy Name praise thee, for thou art worthy to be praised for thy mercies and thy goodness shed abroad in the hearts of thy children. Do thou in thy tender mercy support us; and do make us to know our end; that we may trust in thee. We trust in thy Name; we fear thy Name; we honour thee as the Redeemer of thy chosen. And what, O Lord, shall we say more? Thy mercies are lengthened out to us still; even from everlasting to everlasting they are the blessings of thy people. Mercy bringeth life to the soul, and the soul feels it springing up from the well of Bethlehem. O for more of thy blessing, Lord, for more of thy love in our hearts! Lord, we want to honour thee more, and adore thy Name; for thy Name is above every name, and there is no other name given under heaven amongst men whereby we must be saved. Lord, we ask a blessing, that we may feel an interest in the power of thy salvation; saved by the blood of Jesus Christ; saved by the work of righteousness upon Calvary. . . . Do thou in thy tender mercy look down upon us; do thou in thy mercy revive us, and let not the enemy have dominion over us. . . . Remove everything that seems to be against thee. Do thou be a defence unto us. Raise a cry from thy children; and may that cry come unto thee, and deliver them. Do thou bless us as a people, and lead us on to life eternal, that we may bless thee for ever and ever, for thy mercy's sake. Amen."

In April he went to visit his son at Reading, to try change of air, but he returned not any better. He wrote a few lines to a fellow-member from thence.

"My dear Friend,—May the grace of God rest upon and power from on high overshadow you with every blessing that is needed of a heavenly

nature. I must say that the Lord hath blessed me indeed, both in temporal and spiritual mercies. He hath promised to be a merciful God unto the spiritual house of Israel. I have found him so. I arrived safe at Reading yesterday afternoon. My eyes were melted into tears at the goodness of the Lord, seeing that he careth for such an unworthy creature as I am. I cannot add more, feeling so overwhelmed with the goodness of God that I cannot express myself. In much weakness and pain,

"April 9th, 1879."

"Yours in the Lord,

JAMES HUDSON.

These few lines were especially welcome, because they bespoke that the Lord had turned his captivity, for his petitions and conversation for some time had been full of lamentation on account of the hidings of the Lord's face, hardness of heart, and darkness of soul. He returned in a fortnight, and for a short time resumed a little work; but he expressed the firm persuasion "that the Lord was gently taking down his tabernacle." He was really ill about about six or seven weeks; the outer man decaying without marked disease. At times he suffered much pain, which he was enabled to bear patiently. For the most part he was stayed in his mind, and would signify that he was firm on the Rock, the foundation laid in Zion. One of our friends called one Lord's day, and found him much blessed in his soul, and broken under the sweet enjoyment of hymn 483. When asked as to temporal needs, he said, "The Lord is so good, he anticipates them before they come." A friend who called the night before his decease asked him how he felt in his soul. He said, "My mind is stayed on the Rock. He was gently dismissed from his suffering tabernacle the next morning, about 6 o'clock, to be "ever with the Lord." His remains were committed to the earth on the following Saturday. Mr. Hatton kindly gave his services, and a few friends felt it good to be present who believe that he is "well laid in the grave."

Oakham, Oct. 16, 1879.

A. F. PEAKE.

ANN RILEY.—On May 8th, 1879, aged 77, Ann Riley, of Accrington.

When about 33 years of age, she was brought under deep cutting convictions of sin, and for a long time was in great distress and trouble of soul; many times crying out, "What must I do? Where must I go? Can God be just and save such a wretch as me?" She was also much tempted to self-destruction; but was mercifully preserved from committing the dreadful act.

On one occasion she told a friend a little of the exercise of her mind; but after this Satan set in upon her and told her she was deceived and was deceiving others. This distressed her mind so much that she went eight miles to tell her friend not to pray for her, as she felt she must be lost. She could not rest day nor night.

About this time Mr. A. B. Taylor came to preach at King's Row, a place near where she lived. She went to hear him, and her expression was: "He traced me out step by step, all through my trouble; so much so that I thought some one must have told him all about me." She thus got a little relief at this time, and these words were given her: "A remnant shall be saved." She said a little hope seemed to spring up within her, and a "who can tell? Perhaps I may be among the remnant." And it pleased the Lord soon to confirm her little hope with these words: "Let not your heart be troubled. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." She has said, "I felt my burden, my trouble to be all gone, and I shouted, 'I'm saved! I'm saved!' and I sang and blessed and praised the dear Lord." Such was the overpower-

ing emotion of joy that she took up her large Bible in her apron, and ran to her husband, a man that feared God above many, to tell him what great things the Lord had done for her soul; and they rejoiced together in the wonderful love, grace and mercy of that God who saves poor sinners from hell. The 103rd Psalm was a sweet portion to her soul.

But she, like many others of the Lord's dear people, found that her joy was but of short duration. She was soon brought down into a low place. Her joy was turned into sorrow; her hope seemed to have perished. She had to walk in much darkness, her adversary saying, "Where is now thy God?" And strong temptations came upon her to destroy herself; but she was kept by the power of God. In this trouble she again felt she must be lost; and her enemy said to her that she must have as much fresh air as she could get while she lived, for she would soon be shut up in hell. For this purpose she left her home and family, determined to walk as far as she could, and then lie down and die in her distress and misery. But she had not got far from home, when these words came with much power into her mind: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." This caused her to return home, and enabled her to hope in the mercy of Him who regardeth the prayer of the destitute.

Some time after this, believers' baptism was much impressed upon her mind; and her heart was so much enlarged that she ran in the way of the Lord's commandment. She was enabled to come before the church at Accrington, and was well received, and was baptized in the Name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,—Israel's One God.

By the grace of God she was enabled to adorn the doctrine of God her Saviour with a consistent walk and conversation. Nevertheless, her path in life was not a smooth one. After the loss of a good and gracious husband, she had many trials to endure. She had a very large family to struggle with, but she had a good God, and in the depths of poverty, adversity, and trouble, he did not leave her, but proved himself to be a Father to the fatherless, and the Judge of the widow. He many times supported her heart with these words: "The eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

When her family was grown up, and settled in life, the dear Lord provided her a comfortable home with one of her sons. Several years before she died, the Lord was pleased to deprive her of her sight; but tribulation had so worked patience, submission, and resignation in her heart, that she was most blessedly enabled to say, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good."

"Nor let me drop a murmuring word,
Though the whole world were gone;
But seek enduring happiness
In thee, and thee alone."

She esteemed it a great blessing to be favoured to meet with the dear saints of God; but in the latter part of her life she was not able to attend chapel very often, through weakness and infirmity of body. The last time she met with us, she was conveyed to chapel in a cab. She entered the chapel during singing; and these words came so sweetly into her mind: "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! Blessed are they that dwell in thy house," that she felt it to be a Bethel indeed to her soul. She was as one

"No more a stranger or a guest,
But like a child at home."

She said to her daughter-in-law, "It is the last time I shall meet with the Lord's people here."

A few days after this she was taken ill. Her daughter-in-law sent for the doctor; but she said, "The doctor can do me no good. I feel satisfied I shall not get better this time; and I do not wish to get better; for I have a desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better." I frequently visited her, and always found her company and conversation good. In her last affliction she was wonderfully supported. Hymns 993, 472, 483, were much blessed to her. One of the deacons calling to see her, she said, "I have very nearly finished my course; but his rod and staff comfort me. Christ has taken away the sting of death." After this she got much weaker, and it was evident that her end was near. After a short sleep, she lifted her arms, and said, "Christ is my Rock, my only Rock." The enemy was not permitted to harass her. She requested the 23rd Psalm to be read to her, and repeated, "Thy rod and staff they comfort me. He is precious." After this she fell on sleep in the arms of her beloved Christ. "And those that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

J. EDDISON.

JANE WRIGHT.—On August 10th, 1879, at Croydon, in her 67th year, Jane Wright, widow of John Wright, formerly of Brighton and of London.

Our dear mother was born in Oxfordshire, in 1813. The following incident of her early years was mentioned by her to Mr. Covell on his last visit previous to her illness, and will supply as much as can be said of this period of her life. Her mother was a gracious woman, but, living in a village where there were few opportunities of hearing the truth (though it was visited occasionally by Mr. Roff and Mr. Gorton), she was glad of spiritual conversation with any fellow-pilgrim whenever the rare chance occurred. On one such occasion, our mother, as a child, happened to be in the room, and understood sufficient of the conversation to know that it was about religion, and that it seemed to make the speakers strangely happy. The desire was implanted in her heart to have such a religion as that; and she went into a corner and prayed, "O Lord, do give me the same religion as my mama has, that I may be as happy as she is." "This," she said, "was the first real prayer I ever uttered."

When about 21 years of age she went to the Isle of Wight with an elder sister for the benefit of her health; and it was there that the Lord met with her, under the ministry, in Brading Church, of a Sir Henry Thompson, of whom she was never able to ascertain anything beyond the fact of his subsequent early death. The conviction of sin appears in her case to have been very deep, nor was she brought into the full liberty of the gospel for two or three years. On leaving the Isle of Wight she was led in God's providence to London, and was brought under the sound of the truth as proclaimed by the late Mr. Abrahams. It was heard with such power and relish that her heart clave at once to that people. Under his ministry she obtained the longed-for deliverance from bondage; and, on expressing a wish to join the church, was at once accepted, and remained in church fellowship for 30 years.

During the earlier part of this time, there being no family cares to keep her at home, she was a very diligent attendant on the means of grace. Every evening, except Saturday, found her in some chapel where the truth was preached, and this notwithstanding much bodily weakness and pain. Under the ministry of honoured men of God, who have now been gathered home to their rest (but particularly under that of

Mr. Irons), she was favoured with many blessed seasons, the savour of which seemed to remain on her spirit during the whole of her subsequent life.

In 1852 she married in the Lord; and in 1867 the family removed to Brighton, where she became a member of Mr. Vinall's church, continuing in fellowship till he removed to London, after which she attended at Galeed.

In 1875, providence seemed to point to a removal to some place nearer London; and at length Croydon was chosen for the sake of the ministry of Mr. Covell. Soon after the removal into the new house, her husband and daughter were taken ill; the latter recovered, but the former was taken to his rest. His end was assured peace; and his memory is revered by his children, and cherished by all who knew him. In reference to this visitation, our dear mother observed only a few days before her death that she should have doubted whether she had followed the guidance of providence in moving from Brighton had not the step been manifestly approved by Mr. Covell's ministry being much blessed to one of her children.

We now come to her last illness. She had continued in her usual health, which was never good, till the beginning of August, when she suffered from slight congestion of the lungs and liver. On a doctor being sent for, he spoke very sanguinely as to the issue. She, however, even at this time, seemed under the impression that the illness was more serious, and begged him to tell her if there was any danger, as she was not afraid to die. He assured her there was none. On Thursday, August 7th, she was seized during sleep with a paralytic stroke, and lay in an almost unconscious state for twelve hours. The breathing at one time became so feeble that the end was feared. In answer to earnest prayer, full consciousness was restored, and was continued with but slight intermission till her death. On finding that some change had taken place, she expressed a firm conviction that the illness would be fatal, and begged the Lord to cut the work short, saying she was only longing to go home. It appeared from what she said subsequently that this conviction arose in the first place from a period of special blessing she had enjoyed under Mr. Hull's ministry while at Hastings a few weeks previously, the presence of the Lord being also vouchsafed in a marked degree on her return. This had led her to anticipate something; and she now was fully persuaded that it was sent to prepare her for a dying hour. On her son taking his turn in watching at her side, she gave him much wise, tender, and loving counsel about the future, expressing also her own love for the "pure truth," and the solid comfort it gave her at such a time. She trusted his way might be made as plain through life, in all its trials and difficulties, as hers had always been. She frequently exhorted her two children, with tender emphasis, to cleave to each other and to the Lord.

The following are some of her sayings during these last few days of her earthly pilgrimage. On her speaking of her poor sinful body, her daughter said, "All you want is patience." "Yes," she said, "and the Lord's presence."—"Are you in any pain?" "No, only so weary.

"Weary of earth, myself, and sin;"
—how does it go on?" On being told, she said, "Yes, that is it; that is it." At another time: "Whether I can speak at the last or not, I am all right. I am founded on the Rock, Christ." Her daughter said, "It is hard work to part with you, darling, for you have been my only companion." She said, "Yes, but don't want to keep me. Pray the Lord to make a short work of it." It being said, "O that we may meet above! That is the great thing," she replied, "I have not a doubt of it;

we shall all meet around the throne." Very frequently she prayed for strength and patience to endure the Lord's will. "Do support and strengthen me; do give me patience and keep me quiet, for Christ's sake. O! do give me strength. I am such a poor creature; I can do nothing." On its being said,

"Then farewell to evil, a final farewell,
Shut in and for ever with Jesus to dwell,"

she said, "Yes, yes." At another time, "Examine yourself, and see that your religion is all right before you come here; for there is no time to think about anything but the poor body now." On her daughter saying, "You know what Mr. Covell so often says: 'Hold out, faith and patience! A few more steps, and we shall be over the Jordan.'" She said, "Yes, that is it, that is it." Again, when suffering much pain, she said, "The first 'Come and welcome' will make amends for all." At another time, she said, "What my Saviour suffered in the garden! How he must have loved his people!" Seeming to be thinking how great his sufferings must have been compared with hers, painful as they were to witness. But not once during the illness, as far as we could judge, was the enemy permitted to harass her for a moment; not once did she give expression to the slightest doubt, fear, or trembling.

It only remains to say a little of the last few hours of her earthly career. For two hours on the Sunday morning the breathing was so feeble that every breath seemed as though it must be the last. However, she rallied a little during the morning; and the final attack of difficult breathing did not commence till about four o'clock in the afternoon, and continued till 9.20, becoming so distressing that those around her longed and prayed for the end. She suffered much from thirst; but being unable to swallow, her lips could only be moistened. It was, of course, impossible for her to say much during this time, but all she did say was indicative of the same quiet assured confidence and peaceful rest that had characterized her utterances from the first. About nine o'clock she became unable to articulate, but continued to press the hands of her children when asked if she was still conscious and still happy. About a quarter past nine this ceased, and the breathing showed that the end was now certainly close at hand. Her eyes had been so continually closed since the first attack (except when opened with difficulty to see any one for a moment), that the light had been placed as usual so as to entirely shade them. Finding she was now unable to return the pressure of our hands, the light was brought near her face, that we might have a last look at her features. To our intense joy and surprise we found that her eyes were widely open, illuminated with an almost unearthly brilliancy and "gazing stedfastly" upwards, with a look that seemed distinctly expressive of the deepest adoration, mingled with rapture and surprise. This indescribable reflection of some heavenly vision was but for a few brief moments. No sooner had we begun to realize its wondrous beauty than the eyelids slowly drooped, the chest ceased to heave, and the ransomed spirit took its flight to Him whom perhaps it was permitted to see while as yet one organ of the body could still give some expression to the emotions of the soul. Thus died a most loving, tender mother. "Her children arise up, and call her blessed."

"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." (1 Cor. xiii. 3.) Notwithstanding this plain warning, men have confounded alms-giving with true religion; and hence have in many languages called it charity.—*Owen,*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

MARCH, 1880.

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

GOD'S GREAT GIFT AND SURE TOKEN.

A SERMON BY THE LATE MR. JOHN WARBURTON, PREACHED IN
LONDON, DEC. 25TH, 1842.

It is a very common thing for a minister to take a text upon different seasons and times; and as this is called Christmas day, the birthday of Jesus, probably it will be expected that I shall choose a text which refers to that period. Well, I thought of it, and tried all I could to get a subject about the birth of Jesus, for I thought the people would expect it. But, my dear friends, instead of getting a subject upon the birth of Christ, the subject of his death came into my mind, and I could not get away from it; so that I think the best way will be to keep Christdays all the days in the year.

My text then must be as follows :

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"—ROM. VIII. 32.

What a blessed and precious truth this is for you poor souls who can do nothing, think nothing, desire nothing, have nothing that is good except what God gives! What a mercy it is that you have nothing to do! "He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" So you see it is all couched in it, all tied in it, all fastened in it, and all complete in it.

By the help of God, we shall notice—

I. These *characters* who are mentioned as "*us all*."

II. The apostle tells us here that "God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for *us all*."

III. He tells us that with him he freely gives us "all things."

I. Now, with respect to the persons included in the words "*us all*" in our text, it is very evident, and we do not need to take up any of your time to prove that the apostle does not mean all Adam's posterity. It is very evident that all Adam's posterity have not all good things given to them. There are tens of thousands who are ignorant of God, who go on to fill up the measure of their iniquity, and who will be damned at last for their sin. The Lord has described the persons contained in this

word "*us*." He has set them forth in the Scriptures as his own nation, his people, his kingdom, his inheritance. Thus David says, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." So that there is a nation which God owns as his nation, and of which he is King and Lord. "I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." How striking is that petition of David! "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people; O visit me with thy salvation; that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thy inheritance." Now I do not think that David meant literally the kingdom of Israel; but God's peculiar people amongst them—a spiritual nation. Thus we see the apostle Peter completely opens this up. As the mouth of God he says, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."

So you see that these mentioned by the apostle as "*us*" are set forth as a *holy nation*. Not holy in their fallen nature; for there are no people on the face of the earth who are so sensible of their unworthiness as his holy nation. There are no people on the earth who groan, being burdened, as do this holy nation. None have such a hateful sense of their unworthiness, of their unholiness. Their cry is, "From the crown of our head to the sole of our foot, we are nothing but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores. We are altogether as an unclean thing." But they are an holy nation in the Lord. They are perfect through his comeliness, which he has put upon them.

What a blessed book is the Bible, when the dear Comforter, who has sweetly penned it, opens it up to our souls, and blesses *us*, the "*us*" of our text, with a sweet faith and an understanding heart, and leads us up into the blessed holiness of Christ, the perfection of beauty! Here Christ's people are all holy; here they stand as perfect as their God. "I in them, and thou in me; that we may be perfect in one." This nation is a holy nation internally, in their hearts; not internally as to their fleshly natures. Do not misunderstand me. O no! Why, I have been in the way six or seven and forty years. I thought I should get better as I proceeded. I wanted to live in peace more; I wanted to feel my mind more with God; I wanted to have the world more under my feet; I wanted to feel this cursed troop of iniquity put down and weakened, and weakened, and weakened. Instead of that, I think it gets, to my feelings, stronger and stronger. So that when I come to feel at times the depravity that is within, I stagger and say, "Can ever God dwell in such a heart as this?" But if there was not a holy kingdom in the heart, my friends, we should never come to hate this unholiness. No, neither I nor you. Come, poor soul, if thy heart is, to thy feeling, as black as the devil can make it; if it is rambling, at times, upon every forbidden object, and thou grieveest at it, and

it is a burden to thee, and thou wantest God to deliver thee from it, there is holiness in thy heart, a holy kingdom of righteousness. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh;" and these two opposites cause that thou canst not do the things that thou wouldst. But this holy nation has holy desires of living to God and to his glory; so that they are a holy nation. This is true of all contained in this word "*us*."

The apostle says they are a *peculiar people*. I cannot talk with you London people about grammar. I cannot quarrel with you about a word; but it appears to me to be a nation with which no other nation is to be compared of all the nations on the face of the earth. They have a peculiar language. No nation is like them. And they are loved with a peculiar love, that has no beginning, and that has no end. It has a height; but there is no top to be found to it. It is a depth; but it has no bottom. When the child of God, one of these "*us*," is sometimes sinking into such depths that he feels he must give all up; when he sinks, and sinks, and sinks, and is afraid he is going into despair, it is not so; he is only sinking into the love that is beneath. He drops into the everlasting arms; and love raises him up, and gives him such a sweet testimony of everlasting mercy, that he hears the words: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Is not this love very peculiar? And has it not very peculiar effects when the soul feels it? He loves his God; he loves the ways of God; he loves the truth of God; he loves the people of God; he loves all that is of God; and he loves every thing that is to the honour of God. So peculiar is this love, when this holy nation feels it, that it can bear any calumnies, any insult, any reproach that can be offered. When love is treated with contempt, it returns kindness, and thus heaps fire upon the heads of the adversaries. It is such a peculiar love that no one can understand it but these who are here styled "*us*"; these alone. Come, poor soul, never mind; if you have ever had a taste of it, ever had a sweet drop of it, it will bear thee through every storm.

Sometimes God describes these persons. It is always the best, my friends, to have God's description. There is no need of having a fine language of flesh and blood to set forth Scripture, for it sets itself forth. I have heard persons sometimes attempt to make a text of Scripture shine by their paraphrasing it; but, my friends, it is God's Word which makes us to shine, and God will have the honour and glory of opening it up himself. The Lord hath set forth these "*us*" as his city. We say of such a person naturally that he is a citizen of such a city, as distinguished from others. We ask a man, Where do you come from? and he replies, "I am a citizen of such a city; there I was born, and there I dwell." Now, God tells us he has chosen Jerusalem the city of truth. God said of literal Jerusalem, the city in the land of Judea, that it was the place where his name should be. As the psalmist writes: "Jerusalem is a city compacted together, whi-

ther the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord." This was the case literally with the Jews. At stated times in the year they travelled up to Jerusalem from every part for their yearly feasts. Now, you know, God says in reference to these, the "us" of our text: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her." Do not mutter; do not come as if you had got nothing of importance to speak about to Jerusalem; "cry unto her;" and tell her "that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received at the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Now, what city was that which David spoke of when he said, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God"? And, again, he says, "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." Isaiah refers to the same when he says, "And they shall call them The Holy people, the redeemed of the Lord; and thou shalt be called, Sought out, a city not forsaken." The Lord Jesus tells us his people are a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid; and the apostle opens it up, and sweetly clenches the grand truth that these "us" are God's city, when he says that they are "no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."

So these blessed ones are citizens of God's city, fellow-citizens with the household of faith, citizens of the city where God the King reigns and rules. Aye, my friends, and what an immutable city it is! All the arts of the devil can never overthrow it, for God has walled it round with salvation. Its foundation is immutable; it is fixed upon a rock. The King eternal, immortal, invisible, with all his glory, dwells in this city, and protects it on the right hand and on the left. What a mercy it is that you and I are amongst its citizens!

But again. God has described these included in this little word "us" in the Scriptures as his household; that is, as his own dear children. Here the word "us" will particularly apply to a family. All the family were conceived in and brought forth out of one womb, that of the eternal covenant; and, bless the Lord, what a sweet and precious view this gives us of this word "us." The babes, the children, the young men, and the grown up in the family, they are all contained in it. I am often brought into the spot of a little babe, when I cannot, dare not, say "Father." But the little babes do belong to the family. If they cannot talk they can cry. When babes are pinched, or hungry, or in pain, you know, they will cry; and when the parents hear them cry, everything must be put on one side to attend to them, to find out what is the matter. Though the child cannot say Father, yet it belongs to the "us;" it is one of the family, and its complaint will be heard.

There may be some poor little babe here to-day. Let me ask you, Would you not think those strange sorts of beings who would turn a baby out of doors merely because it could not talk? If you can only cry to God to save you, confessing that you are

a poor lost sinner, and cannot save yourself; if you can only cry to God to support you because you cannot support yourself; if you can only cry to God to lift up the light of his countenance upon you because you cannot live without it; bless the Lord, he will own you by and bye. It is God who must help the stammerer to speak plainly. No one can come and loose their tongues and teach them to cry, "My Lord and my God" but himself. Poor Thomas! What a striking proof did he afford of this, when he told the disciples that he would not believe except he should see the print of the nails, and thrust his fingers into the Lord's side. Jesus came into the midst of them, and said to Thomas, "Come, Thomas, reach hither thy hand. Here are my hands, Thomas, and here is my side. Here is the place where the spear entered; come, try it, Thomas." "My Lord," exclaimed Thomas, "and my God!" Oh! my friends, when the dear anointing, the holy unction comes in upon the soul, with what plainness of speech does the soul express itself!

These contained in this word "us" are God's household. They are all born of God; they all live at the same table of God; they are all taught the same language; they are all clothed with the same clothing; they are all brought to have the same feelings; and all have the same teachings from God, and as a family they know each other's language. Thus the apostle tells us that they are of the household of God. And Isaiah says, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." Hereby they know each other. I do not say they are never deceived; but they know each other's language, and there is something of such a nature in it that if they have never seen each other's countenances before, they can talk about the things of God to each other's hearts. They are of the same family, and talk about the same things. I was amazingly pleased once when riding upon a coach. I never hardly met with any one who talked about the truth on a coach. But this was an exception to the rule. There happened to be two men sitting near me. One I perceived to be an Arminian, for he began talking about what men ought to do. The other was a poor man, a countryman, a very poor man, who lived about 6 miles from my town, though I did not know him. "Man," he said, "can do nothing." "No," said the other; "he can do a great deal if he will." But the reply was: "He cannot will anything that is good." So I tried the poor fellow a little. I brought forward one or two texts of Scripture, and asked him what he thought of them. "I do not know much," he said, "about texts. But I know that salvation is of grace." "Yes," I said, "the Scripture says so." Then I brought forward one or two Arminian texts, as they are called. This pleased the Arminian very much, and the other could hardly tell what to say. However, he said again, "Salvation is of grace." I said, "How do you know?" He then told me how God had met with him, how he had brought him low, and delivered his soul, and brought him up with joy

and peace. O! my soul felt such a union to him, and said, "Thou art one of the family; thou art one of *us*." I could not keep the tears from trickling down. I got hold of his hand, and blessed God we had talked of these things. "Ah!" said he, "I thought at first you were an Arminian parson; yet somehow or other I did feel there was something at the bottom covered up." We might have been intimate for fifty years. There is a oneness when we can speak of our weakness and helplessness, and of God's power and the riches of his grace.

These "*us*" are all united in their hearts together in truth and love. It does not matter whether they are Independents or Baptists; whether they are Churchmen or Wesleyans. "Ah," say you, "I did not think old John would have been as soft as that. Why, you have got a soft spot yet." Why, let me tell you we have a good many among us who were Wesleyans, and who know the truth. At first the poor things had not judgment to discern it; but God brought them to see its preciousness and sweetness, and to feel the glory of it. So that these *us* are God's household. They are taught by the same Spirit the same language; and they must live in the same way.

II. But let us just notice, in the second place, the kindness of God in freely giving his beloved Son for us: "He spared not his own Son, but freely delivered him up for us all." Freely delivered him up for us all! What grace, what boundless love, what mysteries of immortal glory are wrapped up in this gift! Can we wonder at the angelic host singing so melodiously in the air, that they astonished the shepherds with their grand music? for I feel sure it was grand. I have thought sometimes I should have liked to have been there, to have heard it. But there will be still grander music, my friends, in heaven by and bye. We are to sing with golden harps. Perhaps thou sayest thou canst not sing at all. Ah! poor soul, if thou canst sing in thy heart of the riches of God's grace, to the riches of his honour, thou wilt sing upon a golden harp to the honour of the riches of his grace. The angels cry out in their song, "Glory to God in the highest." What is the highest? Why, was it not a great height to sing the glory of God in creation? the glory of God in stretching out the heavens as a curtain, in fixing the sun as the grand bridegroom in it; in planting the stars in their glorious lustre; the ten thousand million worlds which exceed all human knowledge to comprehend? What! Is not this the highest? O no! What? Is not this glory to God in the highest, that God should speak particles of dust into man, that he should join particles of dust into a machine with eyes, nose, ears, hands, fingers, legs, and veins, so that it baffles the greatest men to open its deep mysteries? Was not this the highest praise of God? David praised God for this when he said, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made; and that my soul knoweth right well." But the angels sang glory to God in the *highest*; the top, the grand immortal top of all glories, that are worthy of the glory of a God, even "peace

on earth, and good will towards men." Why, how can that be? In this Babe of Bethlehem which was laid in the manger was the Mighty God, equal with the Father. Oh! my friends, what a glory! What an immortal grandeur and glory was wrapped up in this Babe! The infant who was carried by his mother as a babe, and swaddled and nursed, had the whole creation at his own disposal.

Here is the grand display of glory. In giving up his best beloved Son, every perfection of the divine nature meets and is glorified. We who are included in this word "*us*," are saved with an everlasting salvation. Sin was completely abolished, and put an end to; the devil was conquered; death subdued; every particular of God's grand perfection shining with unsullied glory. It is "glory to God in the highest," aye, and "peace on earth and goodwill to men." What an immortal and blessed song it appears, my friends, when we come to look at the grand work which he who was equal with the Father had to do, and for which he was given!

"He spared not his own Son." He spared him not? How spared him not? He inflicted all the punishment, the penalties, the wrath, the vengeance that was due to *us* upon him, that we might be saved with an everlasting salvation. Here is the grand immortal glory;—that as the Bondsman, though equal with the Father, and the brightness of the Father's glory, he suffered for our sins, as the apostle says, according to the Scriptures; yea, and he sat down at the right hand of the Father, full of majesty and glory.

"He that spared not his own Son." If you come to look at Gethsemane's garden, he was not spared. There he was in an agony. He sweat great drops of blood falling down to the ground. Not for his own sin, my friends; but for the sins of his people, which the Father had willingly put upon him, and the Son had willingly received. Blessed be his holy Name! He suffered the just for the unjust, and brought in an everlasting righteousness, wherein his church is complete for evermore as in him.

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all;" so that the blessed ones he died for might be sheltered in him, and delivered out of every probability and possibility of damnation, and brought home to God with joy and peace, and glorify him for the riches of his grace. The apostle Paul says, "I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." Now, the apostle, you see, does not, like some, refer men to this man's opinion, and that man's opinion; but he says, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I received." What was received? Why, the truth of the atonement, of the death of Christ, and his completely-finished work. "I received." How received? Why, he tells us when

he is giving an account of the state he had formerly been in, of what a persecutor of the church of God he had been, how he hated the Lord Jesus Christ, how holy he thought he was. He says he had letters from the chief priests to go to Damascus, and there to bring to judgment all those that called on the Name of the Lord Jesus. But as he came near Damascus, we read, suddenly there shined a light round about him, a light from heaven; and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" He then tells us he was struck blind, and led into the city, and for three days and three nights he neither ate nor drank. Then God appears unto Ananias in a vision, and tells him to go to one of his poor servants, Saul of Tarsus, for says God, "Behold, he prayeth." Poor Ananias! He was flesh, and like us all, and he said, "Lord, I have heard that this man is an enemy, that he is persecuting thy people, and that he has come here to take us all to prison." He was therefore afraid to go; but the Lord said unto him, "Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles." Ananias then goes, full of joy and full of peace; and, entering into the house, says, "Brother Saul"—Brother! See how the feeling comes home, that he is one of the "us" of our text. "God sends me to thee with a message. God has a work for thee to do." Divine power entered into the heart of Saul; he received the blood of Christ into the conscience. He had the testimony, not only in the Scriptures, but in his own heart. Then he arose from the earth, and ate and drank, and was baptized in the name of Christ. So, you see, he went to others with a message that he had received when he testified of the sufferings of Christ, and that they had accomplished their grand end; that he gave himself for us, died for us, and wrought out for us complete redemption. He did not go with the message without having the preciousness of it in his heart. What a difference there is between a man hearing of these things, and knowing them by experience! A man may bring forward text after text in support of his views, and the people may remain as cold as winter, his words having no more power upon the people's hearts than they have upon the pews in which they are sitting. But it is very different if a man has been where Paul was,—three days, and three nights, as it were, in the belly of hell. "Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men." He could testify that Christ had completed his grand work, for he had the testimony of it in his heart.

The apostle says, "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." So that Christ was not spared. He completed redemption; he suffered the just for the unjust; brought in eternal peace, and entered into the inheritance; and sits at the right hand of the Father. "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Ah! my friends, what

a mercy it is that we have a high Priest who hath entered into the heavens, who needs not, like the high priests of old, to offer his incense again and again; but has for ever put away sin by the sacrifice of himself! And bless his dear name, he shall come the second time without sin unto salvation, and they that look for him will surely come to enter into the sweetness and into the glory of it.

My friends, can a child of God be too much here? Ah! says some poor soul, I only want to be once. If God would but indulge me once with a testimony that Christ died for me, I should be satisfied. You would be satisfied while God blessed you with the enjoyment of it; but when the enjoyment left you, and the devil came, and the storms arose up, thou wouldst want it again; and when thou hadst had it twice, thou wouldst want it a third time. I do really think I have had tokens of it hundreds of times within these forty years; and I confess to you I am as anxious for it as ever. I can never lose the feelings of Jonah when he said, "Yet will I look again unto thy holy temple." It is "once again" whenever the Lord's presence is withdrawn. Whenever we come into darkness and clouds, and temptations and fears, and deaths, it is "Once again lift up the light of thy countenance. Once again let me have the blessed knowledge that thou hast died for me, and that thy finished work is mine. Will God bless my soul with another testimony of it? O that I may once again have the enjoyment of it in my heart!"

I begin to feel an inclination to leave the subject for the present. I cannot stand too long. Some people say that I preach in general very short sermons. When a gentleman once told me he was surprised I gave over so soon, I replied, I thought I preached as long sermons as any that he heard from the pulpit. He said he was sure that I did not. "Well," I said, "will you look at the clock when the minister gives out his text, and when he has gone on for some time and finished his introduction, then see how long he was occupied with that. Then take away the time he was occupied in this introduction, which perhaps had very little to do with the sermon." My method is, when I have read the text, to dive, if I can, into the subject at once, speaking whatever the Lord gives me to say. I think that the time will always be long enough and short enough, if we speak so long as God carries the sweetness and power of his word to the heart, and stop, whether in prayer or preaching, when the Lord has done with us. My friends, it is not the length of time nor the shortness of time, but the divine power, and the sweet anointing and the blessed unction of the Holy Ghost, which is of importance. O how was the pride of my heart once broken at my own place of worship! I had very sweet liberty in preaching. Knowing that one of the poor dear souls was in very great bondage, I took a text suited, as I thought, to her condition, and entered into it as well as I could. I had, as I have said, very sweet liberty; and I thought, Ah! she will be delivered. She will bless

the Lord. But when I came into the vestry I found the poor soul ten times more miserable than before. She could not get a bit of comfort. The next Lord's day morning I was reading the chapter; and when I came to the words: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" God was pleased to bless the Word to her heart. She came into the vestry with a countenance like that of an angel. Do you not think, now, that the pride of my heart was humbled because God had not blessed my preaching? I thought I should have glory in her case for flesh and blood.

God bless what I have spoken, and he shall have the glory.

BREATHINGS AFTER CHRIST.

"What is thy petition? . . . and what is thy request?"—*ESTH. v. 16.*

JESUS, Saviour, thou canst see
That my heart does pine for thee;
Other lords I do disown;
Thou art mine, and thou alone.

Do thy beauty manifest;
Give me to believe I'm blest;
Grant me this for which I sue,—
Let me plain thy sufferings view.

In the garden let me see
Drops of bloody sweat for me;
Then to Calvary let me go,
There to see fresh scenes of woe.

Give me there to see by faith
Thee, the Conqueror over death;
View thee dying in my place,
Scene of matchless depths of grace.

Show me all my sins forgiven,
Saved from hell, and saved to heaven;
Let me thy atonement see,
For the whole elect and me.

Send thy Spirit from above;
In me shed abroad thy love;
Seal me by thy Spirit thine;
Tell me plainly thou art mine.

Let me thy great love explore;
Bid me doubt and fear no more;
Grant me more of heaven to know
Ere I'm call'd from earth to go.

Pay thy visits to my heart;
Joy and peace and love impart;
Let me be what I profess,—
Servant true of righteousness.

THE WISE AND FOOLISH BUILDERS.

(Concluded from p. 66.)

BUT the wise man digs also deep into the revealed mystery of God's truth in Jesus, and thus he casts aside first one false and unsuitable view of Christ and the gospel, and then another; and at length, dug out of all hope in God as a Lawgiver, and self as in whole or in part his own Saviour, or in Christ as its respects false and partial views of him, he rests upon God in Christ Jesus as all his desire, and all his salvation; his Rock, his foundation, his All and in all.

Thus a man under divine leadings, digs deep, and never resting finally in the flesh, digs on and on until, rejecting all false refuges and foundations of sand, he by divine grace reposes himself, wearied and self-despairing, upon a covenant God in Christ Jesus. In the process of deep digging he may be tossed with troubles and not comforted; but the end is blessed when he reaches the rock, and rests in simplest faith and hope upon a complete Saviour, and all-sufficient Redeemer.

But no unregenerate and foolish man can ever reach so far. If he even go beneath the surface at all, he is sure to rest short of Christ. He has not the penetrating mind of the Spirit, so he cannot possibly search all these things, and judge rightly between false and true, flesh and spirit. Hence he is sure to begin and end in the flesh; resting in some false notion of God, some false notion of self, or some false notion of the Lord Jesus.

But here we must remark one thing,—that the superficial character is the one likely to make the greatest show soonest. To dig deep for a foundation takes a deal of labour and a deal of time. There is so much under ground and out of sight work going on, that for a length of time it may appear that, as to building, there are no signs of it. But if a man builds on the surface, or very near it, then there is soon a fair show. So it is in spiritual things. If a man digs deep, into divine discoveries of a holy God in the law, of worthless self, and an all-sufficing Jesus, it may appear to himself and others for a long time that there is no building at all. It seems all digging up, and no building up. Whereas the superficial character has in the meantime got a fine showy mansion of vain confidences, fleshly hope, false affections, erroneous knowledge, for himself and others to admire. Wait, however, a while. "An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning," says the wise man; "but the end thereof shall not be blessed." It is better for many a day to be at the painful hard work of deep digging, and at length rest on the Rock of ages, than, despising such labour, to run up some hastily-built structure in the flesh, which, while it makes a fair show therein, is devoid of a good foundation. When the time of real trial comes, the house of the wicked will fall to ruins, being destitute of a foundation, and having the curse of God in it; but

the house of the wise man, founded and built up in Christ, shall stand.

This brings us to another point—the time of trial. The Lord represents the rains descending, the floods rising, and the winds beating with violence upon the houses built by the wise and foolish builders. The wise man's house stands the shock, and bears the trial, being built up by the grace of God upon the rock; but the sandy foundation of the foolish man being washed away, his house shakes, and falls, and sinks into ruin. By these figures the Lord represents to us the time of trial which shall try every man's work of what sort it is. Heaven, earth, and hell will, one day or other, act together in the trials of men's foundations. This trial of his faith is precious, as it respects the wise man, for it only proves his work to be good; whereas it will overthrow the house of the wicked, and prove the insufficient nature of his foundation.

It is here to be observed that the words of our text imply that there is a something in the wise man's foundation adequate to support him under all circumstances. "Although the fig-tree should not blossom, neither fruit should be in the vines, the labour of the olive should fail, and the fields should yield no meat, the flock should be cut off from the fold, and there should be no herd in the stalls;" enough still remains in God in Christ Jesus for faith, for hope and for love, for time and for eternity. Therefore still, the man, as he rests upon him, may say, "Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." The man built on the rock cannot be overthrown completely by anything from above, below, within, or around; whereas, the foolish man will be overthrown by these things, separately or unitedly; and this entire overthrow is the proof of his sandy foundation, and the evidence of his folly.

Now, we will next consider some of these overthrowing or testing trials. And, first, we may divide the period of trial under three great heads; the trials of life, the trial of death, and the trial of eternity. Happy indeed is that wise man who by divine grace so builds as to pass safely through them all.

Some foolish persons may to appearance hold out with a hope through life, though I believe time and trial, even during life, will frequently reduce that hope to a mere nominal and inoperative thing. The foolish virgins' lamps go out, even in this life, as to light with liveliness. The practical power of truth entirely dies away in them, and they sink back into the world and a dead formality, beneath the trials in the way of their once more lively profession. Still, they may continue to have some sleepy unimportant hope that it will be all well with them in the end. They may even manage to carry this false hope with them through the hour of dying. But even suppose the house of the foolish man's hope not to have been utterly overthrown in life or death, it has still the third great testing period to undergo; and here it must be overwhelmed with unspeakable and sudden ruin.

Bunyan's words in the "Pilgrim's Progress" concerning one Ignorance will prove too true. "Then I saw that there was a way to hell even from the gates of heaven."

Now the things that will try a man's foundation are manifold. First, there are things from heaven—"the rain descending." Such are—

1. The Lord's bringing forth to the light the real nature or character of his gospel, and truth concerning Jesus, and the real character of the man who is interested in it, and who, having a true spiritual, living faith, is really resting upon the Rock of ages. (John xii. 48.) Of course, this gospel trial, these showers of gospel judgment, so to speak, or declarations of what the Word of God really says, while they will refresh and delight the children of truth (Mic. ii. 7), will be the overthrow and confusion of the false children of Zion (Isa. xxxiii. 14). Then a mere notional religion, though the notions may be sound, or an ignorant religion which supported the soul upon things untrue as to God, self, or Christ, will come to nothing, and leave their possessors houseless.

2. The Lord's bringing to light the real nature of the holy law, in the extent of its requirements, the spirituality and thought-controlling nature of its precepts, and the severity of its punishments denounced against sin. This will try a man's foundation; for it is one thing for a man to think he believes in Christ, and hopes in God's mercy, when he only sees and feels himself a little transgressor against a little law; and quite another for him to still hope and trust when he sees that he is an infinite transgressor against the law of the only true and living God.

3. God's providences will try a man's foundation, and that whether they be prosperous or adverse. Many a professor has made utter shipwreck of his hope in a fair gale of worldly prosperity. Many another has suffered shipwreck in a great storm of adversity. Therefore Agur wisely prays for neither poverty nor riches, lest prosperity should make him an atheist, or adversity a thief. Thus divine providences may undermine and overthrow the fair house of a sandy-foundation professor.

Secondly, there are things from within and around. Things as to the heart and the life that now is: "the floods came." A man's sins may rise up with their condemning power and aggravations in his memory. His heart may, restraints being taken off, and God permitting it, manifest under temptation its unsearchable wickedness. Who knows what the heart is capable of, in circumstances suitable for the development and display of its hidden and slumbering iniquity? Hazael said: "What! is thy servant a dog?" Elisha only replied: "You shall be a king." Well, then, the heart may put forth its wicked power and deceitfulness. Its various evil desires and propensities may work with awful power and seductiveness.

Again. The men of the world, yea, the professors of religion, yea, the people of God themselves, may combine to persecute

and crush a man. He may meet with avowed enemies, and false friends, and wavering, weak supporters; his name blasphemed, his words misinterpreted, his acts misrepresented, his person or property endangered. Now, things of this kind, rising floods like these, within or around, will try a man's foundation. Happy the man who, being really built up upon Christ, finds Christ a firm enduring support when past sins, present corruptions under temptation, and outward trials come daily round about him like waters.

Lastly, there are things from beneath; or rather from hell and Satan, who is called the prince of the powers of the air: "The winds blew, and beat upon that house." Satan desired to have Peter, that he might sift him as wheat; and doubtless, had Peter not been in Christ, built upon the Rock, the house of his faith would have suffered a complete overthrow. Satan desired to have Job; and we know from Scripture what work he made with him; but still, being really built upon Christ, his Redeemer who lived, after the Lord had tried him he came forth as gold. His house was not overthrown, though the flesh was broken to pieces. Satan desired to have David, Hezekiah, and others; and Scripture in their cases also shows us what a powerful adversary he is, and warns us to watch and pray against the power of the Evil One. Indeed, no one knows how great his power is over corrupt human nature. He drove Cain to murder, Saul to the witch of Endor, and Judas to the betrayal of his Master, and then to suicide, fresh with the innocent blood of the Son of God upon his soul.

Here, then, again, happy is the man who can stand the beating of the wind of the powers of darkness. Now, no man can really do this but he who is built up upon Jesus, who endured the hour of infinite trial, and of the powers of darkness, and came forth triumphantly from all; for sin and Satan had nothing in him.

In the last place, we have briefly to notice the mark and evidence given by the Lord in the words of our text of a man building upon the Rock. "Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like." Now, the sayings of Christ may be divided under two heads: 1, Those which are especially matters of faith, and set forth himself as the rock; and, 2, Those which more particularly direct the practice of his disciples. In the former he exposes all false foundations, and declares himself to be the one only support and refuge of his people. In the latter he exposes all false ways, inconsistent with the gospel and true profession of it, and exhibits that which becometh the man who professes repentance, and assumes to be in him. Now, the hearing and doing by those who come to him, or his professed disciples, of the first sort of sayings, is their listening and attending to these things, understanding them, embracing and obeying them in their hearts. In short, a part or result of their deep digging, whereby they discover

and refuse the false foundations which Christ's Word exposes, and discover, and choose, and cleave to in judgment, will, and affection, the Lord Jesus Christ, a complete Saviour, as the Rock of their foundation. Thus they are led to depend upon him for pardon and righteousness, for life, for will, for love, for power, for all. This is being disciples indeed, and hearing and keeping his doctrinal words. This, too, in truth, is the beginning and sum of all doing, for "this" (says Christ) "is the work of God, that ye believe or him whom he hath sent."

The hearing and doing of the second sort of sayings entirely arises from or flows out of this first hearing and obeying. Without faith it is impossible to please God; and unless a man first look to Christ for righteousness, and then to Christ for strength to serve him in all things because he desires so to do, he never does anything as he ought to do it. This David points out when he sings, "He set my feet upon a rock, and ordered my goings." And again: "I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only."

Thus, then, by a heart doing or keeping of Christ's doctrinal sayings, a man avoids false foundations, and finds a rest truly in Jesus. Then, being on the Rock, by and from the hearty doing of his preceptive sayings he manifests that he is on that Rock, and living by the faith of the Son of God, who loved him, and gave himself for him.

Now, the false disciples and foolish builders never get here. Some are for doing; but then they do not do things in the gospel order. By the latter class of doings, or by a kind of obedience to the precepts, which, therefore, they are making secretly their righteousness, and which they are really depending upon themselves to perform, with or without some supposed assistance of Christ's Spirit, they are thinking to build, or even get upon the Rock. Whereas, from the doctrinal words of Christ not being really apprehended by them in their true meaning, they are never brought out of self, and off from the flesh, or placed upon that Rock. Thus, hearing they hear not, and do not understand, and therefore never do Christ's words at all, neither of the one sort nor the other; and consequently are foolish builders. Or if these persons attempt also to do a little in the way of believing, here again they are foolish; their faith is more a law-faith than a gospel-grace; their work without the Spirit, and not the Spirit's work in and by them; an effort of the foolish and corrupt natural man, and not the operation of the Spirit of God. Thus, in all these persons doing they do not. Their reliances are really in the flesh. Thus they build upon the sand, and, as the Lord by Malachi says, "they may build, but I will pull down; and they shall be called the border of wickedness, the people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever." Though they in appearance come to Christ, they do not really hear and understand his words; but, misapprehending them, set about a certain sort of doing which they think is a building on the Rock;

but, as it is done in self-reliance and self-righteousness, it is a building off of, not on him; and the day of thorough trial will abundantly prove this.

But, then, others despise doing altogether. They profess to rest in a whole Christ, and to love and rejoice in a free-grace gospel; but then their profession is proved to be false by their not doing practically the things which he says. If, as living stones, they rested on that life-giving Stone, Christ Jesus, then living influences would proceed from him into them, and their conduct would be in some degree squared to the preceptive words of the gospel. Faith, true divinely-produced faith, would conform or assimilate them to the living Stone on which by it they are really resting. But it is not so; and as these persons are no more doers of Christ's words than the false workers already spoken of, they too, in spite of all their correct notions, and free-grace professions, will be found in the end foolish builders. The hour of severe trial, which proves the blessedness of those who have come to Christ, and truly heard his sayings, and from wise and understanding and living hearts really done them, will prove the folly of the foolish builders. These last came indeed in appearance, but they heard without understanding, and acted without Christ, or despised his commandments. Thus they did not his sayings, but walked on in self-deceivings, and perished finally in the total overthrow of their sandy-founded buildings. But the hopes of the wise stood the shock of all trials, and remained firm; for as one writes,

"The hope that's built upon his word,
Can ne'er be overthrown."

DIVINE INTERPOSITIONS.

Dear Friend,—I have felt uneasy lately in keeping back some of the many kind interpositions of the Lord for me, a poor unworthy sinner. I will record them faithfully and minutely as they occurred. My days will soon close; but the few instances may be useful to help and encourage some in their trials. Make what use you please of them, or cast them aside.

Yours very truly,

Camera Square, Chelsea, Sept. 1, 1879.

ALFRED BRANDON.

"Thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation."—Ps. xxvii. 9.

I CAN truly say, with the Psalmist, "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth," &c. (Ps. lxxi. 17). As early as 1833, when truth was dawning on my dark soul, the Lord was pleased to teach me the value of prayer, and his readiness to hear my cry. I was then seventeen, and my dear brothers being opposed to the change wrought in me, would sometimes tease and trouble me. One winter Lord's day evening, my brother William took my crutches away (I was then very lame), and hid them behind

one of the high hedges in the garden, and said, "There; you cannot go to chapel now, as I am sure you will not find your sticks." My heart sank in me, I buried my face, and said, "O Lord, help me." And the spot came clearly before me, and I then went behind the hedge, in the dark, on my hands and knees up the very right path (for there were several), and to the very right place; and putting my hands through the hedge, to my joy felt my helpers, and hastened where my heart had already gone. My own dear brother was confounded, but I could only say, "Bless the Lord for delivering me."

The first part of the inspired Word which came with power to my soul was Isa. xxvi. 4; and that has been drawn forth in trials and deliverances these forty-five years. But O! what ingratitude, unbelief, and hardness has this heart thrown up since that day!

Another instance was as follows: Just a month after my wife died, and I was left with my daughter, her two aunts being in the house with us, on the Tuesday morning a strong impression fell upon me that our house would be broken into. I named it to my daughter; at which she smiled, saying such a thing had never been. But I could not get rid of the deep feeling, and sent for a man to fix a large bell in the upper landing, with a pull in her room, and one in mine, and arranged with her that when she heard them, she should pull the bell and open her window, which faced mine, and that I should do the same. All was quiet that night, and the next, and next; but on Friday night my heart was held in prayer, until I cried out, "Lord, what can this mean?" But I retired, and fell into a sound sleep until about one o'clock; when a noise in the room beneath awoke me. Thinking I might be mistaken, I waited and listened, and then was sure I heard footsteps. I rang the bell, and my daughter also pulled hers, and threw up the window. I said, "They are in the house;" but she tried to appease me, telling me I was nervous. Then there was a noise in the back garden, and all was quiet. I listened, and heard no more. But the morning revealed the matter. The front doors were both injured by a jemmy, and the glass-house at the back broken into; the room under me forced open, and the door leading to the stairs partly broken. But the noise of the bell, doubtless, as a means, caused them to flee, considering it was the police.

It was at the end of the next year that I fell into a very low state of mind; and after much trial and exercise the Lord took an unusual way to deliver me. I fell into a deep sleep, and dreamed I was walking up a certain road. The sun was shining; and suddenly I was stopped by the falling of a small white cloud. And in a moment the voice came: "It is the Lord; ask." I felt a solemn reverence, yet faith and courage; and said, "Lord, hast thou really called me by thy grace? And am I thine?" And the Lord (out of the cloud, which was resting upon my arms) said, in a kind and tender way, "Have I

not given you many proofs of it? It is even so." I said, "Lord, tell me; hast thou really called me to speak in thy name? Is it thy work in me? O tell me!" And he again distinctly said, "Have I not helped thee, and led thee all the way, and proved it to be so?" And with this he caused me to feel the sweetness of his presence. Then I said, "O my Lord, once more I ask. Will my end be blessed and peaceful? And shall I be with thee for ever?" Putting the happiest feeling into my heart I ever felt, he said, "Yes; mine for ever." The cloud then went up, and I went on my way; and soon awoke in the most blessed state of soul I ever felt. And the feeling and effect to me was so manifest, that I really thought I should never doubt again; but, alas! I have many times. Still the Lord thus delivered me; and deliverance from him is deliverance, and blessing from God is blessing, whatever the means and channel he uses may be.

Another gracious interposition was on the evening preceding my daughter's wedding-day. It was eleven o'clock. My niece was staying with us; and we were in the lower room, under the shop. There being no benzoline in the small lamp, my daughter fetched the can, which was full, and, pouring it in too near the gas, both the can and lamp caught fire, and throwing it on the floor, the room was soon in a blaze. Our position was perilous. The only door of exit caught fire, and a chest of drawers, as the burning liquid ran over the room. I called to a good old lady who was with us to escape for her life; and as we three stood on the flames, I lifted up my hands in the most distressing feelings I ever had, and fully believing what I uttered, I said, "We must be burnt this night, and at once!" The words had no sooner escaped my lips than that sweet sentence (which will abide with me for ever) came with blessed timely power: "The Angel of his presence saved them." That moment a new life and power entered into me. I lost all despairing feelings; and although very lame, with boots loose, I hastened through the burning door into the back kitchen, caught up the carpets from the floor, threw them on the flames, which extinguished the part at the door; then, with a sort of unnatural force, threw the drawers from their position. My daughter and niece took courage; and although nearly suffocated with the smoke, by throwing carpets, rugs, and chair-covers upon the flames, they were at last subdued. And thus the Lord mercifully delivered us again. Blessed be his holy Name.

The Lord's presence is our life-token, and the Lord's voice is our love-token. Some time after this sweet help and comfort, my daughter was taken very ill, with something forming in her throat. She lay for several days, getting worse, until we were all alarmed; and the day of severe trial came, and the doctor gave no hope. She could with the greatest difficulty breathe. I sat in my little room, fearing each moment to hear she was gone; but could not see her die. I think I never wept so much

in my life. The person nursing her came down, and said, "It is nearly over; her face is black." My sister, who was staying with her, then came down and said, "Do come down and see her; it will be but a few moments." I arose; and when half way up the stairs, the wondrous relief came: "She will not die, but live." I then, instead of going further, turned into a little ante-room, and falling on my knees, said, "O Lord, if it be so, do speak it again." And he favoured me with the word and the power: "She will not die, but live." O! I felt, I can go into the room now. And to my joy she smiled, and said, "Father, I am better; the lump is gone;" and she soon recovered.

With me it is usual for the good Lord to withhold help until I am utterly helpless; but he never comes too late.

A WORD IN SEASON.

WE announced on the wrapper of our periodical last month the decease of Mr. Pert. At the funeral of our departed friend and brother, which was very numerously attended by those amongst whom, as an aged and faithful servant of God, he was much respected and loved, Mr. Hull, before engaging in prayer, made a few remarks to the following effect. And though we cannot ourselves consider that the removal of a minister in a ripe old age, after he has served his generation, is in itself a token of divine displeasure; and though we would also caution our friends lest, in eulogizing the ministry of the past, they go too far, even to unduly disparaging the ministry of the present (Matt. xxiii. 29-32), and thus grieve the Giver of all spiritual gifts; still we do believe that there is plentiful reason for the self-searching spoken of in our churches. The worldliness, covetousness, carnal ambition, love of praise, love of eminence, envy, evil speaking, and detractions, with numerous other evils, so prevalent amongst us, may well grieve the Holy Spirit, and bring upon us Fatherly displeasure and divine chastisements. May we and our friends, then, hear the following counsel:

My dear Friends,—In approaching the throne of grace at this time, I feel sure there will be found among you who are present much heartfelt sympathy with the bereaved widow and family of our late dear friend, and also with the church, who have now lost their overseer and beloved pastor, who for so many years ministered to them the word of life. In the death of our dear friend Pert we all have sustained a great loss; and although we cannot regret the change, so far as he is concerned, when we consider the eternal state of bliss and blessedness he has entered into, yet, as far as the church of Christ is concerned, it is no small matter that faithful pastors are thus rapidly removed from our midst. We sorrow because they are no more with us in the field of labour; but if we rightly reflect upon the speedy dismissal of one and another, will not the solemn inquiry force

itself upon us: "Is there not a cause?" I remember, when Mr. Philpot, of blessed memory, died, my late dear friend Mr. Mountfort said to me, "I shall watch the effect of this stroke upon the churches. If it causes searchings of heart, and exercises the people of God to humility and repentance before him, I shall hope it will be a profitable dispensation to Zion; but if it should only be as a stone cast into the waters, which for a moment causes a few ripples on the surface, and then all becomes so quiet that you cannot perceive there has been any disturbance or movement at all, I shall then fear there are other sore reproofs and chastenings in store for the church of Christ." And now I ask those of you who, as well as myself, have closely observed the course of events in the church from that time, must we not confess that it has been a declining and downward one? How many faithful ambassadors of truth have been called away! And how few have been raised up who *fill* their places! until the general complaint is heard on all hands of the great lack of God-qualified under-shepherds.

Then, while we mourn the loss of such old-established men as our late dear friend Pert, may we not ask how it is that, while the Lord seems to have entered into a controversy with us as a part of his living church, yet the desirable results are looked for in vain? When I heard of the death of our recently-departed friend Mr. Covell, I said, Many will mourn over his decease, and well we may; but I would that God in mercy might turn back the tide of sorrow upon us individually, until the inquiry is heard on every hand: What is it which provokes the Lord thus to bereave his Zion of her watchmen? And while we to-day mourn the loss of an old and tried friend, one long known and greatly beloved by most here present, may the Lord so bring the matter home to our hearts that we may fall before him in true humility, and desire him to cleanse us from whatever is displeasing in his sight, and turn our hearts more singly to himself. Thus, while we supplicate his blessing upon the bereaved widow and family, for the church over which our late friend presided for so many years, and for Zion at large, may we be moved by this circumstance to individually seek unto God for ourselves, with that true repentance which needs not to be repented of.

We add a letter of Mrs. Pert's to Mr. Gadsby, containing an account of Mr. Pert's last illness and death, which he has kindly forwarded to us. We are sure that many of our friends who were acquainted with Mr. Pert, and loved and valued him as a minister of God, will be glad to read some account of his last days.

Dear Friend,—I trust you arrived safe home, and did not take cold. I am sorry to say my daughter and myself both took cold, and have been very poorly ever since. I feel it a mercy not to have been confined to bed, for I was nearly worn out with nursing my dear husband; for although his illness was short, it was of a very distressing nature. He was taken shortly after

getting into bed, on the Monday night, Dec. 29, with cold shivering, and was very ill indeed. I sent for our doctor. He came, and pronounced him very ill. On the Tuesday he felt better, and had his clothes on, and sat by the fire. The doctor came, and was astonished to see him sitting up. The cold shivering, which was distressing beyond description, came on once every twelve hours.

On the Wednesday he dressed again; but, feeling worse, sat up only a very short time; and from that day he got rapidly worse, being paralyzed, which rendered him almost powerless, and so affected his speech that we could only understand a word now and then which he spoke. He appeared to be much in prayer, but we could not hardly gather a word. One day he said, "Read a chapter." We asked him what chapter. He replied, "Isaiah xxxviii." His eldest son read it. His father stopped him several times, having so much to say upon it; and his dear arms were uplifted; and he had such a happy countenance. But it was painful to us, as we could not understand what he was saying.

He said one day to his daughter, "Though painful at present;" but could not repeat the rest of that verse, so his daughter did to him. Then he said, "I shall be more than conqueror too."

But, as he grew worse, he was less able to speak; indeed, his suffering was distressing. The doctor saw him twice on the Wednesday. At the last visit, about 5 o'clock, he said, "He may last four hours;" but he lingered on until twenty minutes past ten on Thursday morning. During the night he called out, "Mother!" but when I spoke to him, he made no reply. He also said, "Heaven," twice.

Although his sufferings were still so great, a few minutes before he departed, his breathing was better; and we could scarce say he was gone before his happy spirit had taken its mansion near the throne. This was the 8th of January. He had not been out on the Monday.

He preached on the Sunday morning previous to his illness, and told the friends he hoped to be with them in the afternoon. He had not walked to chapel for a long time. A young man used to come and drive him to chapel, and then home again. On that afternoon, the man was taken ill, and was not able to attend; therefore he only preached in the morning. He felt very grieved about it. His text was Ps. xxix. 11. I never heard him enter into his subject with more liberty. He was led to speak of so many trials in which the Lord's people needed his strength, and showed in the cases of the Old Testament saints how the Lord had been a strength to them. He then spoke of the peace that the Lord had promised to bless his people with, and was enabled to enter into it in a most blessed way. I have said since it was like preaching his own funeral sermon.

Yours very affectionately,

Flinwell, Jan. 20th, 1880.

MARY PERT.

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

“Whilst the long cloud of witnesses Shows the same path to heaven.”

My very Dear and Beloved Friends,—Grace, mercy, and peace be with you. Amen.

I wish to write a few lines to say I received your very kind and affectionate letter, with enclosed very liberal present. I would gladly write freely, but cannot, my pains are now so great; and I have suffered during the night even to agony. I pray the Lord to reward your kindness by spiritual blessings. I do find love and gratitude increase, I trust, both to God and my dear friends; but O! I pray, I long for the blessed Lord to draw it forth. O pray for me, my dear friend, for grace to accept all the will of God concerning me, and for strength rightly to endure his chastisements. I feel weak and absent. O! I long for his gracious words; and may he make it a healing word. “He sent his word, and healed them.” His word is known by the blessed effect. His words are spirit, and they are life; they refresh and enliven the mind. “To be spiritually-minded is life.” “Thy word hath quickened me.” They attract to Christ. “My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me.” They draw off from what is not his gospel. A stranger’s voice they will not follow. It brings the affections to love the Lord. “He that hath my commandments, he it is that loveth me.” It refreshes the soul like food to a hungry man. “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.” They lead to oppose sin. “Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.” The word is endeared to the heart in times of affliction. The afflicted is exercised to the valuing of the word. “Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now I have kept thy word.” Faith is begotten and fed by the word, as spoken by the Lord; therefore it is called “the word of faith.” “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” It evidences and substantiates the reality of heavenly and future realities. It gives a lively hope of future glory. “Being begotten again (by the word of truth) to a lively hope, the hope of glory,” which may increase and rise to the assurance of hope, which is the Lord assuring the heart of eternal glory. “We have access by faith unto this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” This was my dear daughter’s happy experience in her dying hours; and this my soul longeth to enjoy; for it would raise my heart above the cries and groans from pain.

O blessed Lord, grant me this, and fill my heart with love to thee, and gratitude and praise. It stamps the world a wilderness. It is not a resting place; no happy home for the mind. It opens heavenly and eternal things, as my daughter found, an eternity of happiness; and attracts the desires: “They desired a better country, that is, an heavenly;” and confessed themselves strangers and pilgrims here below. Paul found this to be the

case. "Willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord." "Having a desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better." My heart, my desires, how imprisoned and shut up they are!

I wrote the above yesterday, but was in such pain I could not go on, and to-day I have suffered to agony. It grieves me I cannot write. I can only say my Christian love and gratitude are not abated, but increased. I do bless the Lord for his wonderful providence to me, and long and pray for his blessing on the instruments of his goodness to me. I know not what a day may bring forth, as to this trying affliction. May the Lord be with and abundantly bless you. This is the desire and prayer of my heart. I am yours, gratefully and affectionately,

Hastings, Jan. 19th, 1860.

D. FENNER.

Dear Friend,—You were no doubt disappointed this morning; but better late than never. I was glad to receive yours by the ten o'clock post. The contents were admirable. I am not surprised that you marvel at the goodness of our covenant God and Father. "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come." I am trying to thank and to praise, but am a poor hand at doing "comely things" (Ps. xxxiii. 1); being more frequently like the *nine* lepers than the *one*. I am a Jacob for fear, a Jonah for rebellion, and worse than any disciple for forgetfulness and hardheartedness.

"O for grace our hearts to soften!

Let them be dissolved by love;

We, alas! forget too often

What a Friend we have above."

I am still greatly in arrears with gratitude and thanks, for past and present favours. The wonder is that God does not stop the supply until the old debts are cleared off; and he would do so but he is pleased to be a creditor; and so I shall be an eternal debtor, giving, I hope, "Thanks, eternal thanks to thee."

Also:

"O to grace how great a debtor

Daily I'm constrained to be!"

May he grant that I may never go so away from a contemplation of my insolvency, or from the deed of gift, or from the charter and law of liberty, as to forget what manner of man I am. (Jas. i. 24.) O what a blessed state it is to be a hungry, mourning outcast! (Matt. v. 1-9.) What a rich thing to be poor! How elevated and elevating is it to be low! When I am something, however small, I am deceived and lost; but when I am nothing, I am right, and found, and sound too. A ray of Christ's glory will blind a man to his own excellencies, as we see in the case of Daniel, whose comeliness was turned into corruption by the sight.

"The more thy glories strike mine eyes,

The humbler I shall lie;

Thus, as I sink, my joys shall rise

Immeasurably high."

I can only sum up in the words of a worm (Jacob): "Less than the least of all the mercies and the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servant." (Gen. xxxii. 10. See margin.)

I wish that I had grace and thought to go on painting my own deformities and Christ's excellences for an hour, but, may be, will enable me to God return to such a spiritually profitable subject again.

Truly yours,

Elstree, Sept. 28th, 1876.

G. R.

My dear Friend,—I sit down to send you a little account of what I trust I may call the dear Lord's dealings with my soul this morning. The day began with thick darkness upon my mind. I wondered if any children of God ever felt as I was then feeling; so stupid, so dead. Berridge's words indeed describe my case in some degree, but they did not come to my mind; the Lord must be the real Remembrancer:

"Like some dead dog, I lumpish lie,
And putrefy the ground."

I was full of fears lest God would make me a reproach to the foolish. I feared that he would deal with me as he dealt with Shebna the Scribe,—thrust me on one side, and put an Eliakim in my place. One thing I did feel, and that was some self-loathing; and I could not help justifying the Lord if he did so deal with me. I had pondering thoughts whether it would not be best for me to renounce all public work, and retire into a more private life; for how dreadful is the thought of being an injurer of God's church, and a curse to our fellow-creatures instead of a blessing. You know that the promise to Abraham, and doubtless to all his seed, is: "I will bless thee, and make thee a blessing." We want both parts of this promise fulfilled to us. We crave a fulfilment of the promise: "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." We want to be the channels of divine mercies and blessings to others;—serviceable and useful, not barren or injurious creatures.

Well; my state was to my feelings most wretched and deplorable, and yet I could not properly deplore it.

"Scarce drop one heart-feeling tear."

But O the mercy of God! Grace is indeed free. He remembers us in our low estates, because his mercy endureth for ever. I first felt him visit my heart, and quicken me into the life of God in family worship. It is good to bend our knees in our families unto God; but sometimes what wretched work it is! We do not always approach to this work with that care and reverence which becomes us. At least, it is so with me. I allow my mind to occupy itself with other things almost to the last moment; then go off without due consideration to family prayers. And I confess the Lord sometimes sorely chastens me for this want of care and reverence. He will be sanctified in those who draw nigh unto him. At the best we can only reverence him most inadequately.

“Our best is all defiled with sin;
Our all is nothing worth.”

If we feel and deplore this, he is very pitiful and long-suffering; but if we deal in a light, trifling manner with him and holy things, he will remind us that he is a great King and a great God. Our God is a consuming fire.

Well, to go on with my tale. The Lord graciously touched my heart in family worship, and I could beg him to enable me to approach him as my Father in heaven, and could pray for his forgiveness of my sins and the renewing of his Spirit. I retired again to my private apartment when this work of family worship was ended. I hoped that the communion begun in that worship might be continued. At first, this was far from being the case. My previous feelings of stupidity and death came back upon me. I felt sick, both as to body and soul. I was tempted for a moment to give way to the most desponding feelings, and to say, There is no hope for such a case as mine. But just as I was yielding to these desperate conclusions, the Lord came in with these words, checking despair, and raising up my soul to some lively hope:

“Lord, thou canst tell; the work is thine;
The help of man is vain;
On Jacob now arise and shine,
And he shall live again.”

These words answered exactly to what Ezekiel replies to the Lord's question in chapter xxxvii.: “Can these bones live?”—“O Lord God, thou knowest.” Faith in the Almightyness of God, in the divine ability to do anything the Lord pleases to do, is a blessed thing. I felt that it was only for the Lord to speak, the Lord to smile, and my poor desert heart should blossom as the rose, my soul should live and praise God again. O! as the poet says:

“The mercy which heals us again
Is mercy transportingly sweet.”

After this, I trust, my soul had for a season a good time. O to have the heavens opened, and the heart in prayer and praise ascending unto God! How in a few moments the soul unburdens itself of its woes and wants unto God! O the sweetness of a closet religion; to enter into the closet, and shut the doors about us, and pray to our Father who sees in secret, and rewards us openly! I felt in some degree a wrestling Jacob and prevailing Israel. How my heart could vent itself into the bosom of God, and entreat that I might not dishonour in any way such a cause as his; such a Name as that of Jesus, to which the heavens bow down in wonder and admiration. How I besought the Majesty of heaven that I might be to the glorifying of his dear Son Jesus! How admirable it seemed to be enabled instrumentally to glorify Jesus! How sweet the promise: “He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high!” But what shall I say? O! how at the best the heart faints away beneath a sense of our utter insufficiency. Christ's name is above all praise.

“Fair earth, fair heavens,” says one; “but most fair Lord Jesus.”

“The chief amongst ten thousand fairs,
A Sun amongst ten thousand stars.”

But I must desist, or I shall weary you with my scribblings. Only you know well how sweet it is after a time of darkness, death, and desertion to get Jesus into the arms of faith again. Then the heart expands to his love. Then we cry out:

“Fill all my soul,

And all my power by thine control.”

Then all things sink into comparative indifference. Then heaven is in view. Then Christ is All in all; and then we can fully agree with the poet's words:

“Thy presence is the heart of heaven.”

Yours in the love of Jesus,

OMICRON.

My dear Friend in the Lord,—I cannot refrain from writing to you. I awoke this morning with such a sweet frame of mind, contemplating upon what I had heard at chapel on the previous day, that had you and Mr. Littleton called, I could have said, “Come in, thou blessed of the Lord. What am I, or my father's house, that the servants of the Lord should show me this honour?” It has been my desire for years that I might receive the Lord's servants at my house; and he has granted my request.

The words yesterday were sweet to me: “Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee.” Truly he hath led me a way I knew not, that he might make me know man doth not live by bread alone, but on the fulfilment of the promise,—every word that hath proceeded out of the mouth of the Lord. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits! What scenes of continually-recurring troubles, one after another, like wave upon wave, have passed over me! First, the entire loss of our property of two thousand pounds, by litigation, leaving us almost penniless. Then my daughter's illness and death, followed by my dear husband's rapid decline and decease, leaving me with four little ones dependent on me, without means. I had a verse given me twelve months ago, which was very sweet, and gave me a good hope that the Lord would supply all my needs. This was the word: “Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.” O, my dear friend, I have proved him firm in his promise, for he has supplied all my needs, bless his holy Name; and I do believe I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;” and I do pray the Lord to purify my heart, and that I may be humble, and trust his holy Name for all things, and not trust in an arm of flesh; for I know what a poor weak creature I am. I can sympathize with the writer of the sweet hymn:

“ Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;
 Prone to leave the God I love.”

I can join in with that; for I do love my God, and am greatly grieved when I do anything to displease him.

In the midst of my sorrows, how trouble has been sanctified! What nearness to God has been given! And how sweetly have passed over my wounded spirit the words: “ When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.” During this time of affliction the Lord laid with greater weight the ordinance of believers’ baptism upon my mind. Night and day my soul was exercised and drawn out in prayer that he would make a way for me to join the dear people of God, and break bread with them. I thought it cruel that our dear minister did not call; almost imagining that he must have known my exercises. Mr. T. being led to come before the church, made the way open. The number of persons present had no influence on me. I felt raised above friend and foe; my mind being stayed on God. The words: “ Be still, and know that I am God,” rested on my spirit; and prompted by love to the Lamb who suffered for one so vile, I courageously confessed him before men. The forms of anguish from trial, loss, and bereavement, were by grace sweetly exhausted. The cup drained to the dregs; pride and the fear of man suspended; and that memorable sermon by Mr. H. again brought to my mind: “ The cup passing in the drinking of it.” At the Lord’s table a holy serenity pervaded me, and it appeared to me as if our dear Lord and Master sat at the table with us as his disciples.

What a mercy the Lord gives me a hearing ear and a heart to receive under the word! As I know our dear pastor loves to hear of his people growing in grace, I thought this letter might comfort him in his labour of love; and as a wife honours her husband, and labours with him in her soul, I think it will also comfort you. Hoping you are better, and the family well. The Lord be with you, bless you, and do you good.

Yours sincerely in the Lord,

Palesgate, Rotherfield, Dec. 22, 1880.

E. A. BOARER.

Dear Brother and Sister,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you, through Jesus Christ.

It is a great mercy, my dearly beloved, and may both you and I greatly esteem it to be so, that ever the sovereign Disposer of all events should condescend to cause our hearts to seek his face, to fear his name, to hope in his mercy, and in a small degree to know and love his truth. These great and good things are not given to many in this awful day in which we live; and it is no small mercy for us that it is revealed that God of his own rich, free, sovereign grace makes choice of the poor, the weak, the base, and the despised of this world, to bring them to a knowledge of himself here, and eternal blessedness hereafter. By so doing he secures all the glory to himself, to whom alone it is due. Not

unto us, not unto us, but unto thy Name, O God, be all the praise.

This I hope will ever be the language of our souls, as we know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes,—revealed by the powerful and sacred teachings of the Holy Ghost. Thus you read in the Scriptures of truth, “All thy children shall be taught of the Lord;” and we believe there is none teacheth like him. We hope it is the life-giving influences of the Holy Spirit, and his teaching, which have made us sensible of sin and its dreadful consequences, and that make known to our hearts our dead, lost, vile, polluted, loathsome, helpless, self-destroyed, and perishing condition by nature. This teaching makes us feel our need of the good Physician, Jesus Christ, and the invaluable worth of his most precious blood, to cleanse us from all our sensible contracted sin, filth, and pollution; of his all-atoning sacrifice to expiate our guilt; and of his spotless everlasting righteousness to justify our souls in the sight of God. This makes us also seek unto him for an application of these things to our own souls. O how sweet are these words of the Saviour of lost sinners to our souls, at times, as well as others of similar import: “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.” This evidently implies that he takes particular notice of the inward desires and breathings of the soul after him and his great salvation; and that such persons shall, in his own good time, be blessed with a satisfactory knowledge and enjoyment of interest in it. Thus we see what a good thing it is to be brought to seek the Lord, and to wait for him, from a feeling sense of our need of him. The Lord himself says that it is good for a man that he patiently wait and quietly hope for his salvation. And, moreover, for our consolation he has said, “Blessed are all those that wait for me.” There is no such counsel and consolation as this from the prince of darkness. No! But the very reverse of all this, to the great disquietude of our souls. It is written again that all Israel shall know every man the plague of his own heart; and one part of the plague of my heart which I experience at this time is its exceeding hardness and stupid insensibility, while such afflictive dispensations and terrible judgments of the Almighty are abroad in the earth. I pray the good Lord in his abundant mercy to bless me with such a frame of mind as I find described in the 9th chapter of Ezekiel and the 9th chapter of Daniel. If you will read those chapters, you will better understand what I mean; for whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our instruction, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who in the midst of wrath remembers mercy, and has in this our day of darkness, blasphemy, and apostacy, reserved unto himself a few, though but a few, to stand between the living and the dead, to shield off the impending wrath from this our guilty land. It is true the Lord is slow to anger, and this is now verified indeed,

or we all had ere now been utterly consumed. Nevertheless, that which is determined shall be done; and the Lord our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth; for we have sinned against him. Therefore, we may rest assured that the Lord God of hosts will visit the iniquity of this our land; and because he will do so his counsel is, "Prepare to meet thy God," as he said to Israel. May the good Lord in his tender mercy enable us so to do. And unto God only wise be all glory, praise, and power ascribed, both now and for evermore. Amen.

May the Lord God of Israel bless you and keep you, and lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you peace. This is the desire and prayer of him who is not worthy to be remembered with the least of saints, but am

Your affectionate brother,

Loughborough, Feb. 22nd, 1881.

THOMAS CLARKE.

A WORD FOR THE PRAYER-MEETING.

"Follow peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."—
2 TIM. II. 22.

THE old Adam nature of a regenerated child of God is a great hindrance to him in the ways of God. In his favoured moments, he longs to be free from it for ever. This old man is corrupt, and a lover of pleasures more than a lover of God. Hence the exhortation: "Flee youthful lusts." By the renewings of grace the believer is enabled to do this; but it is only as he walks in the Spirit. Walking in the Spirit is standing in the revealed will of God as an obedient son. This walk he finds to be life and peace, and in it he, more or less, enjoys the consolations which are in Christ, the comforts of electing love, the fellowship of the Spirit, and the bowels and mercies of a Triune Covenant God.

What a sacred pleasure it is to him, under this blessed frame, to meet with and join in the prayers of a few like-minded, taught and led by the same blessed Spirit! With dear Shirley he can then say,

"I love to meet among them now,
Before thy gracious feet to bow,
Though vilest of them all."

For such is the paradoxical nature of the actings of divine grace in the soul of a "vessel of mercy," that when his heart is purified, being purged by the application of the precious blood of Christ, and therefore a pure heart, he feels as before a holy God, and is in his own esteem

"Vilest of them all;"

or, as Erskine puts it:

"Thou'st got to see thy filthy self,
Thy Husband's purest light."

Is not this the character Jesus refers to in the words: "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God"? (Matt. v. 8.) Do they not see him here by faith when he gives them access into

the grace wherein they stand, as truly, if not in the same way or degree, as those already departed to be with Christ see him in glory?

By the actings of a living faith they see him as a God of sovereign mercy in Christ Jesus, and can bless him as such for delivering them through him from the eternal wrath to come. They see him as a sin-pardoning God; and they call upon him as such. They see him as the "faithful God," and call upon him to hold up their goings in his paths, to bless them with clean hands, and to preserve them to the end. They know that if they are kept, it must be by the power of God.

These things make for the peace of the believer's own soul, and for the peace of Zion. This is "the poor walking in his uprightness." (Prov. xxviii. 6.) This is "holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." G. A.

GOD IS LOVE.

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us."—1 JNO. III. 16.

WHERE is a theme our hearts can raise
To God in songs of loudest praise?
Where is a theme? That Christ was slain,
That we might life eternal gain.

The blood of Jesus can inspire
Our hearts, and warm with heavenly fire.
The blood of Jesus can set free
Our tongues in sweetest melody.

O! Here was love! The Father's love!
That enemies his heart could move
To such compassion, make him give
His Son to die, that we might live.

If you would know the Father, see
His Son made sin on Calvary's tree.
There, writ in characters of blood,
Sinners may read the love of God.

O glorious love! The Just One dies!
Thus God will bless his enemies.
The Son's own blood must freely flow,
That foes and rebels love may know.

God's power in nature I may trace;
But the still voice of gospel grace
Alone this stubborn heart can move,
While softly whispering, *God is Love.*

GOD puts a sweetmeat at the bottom of his children's cup of sorrows; and when they have well drunk of the bitter potion, they come at the sweetness. (Heb. xii. 11.)

THE INIQUITY OF TRAFFIC.

We readily insert the following letter, received from a friend of truth, and a reader of our magazine, because the particular form of the "Iniquity of Traffic" to which it adverts cannot be too strongly reprobated. Of course, it was virtually included under what was said in the third paragraph of the "Short Paper" upon this subject; but we quite agree that it deserves a special mention and distinct mark of reprobation, and we thank our friend for supplying what was deficient. It really never occurred to us that the godly, at any rate, could be guilty of this iniquity; but we fear our correspondent is right. In these days of laxity, and *anythingism* in religion, even those of whom we might hope better things do not appear exercised, with the apostle Paul, to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men. Hence we sometimes see with amazement in the shop windows of persons professing to fear God handbills of theatrical and other vain entertainments, and of those professing free grace, handbills inviting to places where free will reigns and riots.

To the Editor of the "Gospel Standard."

Dear Sir,—I have read with interest your article on the "Iniquity of Traffic" in the "G. S." for the present month, and I doubt not that the majority of your readers will have hailed with mingled feelings of satisfaction and sorrow the exposure of an evil, the existence of which is only too painfully manifest, and which is as evidently working sad havoc amongst the children of God; and may, moreover, in the humble opinion of the writer, be traced as one of the fruitful sources of the prevailing spirit of lethargy, indifference, and halfheartedness which is now desolating and demoralizing the church of God.

Within the Christian camp there is, it is to be lamented, too much of the presence of a spirit of ambition, and desire for worldly gain and prosperity, which too often prompts to the use of means in no degree differing from those adopted by the mere worldling and godless professor, and to which the reproof expressed in Hymn 807 (Gadsby's) is both suitable and seasonable. It must, therefore, I repeat, be a source of satisfaction to those who are enlightened to find that you have been led to expose and oppose, through the medium of the "G. S.," this spirit of "covetousness, which is idolatry." The time in which we live calls for plain and faithful speaking on the part of all who love and value the precious truth of God, and desire by the grace of God to "live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world."

But with reference to the subject in hand, it has occurred to the writer that an important omission has been made, which calls for comment, the supplying of which will add very considerably to the grave and serious nature of the case, as already laid bare in your periodical. Briefly stated, then, it is the mournful fact that there are those who profess to fear God, and contend for the doctrines of distinguishing grace, who are en-

gaged in the traffic and dealing out, principally to the young, of that which is calculated to demoralise, and call into action the basest propensities of the carnal nature, in the form of the trashy, fictitious, and, in some cases, utterly impure and degrading, yea, filthy literature, with which our land is almost deluged, and yet is ever increasing. It may be a hard saying, yet it is nevertheless a truth, that such are dealing out to our children poison of the most deadly nature, as it respects both soul and body.

Shall the people of God, for the sake of filthy lucre, or even in order to obtain a livelihood, lend themselves to such a trade, and display in their shops for sale these publications which a moment's consideration must convince them are nothing but emanations from the fruitful brains of those who are engaged in doing service to the prince of this world, even the devil, whose occupation and aim we are distinctly told is to go "about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour"? Viewed in the light and teaching of the sacred Word of God, the gain that accrues from such a traffic must, if it be called by its proper name, be termed the wages of unrighteousness.

That the Lord may follow with his diyine blessing what has already gone forth on the important subject of the "Iniquity of Traffic," and also these few thoughts, should you deem them worthy a place in the "G. S.," is the prayer of the writer,

Cardiff, Jan. 7th, 1880.

A. RADDON.

A RIVER OF MERCY.

"There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God."—
Ps. XLVI. 4.

THE church, in her manifold sorrows below,
Of strong consolation has need;
And sweet streams of truth, which those comforts bestow,
Such streams become precious indeed.

O the mercy in heaven, which open'd a door,
That all through this wilderness road
The streams of a river might flow to the poor,
Through the Spirit, the Word, and the blood.

The rougher the pathway, the harder the case,
Through sufferings and sorrows untold;
The more we partake of the river of grace,
And say, with the psalmist of old,

"There is," and we love to proclaim it anew,
"A river" of boundless supply;
And all who would feelingly prove it is true,
May come without money and buy.

O how feeble and faithless, oft-times, is our cry!
"Ask much," says the Lord, "and have more;"
There's a far more exceeding abundant supply,
To meet all the wants we deplore.

If natural pleading will fathers incline
 To give to their children below,
 Much more will the Father of mercies divine
 His Spirit's abundance bestow.

Ye have not, he says, for ye ask not aright;
 Yet surely there is a reward

To the man who in Jesus can truly delight,
 And who asks for the joy of his Lord;

Who asks in the Spirit's fair graces to grow,
 Not only for comfort and peace;

But more of the image of Jesus to show,
 And see his dominion increase;

Who asks for more courage and strength in his race;
 Not only an easier road;

But daily to hold forth the word of his grace,

1880. And to show forth the praises of God.

M. S.

GRACE REIGNS.

A BRIEF AND FRAGMENTARY MEMOIR OF
 THE LATE MR. CLOUGH, WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE VERY SUDDENLY
 ON MAY 26TH, 1879, AGED 62.

In presenting our readers with this very inadequate account of the Lord's dealings with our late friend Clough, we feel to regret two things:—First, that this memoir has not appeared at an earlier date; and, secondly, that it is of such a fragmentary nature.

The delay in its appearance has arisen partly from our having waited for a time in hopes of being furnished with more material for a fuller account, and partly from a state of health which made us shrink from the labour of putting into something like shape what we possessed. Had we been furnished with a memoir compiled by some friend, an early insertion would have been easy; but as we had the burden of compilation thrown upon us, the request being made that we would put the memoir into form, the causes we have mentioned have proved a hindrance. The fragmentary nature of this account arises from the nature of the materials for a memoir with which we have been furnished.

Our own acquaintanceship with Mr. Clough has only been of late years. We admired the grace of God in him which made him what he was. We loved him in the Lord. Some of his letters, which we have seen from time to time, have excited our astonishment and admiration on account, not only of the truths contained in them, but the real beauty of the expressions in which that truth was contained and set forth. Though his intellect was not trained and cultivated by early education, it was naturally, we conceive, very good; and he was well informed in many particulars, being self-educated, so we suppose, to a con-

siderable degree. He was a man that truly feared God, dearly loved the doctrines of free grace, and loved to exalt the Name of the Lord Jesus, who had doubtless done great things for his soul. He was a preacher, as many of our readers know better indeed than ourself, of considerable gifts; an able minister of the New Testament. For some length of time before his decease his bodily ailments interfered much with his ministerial work. But even to the last he spoke occasionally. We had the pleasure of hearing him at Zion Chapel, Leicester, from Eph. iv. 9, not very long before the Lord took him home. We felt it was an able and good discourse. He trusted in the Lord's providence; and God did not fail him. Our readers will, no doubt, remember a sweet record of the Lord's appearing for him in a providential way which was inserted in this magazine in October, 1878. We heard him relate the circumstance at a friend's house; and feeling a desire that our readers should have the benefit of reading it, we requested him to send it to us in writing; which request he kindly complied with.

Amongst the able and valiant men of Israel taken home last year, we feel that Mr. Clough was one. We wish we could give a more connected and adequate account of his career, but we cannot exceed our materials. From time to time we hope to be able to insert some of his letters in our pages; and letters written, as his were, warm from the heart, give a good representation of the mind of the writer.

We now proceed to give an account, beginning with his earlier years of profession, which has been furnished by Mr. Smith, of Siddal Hall, who prefaces the account, which will indicate the reckless, headstrong character possessed naturally by the subject of this memoir, as follows: Mr. Thomas Clough said in the presence of myself and some others a few years ago:

"The time the Lord first opened my eyes to see myself a sinner is a time to be remembered. I was then living in sin, and loving it well. At that time I was working at a coal-mine in the North of England for my daily bread. I was then dead in sin, and cared for nothing. At the pit in which I worked there was a law or rule that no collier should be allowed to go down into the pit within three hours if he was not on the ground at a given time in the morning. One morning I was a few minutes late, and the banksman who had the care of the cage in the shaft refused to allow me to go down with the other men. As soon as all the men had gone down, I began to abuse the banksman who refused to allow me to go down, when some oaths and curses were exchanged between us. I then went off the ground to a public-house on the opposite side to get something to drink, proclaiming vengeance against my enemy, as I thought. In the course of an hour or two, I was singing merrily, and declaring I would not go to work that day; when news was brought into the public-house that every man that had gone down into the pit that morning was killed; and it was soon discovered that the news was too

true. In one moment I felt as sober as if I had never tasted any intoxicating liquor that day. I trembled from head to foot, and said to myself, If I had gone down into the pit this morning, I should have been a dead man; and what would have become of my soul?

“That seemed to be the first time that I had an impression on my mind that I had a soul, either to be saved or lost. The arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in me; and the terrors of hell got hold upon me. I was then both a convinced and condemned sinner in the sight of God and my own conscience, and I cried out in the bitterness of my soul, Lord, have mercy upon me, a miserable sinner.

“I passed many sleepless nights and very uncomfortable days in this state of mind; but at last the Lord spoke peace to my never-dying soul, and said, ‘Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee.’

“‘Sov'reign grace o'er sin abounding!
Ransom'd souls, the tidings swell;
'Tis a deep that knows no sounding;
Who its lengths or breadths can tell?
On its glories
Let my soul for ever dwell.’

“From that time I began to go to chapel, and was full of zeal for God, as I thought. I soon joined the Arminian band, and concluded they were all as holy as angels, and truly the ‘excellent of the earth.’ I attended their prayer-meetings, class-meetings, and preaching, and was ever ready to lend a helping hand to forward God’s work; and truly I thought this was it. I was soon invited to stand up to preach amongst them, and I willingly consented; for my heart was warm with the love of God. I wanted to do something for that God who had spoken peace and pardon to my soul. I preached among those people for several years; in fact, until the Lord opened my eyes to see their error and my own ignorance. He did both, and opened my heart to receive his truth in the love of it. ‘Bless the Lord, O my soul.’

“About that time I was led by the Holy Ghost to see that God had a special people, of whom he says, ‘This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise.’ As the Holy and ever-blessed Spirit was pleased to reveal the glorious doctrines of divine grace to my understanding, I was compelled to preach them wherever I was sent; but I was not allowed to preach them long before the leaders of our society were upon me like a hailstorm, declaring that I was a ‘Calvinist.’ I must confess that up to that time I did not know what a ‘Calvinist’ was. These preachers and leading men soon began to persecute me, and to condemn the doctrines I preached as erroneous; and they ultimately turned me out as a dangerous man, saying that if I was suffered to go on preaching such things I should ‘ruin their flock.’ At that time the Lord was showing me that he had

a 'slaughtered flock,' and that I must go and feed it; and, thanks be unto God, I have been enabled to do so, to a lesser or a greater degree, ever since.

"Some time before this took place I had heard of a man who preached the truth down in the North, and I went to hear him preach. On that occasion he took for a text Eccles. ii. 14, which reads as follows: 'The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness.' When the good man had finished his discourse, I said, 'I am the fool in the text.' I thought I was the greatest fool in the world for ever attempting to speak in the Lord's Name; and yet I felt some encouragement to go on declaring what the Lord had taught me, and what he was then teaching me.

"Since then I have had many things to pass through of a painful nature, both in providence and grace, both in the world and in the church; but I have been upheld to this day, through Christ strengthening me."

We next insert a letter from a friend of Mr. Clough's, Elias Armstrong, which not only confirms the foregoing account, but contains further and interesting particulars. It pays, we believe, a just tribute to Mr. Clough's devotedness and liberality. He who at one time worked zealously, at any rate to a considerable degree, from Arminian principles, remained zealous and liberal when the love of God and the grace of Christ had been in a fuller measure made known to him, and had in a greater degree enlarged his heart. This is, we believe, the genuine working of the grace of God; but at the same time we fear that too often and in too many cases the flesh takes occasion from the doctrines of grace to weaken zeal, and sink the soul into coldness and lethargy; if even not in something worse,—a tampering with sin. What a mercy, as Dr. Owen writes, to water a free pardon with the tears of godly sorrow, and zealously seek the destruction of that sin which yet we believe through grace shall not destroy us eternally! And, we may add, what a mercy not to lose in the clearer light of more orthodox opinions the power of vital godliness, and the warmth and devotedness, and animating zeal of our first love.

But we must now give the following interesting letter :

If I remember rightly, I first became acquainted with Mr. Thomas Clough in the year 1836. He was at that time what we call a Primitive Methodist preacher. He told me that the Lord came to him when he was on a bed of affliction, and spoke peace to his soul. When he was healed of his malady he said he would be religious, and as the Primitives seemed to be a happy people, he thought he could not do better than cast in his lot amongst them; and I may say he soon learned their way of saving sinners, and was for a time a zealous advocate for the doctrines they professed. Being a tolerable scholar and a good talker, he soon became a teacher amongst them.

As these people were many, he entered into a confederacy with them; but the time was at hand when the Lord intended to separate the precious from the vile. He was brought, like Balaam by Balak, to South Hetton, to curse their enemies; but here the Lord made him, unlike Balaam, bless both the Lord and his people. He received a commandment to bless; and he has blessed, and it cannot be reversed. This was the first time I spoke to him on the things of the Spirit. He came to me, like some bold champion, with this portion of God's word (Matt. xxiii. 37); and O how he harped upon the words: "Ye would not." I said to him, "And what would they not do, my friend?" He said, "They would not receive Christ." I said to him, "It does not say so. It says, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!' The rulers would not allow Christ to gather the children or people together to instruct them in the truth." He stood amazed, and astonished that he had not seen this before; and said, "I will further consider the matter."

From that time he began to think there was something wrong in his religion, and that there was something he wanted which he had not. From that time all his "comeliness was turned into corruption," and was made to cry, "Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips." I tried to persuade him to come over and hear our minister, Mr. Bewick; but he said, "I have to teach the children on the Lord's day." I told him that it was himself who required to be taught. He came down one Sunday morning to hear Mr. Bewick, who preached on that occasion from Eccl. ii. 14: "The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness." When Mr. Clough came out of the chapel, he said, "I am the fool that is walking in darkness; and yet I am appointed to preach to-night in the Primitive Methodist chapel; and I am going to take for my text Rom. viii. 1." He asked me if I would go and hear him. I said to him, "You know nothing about that portion." However, I went with him, and he preached from that text, and told the people that as there was no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, there could be no separation from him. When he came down from the pulpit, the people soon told him that he had been preaching Calvinism; but he would not say anything to them; for he did not know what he had been preaching. The plough was now bringing all his beautiful roses into the dust, from whence they came; but his feet were being set like hinds' feet upon high places.

About that time he went about the fields and woods night and day, and when he went to the pit to work he had fears the coal might fall upon him and kill him, or that the pit might close upon him, as he was such a great sinner. He thought that God had set him

as a mark to fall soon. I remember, one day about that time, there was a very heavy thunderstorm, with lightning and heavy rain. I had to go that day by the way of his house; and I called in to see him. I found it was not only thundering and lightning without him, but also within him. He was like Paul on his voyage, where two seas met and broke the old vessel to pieces; yet all came safe to land. This was the first time I ever went into his house, and I found him in one corner on his knees. Mrs. Clough and another woman were going about the house quite distracted, fearing, as they said, "the day of judgment had come, and they were not ready." Mr. Clough rose from his knees, and said he wondered I was not afraid of the thunder, and that he thought surely the day of judgment had come. I said, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels in heaven;" and I encouraged him as well as I could in his nervous state.

Soon after that it fell on a Lord's-day that he had to go to Seaham Harbour to preach, with the arrow of death sticking fast in him. That day he took tea with a professed friend, to whom he told part of his sorrow. The man pitied him, and told him he had a book that would just suit him, and that he would give it to him. He did so, and it being summer time, and Mr. Clough having four miles to walk home, he commenced reading the book as soon as he left the place. The more he read it, the more he desired to read it; so he sat up until two o'clock in the morning.* The book was Mr. Huntington's "Kingdom of Heaven taken by Prayer."

He preached once more among the Primitives in South Hetton, from John iii. 3; and it was said to be the means, in the hand of the Spirit, of the conversion of one Mrs. Gray. I heard her husband say, after this, that he seldom went home but he and his wife were reading the Bible.

Mr. C. then left the Primitives, and came over to us, and was baptized by Mr. Bewick, near Houghton-le-Spring, Durham. This was in the month that his daughter Anne was born. After this he went to live at Thornley. He had then six or seven miles to walk to the chapel every Lord's-day, but he never stayed away except he was unwell, winter or summer. I remember his telling me about this time that when he was coming one Sunday morning to the chapel, a Wesleyan preacher was also coming to preach at Haswell, about two miles off. It had been raining very heavily, and was very wet. They came to a pool on their way, that they must either pass through or return. When they got to it, the Wesleyan said, "I shall not go through that water; but shall return." But Mr. Clough said, "No going back. Here goes free grace; but there goes free will. Free grace can go through when free-will will not enter." I sometimes said

* Mr. D. Smith adds the following interesting information: "I have heard Mr. Clough say that this book was picked up by a sailor in one of the streets in London out of the ruins of a fire, and sent to his cousin in the North, the very man who gave it to Mr. Clough."

to him, "You should not come in such stormy weather." He would reply, "I wish it was as quiet within."

We walked many years together in company to the house of God. I remember one Lord's-day we were coming from chapel. He was very poor at that time, but had a liberal heart. He saw a man on the road near my house begging; and seeing the man had no shirt on, as soon as he could he got into my house and commenced pulling off his clothes. I said, "What are you about to do?" He said, "If you will lend me a shirt, I will give that poor man mine." I said, "I will not do so." But he did give the man his. Poor fellow, he would give the last copper he had in the world.

Another time, he heard of a poor family that had no bread in the house. He went to the master of the colliery, and when the master saw him, he said, "Now, Tom, what are you wanting?" He said, "Well, sir, there is a family in this place which has no bread, and I want you to give me some money for them." "How much?" said the master. "Well," he said, "half a guinea;" and the master put his hand into his pocket and gave it to him. Mr. C., when he had received it, went and gave it to the poor family; and very thankfully was it received.

Mr. C. was always "ready to do good and to communicate." I well remember him opening the room for preaching in West Hartlepool, where he preached once a month. He had to walk on one occasion to get there from Percy Main, a distance of 27 miles, to preach the gospel. I remember when he first went to Leeds to preach,—he came down from Percy Main with very little money. He had not as much as would pay his railway fare, so Mrs. Briggs and myself paid it. When he had preached at Leeds, the people gave him three pounds, and he gave one to Mark Owen before he got home. The second time he went to Leeds he came from Percy Main with only twopence in his pocket, and he paid one penny for his boat fare and a half-penny to go over the bridge at Sunderland; so he was left with two farthings. He went to sleep at Mr. Turner's; and after supper, as he was going to bed, Mrs. Scott said, "Mr. Clough, I have got ten shillings for you, which a friend left the other day." Mr. C. said, "That is just what I want for my fare to Leeds. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name."

I think, poor man, he has just got through this wilderness with strength enough, but none to spare.

Yours in the best love,

ELIAS ARMSTRONG.

South Hetton, near Sunderland, June 11th, 1879.

(To be concluded.)

DOUBTINGS, fears, temptations, if not ordinarily prevailing, are consistent with gospel assurance. Though the devil's power be limited in reference to the saints, yet his hands are not tied; though he cannot prevail against them, yet he can assault them.—*Owen.*

“THE MEMORY OF THE JUST IS BLESSED.”

BEYOND the mere notice which was published in our Magazines for February of the death of Mrs. Ann Hennah, of Torquay, we have a particular wish to pay a somewhat further tribute of Christian esteem to her memory. A personal friendship between our dear departed sister and ourselves, of many years' standing, might be a sufficient plea in itself for our wishing to give a few more particulars about her last days upon earth. But knowing how for many years previous to her decease she had taken a lively interest in the prosperity of the “Gospel Standard,” and of the “Friendly Companion” since its commencement, and knowing also that her able contributions have appeared from time to time in the pages of both magazines, we feel that it is quite due to her memory that a little more should be said about her.

Well do we remember how, after the death of that dear man of God, Mr. George Doudney, of Plymouth, whose ministry Mrs. Hennah constantly heard, she came and placed herself under our own poor ministry at “Corpus Christi” Chapel, Stonehouse; and though she continued to attend the chapel, both on Sundays and week evenings, until in the providence of God we were removed to our present sphere of labour, yet never once did she ever say much to us about whether she heard the preaching well or bad. Just now and then she would drop a word expressive of satisfaction, but nothing much beyond it; and yet her manner of manifesting her approval without words was as unmistakable as if she had said ever so much. She was neither a flatterer nor a detractor. She was not the woman to either puff a minister up with pride by saying too much, or to discourage him in his work by withholding tokens of approbation when she had heard the Word to profit. Still, her expressions of personal friendship and acknowledgment of the way she had received our ministry have been far more profuse, as conveyed by letter, since separated from her in the providence of God, than what they ever were by word of mouth when we so frequently met face to face in the house of God.

The last communication we ever received from her was from Hastings, where she died. It was in reference to a piece in the “Gospel Standard” for November last, entitled “The Saints' Inheritance,” and which was written in compliance with Mrs. Hennah's private request. She wrote after reading the piece to say that not only was the view expressed in it in accordance with her own, but that her own soul had been so much blessed in reading it, with a faith's view of the glorious blissful prospect which she felt so very soon awaited her, that she had not had so sweet a season in her experience for a long time past. And yet at the time she thus wrote to us she was better in health, and was thinking of leaving Hastings and returning to her home; and hence little knew, and probably as little thought, that the time of her departure was so near at hand.

She also sent us at the same time a communication for the pages of the "Gospel Standard," containing some particulars of this happy season, and asked us if we should be willing to insert it. Why we did not comply with her wish was simply because her communication contained too much kind commendation of what had emanated from our pen to make us think it desirable to give it public notice; and our mentioning the circumstance now is not at all as wishing to make known what use the Lord may have condescended to make of anything of ours to our departed friend, but merely as showing that as at the time we received that last communication our dear sister's end was drawing near, so, no doubt, the Lord, by the sweet season which he gave her in her experience, was not only preparing her to approach that end, but was also preparing her for her heavenly inheritance above.

Perhaps few of her sex among the children of God possess greater powers of mind than what she did herself. She was endowed with abilities of no ordinary nature; and those abilities being sanctified by grace, they were employed more for the advancement of divine truth, and stemming the tide of error, than in any other way. One or two of her poetical works which have been published, and mentioned in our pages, are no doubt known to some of our readers. But if all the prose and poetical productions which have flowed from her fertile mind could be brought together, they would no doubt amount to many volumes in bulk; indeed, we have manuscript-material enough of hers in our possession at the present time to make up two or three good-sized books, was it all to be put into print. Some pieces from the packet, which are more particularly suitable for either the "Gospel Standard" or "Friendly Companion," we shall hope, with the kind consent of the editors, to insert in their pages; and in that way we shall be able to let our dear friend's words be occasionally read, whilst her lips "lie silent in the grave."

We had hoped to have been supplied with more particulars of her last days than what, in consequence of her very sudden departure from the world, any member of her family has been able to send us. But in the absence of such verbal dying testimony as is sometimes obtainable, we can only fill up the gap with such particulars in reference to the closing scene of her life as have been kindly placed at our disposal.

Our sister had been staying, for some weeks previous to her decease, on a visit at her son's house at Hastings; and having felt so much better for the change of air, she had arranged to return to her home in Devon within a few days of the one on which she passed from earth to glory.

In speaking, however, of the closing scene of her life, we cannot do better than confine ourselves to such particulars as we have received from one of her own beloved children. Her decease took place, as before stated, at Hastings, on the 18th of December. She had had a severe attack of bronchitis, which had left her

very prostrate. Her daughter, who was written to at Torquay, to go down at once to Hastings, informs us that she found her dear mother looking somewhat altered, but very cheerful, and not so weak as she had seen her during a previous illness. She wandered in her head a great deal during the night; but still took so much nourishment that those around her could scarcely realize her true condition; until the doctor, who came in the morning, gave them to understand that he considered her end very near, and that in a few hours she would probably breathe her last. Such, it seems, proved to have been the case. "She lapsed into unconsciousness soon after breakfast, and at 2:30 p.m. entered her eternal rest, surrounded by those she loved; and acknowledging that 'goodness and mercy had followed her all the days of her life.'"

Thus died, as she had lived, a believer in Jesus; and we may say, "Strong in faith, giving glory to God." Almost her last statement, a little time before unconsciousness set in, was: "I do love Jesus so much. He is so precious to me. I never felt him so precious before." Again, as confirmatory of an observation we have made in the course of this short memorial, viz., that the Lord no doubt was, previous to her death, preparing her mind for the great and blissful change which awaited her, she says in a letter written to a Christian friend at Plymouth about a month before her death: "Through mercy, I was able yesterday to go down stairs to breakfast. My son read from Isaiah: 'He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.' My eyes filled with tears; and whether I am spared to wish you the happy return of another birth-day or not, I bequeath to you this ever-blessed comforting promise: 'He will swallow up death in victory.' May the Holy Ghost write it with divine power on each of our hearts."

Again, in another letter to the same sister in the Lord, and written only about a fortnight before her departure, she writes: "God is loosening the ties of earth to you and to me, and causing us to feel, with the patriarch, I loathe it, and would not live always. My daily infirmities remind me that there is but a step between me and death; and yet my heart feels sometimes as dead as a stone, and my affections set more on things below than on things above. . . . It is of the Lord's mercies, and unchangeable love, that I have not been cast off as a withered branch; but he brings me sometimes back to himself, my holy habitation, with weeping and supplication, and again reveals himself as that 'Friend that sticketh closer than a brother,' and who has pledged himself never to leave, and never, *no, never*, to forsake me."

The following verses, from an original hymn by our dear deceased friend, and which is written on the words, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth," will be a fitting termination to this brief tribute of sincere Christian esteem to her memory, and the more so as those verses are *now* so blessedly true of herself:

- “Believers sleep the sleep of death
 In thy soft arms, O Lord;
 What great encouragement to faith
 Does this sweet truth afford!
- “Like water spilt upon the ground,
 Their persons are no more;
 Still death re-echoes back the sound:
 ‘Not lost, but gone before.’
- “Yes, they are gone, for ever gone,
 Where every tear is dry;
 For the corruptible alone
 Shall in the cold grave lie.
- “Gone forth from hatred and from wrong,
 Derision and dismay;
 To join th’ innumerable throng,
 In raiment bright as day.
- “They’ve gone; but if we follow now
 In steps their feet have trod,
 We soon shall meet, and with them bow
 Around the throne of God.”

C. H.

Obituary.

WILLIAM SAGGERS.—On Dec. 11th, 1878, William Saggars, aged 47 years.

W. Saggars was a member of the little cause at Park Lane, Farnham. He was a native of Waltham, Hertfordshire.

About 28 years ago the Lord in mercy laid his sins with weight upon his conscience under the preaching of that dear servant of God, Mr. Martin, late minister of Stevenage; thus bringing him out of the world, and the ways of sin, and from sinful companions, which before he loved. The cry of the poor publican was often his: “God be merciful to me a sinner;” and with the poor woman, “Lord, help me!”

He was for many years tried, and often said that after all he feared he was nothing but a deceiver, and that the Lord would never save such a wretch as he felt himself to be. He would often, as he thought, get in secret, and cry, and plead with the Lord that he would remember him with the favour wherewith he remembered his own dear children. At other times, he was blessedly raised to hope that after all the time would come when he should be enabled to say, “The Lord is my Portion.” For this he often cried, and used to say, “Nothing short of this will satisfy my poor soul.” He was not a great talker; he was so afraid he should be left to say what he did not feel. His great desire was to be made right, and to have that religion that would not leave him when he came to die. Those words were at one time sweetly blessed to his soul: “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?” Not, indeed, fully delivering him from all his fears, but sweetly enabling him to hope he was one of that happy number.

After the death of Mr. Martiu he used to travel to Hitchin with his dear friend and companion in soul-trouble, Mr. Kitchener, with whom he felt more union of soul than I can express. There he heard those dear men of God, Mr. Skipworth, Mr. Mountfort, Mr. Jackson, and several others, whose testimonies in the hand of the Lord were made sweet food for his poor cast-down soul; of which at times he spoke. He

often mentioned a sermon spoken by Mr. Jackson from those sweet words: "Although my house be not so with God, yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant."

Nine years before his death he was in the providence of God removed to Farnham, where it often pleased the Lord to bless his own truth to the comfort of his soul. The last two years of his life his sufferings were great; but he patiently bore them all. He would say, after a severe attack of his heart, as soon as he could speak, "O the long-suffering goodness of God to an unworthy sinner! See how he has comforted, kept, and spared me yet once more to my poor children." These, at times, lay very near his heart. Sometimes he has begged of me, before he seemed to have strength himself, to thank and praise the Lord for his great goodness to him.

Many times we have watched him for hours, never thinking he would speak to us again. But the last night of his life was a night never to be forgotten by me. Sleep seemed to have departed from him. He was talking of the many things we had been brought through, and the times when the Lord had appeared for us. I did not think at the time what the Lord was about to do with us. He had been better for a week longer than for some time had been the case; and I had had sweet freedom in pleading with the Lord that he would strengthen him and bless him with health. He pressed me very much that, if he went to sleep, I would awake him at 6 o'clock; which I did, as gently as I could. He got himself up, but fell back asleep in death. "The memory of the just is blessed."

S. SAGGERS.

SARAH BLACKWELL.—On March 17th, 1879, in the 80th year of her age.

ELIZABETH BLACKWELL.—On Aug. 29th, 1879, aged 82; both at Devizes.

We regret the omission of the deaths of the above esteemed Christian friends until now. It is, however, a comforting satisfaction, in making a brief reference to their memory, to be able to do more than merely record their decease. They have not only left this world of sin and sorrow, but have, we doubt not, gone to be for ever with the Lord.

Miss Elizabeth Blackwell had been, during a long period of her life, a member at the "Old Baptist" chapel, Devizes. We have many times heard her speak of the blessed seasons she had enjoyed in hearing the gospel of God's grace in that place. Being blessed with strong powers of mind, and a clear discernment in Divine truth, and having been brought again and again in her experience to know her own personal interest in Christ, she was able to converse upon the things of God with the more gracious freedom of spirit. Her extreme kindness to the Lord's poor was quite characteristic of her, as well as of both her sisters. In years gone by, when their temporal prosperity was greater, few were more quick to go on missions of mercy to the suffering poor than were our dear friends the three Miss Blackwells, of whom only one, Miss Ann, now survives.

Miss Elizabeth was upon the whole much blessed in her last affliction. We have found her, on some of our visits, full of sweet assurance, and her heart flowing over with blessing and praise to the Lord; though at other times her mind would be for a time clouded, and her way apparently dark. Her affliction was of such a nature, that it made the goodness and tender mercy of God the more manifest towards her in the way in which he controlled that affliction, and gave her sweet seasons of quietness and peace in believing; and in such peace and quietness she at last passed away, after a long pilgrimage, to the "rest which remaineth for the people of God,"

Her dear sister, Miss Sarah, had never made any public profession, though for years before her departure she had, we have reason to believe, secretly confessed, and sought, and loved the Lord in her heart. She was a weak, trembling soul, and one who, through fear of saying too much, was kept from saying as much as she might. Perhaps, for a period in her life, and subsequently to her having been quickened into spiritual life, the work of grace in her soul showed less signs of growth and development. But it was remarkable how the Lord put his hand to his own work to make it manifest in her last affliction. She suffered from a most painful malady, but not a murmur or repining word was heard to escape her lips. She would often repeat the lines:

“Weary of earth, myself, and sin;”

and with peculiar emphasis, would say,

“And there I long to be.”

We give a few particulars here as penned down by a friend who was much with her:

“I said, ‘Come quickly, Lord Jesus.’ She said, ‘Quickly come.’ After this she rallied; but having increasing suffering of body on the following day, I said, while holding her up, ‘Have you no other hope, dear, but the blood and righteousness of Jesus?’ She replied, ‘No, no! Crown him, crown him.’ I repeated that verse:

“Then in a nobler, sweeter song,

You’ll sing his power to save.”

She replied, ‘Yes.’ Other verses were repeated, such as,

“Jesus, thy blood and righteousness;”

and

“Join the glad throng;”

in response to some of which, she said, ‘O yes, read it, read it.’

“Mr. Hemington had much liberty at times in his soul in praying for her, and felt satisfied of her eternal safety. Also Mr. Vine, who spoke with much confidence after visiting her, that her ransomed spirit would soon join the ‘spirits of the just.’

“Thus both these esteemed Christian friends have left a testimony behind them, which fully justifies our adopting the apostle’s language concerning them: “We sorrow not as others which have no hope.”

C. H.

NATHANIEL WARNER.—On Sept. 16th, 1878, aged 55 years, Nathaniel Warner, pastor of the Strict Baptist cause, Brentwood, Essex.

Nathaniel Warner was born at Walkern, Herts; and his youthful career was one of the most reckless I ever heard of. He lived in this state, the terror of the village, till about 20 years of age, and appears to have been ringleader in all kinds of mischief and wickedness. One evening, hearing there was to be a coloured man preach in the village, he, with some more of his companions, went to ridicule him; and according to his own words, they agreed that if he was preaching there they would pull him off the chair on which he stood, and get up in his place, and make game of him. But God, who is rich in mercy, and wonderful in working, knew for what our friend was going; and instead of persecuting the preacher he gave him a listening ear to what the preacher had to say. Whilst the man was telling the dreadful consequences of sin, and declaring that those should not go unpunished who died without repentance, judgment seemed laid to the line, and righteousness to the plummet in his own soul; so that instead of persecuting the man, he could not help crying aloud for mercy; and instead of going home a persecutor, he went home with the sentence of death in his own soul, and cried for mercy.

His friends knew not what to make of him. He fled from his ungodly

companions, and set to work as hard as he could to live up to the law; but finding he could not do this, he thought he could not be a Christian. These words at this time: "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" were a great trouble to him. Also Malachi iv. 1, and Rev. vi., last four verses. These, and a great many other passages in God's Word, were brought into his mind with a condemning power, which nearly brought him to his wit's end. †

About this time he was greatly tried in providence, being only a farm labourer, receiving nine shillings per week, with a wife and family to maintain. He thought God was now about to punish him openly for his awful sins. He went to an old man of the same name as himself to hear him read the Word of God; and to him he opened his mind. He told him of the dreadful feelings he had in his mind, and the awful rebellion that often rose up against God because he had not made him a dog, a horse, or anything that had not a soul which must some day stand in the presence of God. The old man read to him, and tried to show him God's plan of salvation; but he could not receive it. He wanted something tangible; and, getting into conversation with a Wesleyan, he advised him to accompany him to their chapel. He went, and they set him to work for salvation; and instead of finding any relief, he got farther into bondage. They tried to daub him with untempered mortar, telling him to exercise faith, and say, I believe Christ died for me; and that then it would be all done. But God did not suffer him to be thus slightly healed; for he said, "Unless Christ tells me plainly he died for me, I dare not believe it." He began to see about this time God was of one mind, and could not change, which caused him great trouble; these words striking his mind forcibly: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still, &c." He asked a Wesleyan about this time if he thought God had a people who should be eternally saved; and his answer was: "All might be saved if they would but come to Jesus."

However, this did not satisfy him; so he thought he would go to Stevenage, or Welwyn, I forget which, to hear Mr. Smart. He felt he was a dangerous man to have anything to do with, especially if all was true that the Wesleyans told him about him. Nevertheless, true or not, he was determined one Sunday to go and hear him. He went praying and crying all the way from Walkern. When he got to the chapel, he sat in one corner; and when the man of God began to lay open the heart, and to show the evils that were hidden therein, Mr. Smart so entered into his feelings that he came to the conclusion that Mr. Martin, of Walkern, had been telling him all about him. Whilst the minister was describing the work of the Holy Ghost upon the soul, he was a little comforted; and a ray of hope sprung up in his soul, with a "Who can tell but God may be gracious?" This fastened his ear to the door-post, and he often went afterwards, and was greatly encouraged.

He had the pleasure of hearing a man named Field, from Phil. ii. 7, 8, which was made a blessing to his soul; so that he could say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear what man can do unto me. This God is my God for ever and for ever." Many other similar passages of God's Word were very sweet and precious to him, which gave him rest for a time; but he did not enjoy this privilege long. He was soon after beset with various temptations, especially in reference to his former life. Sin again seemed to return in its guilt and power, which caused him great trouble; and oftentimes he used to cry to the Lord to pardon the sins of his youth.

About this time he was working on a farm at Walkern. One day, being exceedingly troubled, he cried bitterly to the Lord for a manifesta-

tion of pardon; and thinking of what his past life had been, and what a miserable life he was now living, he thought he would call on the Lord just once more. While he was musing, he heard what he thought to be like an audible voice, saying, "I thirst;" and with the words came faith, and he was privileged at that time to view Him who was God over all, blessed for evermore, suffering and dying as the sinner's Substitute; yea, even *his*, who was the vilest of them all. His soul was now overflowing with joy, and he desired to let others know what God had done for his soul. He communicated the joyful news to his wife's brother, and they both praised God together for this manifestation of Divine love.

After this he had a desire to read God's Word for himself, and how to learn to read he did not know. Mr. Martin, of Walkern, helped him greatly at times in this matter. About this time some one gave him a New Testament, and he learned to read little by little; and in less than a year he could read a chapter or two in it. He was very much tempted about this time to believe that when God came to gather up his children, he should be so very insignificant that he would pass by him, and not notice him; which caused him to cry mightily to God; and God most blessedly answered his cry by speaking home this promise to his soul: "I will never leave *thee*, nor forsake *thee*."

He was baptized at Stratford, in Essex, some few years after the above promise was given him, by whom I know not.

Fifteen years ago himself and seven others, at Brentwood, were formed into a church, based upon Strict Baptist principles. He was chosen by the people to be their pastor, and remained so till the time of his decease; and the truths that he preached were made by God a blessing to many who heard him.

On Oct. 25th, 1877, he met with an accident, as it is called. He was crossing the railway at Chelmsford to pick up a note his employer threw off an engine, when an express train came along, and caught him, shattering his thigh and arm. He was sensible when picked up, but soon lost consciousness. He was taken to Chelmsford Infirmary, and there lay for six months. The first six weeks he was there it was wonderful to see the composure of his mind under the great sufferings he must have been enduring. He did not seem sensible to anything of a worldly nature. His mind seemed to be lost in the ocean of Jehovah's love; and whenever he spoke to any of us, it was all about God's love and care towards him.

For many years he had been a very tried man. In the year 1865 or 1866 he was laid aside by affliction, so that we despaired of his life. In this affliction he was greatly tried in reference to the ministry. Some of his principal friends left the church, and reported he was not called to the work, which was a source of great trouble to him. He was determined in his own mind to preach no more, but he could not keep silence. His sickness soon laid him quite aside, as it proved to be inflammation of the lungs. In his weakness Satan took advantage of him, and he seemed to be always in tears, and greatly distressed. For several days prayer was offered up for him continually by the church, and when he was deprived of consciousness his soul seemed to be in the third heavens. Thus were the prayers of the church over which God had placed him answered, and it seemed to purge out their former discord. When he became conscious again, he told us the Lord had blessedly delivered him from all his fears in reference to the ministry from these words: "If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out;" so that he had exclaimed, "Lord, 'tis enough. I will, by thy help, preach thy word before friends or foes."

After this the Lord brought him more publicly forth in the county where he lived by his supplying other pulpits; viz., Barking, Witham, Heybridge, Dunmow, Thundersley, &c., in which places the Lord owned and blessed his labours.

But to return to his last days. He was most blessedly supported under his sufferings, and the kingdom of God was truly in him, and was manifest to all around him, so that many did say, especially his fellow-workmen, "We have seen strange things to-day." He was removed from the Infirmary on March 4th. After he was brought home Satan seemed to take advantage of him in his weakness. All round him appeared dark. He went, to all appearance, mourning without the sun; and his bitter cries and tears to the Lord used to grieve our hearts. His mind, indeed, at times, was very dark, and his pains seemed more than nature could bear up under. Abscesses now began to form around his wounds, so that he was reduced to such extreme weakness as not to be able at times to talk or read. But still faith clung to the promise: "I will never leave thee." Generally, when any one spake to him about his soul or eternal things, he seemed able to speak of the value of Christ's precious blood and righteousness. Here was his refuge and hiding-place. In the depth of his suffering a gentleman came to see him, and told him he was glad to find he had made his peace with God. He immediately answered, "Ah, sir, if God had not made peace with me by the blood of the cross, I should never have made peace with him, or have had peace in him." He was enabled by grace to direct that gentleman's mind to the eternal covenant of God's grace, and to the peace-speaking blood of Jehovah-Jesus as the only foundation of his peace and happiness.

After this he gradually got weaker, and it was sweet to be in his company. His sufferings were of the most painful nature, but not a murmur escaped his lips; and whatever was done for him by any one, he could not sufficiently, as he wished, express the gratitude he felt for it. All the friends marvelled at his composure. He was truly resting on the Rock.

A few minutes before he departed he took a little stimulant, and said, in a low voice, "Jesus took the cup; and when he had given thanks—Let us do likewise." He did so, and appeared overcome by weakness. Soon after, his eldest son came in, and said to him, "Father, are you happy?" He answered, "Nothing but the blood and righteousness of Jesus will do here;" and sank again into utter prostration.

Just before he breathed his last he was heard to say, "Come, Lord Jesus, come." And thus departed from this world one of God's tried and afflicted children, to enter into that land where the inhabitants shall no more say they are sick. He was a good and kind father, an affectionate husband, and a faithful friend. E. CASEY.

THE whole world of nature, no less than those of grace and glory, is under the absolute dominion and the never-ceasing direction of God. Every wind that blows is of his breathing, and every drop, whether fluid or condensed, that falls from the sky, is of his sending. The adoring nations must confess that "he giveth snow like wool; he scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes; he casteth forth his ice like morsels. Who can stand before his cold?" (Ps. cxlvii. 16, 17.) "He saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength." (Job xxxvii. 6.) Let the same question be put to my readers which Omnipotence, speaking once, put to Job (xxxviii. 22): "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?" Hast thou (fully) considered its nature, its properties, and its uses?—*Toplady*.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

APRIL, 1880.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

TO OUR READERS.

Dear Friends,—When the lines we are now penning reach your eyes our native country will be plunged into the turmoil of a general election. We believe that it will be one of great importance. Though the Lord's people occupy the position of strangers and pilgrims upon earth, they cannot be unconcerned spectators of what takes place around them. They must be in the world, though not of it, and must be more or less affected by what concerns their fellow-men. The Jews were told, when sojourning at Babylon, to seek the peace of the land in which they were dwelling. We are told to do good unto all men, and pray for all sorts of persons; we cannot well do this if we are indifferent to, and unaffected spectators of, passing events. In this highly-favoured land we enjoy great privileges. We can worship God according to the dictates of our consciences, no man making us afraid. We live under, for the most part, just and equal laws, and are really in a great degree well-governed. Surely it becomes us to seek the welfare of our native land, and to pray for a continuance of such great blessings. It is right for us to entertain feelings of the truest patriotism, to manifest a proper concern as to the real prosperity of our native land, to rejoice in its welfare, and mourn over its adversities.

We are not, then, called upon to be unconcerned spectators of the coming struggle. Great results probably depend upon it. We fear, amongst other things, lest a party, weak in itself, and with a too small majority to be independent, may sell us into the hands of those who are seeking to advance the interests of a false religion; and will, if successful, by the promotion of that religion, bring down the heaviest calamities upon our beloved country.

Seeing, then, that an event of such vital importance is coming on, and that it is not improper for us to take a certain amount of interest in it, we think it not out of place, as editing this periodical, to address you in a few words. In the first place, we would warn our readers of the danger of being *unduly* affected by these things. If our minds are excited, and our hearts unduly affected, these things will sadly interfere with spirituality and a

comfortable attendance, either in public or private, upon divine things. Whilst taking a proper interest, it is well for us to stand, as it were, aloof in the spirit of our minds, calm and composed, whilst numbers are hurried away by an unhealthy excitement. To help us in this non-conformity to the spirit of the world, and to keep us from undue excitement or anxiety, may we ever remember that in the midst of all events the Lord reigns, and so reigns as to make all events work together for his glory and his people's good. Thus we need not fear or be over-sad if the earth be removed, and if the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea. Thus, too, we shall be more able to do what is really right, and to act as become Christians. It is a time for the Lord's people to be much on their knees in secret prayer that God would so rule that the plots of designing persons may be frustrated, and that those may be returned to Parliament who will firmly resist the attempts of men who, if successful, would bring our country under the displeasure and judgments of God. All God's people, by the grace of his Holy Spirit, can serve their country in a way of praying for it.

Some of us will be called upon to exercise our right of voting. This should not be done in a light or careless way, but with due consideration, and in the fear of God. If we are told in God's Word, whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God (1 Cor. x. 31), certainly we ought to consult his glory in giving our votes at the coming election. Shall we, carried away by mere party or political feelings, vote for those who will in their places in Parliament sanction such things as the desecration of the Sabbath, or the advancement of the interests of popery? Mind, we are no advocates of persecution. We are not for withholding from our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects any proper rights as citizens. We do not think that injustice can advance the cause of God. But neither justice nor wisdom calls upon us to give unnecessary privileges or assistance to, or pass laws peculiarly in favour of, those who avow opinions utterly subversive of all civil and religious liberty. Mind, we write not as politicians; we do not attempt to say for what party our readers ought to vote. All we urge upon them is this,—that they should consider the power of voting a trust committed to them by their country, to be exercised for the welfare of their fellow-countrymen in the fear of God. What offends God can never really benefit man. So, then, the truest patriotism is to seek the welfare of our countrymen by endeavouring, as much as we are able, to advance the cause of God, and to withstand those evil things which fight against it. Though much distress still prevails in this country at the present time, especially amongst those who cultivate the soil—a subject which calls for prayer to God—it cannot be denied and overlooked that God in his mercy is to a certain extent giving us a revival of trade, and indications of further prosperity. Here, then, we see cause for both prayer and praise. Praise for the relief already granted;

prayer for further mercies; especially for a favourable season this year for ripening and gathering in the fruits of the earth. But whilst we both pray and praise for temporal prosperity, it is well to do both with trembling. May we ever remember that sin is the disgrace and ruin of any country. It becomes us, then, to principally direct our prayers against sin, against errors and evils, against Popery, infidelity, materialism, atheistic denial of God. These are the great, though often disregarded, dangers. Let us, then, by God's help, be much in prayer against them. Let us pray for our rulers that God would govern their counsels, and not suffer them to take counsel as against the Lord. Let us at this time, too, God helping us, especially pray that the Lord would so rule and overrule in this general election, that a parliament truly beneficial to the nation may be returned. This, indeed, is to pray that men may be returned, the majority of whom will steadfastly oppose all legislation which strengthens instead of weakens the hands of iniquity and error. In thus doing we shall act the part of true lovers of our country, seeking to advance its truest interests, and at the same time its national prosperity.

A WORD OF PROMISE.

“He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light.”—Ps. xxxvii. 6.

THESE words may be taken, we conceive, in a twofold sense; either as referring to the justifying righteousness which is needed before the throne of God, or to the clearing up a man's character and conduct, and justifying him in various particulars before his fellow-men. It is in the first point of view we shall consider them at this time. In another discourse, taken from the second clause of the verse, we shall touch upon the latter point of view to some extent; there being in it a considerable sweetness, and much consolation to a tried and tempted child of God.

In noticing, then, at this time the words as they may be applied to the justification of a sinner as before God, we must observe that God's people are a tried people; and after being quickened by his Holy Spirit, they usually have to pass through a great fight of spiritual afflictions; being beset with many doubts and fears, and finding it a hard matter to make their calling and election sure. (2 Pet. i. 10.) They have to tarry the Lord's leisure, waiting in a way of prayer, and seeking at Wisdom's gates, watching at the posts of her door. (Prov. viii. 34.) And it is to encourage such persons to wait on and on, that this psalm may be considered as in part written, and the sweet promise of the verse containing our text given by God the Holy Ghost: “He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.”

But what righteousness can that be which the Holy Ghost speaks of as the poor seeker's righteousness? To answer this question, we must consider what the Scripture says upon the

subject of righteousness. The scriptural meaning of the word is a perfect coming up to the standard of God's holy, just, and good law. The man that without deviation doeth these things, he is righteous; he shall live in them; but there must be no flaw; no imperfection. God's justice is like himself; yea, is himself; and as God is an infinitely great and glorious Being, so his justice is of an infinitely perfect character. So, then, when we read in Scripture of a just man, we are not to suppose it means a man of a certain amount of moral integrity, a good son, husband, or neighbour; one whose outward conduct is not marked by any noticeable misbehaviour; but it means a person who in some way or other is viewed by an infinitely just God, as having fulfilled all righteousness, and done no iniquity, within or without. But the Scriptures which thus define righteousness, further declare the divine judgments in respect to the doer or not doer of righteousness. He that doeth these things shall live in them; but "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." (Deut. xxvii. 26; Gal. iii.) He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all (James ii.); and God will in no wise clear the guilty; but "the soul that sinneth, it shall die."

Again. The Scriptures declare, and to this agrees the conscience of every God-taught person, that there is not a just man upon earth, who doeth good and sinneth not; for all have sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God. (Rom. iii.) Therefore, all being naturally concluded under sin, all naturally have the wrath of an offended God abiding upon them. How, then, can a man, a sinner, be just with God? O! Solemn question! The Scripture answers it by setting forth the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. The divine way of justifying a sinner is to wash him in the blood of Jesus, viewed as dying in his place, and to clothe him in the obedience of Jesus, viewed as rendering a spotless obedience to God's holy, just, and good law in his behalf. O! marvellous work of grace and love! Here God appears just and a Justifier; and the sinner, hopeless in himself, finds mercy set up for ever.

But here the question will perhaps occur: How can one do and die for another? Truth says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." How is the Word of God fulfilled in the substitutionary death of Jesus? Why, the mystery of eternal union solves this difficulty. God has joined Jesus and his people together, and they twain are as one. The Second Adam and his church answer to the figure of the first Adam and his wife; and what God has joined together let no man attempt, for no man can, to put asunder. Jesus has taken upon him the seed of Abraham. (Heb. ii. 16.) He is bone of his people's bone; their near Kinsman and their Husband. Well, then, Jesus being viewed as one with his people by God, his holy spotless life is viewed as their obedience, his death as their death for sin. The wife's sin and guilt becomes her husband's, and he dies for it;

the husband's obedience becomes the wife's, and she lives by it. O blessed union! Here God appears glorious, holy, just, and true, and yet the God of pardons unto his poor lost people.

But we must here say a word about the necessity of Christ's death. There are some professed Christians who see and feel not the necessity of Christ's death. They view him as an amiable moral pattern, and they see and allow of some necessity for his altering and amending us a little; but though they thus allow of the water, they despise the blood. (1 Jno. v.) A Christ come by water to wash them a little is all very well; but a Christ coming by blood to purge a damnable sinner from his guilt, they cannot see the need of. But hear what Scripture says in Ezek. xxxiii. The Word supposeth—at least, in a full sense of the words, it can only be a supposition—a man to have fulfilled all righteousness, say for ten, twenty, thirty years; but at the end of that period to have committed sin. Well, what says the strict and holy law of God concerning him? Why, all his righteousness shall not be so much as remembered; but in the sin that he hath sinned he shall die. Past obedience cannot possibly atone for present sin.

Well, then, see here the necessity of the atoning death of Jesus. He wrought all righteousness, and was the Holy One of God; but, then, his people's sins being imputed to him, before his righteousness could avail and be remembered, in the sin that his people had sinned, and which, therefore, he himself was guilty in respect of by imputation, he must die. Thus, having made an end of his people's sins by his infinitely meritorious death, being God as well as man, he brought in everlasting righteousness at his resurrection from the dead, as the prophet Daniel (ix. 24) foretold concerning him.

Lastly, before we conclude this part of our subject, let us dwell a moment upon the nature of this righteousness of Christ, which becomes the poor lost sinner's by the grace of God. It is called in Scripture the righteousness of God. That is, it is Godlike, infinite, perfect, and eternal. Wrought out by the Second Person in the blessed Trinity, it has a divine glory about it; and as Jesus himself is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, so his righteousness, which is the needy sinner's, is everlasting. (See Isa. li. &c.)

But having thus considered this righteousness of Christ, whereby the unjust sinner becomes a righteous man in the eyes of a perfectly just God, we must proceed to describe *the character* particularly addressed in the words of our text; the person to whom this righteousness is said so to belong, that the Holy Ghost uses the cheering expression "*thy righteousness.*"

In the 51st of Isaiah we have the Lord's people spoken of as in two very different states, or stages of experience. Some are said (ver. 7) to know righteousness; which means, not only that they had some correct notions concerning Christ's righteousness, but that they had been enabled to lay hold of it in their hearts, and rest upon it as their hope of acceptance with the Father.

They could see themselves as in Jesus before the throne of God, and the eyes of Divine purity; and seeing themselves in Jesus, though vile and guilty in themselves, they could rejoice in a blessed confidence, that God viewed them as no longer guilty and unjust, but as sinless sinners in the Beloved. Others are said (ver. 1) to be following after righteousness. That is, they were desiring of all things to know their interest in this righteousness of Christ, hungering and thirsting after it. Unable to satisfyingly assure their souls that it belonged to them, and that in it they were just; but longing after this assurance as the one thing needful to make them happy with a joy unspeakable.

These last, these blessed, though not at present comfortable persons, are the very ones particularly addressed in our text. "He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light." We will here endeavour to trace the operations of the blessed Spirit upon the soul; showing what brings a person to be a hungerer and thirster after righteousness, and thus into the place of promise.

When the soul of a sinner is first awakened, usually the great thing that oppresses it is the sight and sense of past sins, the manifold transgressions of the past life against God's holy will, as declared in Scripture; and frequently the Holy Spirit seems to make conscience upbraid us for some particular sin above others, which stands forth more prominently than the rest. If men have led a more profane life, then it is some such sin as drunkenness, uncleanness, Sabbath-breaking. If a more religious life, then it is the mockery of God contained in their formal prayerless prayers, their horrible iniquity in partaking without faith in the heart of the Lord's supper. This "meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of asps within him." (Job xx. 14.) He fears that, after the sop, has entered in the devil.

Well, then, for a time the convinced sinner's thoughts are principally swallowed up with this question: "How can my sins be forgiven?" But as he goes on, searching the Scriptures, and seeking to pray unto the Lord, further light breaks in, and he obtains clearer and clearer views of the nature of the Divine justice. He then sees that a sinner must have a perfect righteousness to stand before God in, or he cannot appear before him at all. Now, in both these cases, the Holy Spirit usually comes in with a little help, by showing the sinner that there is mercy with God for sinners, that he may be feared (Psa. cxxx.), and that God is able to justify the ungodly; and thus the poor self-despairing sinner is held for a season unto the Lord in hope. A stranger; but Christ will surely ere long take him in.

But he has something more to learn. It is a very, very hard thing to root a man out of self, and plant him entirely into Jesus; and for a time this thought will cleave to a man: "O that I knew my sins were pardoned, and my soul at present made just; and that I might begin again, start afresh. I would seek indeed to go and sin no more." (John v.) But by degrees a man is shown more and more of the utter depravity of the human heart. The

truster therein, says Solomon, is a fool; and so the man under divine teaching finds. A "go and sin no more" is not enough for him. He dare not undertake anything at all. He can do nothing to rectify the past; he dare not rely upon himself in respect to the future. In short, he sees and feels that nothing will do for him but an everlasting righteousness; a pardon full, free, and eternal; a righteousness Godlike, glorious, infinite, and everlasting. And now, blessed man, God the Spirit opens his eyes to see that this is just the very thing which God gives the sinner in Jesus. "He that is washed," says Christ (in precious blood), "is clean every whit." (John xiii.) "My righteousness shall be for ever." (Isa. li.) So then, "He that believeth on me is passed from death unto life, and shall not come into condemnation." (Jno. v. 24.) Nay, not into *judgment*; for that is the meaning of the word here in the original; for the law is abolished, and grace reigns in Jesus through eternal righteousness (Rom. vi.) everlastingly triumphant.

Well, the needy sinner, seeing this, is brought by the Holy Ghost to hunger and thirst after this righteousness. It is as bread to a hungry man, drink to a thirsty. He longs to have it more clearly revealed unto him, and to see himself clothed in it before the throne; and thus he comes into the waiting-place of our text; the place of promise: "He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light." "He shall bring it forth." Dwell upon this expression. If a thing is brought forth, it implies that it has a previous existence, and is stored up somewhere to be brought forth in due season. So it is with this poor seeker's righteousness. It has an existence; it is in Jesus Christ, who is called "The LORD our Righteousness." (Jer. xxiii. 6.) It is treasured up in heaven, where Jesus sitteth at the right hand of God. There it is in all its glorious beauty; and there neither world, nor sin, nor Satan, can get at it. Happy child of God, to have so glorious a robe, and to have it laid up in so safe a place! Satan stripped Adam by temptation of his original robe of innocence; for it was kept in an earthly storehouse, into which the thief Sin could break through and steal. Satan strips the glittering false professor of his fancied righteousness. Yea, he sometimes prevails to cause a saint like David to defile the robe of his own obedience, or godly conversation; but he can never cause a spot of defilement to touch the saint's real dress, which is the spotless righteousness of Jesus, and which is reserved for him up in heaven. It is with this robe as with the Crown of England jewels. They are kept safe in the Tower of London, to be brought forth on coronation days and grand occasions. So the robe of Christ's righteousness, and the regalia of heaven, are kept in the Tower of David (Song iv. 4), to be brought forth on the spiritual coronation days of the child of God, and the festive periods of his espousals unto Jesus. Then he puts them on by faith. Then he walks beautified in them. Then he sings the song of the spouse: "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 the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. (Is. lxi. 10.)

But, secondly, the words "*bring forth*" signify that the seeking sinner cannot do this for his own self. It wants a longer arm than that of creature-power to reach up to the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, and thence bring forth this righteousness. Some people will tell a poor burdened helpless sinner, in whom the arm of creature-help and strength is withered, that he can apply Christ's righteousness to himself, and that it is his own fault if he does not bring it forth and enjoy it. But the words of our text teach a different lesson, and put this needy person in his proper place; namely, that of prayer and waiting upon the Lord, who alone can bring forth this righteousness to his joy and consolation.

The first work of the Spirit, in respect to applying this righteousness, is to bring the soul into a waiting, patient posture. Here he causes it to sigh and cry to Jesus, and to wrestle with him, giving him no rest until himself, as the righteousness of his people, go forth as brightness. (Isa. lxii. 1.) Here the Spirit keeps the soul through many a dreary hour, until "He who shall come will come, and will not tarry."

Thirdly, the expression "*bring forth*" shows us the work of the Holy Spirit as the Comforter of God's people, whose office it is to bring forth this righteousness of Jesus, and apply it with power unto the soul; enabling the helpless soul to exercise faith upon it, and to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory in it. "He shall take of mine," says Christ (Jno. xvi.) "and shall show it unto you." This is the strong hand which powerfully brings forth the righteousness of Jesus, working faith in the heart, to see its nature, apprehend its fulness and freeness, and to embrace it as an eternal hope of glory.

Lastly. We have to consider the words "*as the light.*" The figure here is taken from the Lord's operations in nature. His bringing forth the morning of Christ's glory is compared to the bringing forth the sun day by day. Some people fancy that the sun rises day by day, according to what they call the course of nature. So it does; but their course of nature is an atheistical or deistical course. The Christian sees in the rising of the sun morning by morning the continued working of the will and power of the Creator; who has not receded from, but is present with, all his works, and present as an infinitely wise and Almighty Agent. Thus the believer sees in "the course of nature" a present God, working all things according to his own will, and bringing forth the light of the morning; and then he can pass from God's decrees and operations in nature to those in grace, and see a sweet analogy between the two; and his own experience of divine things unfolds to him the beauty and fitness of divine comparisons. Thus nature serves as a handmaid to grace;

and grace throws a lustre upon nature, as she discovers the spiritual deep which coucheth under her course and outward appearance.

Well; the righteousness of Christ is compared here to light; and its bringing forth to the bringing forth of the light of day.

Now, firstly, this comparison leads us to notice the different dealings of God with his different people. It is well known that in some countries further south there is no twilight like what we have in England; but the day at once is engulfed in the darkness of night, and the darkness as suddenly gives place to the full day. In our country it is different. The daylight melts away gradually, and the shadows of night are slowly dispersed by the beams of the rising sun. Thus it is in spiritual experience. Some sinners are plunged suddenly into deep convictions of sin, like Saul of Tarsus on his journey to Damascus. From the false light and towering heights of a false profession he fell into the deepest darkness. There was no twilight. Some fall much more gradually beneath the convincing power of the Word and Spirit of God. Both come to the same place,—a night as to natural hopes and self-righteous dependencies; but in different ways. Again, some are brought forth *suddenly*, as into the full beams of the daylight of Christ's righteousness; the glory of the Lord in grace shines round about them; from dark night it is bright day. While others are kept long in a sort of twilight; it is neither light nor dark. But here again both come to one end. They are brought to rest and rejoice alone in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Sun of righteousness risen upon them with healing in his wings.

But, secondly, this figure leads us to reflect upon the exact suitability of this righteousness. "God," says John, "is light, and there is no darkness in him." (1 Jno. i.) And no darkness can dwell, therefore, with God. Ah! what will those who trust in their dark self-righteousness do when this truth appeareth? But Christ's righteousness is as the light. So, then, the man clothed therein is fit for the presence of the All-holy God. We read of Christ (Ps. civ.), that he clothed himself with light as with a garment. This was at his resurrection, when he put on the robes of his own glorious righteousness, in which he shines before God as the Redeemer of sinners. In this righteousness the believer is enrobed. "Now," says Paul, "are ye light in the Lord."

But observe, finally, these three things in light, which will lead us to three answerable excellencies in Christ's righteousness. First, light is *glorious*. Look at the earth when it is night; the glory is departed from it; it is a dark inglorious mass. But when the sun rises upon it, it bursts forth again in renewed glory. So with the sinner's soul. View it apart from the righteousness of Christ, and it is full of shame, and covered with ingloriousness; but clothed in the beams of the Sun of righteousness, it is glorious with the glory of God. (Rev. xxi. 11.) The city, says John, was "having the glory of God."

Secondly, light is *beautiful and beautifying*. Look at the earth on a dark night, and it is without any comeliness; but when the sun rises upon it, it shines forth clothed by the light with exquisite beauty. So look at the sinner's soul without the righteousness of Christ, and it is a dark unlovely object; but with the glory of the Sun of righteousness risen upon it, it shines with beauty. "Arise, shine," says the Lord (Isa. lx. 1), "for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee."

Lastly, light is *all-revealing*. "Whatsoever doth make manifest is light." In the dark we cannot judge correctly concerning the various objects round about us. So it is spiritually. In the light of Christ we see light (Ps. xxxvi. 9; Mal. iv.); and when he shines upon us as the Sun of Righteousness, then we can form a true judgment concerning things. Then we have clear views of God and his grace, of Christ and his glory, of the law and its majesty, of sin and its exceeding sinfulness, of the world and its emptiness and vanity. And now if there comes unto us (Deut. xiii.) a prophet or dreamer of dreams, that would turn us from the Lord our God with a Lo here! or a Lo there! in the light of Christ's righteousness he stands discovered as a wolf in sheep's clothing. On the one hand, if he says, "You must add your doings to Christ's, and if you do your best, then God for what you have done, for your piety, will accept you when you die for Christ's sake;" the righteousness of Christ, which now, alone, and for ever makes the sinner righteous, detects him, and the soul says, "Get thee hence, deceiver; we are justified freely (Rom. iii. 24) by his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." If, on the other hand, he comes with a "Let us continue in sin that grace may abound; so imputed righteousness teaches,"—"Nay," saith the soul, "God forbid. The righteousness of Jesus goes before him, and directs into the way (Ps. lxxxv. 13) of his steps. That righteousness revealed in my heart has inflamed (Gal. v. 6) it with the love of God; and love effectually teaches me to desire ever more and more to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously (Titus ii. 12), and godly in this present world, devoting myself in love to the service of THE LORD MY RIGHTEOUSNESS."

WERE we under the continual influence of an humble spirit, our attainments in religion would not be so apt to glitter in our own eyes; nor would we be so forward in admiring and talking about our own comeliness and beauty. No; we should be more apt to consider ourselves as little children in grace, and our attainments to be those of babes in Christ. We should be daily ashamed of, and sorely lament our great blindness and ignorance of God, our astonishing ingratitude, and the coldness of our love to him. Until we are brought to this state of true humility, taking shame to ourselves, and giving glory to God in and for everything, we cannot possibly enjoy [much] communion with God, and [much] growth in grace cannot possibly take place. Real humility takes nothing to itself but sin and shame; and it gives all the glory to God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift.—*T. Charles.*

SHORT PAPERS.

THE SOUL SEARCHED AND COMFORTED.—A MEDITATION UPON
PS. CXXXIX.

THE psalmist is led in this psalm by the Holy Spirit to meditate first of all upon the infinite knowledge of God; not so much as it respects the creation generally as in reference to himself. This omniscience of God was not a theory or a speculation with the psalmist; but a something practically bearing upon and intimately affecting his own soul.

He begins: "O Lord." This was no taking the holy Name of the Lord, of JEHOVAH, in vain. No! He realized his being, perfections, and presence, as he penned the words. His faith was in exercise, and drawn out unto the Lord whom he addressed. Faith was to him, in the Holy Spirit's power, the evidence of things not seen. He was *as* seeing him who is invisible. O my soul! hast thou this faith? hast thou any experience resembling that of the psalmist? or art thou still as a kind of atheist, experimentally and practically, as though without God in the world? These are solemn questions for thee to answer; mayest thou reply to them in an honest and satisfactory manner.

"O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me." God knew all about the psalmist, and required no information to make him wiser. He searches not to obtain information, as we do. There is no searching of his understanding. All things and all ages lie open to his omniscient eye as one eternal now. But God searched and knew the psalmist in a way of making him acquainted with himself and his own condition, and also as making him aware of God's omniscient and searching eye being upon him. By his Word and his Spirit he searched and ransacked the psalmist's heart and conscience. Thus the Word of God was to him as the candle of the Lord, discerning the inmost recesses of his soul. Thus, too, he became aware that all things pertaining to him—the whole course of his life and the inmost secrets of his heart—were naked and opened unto the eye of him with whom we have to do.

The psalmist became under this divine teaching a self-observer. His conscience was alive and enlightened, and bore witness concerning him and his ways and words in reference to the judgment and Word of God. Thus he could no longer sit down and rise up as those idolatrous professors do who sit down to eat and to drink, and rise up to play. His sitting down and rising up was consciously as under the eye of God; and the motives influencing his actions were noticed by him as well as the actions themselves.

"Thou understandest my thought afar off." By his thoughts we understand him to mean not only his thinkings, but the purposes he formed; what he sat down and rose up to do. In fact, what he was about in public and in private, and the thoughts, and plans, and purposes, governing all his movements. Well

had it been for us whose works too often have been as in the dark, as if God saw us not, had we always acted graciously as thus under the eye of God.

But we are only writing down a few reflections. Suffice it, then, to say that under the searching eye of God, which was felt by the psalmist to be upon him at all times and in all things, observing all within and all without, he now took notice of his past life and present actions ["Thou hast beset me behind and before"], of the words which dropped from his lips, the thoughts which passed through his mind, the plans he formed, the things he purposed. What he thought, spoke, and acted went on as under the eye of God. This infinite, intimate, and minute knowledge of God was indeed too wonderful for his finite mind to comprehend; but he could no more deny it than he could his own existence. No! God in his omniscience, his infinite knowledge, was a reality unto him. His very being was pervaded with a consciousness of God's being and intimate knowledge of him.

From this contemplation of the infinite knowledge, the omniscience of God, he turns to God's omnipresence. He is present in every part of his creation. He is as near to the creatures as they are to themselves. But the sons of men, for the most part, do not realize this. To them God is in the height of heaven, not a God close at hand; but this proceeds from the lamentable distance of a moral nature which the fall has produced between a holy and just God and a sinner. The psalmist, an awakened and living man, realized this presence, everywhere and at all times, of God, and realized it as having a solemn reference to himself. Thus he writes in the most solemn way:

"Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" The question is one which is intended in the strongest way to express the feeling that God was everywhere; and therefore to attempt to evade his presence was folly and madness. Vainly Adam hid amongst the trees of the garden; vainly Jonah fled from the presence of the Lord; vainly sinners in the day of judgment will seek a hiding place. "There is no darkness nor shadow of death where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves." Thus the psalmist goes on: "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there." God fills heaven with his smile. There is the brightest manifestation of his glory. There is his throne. But we must not suppose that he is there in such a sense as if heaven, or the heaven of heavens, could contain him. O no!

"He fills his own eternity,
And ever is his time."

He is in heaven, in the sense of his there manifesting the brightest beams of his glory, and filling the inhabitants with boundless joy and peace; not as if he was limited to heaven as an abode.

Therefore the psalmist goes on: "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." In vain, then,

"The sons of darkness fly
The terrors of his frown."

Hell is no hiding-place. Hell is no refuge from the frown of God. Far from it; the hell of hells is the eternity of that frown.

But is there no escape for the wicked? Cannot we flee from the hand of God? Is there no secret place where we can hide ourselves from his justice and his Almighty power to arrest? Let the psalmist reply: "If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." If I could fly as in a moment of time to the greatest distance, I should only there find God, and fall into the hands of his Almighty justice. It was said of a poor wretch who offended the mighty Roman emperor that it was vain for him to think of escape. How much more may this be said of one who is guilty before God?

But, then, can I not bury myself in some deep darkness? If I banish from my mind all thoughts of God? If I say, "Surely, the darkness shall cover me," will not this hide me from God? O vain thought! God is light. Created night and day to him are both alike. In vain can I flee, in vain can I hide, from him who is everywhere, who knows every thing, who made me, who upholds my being, who penetrates the inmost recesses of my mind. From two things, O sinner, it is in vain to think of flying;—from thyself; and from that Almighty Creator who is as near to thee as thou art to thyself; for in him thou livest and movest, and hast thy being.

Having had his thoughts turned to God's presence as the Author of his being, the psalmist next reflects upon the wonders of that being, and considers seriously the Almighty power and infinite wisdom of God as displayed therein. "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." We cannot in such a short paper enlarge here; but must only dwell briefly upon these two words: "*fearfully*" and "*wonderfully*." Many acknowledge the *wonderfully*; but the psalmist speaks of the *fearfully* likewise. The formation of our bodies is wonderful. Those who have most examined into their construction have most acknowledged this; but even a little reflection upon ourselves, without entering into scientific niceties, may suffice. Then look at our souls, with their various powers and faculties of understanding, will, affections, conscience. Then look at the union of soul and body, and how they act and re-act upon each other; and we shall soon be obliged to join in with the psalmist's words, and say, "I am . . . wonderfully made."

But is not the word "*fearfully*" as just and true a word as the other? Are we not *fearfully* made, as to our bodies, when we consider their capabilities of pain or pleasurable sensations? Is it not something to tremble at when we think of the intense agony these bodies are capable of undergoing? Let us go to some poor creature suffering from cancer, and ask, "Is not the psalmist's language just: 'I am *fearfully* made?'" But, then,

what shall we say of the soul? Bodily suffering is but as the image of that which the soul can endure. Bodily pleasure is as nothing in comparison of mental felicity. Is it not a fearful thing to have souls capable of everlasting, unutterable felicity, or everlasting, unutterable woe? "A wounded spirit," even in this life, says the wise man, "who can bear?" Go to some poor creature under conviction of sin, and fearing the wrath to come, and ask him if he is not fearfully made, being capable of enduring such anguish of mind? Why, he will tell you that bodily suffering is as nothing to the torments of his soul. Go to him again when blessed with pardon and peace, and if even racked with bodily pain he will sometimes shout and sing.

Well, then, our bodies are fearfully made, our souls are made far more fearfully, and then both are united together, and fearfully united, to be companions in action during life, and companions in joys and sorrows also; and though separated for, as it were, a moment by death, they must be again inseparable companions through eternity; companions in unutterable happiness or unutterable misery. Well, then, might the psalmist say, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

But how can the psalmist, being a sinner, say, "I will praise thee," in connection with these words? His knowledge of God worked aright. It was not speculative, but practical. It was a divine knowledge given to his heart. Hence it brought him to fly for refuge to the remedy. He found peace by believing in Jesus. Therefore he turns from these contemplations of the knowledge, everywhere presence, wisdom, and power of God to the sweet subject of his love, grace, and mercy to sinners in Christ. "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God!" Yes; the man who values God's thoughts and purposes of love and mercy and grace, is the man who, like the psalmist David, has been made to see, feel, and understand, by God's Word and Spirit, something of the glory of God and of his own wretched state and condition as a lost and undone sinner. Then

"Convinced and pierced through and through,
He thinks himself the sinner chief."

A malefactor doomed to die, he finds there is no escaping from that doom by any ways of man's devising. He can neither bear God's wrath, nor escape it by any carnal refuges of lies. But he comes to Jesus. He finds in Christ a sure, and safe, and eternal hiding-place. There he can both realize God's perfections and presence, and delight in them. "We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."

O fellow-sinners! may God give you and the writer to experience with the psalmist the deep heart and life searching power of the Word and Spirit of God. For this, with him, may we sincerely pray. May we feel even more and more under that divine and intimate soul-searching how lost we are, how vain are all refuges of lies; and may we be enabled by sweet Almighty

grace continually to fly for refuge unto Jesus, and to say with the psalmist, as in Christ, "I will praise thee, my God, my Maker, though I am fearfully and wonderfully made; because thy thoughts of mercy, love, and peace overflow my soul, and being a pardoned sinner and adopted child, I need not fear thy frown; but shall enjoy thy smile in endless bliss throughout eternity. Sin I would count my greatest enemy, my chiefest misery. I would say, not only to the obdurately wicked generally, but to the wickedness of my own heart especially, Depart from me, ye bloody men, ye cruel deceivers, ye murderous inmates of my soul. These I would have grace to diligently search out; these I would have a divine light to discover; and, being discovered, I would have strength of will and determination of purpose to renounce, yea, crucify them. Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

FAITH'S VISION.

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour."—HEB. II. 9.

MARK, my soul, the sweet and peculiar manner in which God the Holy Ghost here speaks of Jesus. He was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. Yes, a body such as ours was given him for the express purpose of suffering. Our nature by reason of sin required a sacrifice for sin. It behoved him therefore to be in all things like unto his brethren. But when he made his soul an offering for sin he for ever sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. To none of the angels was it ever said, "Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Now ponder these blessed things, and then say whether thou hast so seen Jesus. If so, thou hast seen thy nature in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, not only exalted above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, but thou hast seen him "crowned with glory and honour" as the Head of his body, the church. I charge it upon thee, my soul, that in all thy views of the Lord Jesus as a risen and exalted Saviour, thou for ever connect with it and never lose sight of it, that it is Jesus, as Jesus, in his human nature that is so exalted, so honoured and glorified. It would be no honour, but rather a dishonour or degradation of the Son of God, as God, to say such things of him as being made, or receiving a throne, or having glory given him. All power, sovereignty, and might are his before. But when we behold Jesus as made a little lower than the angels and becoming mediator, he stands forth the Servant of JEHOVAH, redeeming his church and people; and as such, "for the suffering of death, is crowned with glory and honour." And O! how blessed the view! For if he was thus crowned in our nature, then surely he will have

respect to our nature in all the wants of his people. If he be exalted in our nature, surely he is exalted in that nature, "as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins." And if it be the same Lord Jesus whose head is now crowned with glory that was once crowned with thorns, O! with what humble confidence may a poor sinner, such as I am, look up and tell him of the glories of his cross now shining with tenfold lustre in the glories of his crown. Shall I not hope, dear Lord, by the sweet influences of thy blessed Spirit, to make every day a coronation day, when by faith I crown thee my true and lawful Sovereign, desiring to bring every thought and affection of my poor heart into obedience to thee, to bow the knee of my heart before thee, and with holy joy confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father? Amen.—*Dr. Hawker.*

MINISTERIAL EXERCISES.

My dear Brother in the flesh and in the Spirit, a double union, a blessed union, which nothing can ever separate, because it is centered and rooted in Christ Jesus as our covenant Head, in whom is all fulness; and out of his fulness we receive grace for grace. And to him, as all is from him, be all the praise, honour, and glory. Amen.

Dear brother, I have been much exercised since I last saw you, and should have written to you ere this but could not get my heart high enough to write upon such an important subject. A few days after I saw you I had an interview with our dear pastor, Mr. Vine, who informed me he had brought forward at a church meeting in my absence that it was his wish and the wish of the four deacons that I should be asked to speak before them *as a church* on Monday next, the 23rd inst., at half past six o'clock. I cannot tell you the workings and operations upon my mind since then, feeling as I do my inability for so great a work as being put into the ministry; a poor, helpless, sinful, polluted thing like me, dust and ashes, a worm and no man, and not having the common understanding of a man in the things of God. How can I speak to a people that are so much farther advanced in the divine life, and who have had their senses well exercised these many years, and are more matured and better qualified for so great a work than myself? At times, I feel I shall never stand the trying hour. My ignorance is very great, and I am a man of slow speech, a weak mind, and a weak body; and, as Job says, "behold, I am vile;" a mass of sin, virtually all sin; and "a beggar poor, at mercy's door. Dear Saviour," I say, "take me in. Keep me near thee. Engrave and stamp thy image upon me, and make me more like unto thee. Teach me and lead me in thy truth. Bless thy truth unto my soul. Make me a true recipient of thy grace, that I may walk thy truth, love thy truth; yea, make it more dear to me than my life. Let me enjoy a double portion of thy blessed Spirit. Enlarge my coast, as thou

didst that of thy servant Jabez, and make me a vessel afore prepared unto glory."

May the dear Lord the blessed Spirit enable you, yea, lay it with great weight upon you, to encompass the throne of grace on my behalf, that I may be supported, if spared, to speak in his great Name; that he would by his blessed Spirit help my many infirmities of a bodily and spiritual nature, and grant me all needed help. This is my only desire,—to fall into his dear hands, as clay in the hand of the heavenly Potter. May the Lord enable you to pray hard for one of the vilest of sinners,

Your loving Brother,

Hailsham, Feb. 18th, 1874.

W. KNIGHT.

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

"Whilst the long cloud of witnesses Shows the same path to heaven."

My dear Friend,—Grace, mercy, and peace be with you, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom every covenant blessing is secured to us, the church of God; and I trust we can say, "From his fulness have we received, and grace for grace."

I have thought of writing to you for some days, but have been prevented by many engagements, but will now tell you my yesterday's text. (Ps. lxxi. 17, 18.) It was given in rather a singular manner, and I hope the Lord did bless the discourses from it. David acknowledges the divine goodness in teaching him, and no doubt this work was begun at an early period of his life; for he is called a youth when he fought Goliath. Saul said, "Thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." But methinks the Lord was teaching him when he was tending his father's sheep, and then he saw much of the goodness of the Lord in delivering him from the paw of the lion and bear, which encouraged him to trust for deliverance from Goliath. It pleased the Lord to begin with me when a child; and having his fear in my heart was a preservative against many evils. Herein is the sovereignty of God displayed, as there is a set time for every purpose under heaven; and it is sometimes difficult to say when the seed is sown in the heart. But the reason why so many professors die away and come to nothing, is that the fallow ground has never been broken up, and they never receive the word in an honest and good heart. They have no root, no moisture, none of the blessed bedewings of the Holy Ghost, no watering, no trouble, like children of God, no fears; and though at last, like Ignorance, they may fumble for their certificate (for we never hear of his seeking for it before), no soul-labour and travail to make their calling and election sure. The publican's prayer is not theirs.

But David says, "hitherto." And what say you, my friend? It is "hitherto the Lord has helped." And notwithstanding our many fears and misgivings, the Lord has been better than all

our fears. Nevertheless, the may-be's of to-morrow will crowd in to-day; whereas we read, "Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof;" and, as Kent says,

" We oft put in our *how*,
When he has said, *I will*."

David, from divine teaching, was able to teach others, and willing to declare the wondrous works of God in creation, providence, redemption, and the work of grace in the heart; and sweet employment he found it when the sacred unction rested upon him. He was one of those despised experimental preachers. He says, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." He had tasted and handled the good word of life, and then could speak of it to others; and his prayer that follows is: "*Now also, when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not.*" You and myself are getting old and grey-headed, and we need the same prayer. It is a sorry thing to see many in old age wither in their profession, though not die. They seem to be always looking back to what they had twenty or thirty years ago. I pray that the Lord's promise may be fulfilled in us: "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; to show that the Lord is upright." The grand point in this text is: "*They that be planted;*" and this planting must be by the right hand of God; for Christ said, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." To make us still fruitful branches we must continually receive fresh sap from the living Vine. There must be a constant abiding by faith in Christ, or no fruitfulness. I do not conceive that David's meaning was that he feared lest the Lord should finally forsake him, but lest the blessed Spirit should withhold his heavenly influence when his natural strength abated. What a mercy to find that, as the outward man decays, the inward man is renewed day by day! The Lord has promised he will be as the dew unto Israel; they shall revive as the corn, grow as the vine, &c. Then Ephraim says, "What have I to do any more with idols? I am like a green fir tree." The Lord reminds him: "From me is thy fruit found." And we can say,

" Our fresh springs of faith and hope,
And love are all in thee."

I hear by Mr. Peake that you were very unwell at Oakham a short time since; but I hope you are quite recovered. These sudden things are to show us at what an uncertain tenure we hold all things here below.

I spent the evening yesterday with Miss Morris, and Mr. and Mrs. Peake. Miss M. thanks you for your kind letter, and hopes some day to answer it; and all unite in Christian love to you. I hope (D.V.) to be at Oakham on the 8th of October, and Stamford the following evening, and then at Grantham for Sunday and the Wednesday following.

I shall be pleased to hear from you. And will you give my love to any to whom I am known, and accept the same; and believe me,

Yours in the best of bonds,

Brighton, Sept. 22nd, 1856.

JNO. GRACE.

Mr. Thos. Clarke, Loughborough.

My very dear Friend, Sister, and Companion in the path of tribulation,—Few indeed are the hours that pass without your being on my mind and in my thoughts. I often say to myself, I wonder how the sparrow alone upon the housetop is, as I fancy you are turning and rolling upon your bed, no doubt in pain a great part of your time, from the very nature of the disease the Lord hath chosen to afflict you with.* My thoughts often run down to you in the silent hours of the night, as I spend many without sleep, and I feel I should be glad to peep in to see how you are.

I was just now thinking of you and your affliction, and I thought, "Yes, she has two companions in the Bible, and many in the world." The sweet singer in Israel once said, "The Lord hath chastened me sore, but he hath not given me over unto death." He, then, is one companion; for, though chastened sore, you are not given over unto death, but still have a living desire through grace, and a sigh. "O Lord, hear thou the desire of the humble," was once David's cry; and till you can say no desire through grace or sigh after God goes forth from your heart, I will say, Not given over unto death, but walking in the road to find out that God yet waiteth to be gracious.

Another companion said, "O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me." Just ask your kind daughter-in-law to read it for you in Isa. xxxviii. See how dark the night was; even his hope was gone; but O look at what follows. He says, "The Lord was ready to save me," &c. What a contrast in the language! And O that you may yet rejoice in feeling, and as seeing that of him you may truly say, "He is the Lord, and changeth not; therefore we are not consumed." I often think I have not felt enough of my deserving to be consumed, and yet sometimes it makes me sweat and tremble at the thought. And so it is written:

"Ifs, buts, and hows are hurled
To sink us with the gloom
Of all that's dismal in this world
And in the world to come."

Now, in looking at David and Hezekiah, I saw that

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

But pardon me for not writing more, as I hope to see you in a few days. May the Lord comfort your feeble mind, and support

* The disease was cancer in the face.

your weak faith and hope, till he shall strengthen you to say, "I am ready to depart." My love to you and all around you.

I am, yours affectionately in hope of eternal life,

Reading, Dec. 6th, 1871.

JOHN VINDEN.

Mrs. Couchman, sen.

To my dearly beloved in Christ, grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied.

Your trial is indeed a fiery ordeal, in which you have much need of strength communicated by the Holy Spirit, seeing that human strength is of no avail, but only retards deliverance by looking to wrong sources for relief. In the Lord ЖЕHOBAH alone is everlasting strength; and nothing less will serve our turn in the day of adversity. This we are to "consider," and to turn to him that smiteth us, that we may be "healed;" and this is done by his word (Ps. cvii. 20), and by his sufferings (Isa. liii. 5), which being applied by the Spirit, bring health and cure in the most desperate cases, revealing to the soul "the abundance of peace and truth," as manifested in the Person and finished work of our dear Redeemer; upon which faith feeds, and gets boldness to draw nigh to God as a reconciling Father. (Eccles. vii. 14; Isa. ix. 18; Hos. vi. 1; Eph. iii. 12.) All the comfort of the soul depends upon the exercise of faith; for in dark seasons, when the soul is oppressed by the enemy, and its way is hid from the Lord, the hands get weak, the knees feeble, and we stagger at the promises of God through unbelief. In such seasons it is hard to tell whether we have any faith at all of the Spirit's operation. When faith is in free and full exercise, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, it views Christ as crucified for *our own* sins, which so inflames the soul with love to him, that it is ready to suffer anything it may be called to for his sake. (Heb. xi. 27.) Then to leave all for him is an easy task, whilst faith sees its interest in him, and the riches which it possesses in him, though "persecutions" are sure to attend it. But then there is the hope of eternal life which bounds the prospect, and this cheers the soul on to encounter the difficulties in the way. (Mark x. 29, 30; Tit. i. 2; Heb. xi. 26.) Faith comes to Christ as the bread of God which came down from heaven, and as the gift of the Father's love. (Jno. vi. 33, 35.) In him it finds sweet food for conscience, his sacrifice being meat indeed and drink indeed, because it brings into the soul a satisfying feeling of pardon, peace, and reconciliation to God; which is enough to satisfy every longing soul, to satiate the weary soul, and to replenish every sorrowful soul. (Jer. xxxi. 25; Ps. cvii. 9.) This it was which so delighted the spouse, while she sat down under his shadow and tasted his sweet fruit. (Song ii. 3.) Here she saw herself protected from a fiery law, the wrath of God, and the stroke of divine justice. Here she felt her security from the blasts of those terrible ones, Satan, law, and conscience, which make sad havoc in the mind when all comfort is withdrawn, the

enemy as it were let loose upon us, and no access to God can be found in prayer; when all seems a blank, no tokens for good shown, no signs seen, as has been the case with those who have gone before us. (Ps. lxxiv. 9; lxxxvi. 17; Isa. xl. 27.) These are mourning times indeed, but they will have an end. (Ps. xxx. 11; Isa. lxi. 3; Jer. xxxi. 4; Luke vi. 21.)

Faith in free and sweet exercise is a sensible dwelling or abiding in Christ. (Jno. xv. 4; Ps. xc. 1; Isa. xxxii. 18.) It views the love of God in Christ, and works by love to him. (Gal. v. 6.) Under this influence there is a discerning of the things "that are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor. ii. 12), and a consciousness of the indwelling of God in the soul through the Spirit. (Eph. ii. 22.) This arises from the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, the feeling sense of which brings with it such an assurance of salvation, as makes it a sure dwelling indeed. Then the obedience and sufferings of Christ, bringing pardon and justification sensibly into the conscience, become a peaceable habitation, relieving the mind from all guilty fears, purging the conscience from dead works, banishing all doubts and misgivings, and making the heart the residence of joy, peace, and praise. Add to these the testimony of the Spirit to the reality of these things, the witness of adoption, the cry of "Abba, Father," and the foretastes of the inheritance, with his fruit, which is "in all goodness and righteousness and truth;" and these together form such quiet resting-places as produce the most pleasing sensations in the soul, and cause it to feel that it is brought to lie in a good fold, and to feed in a fat pasture. (Ezek. xxxiv. 14; 2 Cor. i. 12; Eph. v. 9; Jer. xxxi. 2; Ps. cxvi. 7; Isa. xi. 10; xiv. 3; xxx. 15.) This is the rest to cause the weary to rest, and this is the refreshment, when the ear is circumcised to hear. (Isa. xxviii. 12.)

Faith shows itself also in a longing for the manifestation of Christ, when his manifestations of himself have been withdrawn for a season, and the soul left to lament his absence; in the remembrance of former enjoyments, when his glory and beauty had shone forth to her unspeakable comfort. (Psa. lxxiii. 1, 2.) If there were no faith in him in the heart, there would be no quietude and restlessness felt when he does not sensibly communicate himself, and refresh the soul with his benefits.

But faith, if it is not attended with joy, but with darkness and discouragements of every kind, keeps the soul waiting for the Lord in the way of his judgments, that it may discern his mercy in the midst of them. The *desire* of the soul shows its *faith*, the *reality* of it, and the *object* of it, and keeps it resolutely following after him, and seeking his face. (Isa. xxvi. 8, 9; Psa. cv. 4.) Hence the means of his own appointment are not neglected. Reading, meditation, prayer, the preaching of his word, are all followed up perseveringly, though the enemy of all good makes great efforts to deter the poor benighted soul from pursuing these things, knowing well enough that in the end they

will be blessed to its deliverance. (Psa. xxv. 5; lxii. 5; Isa. xlix. 28; xl. 31; Jer. xiv. 22; Lam. iii. 25, 26; Hos. xii. 6; Zeph. iii. 8, 9; Gal. v. 5; Psa. cii. 17.)

The oppressions of his poor and needy ones do not escape Christ's notice, however for a time he may suffer the adversary to deride their hope. (Psa. xii. 5.) May you then be led, from what you have lately felt of the goodness of the Lord, to pray with the prophet's faith, and with him to hope in Jesus in this day of your calamity, seeing that he will not fail to plead your cause effectually, and avenge you of all your enemies. (Jer. xvii. 17; 1. 34; Luke xviii. 7, 8.) It is for this purpose that God raised up his Son Jesus Christ from the dead, and received him up into glory, and his purpose cannot fail. (1 Pet. i. 20, 21.) He can bless this weak thing to you.

From your affectionate friend in Him,

J. S.

My dearest Husband,—I was very pleased to receive your letter, and to find you were well, and got on nicely with Mr. Smart. I was sure you would. I love him for the truth's sake.

I am much troubled to write, having still a very bad thumb, and the forefinger of my right hand is very bad and painful. I have still two large poultices on, therefore am troubled to hold my pen.

Mr. Chandler came on Friday. I felt very wretched and ill, and it really was quite a trouble to speak to him. I could not think why you could wish him to come on Friday, as they could have done very well without him. I felt very sadly on Thursday. I was so possessed with the idea that I should lose my rationality, and that I should be left to make away with myself. I thought of Mrs. G., poor Mrs. W., and others. I was a little better when I was at Mrs. Hannington's on Thursday; but she made me almost promise I would not go out on Friday evening, as she was sure I was not fit. My head was very bad all night, and I was not at all fit to go out when the evening came. However, about half-past six I went up-stairs, not knowing whether I should go out or not; and mechanically put on my things, and went out, and really feared I should die in the street. I had such dreadful forebodings, and felt so ill, I could not describe my feelings. I got into chapel more dead than alive. Mr. Chandler read the 103rd Psalm. I thought to myself that there could not be a chapter in the Bible less suited to my feelings. I had no more power to bless the Lord than to create a world. He read the first four verses, and said nothing. I thought, I wish he had stayed at home; any one could have read a chapter. He then began and expounded these verses; and I really thought my heart would break. I was melted in a moment, and wept like a child. Every verse seemed like a balsam to my wounded spirit. As long as I have recollection I shall not forget the contrast in my feelings. Let no one say persons may have expe-

rienced a full and free pardon, but *not know it*. They may just as well say they do not know day from night. The fruit of the Spirit I found to be love, joy, peace, &c., instead of wrath, bitterness, and distraction. O how different were my feelings when I left the chapel to what they were when I entered it! I could then say from my heart, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits," &c. It was indeed like apples of gold in pictures of silver. O how sweet then were those words, and still are to me: "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee;" and: "O Lord, I will praise thee; though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me;" and: "I am the Lord that teacheth thee to profit." "I have refined thee, but not with silver." "And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both." When their strength was all gone, none left, then the dear Lord appeared.

O what a reality is there in real religion! "Like as a father pitieth his children," &c. What endearing words! How precious are the promises! The Bible seems a new book; every word seems for my comfort.

Mr. Chandler preached very nicely on Sunday morning from Hosea xiii. 12, 13; and in the evening from Titus ii. 14. I had a very good day; and I think generally the people seemed to get on. We were very full, and Mr. Chandler felt very comfortable himself. He found me out, and traced out my experience; and I could testify that the Lord is in the man of a truth. He spoke of how a child of God might be tempted to destroy himself; but that he did not believe the Lord would ever suffer one that belonged to him to do so; for he had promised not to lay upon his people more than they could bear, and with every temptation to make a way for their escape. They might be tempted, and that sharply, for he believed the devil often let a mere professor be quiet enough; but a poor child of God he harassed and distressed, but could not destroy. He spoke very much about how the iniquity of Ephraim was bound up and hid until the Lord opened the budget, and revealed it to a poor sinner.

You will begin to think there is nearly enough of self. Well, I think so too.

Mr. Warburton was still alive on Saturday, and very comfortable. He had not a wish or a desire, but said he could leave his poor old widow, his daughters, and his church without a care or thought. He had not great joy; that, poor dear man, his poor frame could not bear; but was quietly waiting, and had a calm resting on his God, believing that whenever the summons should come, he should enter into the joy of his Lord. I think his wish, and that of the church, is that you should bury him.

My kind remembrance to all friends. Very kind love to Miss Gambling, and dear little Priscilla. Send word about what time

we are to expect you. We all unite in kindest love; and believe
me, as ever, Your attached wife,
Islingword Road, Brighton, Nov. 11th, 1856. ELIZA GRACE.

THE THREE AT PRESENT ABIDING GRACES.

"And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."—1 COR. XIII. 13.

FAITH.

THE grace of faith is God's own gift
To those redeem'd by God the Son;
'Tis by the Spirit wrought in all
In whom he has his work begun.

The man in whom this faith is found
With all his heart believes in God;
He hears Mount Sinai's thunders roll,
And fears and trembles at his rod.

At length a voice from Calvary speaks;
"Thou dost believe in God, and fear;
Believe in me; I am the Way;
For vengeance will not smite thee here."

Faith is the ear that hears him speak,
Who is the only hiding-place;
Faith is the eye that looks to him,
And sees him full of truth and grace.

By faith the sinner walks to him,
Drawn by the Father's mighty power;
By faith he sits beneath his shade,
Nor Satan dares his soul devour.

Faith is the hand by which he takes
Salvation's blessings as his own;
By faith he looks within the veil,
And sees *his* Saviour on the throne.

When faith is tried, it still remains;
The fire will prove it is divine;
The tin and dross will be consumed,
But faith itself will brighter shine.

True faith believes the truth of God,
And on his mighty power depends;
It knows his mercies never fail,
And that his kindness never ends.

Faith sees a rest beyond the grave,
Where pilgrims in full glory shine;
And sometimes helps them here to say,
"That endless rest, through grace, is mine."

HOPE.

HOPE is a grace that cheers the soul;
 It spies the dawn of day;
 Its Author is its Object too;
 It makes despair give way.

It has to do with Christ the Lamb,
 His Person and his grace;
 It longs to have him in the heart,
 And feel his sweet embrace.

It looks, and longs to be supplied
 With promises divine;
 It wants to have them all fulfill'd,
 To say, "They all are mine."

Good hope, through grace, bears up the soul,
 Which else would sink with woe;
 Within the veil it taketh hold,
 When strong temptations blow.

It bears the soul upon its wings,
 Above this earthly clod;
 It brings a taste of heavenly rest,
 And leads us to our God.

LOVE.

How precious is the grace of Love!
 Its source is from above the skies;
 It is by God the Spirit wrought,
 And is a grace that never dies.

To love our God and things divine,
 The Christian finds a sweet employ;
 His pride and enmity depart,
 And true and solid is his joy.

He loves the sacred Word of God,
 His house, his people, and his ways;
 He envies not the world their bliss,
 But tunes his harp, his God to praise.

In the sweet exercise of love,
 His soul is fill'd with heavenly peace;
 His unbelief and fears recede;
 He rises high; his joys increase.

This love will live in Jordan's flood,
 And hold the Friend of sinners fast;
 If faith and hope in death shall end,
 Yet shall this grace for ever last.

A DISCOURSE TOUCHING PRAYER.

AN understanding well enlightened is of admirable use also, both as to the matter and manner of prayer. He that hath his understanding well exercised to discern between good and evil, and in it placed a sense either of the misery of man, or the mercy of God, that soul hath no need of the writings of other men, to teach him by forms of prayer; for as he that feels the pain needs not to be taught to cry Oh! even so he that hath his understanding opened by the Spirit needs not so to be taught of other men's prayers, as that he cannot pray without them; the present sense, feeling, and pressure that lieth upon his spirit provokes him to groan out his request unto the Lord. When David had the pains of hell catching hold on him, and the sorrows of hell compassing him about, he needs not a bishop in a surplice to teach him to say, "O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul" (Ps. cvi. 3, 4); or to look into a book to teach him in a form to pour out his heart before God. It is the nature of the heart of sick men, in their pain and sickness, to vent itself for ease, by dolorous groans and complainings to them that stand by. Thus it was with David in Ps. xxxviii. 1-12. And thus, blessed be the Lord, it is with them that are endued with the grace of God.

It is necessary that there be an enlightened understanding, to the end that the soul be kept in a continuation of the duty of prayer.

The people of God are not ignorant how many wiles, tricks, and temptations the devil hath to make a poor soul, who is truly willing to have the Lord Jesus Christ, and that upon Christ's terms too;—I say, to tempt that soul to be weary of seeking the face of God, and to think that God is not willing to have mercy on such a one as him. Ay, saith Satan, thou mayst pray indeed, but thou shalt not prevail. Thou seest thine heart is hard, cold, dull, and dead. Thou dost not pray with the Spirit; thou dost not pray in good earnest; thy thoughts are running after other things when thou pretendest to pray to God. Away, hypocrite; go no further; it is but in vain to strive any longer. Here now, if the soul be not well informed in its understanding, it will presently cry out, "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me." Whereas the soul rightly informed and enlightened saith, Well, I will seek the Lord and wait. I will not leave off, though the Lord keep silence, and speak not one word of comfort. He loved Jacob dearly, and yet he made him wrestle before he had the blessing. Seeming delays are no tokens of his displeasure. He may hide his face from his dearest saints. He loves to keep his people praying, and to find them ever knocking at the gate of heaven. It may be, says the soul, the Lord tries me; or he loves to hear me groan out my condition before him.

The woman of Canaan would not take seeming denials for

real ones. She knew the Lord was gracious; and the Lord will avenge his people, though he bear long with them. The Lord hath waited longer upon me than I have waited upon him; and thus it was with David. "I waited patiently," saith he; that is, it was long before the Lord answered me, though at the last "he inclined his ear unto me, and heard my cry." (Ps. xl. 1.) And the most excellent remedy for this is an understanding well informed and enlightened. Alas! how many poor souls are there in the world, that truly fear the Lord, who, because they are not well informed in their understanding, are oft ready to give up all for lost, upon almost every trick and temptation of Satan! The Lord pity them, and help them to pray with the Spirit, and with the understanding also.

Much of mine own experience could I here discover. When I have been in my fits of agonies of spirit, I have been strongly persuaded to leave off, and to seek the Lord no longer; but being made to understand what great sinners the Lord hath had mercy upon, and how large his promises were still to sinners; and that it was not the whole, but the sick; not the righteous, but the sinner; not the full, but the empty, that he extended his grace and mercy unto; this made me, through the assistance of his Holy Spirit, to cleave to him, to hang upon him, and yet to cry, though for the present he made no answer. And the Lord help all his poor, tempted, and afflicted people to do the like, and to continue, though it be long, according to the saying of the prophet; and to help them, to that end, to pray, not by the inventions of men, and their stunted forms, but with the Spirit, and with the understanding also.

And now to answer a query or two, and so to pass on to the next thing.

Query 1. But what would you have us poor creatures to do, that cannot tell how to pray? The Lord knows I know not either how to pray, or what to pray for.

Answ. Poor heart! Thou canst not, thou complainest, pray. Canst thou see thy misery? Hath God showed thee that thou art by nature undone under the curse of his law? If so, do not mistake; I know thou dost groan, and that most bitterly. I am persuaded, thou canst scarcely be found doing anything in thy calling, but prayer breaketh from thy heart. Have not thy groans gone up to heaven from every corner of thy house? I know it is thus; and so also doth thine own sorrowful heart witness, thy tears, thy forgetfulness of thy calling, &c. Is not thy heart so full of desires after the things of another world, that many times thou dost even forget the things of this world? Prithee read this scripture: Job. xxiii. 12.

Query 2. Yes; but when I go into secret, and intend to pour out my soul before God, I can scarcely say anything at all.

Answ. 1. Ah, sweet soul! it is not thy words that God so much regards, as if he will not mind thee, except thou comest before him with some eloquent oration. His eye is on the

brokenness of thine heart; and that it is that makes the very bowels of the Lord run over: "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." (Ps. li. 17.)

2. The stopping of thy words may arise from over-much trouble in thy heart. The psalmist was so troubled that he could not speak. (Ps. lxxvii. 3, 4.) But this may comfort all such sorrowful hearts as thou art, that though thou canst not through the anguish of thy spirit speak much, yet the Holy Spirit stirs up in thine heart groans and sighs, so much the more vehement; when the mouth is hindered, yet the spirit is not. Moses made heaven ring again with his prayers, although, that we read of, not one word came out of his mouth. But,

3. If thou wouldst more fully express thyself before the Lord, study, first, thy filthy state; secondly, God's promises; thirdly, the heart of Christ; which thou mayest know or discern—1, By his condescension and bloodshed. 2, By the mercy he hath extended to great sinners formerly. And plead thine own vileness, by way of bemoaning; Christ's blood, by way of expostulation; and in thy prayers let the mercy that he hath extended to other great sinners, together with his rich promises of grace, be much upon thine heart. Yet let me counsel thee—1, Take heed that thou content not thyself with words. 2, That thou do not think that God looks only at them neither. But, 3, However, whether thy words be few or many, let thine heart go with them; and then shalt thou seek him, and find him, when thou shalt seek him with thy whole heart. (Jer. xxix. 13.)

REVIEW.

Memorials of Charles Rolfe, B.A., Rector of Shadoxhurst and Orlestone, Kent; with Incidental Reflections. By EDWARD WILKINSON, M.A., Ph.D., Rector of Snargate, Kent.—London: Nisbet and Co., Berners Street, W. 1879.

WHAT a beautiful thing is real friendship! and especially when it is backed up with such manifestations, and practical proofs, as demonstrate its sincerity. Jonathan showed the sincerity of his love to David by interceding with his father Saul in David's behalf; and Boaz gave the most practical proof of his friendship to Ruth by letting her glean in his harvest field, and by telling his reapers to show her favour by letting her glean among the sheaves. But O how little of such sincere genuine friendship is there among poor mortals now! What a deal of hollow false friendship there is among them! The mere professions of friendship, the vain talk about it, friendly words, and friendly looks, and friendly good wishes expressed, are abundant enough; but very little friendship that flows out of the very bosom, as warm as a man's heart, and which has the right sort of marks, and tokens, and practical proofs to back up its genuineness. The more we are taught of God the deceitfulness of the human heart, and the more we learn of

human life, of men, and their ways and actions in the world, the more, no doubt, shall we find, like Micah, that *real* friends are very few, and that it is unsafe to put over much trust in any creature whose breath is in his nostrils. "Trust ye not," saith Micah, "in a friend; put ye not confidence in a guide; keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom." How poor Job had to prove the need of such caution when passing through his bitter trials! The men that had flattered him with their smooth tongues and bland words in the day of his prosperity had not a kind word to say to him when the hand of God was heavily upon him, and which made Job say, "To him that is afflicted pity should be showed him by his friends."

But, then, in this pathway of comparative desertion and solitude, which will be sure to befall some of the children of God in the course of their pilgrimage, they are the better able to feel a true and tender sympathy with the perfect and sinless Jesus, that Man of sorrows, who deserved universal pity, and whose sufferings claimed commiseration from all, and yet who received so little of either that he was made to say, "Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness"; and, further, they are the better able to value the few true friends they find among men, and the more to cherish their friendship.

Among the many interesting features in the work mentioned at the head of this paper is the true and warm-hearted friendship which existed for many years between the late Mr. Charles Rolfe and Mr. Edward Wilkinson, the compiler of his "Memorials." With both these good men, "open rebuke was better than secret love;" and "the wounds of a friend" better than "the kisses of an enemy," which are "deceitful." Knowing, moreover, that friendship, like delicate plants, often withers for the want of culture, and as often flags for the want of moisture, they learned in a very blessed way how to *cultivate* friendship between themselves, and to keep their friendship thriving and healthful through the moisture of reciprocal kindness.

Mr. Rolfe, the subject of the "Memorials," being rector of Shadoxhurst and Orlestone, Kent, and Mr. Wilkinson being rector of Snargate, Kent, they were fellow-labourers in the gospel of Christ; not merely two clergymen of the national Establishment, which in too many instances amounts to nothing of vital importance; but they were godly men, servants of Christ, and both taught the discriminating truths of free and sovereign grace, and hence were fellow-labourers in the gospel in the best sense of the word.

It has seemed a little remarkable, since the "Memorials" came into our hands, that we should never once have heard of Mr. Rolfe before. We are, however, told by the author of the work that "he was but little known on earth, and was completely overlooked by the professing world." He was evidently a man of peculiarly retiring habits of life, and preferred his "quiet meditations on the lonely roads about Shadoxhurst, and

to be alone with Jesus," to thrusting himself into public notice. Not but what other servants of Christ, whose habits are as retiring as were Mr. Rolfe's, and who as much prefer, when they can get it, the quiet meditation on lonely roads, yet creep into more public notice, despite their efforts to avoid it.

We will now touch a little upon some things in the volume, and give our opinion of it as a whole. Being ourselves thoroughly Nonconformist in principle, it would be naturally expected, interesting a book as we have found it to be, yet that we should not agree with everything we meet with in it. As, however, it is the proper work of a reviewer, and particularly if he be a man of God, to express an impartial opinion of any work he takes in hand to notice, and to faithfully state wherein he agrees or disagrees with its contents, we shall be obliged, in dealing with the "Memorials," to exercise this liberty; and, indeed, we feel that we had better, without such liberty at command, never presume to notice any work at all in the pages of this magazine.

In turning, then, at once to our volume, our remarks will be confined to a narrow limit. They must of necessity be so, if we keep to that part of the work which really constitutes the "Memorials" of the late Mr. Rolfe, inasmuch as they form a very small part of the work, in comparison with that part which is taken up with "Incidental Reflections" by the author. Whether this might not prove a little disappointing to some, who, upon seeing an advertisement of the book, might expect, according to its title, to get a good long memoir of a departed saint and servant of Christ, we will not decide. What, however, is recorded in the way of reminiscences of Mr. Rolfe, his religion, faith, doctrines, and experience, all bears the right stamp. He was no doubt a very godly man, and in his life and practice feared God above many. When at the University, at Oxford, where he took his degree of B.A., he contested an open fellowship with that eminent Christian, Mr. Philpot, who afterwards resigned it, when, from conscientious motives, he seceded from the Church of England, and joined the Particular or Strict Baptist Communion, of which he became an eminent minister of "the gospel of the grace of God." We are told that, "by the time Mr. Rolfe had taken his degree, not only was his personal holiness manifested, but his doctrinal views were established." "Taught by the Spirit to understand" early in life what are called "The Five Points," viz., 1, The Fall of Adam, and consequent spiritual death; 2, Election and Predestination; 3, Particular and Eternal Redemption; 4, Regeneration and Effectual Calling; and 5, the Final Perseverance of the Saints, he never in any subsequent period of his Christian life wavered in his belief of those great doctrines; they were, says our author, "his comfort through life, and gave him perfect peace in death."

Mr. Wilkinson, in speaking of the very early period when his friend became a partaker of the grace of God, writes almost as

if he thought he came into the world a Christian. "He seems," says Mr. W., "like John the Baptist, and Jeremiah, to have been sanctified from the womb." And again, a page or two further on, "from his very birth he was an object of God's special and distinguishing grace." If by such remark the author simply means that the Lord began to operate on his heart when quite a child, we can understand his meaning; but if he means that Mr. Rolfe was a subject of divine grace at the very time of his natural birth, we think this is more than what any body could tell. Leaving, however, the time when the mysterious work of regeneration was wrought by the power of God in his soul, it may be enough for us, as probably it was for Mr. Rolfe himself, to know that he was brought very early in life to experience the saving operations of God on his heart, and to be convinced that he was conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, and that, as a sinner by nature and practice, he could only be saved by the sovereign and almighty grace of God.

Being appointed to the rectory of Shadoxhurst, it was in that parish that he began, continued, and ended his labours as a minister of the gospel of the grace of God. For thirty-nine years he laboured in that "rustic village," being "but little known on earth, and completely overlooked by the professing world." His motto seems to have been all through his spiritual life,

"Be familiar with few;
Be cautious with some;
Be courteous to all;
Speak evil of none."

Would that this was the motto of many more, and that it was as practically carried out as it was by Mr. Rolfe! As he sought not the friendship of the world, knowing it to be enmity with God, so neither did he seek the society of mere professors of religion; and there being few with whom he could feel a union and a fellowship in the gospel, he kept himself aloof from most. His spirituality, says our author, "was distasteful to them, and his religion was a reproof to those who experienced no reality in their own profession. His visits were never a mere idle pastime, spent in common-place conversation, or in the gossip of the day, but were more like angels' visits with conversation in heaven. An admirable answer was given by a respectable woman at Ham Street to the question, 'How would business be attended to if they were all like Mr. Rolfe?' 'Well, I don't know,' she replied; 'he always attends well to his own business; at least, he does when he comes to us.'" He seldom, we are told, entered a house without offering to engage in prayer; "it was the very atmosphere in which he lived." O what houses are entered, and how often are they entered in the present day by those professing godliness, when we fear it hardly ever comes into such persons' minds to propose to spend a moment in prayer with God. But were the minds of the children of Zion much more frequently led out under the influence of grace to adopt such practice when they

meet together, it would surely indicate a more healthful state of soul than what now seems to exist among them.

Mr. Rolfe being a great reader, he explored such mines of theological literature as are to be found in the works of the Reformers, and the Puritans, and particularly such Puritans as Owen and Thomas Goodwin; but being strongly opposed to duty-faith, of which there is too much in their works, he would sift the wheat from the chaff, take the pure grain, or faithful expositions of the Word, and let the chaff and husks of duty-faith go for what they are worth. This, through God's mercy, is what we have always been enabled to do ever since we first became acquainted with the works of those great divines; and having been enabled to adopt this method, it has kept our mind the more unprejudiced in making use of them, and getting what good we have been helped to obtain in reading the same. Neither will any man, we trust, ever make us afraid to either mention the word Puritan, or quote their sayings, lest we should be thought a duty-faith man for so doing.

“Mr. Rolfe frequently told an anecdote of a person who went to a minister who had been ‘offering salvation’ to all who chose to accept it, and said to him, ‘Sir, last night you offered me salvation; can you give it to me?’ ‘No.’ ‘Then why did you offer it?’ ‘Preach the gospel of the grace of God boldly as you ought to do, without seeking to please men, and then the Holy Ghost will apply the truth of God to the hearts of those whom the Lord shall call.’ It is not in the natural power of any unregenerate man to accept Christ, or come unto him; for he himself expressly says, ‘No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him.’ ‘The preparation of the heart is from the Lord,’ and it is only in the day of God's power that men are made willing to receive Christ. They must be first made to feel their need of a Saviour before they desire him, for the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither can be. At the same time, the faintest desire after God is a sign of spiritual life, and the invitations of the gospel are to all the weary and heavy laden.”

This has always been our view of the matter; neither do we feel, after 80 years' labour in the gospel, the least turning of mind in an opposite direction. Having all along repudiated the duty-faith system, we deprecate it now as much as ever, and yet we love some of the good old Puritan writers for all that.

Again. Mr. Rolfe was as thoroughly practical in his religion as he was sound in doctrine. “Utter unworldliness,” we are told, was “one of his chief characteristics.”

“No one could ever visit Shadoxhurst rectory without being impressed with the reality of true godliness; and those who were able to enjoy a heavenly spiritual-mindedness felt it good to be there.

“The day was begun, continued, and ended with a perceptible evidence of godliness in the tone of mind—I should say spirit—and conversation.

“Every morning he repeated the 51st psalm while dressing, and he was constantly applying Scripture to any remark made at mealtimes.

“He allowed nothing to set aside family worship, and constantly exhorted the members of his family to be present at it.

“One of them once said to him, ‘Father, we shall never have cause to blame you. We are sure you will go to heaven, and you have shown us the way.’

“Would that this could be said to all parents professing godliness.

“The rest of the day was spent in reading, meditation, prayer, pastoral visitation, and walking; his asthma making constant out-door exercise necessary to him.”

But what a trial it must have been to so spiritually-minded a man to have lived all the days of his Christian pilgrimage upon earth, with no more vital godliness around him than what it appears was to be found in the parish where he laboured. If asked about the state of his parish, we are informed what answer he would give. He would say, “I cannot say that I see much vital godliness. There is a *profession*, but I cannot say there is a *possession*. Such a one is a kind man, a good man of business; but I cannot say that he is an enlightened, spiritually-minded man. I would hope the best; but I cannot discern any sign of real life.” With the exception of one here, and another there, he considered his people, says our author, “neither better nor worse than the rest of the world.” To have remained for 39 years in such a parish, and under such disheartening circumstances, must, we should think, have been crushing to the good man's spirit; and profoundly mysterious, too, to our mind, when we consider the character of Mr. Rolfe, was the purpose of God in permitting him to abide there so long. We can only hope, with Mr. Wilkinson, that the truth of God, “which he exemplified in his life and death,” may bring forth its fruit in after days.

Though we as conscientiously dissent from the Established Church as it is possible for a man to do, believing most sincerely that, as a system, it is without an atom of divine authority for its origin and existence in the world, yet we are always glad when we hear of any who minister within its walls, that they “know the grace of God in truth,” and are faithful preachers of discriminating grace. If we hear of any coming out, and seceding from it, on such conscientious grounds as those which brought out the late esteemed editor of this periodical, we are glad for such separation. But when any really good and gracious men of God cannot see their way clear to break away from the national Establishment, and yet, through being divinely taught, can see their way clear to preach, in whatever pulpits of that Establishment they may be called upon to stand up, nothing but the pure gospel, we can, we are sure, rejoice in this. It is not, in fact, so much with the position they choose to assume, that we wish to interfere; it is a matter we prefer leaving between God and their own consciences. But when they venture to publish broadcast over the land such a statement as we meet with on the 112th page of the work we are noticing—viz., that the Established Church of England is “the *purest* Church, because the most *Scriptural* and apostolic, in the world,” we feel equally at liberty to turn our eyes directly *away* from the Anglican Church, to look for a pure and Scriptural and apostolic

one. If, as our late esteemed editor said of the Puritans, when reviewing "Nichol's Series" of their works, that "they were men who were heartily and conscientiously opposed to the errors of the prayer-book, and to the corruptions of the Establishment," we wonder what those godly men, so mighty, as Mr. Philpot says, in the things of God, would say of the Established Church in the present day, were they alive to witness its horrible corruptions, its impure, unscriptural, and unapostolic practices. Again, when Mr. Wilkinson himself confesses on another page of his book, that "the unimpeded progress of Popery has so weakened the hold of it (that is, the Church) on the affections of the nation, that an M.P., who had always been a supporter of the Church, lately said that there was scarcely one of his colleagues who would now hold up his finger in its defence," we can only say that were we among the honourable member's colleagues, we should certainly not be the one to raise so much as a finger for either its defence, or continuance, another day. *When and how* it will come to its end, we are very willing to leave with the Lord; but that its downfall will be brought about, if not before, yet towards "the time of the end," and that all godly eyes will be made to see that, as a *system*, it was always human, and not divine, always corrupt, and not pure and apostolic, we have no more doubt than we have of the downfall of Popery itself. Were we to look about us in a day like the present to find a thoroughly pure, Scriptural, and apostolic church, perhaps we should have to look far and wide to find such. But were we to seek for a church as near that model and pattern as could be found, then we should take such Nonconformist churches as are made up of professed believers in Christ, and who have been baptized by *immersion* on a profession of their faith in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and who continue "steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." And that either Mr. Wilkinson or Mr. Rolfe should not have thought such churches more apostolic than the Established Church of England, it is difficult to understand; and the more so, after reading such remarks as the following in reference to good old Mr. Rolfe:

"He rejoiced to hear of all men of truth in the church, and his heart's affections were instantly drawn towards them. Yet, though he was thus a loyal member of the Church of England, he was still more united to the 'holy Catholic Church' than to any national one. This church is composed of all the living members of Christ's body, redeemed from among men, out of every kindred, nation, and tongue, and sanctified and regenerated by the Holy Ghost. These are the elect people of God, and are confined to no particular churches, whether national or congregational. Bishop Ridley says, 'When I speak of the Church of England, I mean God's elect people of England,'—that is, when he intended the real living Church of England."

We will now make a brief reference to Mr. Rolfe's last days, his death, and triumph of faith in the swellings of Jordan. An extract or two, without further remarks of our own, will be sufficient:

“The faith of Mr. Rolfe never wavered for a single moment, and in the full assurance of hope he looked forward to his departure with joy. He knew whom he had believed, and he was confident that he would keep that which he had committed to him. His conversation was in heaven, and earthly things were completely lost sight of, and he was longing to depart and be with Christ. He had never borne any hatred or malice, but on the contrary was full of love and charity, and consequently at peace both with God and man.”

His son gave the following particulars to Mr. Wilkinson:—

“He continued in the same joyous and ecstatic state as that in which I left him, and the nurse said he raised himself up and was preaching with a loud voice the whole of the time. ‘It was delightful,’ said she, ‘to be with him. I have never witnessed but one such death before, and that was 20 years ago. Oh, sir, you must write an account of it. It was beautiful! There was no fear of death. The sting was completely removed.’

“During the day he said, ‘Give my love to the people,’ meaning his own charge. He had loved and prayed for their souls in life, and he loved and prayed for them to the end. ‘Blessings on my sons!’ ‘I am thankful to have been made a blessing to Mr. Wilkinson, and he says also to Mr. Hale.’ ‘To God be all the praise!’ ‘God deliver this nation from Popery!’”

Again; at the very last, he said,

“‘God bless my dearest wife, and recompense her and every one for all their kindnesses!’ ‘A thousand pardons for every hasty word!’ ‘The doctor says I must not talk, but I must talk of Jesus!’ These were the last words of the dying man of God. Christ had been All in all to him in life, and the sum and substance of all his discourse and ministry, and now in death his last words were, ‘I must talk of Jesus.’

“Thus passed into glory Charles Rolfe, 39 years rector of Shadoxhurst and Orlestone, Kent, on the 19th of August, 1877, in the 76th year of his age, leaving behind him a character for godly simplicity, spirituality, heavenly-mindedness, and decision for the truth as it is in Jesus, and in the faith of God’s elect, that may be equalled, but never surpassed.”

As we have before stated, this work contains numerous “Incidental Reflections,” by the author, and which form the largest part of the volume. But these “Reflections,” with the “Memorials” of Mr. Rolfe, his original hymns, of which there are a few, and also a few of his Letters, and some “Notes of Sermons,” make the work, as a whole, an interesting book to read. For some of our poorer friends and readers, it may be too expensive, especially in these bad times, for them to purchase; but as there are always some who can better afford to invest a few shillings in the purchase of any book that is really worth the buying for the spiritually profitable reading which it contains, we can commend the “Memorials” of Mr. Rolfe as being one of that class.

LET US praise the Lord Jesus that before he died he made his will, and remembered us in it. By his death the will was valid. (Heb. ix. 16.) And he is now risen, and is the executor of his own will; so that it is not possible that we can be defrauded of what he hath bequeathed us. The chief articles are tribulation, peace, and a kingdom.—*Newton.*

A LOVING MEMORIAL.

Dear Mr. Editor,—The enclosed letter I received from our dear friend, Mr. Warburton; and as many have expressed a wish to see something in the "Gospel Standard" respecting our late dear pastor, Mr. Vinden, if you think it suitable, we should like it inserted. If not, please to return it; and you will oblige yours,
W. BENNETT.

Myrtle House, Boar's Isle, Ashford, Dec. 3rd, 1879.

We have very great pleasure in complying with the wishes of the friends, as expressed in the above letter, and in inserting the account of the late Mr. Vinden. We have wondered how it was that no memoir of so gracious a man and minister had ever reached us, and felt it was an omission. We gladly, then, insert the letter of Mr. Warburton. Perhaps at some future time even fuller particulars may be sent for insertion. In the meantime, we wish to thank the friend who sent us this letter, and the attached friends of the late Mr. Vinden, the Miss Johnsons, for an acceptable packet of his letters, which we hope to insert from time to time.

My dear Friend,—As a church and people you have experienced a great loss in the removing by death of your much loved and profitable, because made so by the grace of God, pastor, Mr. Vinden. I may say no minister was favoured with a more affectionate people. Your affections as a people were riveted to him, not from natural causes, but because the Lord had from time to time abundantly blessed his ministry to the comforting, establishing, and refreshing the souls of his weary ones. God did put his seal of approbation upon his testimony, not only among you, the people of his charge, but in a great many churches of truth in this land. He was thus well known, loved, and respected by many, and his name is embalmed in the minds of the Lord's people.

All he was as a believer in the Lord Jesus, and as a savoury and powerful minister, he owed unto the grace of God, which was with him, the seasoning both of his heart and sermons. It was this that made him acceptable unto the poor and afflicted in Zion. His grand theme was Jesus Christ, and him crucified, as the Way, the Life, the Light, the Hope, the Righteousness, and Strength of the whole Israel of God. Jesus he knew in the power of his Spirit. By faith he had seen his glory; and having tasted that he was merciful and gracious, it was the ambition of his soul to set him forth as the All and the in all; and great was his success therein.

In experience he was by no means shallow. He knew the awful wickedness and deceitfulness of the carnal heart. Often did he sigh and groan under its powerful workings. The temptations of Satan he was no stranger unto. That powerful accuser, when permitted, set upon him like a ravening and roaring lion, just

ready to devour. In the distress of his soul how many times has he exclaimed, "O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me." He often felt the sweetness, power, and preciousness of the Word, and with the psalmist could say, "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!"

In providence he saw the Lord's hand go before him, in spreading a table for him in this vale of tears. The exuberance of God's goodness to him was wont to cause tears of joy to flow down his cheeks.

The comfortings, the renewings, refreshings, and the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit he knew something of. The truth in his heart was as a springing well. He drank "waters out of his own cistern, and running waters out of his own well;" which he dispersed abroad, as many of the Lord's thirsty ones that drank of the waters of life out of the good treasure of his heart can testify, to the glory of the grace of God.

When in the providence of God he first came among you at Boar's Isle, your cause was very low, as I have been informed. In that low state you no doubt often thought, By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small. (Amos vii. 2.) Often your eyes and prayers had been lifted up to God; and that not in vain. Your cry was heard, and the Lord sent our brother Vinden to you "in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." The word he was enabled to proclaim among you you received through him, as it were the word of God, being fastened in your hearts by "the masters of assemblies." Under his instrumentality the church and congregation increased, both in numbers and in union of heart and soul to each other; so that "the word of God grew and multiplied." The Lord opened a door before you, which stirred up the enmity of some, so that they set themselves as adversaries against you. But the Lord was with you, prospering, comforting, and blessing your souls under the word, to the confusion of your enemies. With wonder and humbleness of mind you saw many round about gathering themselves together, being drawn by the sound of the everlasting gospel. They both heard and knew the joyful sound. Our brother came to you, not with an uncertain sound. The word that he preached among you was not Yea and Nay; but Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus, unto the glory of God. He knew that the gospel which was preached of him was not after man. He received it by the revelation of Jesus Christ. He had an internal discovery of the truth that Jesus Christ was God's salvation unto all the ends of the earth (Acts xiii. 47); also of his interest in him as such. Christ was formed in him. His Spirit was put within him. The grace of God was implanted in his heart. He spoke out those things he felt in his heart, and which God commended to the hearts of his hearers. This caused a shaking among the dry bones. The breath of the Lord breathed in the ministry of Mr. Vinden life, light, peace, comfort, and consolation. He lifted up the Root of Jesse as an ensign of the people. (Isa. xi. 10.)

Many sought unto it, so that there was no room for them. The tabernacle was much too small to receive the doves that came as a cloud (Isa. lx. 8) to pick up some of the corn of heaven. (Ps. lxxviii. 24.)

The pillar of divine providence went before you in this matter also, and at the right time God provided a most eligible piece of land, on which, by the good hand of God towards you, a chapel has been raised, that the truth and ordinances of God according to the New Testament may be continued therein. Now stand here and look about; for you cannot fail to see that the Lord was on your side, and has done great things for you, whereof you were glad. (Ps. cxxvi. 3.)

Well do I remember the opening of the chapel. There was first a prayer-meeting; and a soul-melting one it was. The Holy Ghost, in his powerful operations, was with each of the brethren, as they poured out their souls before him, warming and enlightening the hearts of those present. By this I felt persuaded God had chosen the place, and sanctified it by his presence, and appointed that his Name from henceforth should be recorded therein. Then follows a sweet promise: "I will come unto thee, and bless thee." (Ex. xx. 24.)

After the prayer-meeting, the first public worship of God commenced. Our friend and brother Taylor, of Manchester, preached a discourse from the words, "Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks; consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following." (Ps. xlviii. 12, 13.) That day will be long remembered by some, for it was a good day. What an honour! You saw, and that beyond a doubt, the blessing of the Lord upon your labours of love. Peace and prosperity was in your midst.

Your late pastor went in and out before you for several years under this sun of prosperity. But ah! how very soon the Lord drops the sable curtain of adversity upon all our pleasant pictures! (Isa. ii. 16.) The day of prosperity continued long with you, in which you rejoiced. The day of adversity was sure to follow. God hath set the one over against the other. (Eccles. vii. 14.) He sowed unto you spiritual things, and he reaped your carnal things. (1 Cor. ix. 11.) Many years he travelled from his home, Reading, to Boar's Isle, which was a long journey. This he continued to do, going to and fro, winter and summer. You all thought it desirable he should be near to you, and more so as he advanced in life. With a view for his future welfare, you assisted him to the utmost of your power to build himself a habitation. You saw the foundation laid, the building raised up, and your minister take up his abode therein, much to your satisfaction. Both you and he may have looked forward to years of comfort, which you fondly hoped he would spend with you, as your minister and servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. But such was not the will of God. The house and his ministry were finished almost at one and the same time. This appeared a dark step in

providence. After all your anxieties and prayers to have him settled in a comfortable habitation only a short walk from the chapel, to your grief he was by the afflicting hand of God confined in that house which you his friends and supporters did hope would be a comfort to him even to old age.

In pondering over the Lord's ways, and his dealings with us, how often do we forget that whatever comes upon us is all according to the Lord's purpose. "I will work," says God, "and who shall let it?" (Isa. xliii. 13.) It is trying and painful to flesh and blood for all our contrivances, good motives, and everything we have done, so far as we were capable of judging, for the good and prosperity of Zion, to be dashed at one stroke all to pieces—at least to all appearance. Thus it appeared to you and your friends, when, week after week and month after month, your much-loved pastor was suffering on his couch, gradually wasting away, under the afflicting hand of God. It came upon you so suddenly, and was so unlooked-for, and to the astonishment of you all. My friends, we know not what a day may bring forth. (Prov. xxviii. 1.)

No prayers, no tears, no entreaties could prevail with God to spare him to you a little longer. His work was done. Therefore it pleased the Lord to take his servant home to himself. As for myself, I felt thankful when I heard of his death; for in a moment he was absent from the body, present with the Lord.

At his interment the tears of affection flowed freely from the eyes of his sorrowing friends. Not that they sorrowed for *him*. They knew he was happy; but for themselves, at the loss of the man by whom God had often refreshed their souls; but now he was gone, they would never hear his voice again. Then, in a sort of half-despairing feeling, this question was asked: "Oh! What will become of the cause?" But shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? He does all things that are just and equitable in providence; and there is no unrighteousness in him, nor in any of his ways and works.

The Lord bless you all with a sweet submission unto his sovereign will, and in his good pleasure, if it is his will, send you a pastor after his own heart. The Lord keep you together in peace, love, and union. "In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

It is some years since I first became acquainted with Mr. Vinden. In the providence of God, I went to Reading for a week evening. That evening I spoke from the words: "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole." (Matt. ix. 22.) That discourse was made a blessing to his soul. The word entered into his heart with power, light, and life. After the service we met at some friend's house, and spent the remainder of the evening very comfortably together. The next morning we travelled to London together; and as we had the carriage to

ourselves, on the way he told me somewhat of his experience; for his mouth and heart both seemed opened. He began at the beginning, where God first began with him, and went on step by step. It was a blessed testimony. From that moment a union of soul sprang up in me towards him. My heart was knit to him. That union God never permitted to abate. We were of one heart and soul. I have preached with him, travelled with him, and ever found him a faithful, affectionate friend and brother in the truth. He has for years, now and then, supplied my pulpit, with acceptance to my people.

I conclude with Christian love to you and the church. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Yours affectionately in the truth,

Southill, Nov. 18th, 1879.

JOHN WARBURTON.

GRACE REIGNS.

A BRIEF AND FRAGMENTARY MEMOIR OF

THE LATE MR. CLOUGH, WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE VERY SUDDENLY
ON MAY 26TH, 1879, AGED 62.

(Concluded from p. 139.)

To these particulars of the late Mr. Clough's earlier days of profession we now add two accounts, both furnished by Mr. D. Smith. They were derived from the subject of this memoir himself in private conversations, and are so remarkable and interesting, especially the second, and bring the man of God himself so vividly before us, both as an original character, and as one under the powerful teachings and leadings of the Lord, that we believe our readers will join with us in regretting that we are not able to furnish them with fuller details of this good man's career, and more anecdotes of a similar character.

Mr. Clough, in one of our conversations, informed me that he was out one day in a nobleman's park in the North of England, where he could read his Bible quietly, away from the busy crowd. This was soon after the Lord had called him by his grace, and when he was preparing him for the ministry. He often resorted to that park. On this occasion he had been lifted up a little above measure, so much so that he rose from his seat and walked about the park, and went home without his Bible, having left it near the place where he had been sitting to read it. When he got home, he discovered his loss, and went back to the park in search of it. When he got there the nobleman, the owner of the park, was walking about, and noticing Mr. Clough crossing the park, went after him, and asked him what his business was there. Mr. Clough replied, "Sir, I came into this park this morning to read my Father's will over; and I was so elated to find that there was a mansion and a goodly inheritance left for me, that I went home and forgot to take the will back with me. And now I have come again to find it; but I do not re-

member exactly where I laid it." The nobleman said, "I will go with you and help you to find it; for it is an important document." They both walked together amongst the trees until they found the little pocket Bible Mr. Clough had left. Mr. Clough took it up, and said, "Here it is, Sir." The nobleman said, "Why, that is no will; that is the Bible." "Yes," said Mr. Clough; "and it contains my Father's will, and points out my inheritance." And he referred to the two following portions, and read them to the nobleman: "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." (Jno. xiv. 2.) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." (1 Pet. i. 3, 4.) The nobleman looked at Mr. Clough with astonishment, and thought he was half crazy.

Just at that moment the parkranger or gamekeeper stepped up, and said to his lordship, "I hope you will give that man positive instructions to keep out of this place; for he is here almost every day, and takes no notice of what I say to him." The nobleman said, "You may allow him to come whenever he is disposed; for he will do no harm here." And from that time Mr. Clough had free access to the park, whenever he pleased to go into it.

I remember Mr. Clough telling me some years ago of his having to go and preach at some place down in the North. The distance from his home was about 15 miles. He had only three halfpence in his pocket, and therefore had to walk all the way. After he had left home a snowstorm set in; and by the time he had got about seven miles on the road the evening shades drew on, and the storm was so heavy that it was impossible to get through without being lost in the snow. He therefore made for a farm-house near some village that lay before him. He went into the house, and asked for shelter until the storm abated. The good woman of the house, the farmer's wife, said, "Yes; come in and sit down." He did so; and after being seated a short time felt faint, and asked the woman if she would sell him a pennyworth of milk. She said, "With pleasure," and brought it to him in a basin. He then asked her if she would also sell him a half-pennyworth of bread. This was all that remained of his travelling money for the entire journey; but he was to retain so much for the next day, as the good woman said, "I will give you a piece of bread, and you may keep your half-penny in your pocket."

"For when the Lord's people have need,
His goodness will find out a way."

When Mr. C. had got his milk and his bread together, he asked the Lord to bless it to the strengthening of his poor body; and

the woman looked on with surprise at her guest. When he had eaten it, he looked out at the door of the house, and the storm was still blowing, and the snow increasing. He returned to the hearth, and sat down again on his seat, which was a large old-fashioned piece of furniture, like a sofa, or what the Yorkshire people call a "longsettle;" and he said to the farmer's wife, "Perhaps you would allow me to sit on this couch all night if the storm continues." She said, "That I cannot promise you at present; but my husband will be in soon, and I will ask him." Her husband had gone out into the barn to milk his cows, and fodder his cattle for the night; but, as his wife said, he soon came in with his milk-cans. After putting the milk into bowls in the cellar, he came and washed himself, and put on his better clothes, and came and sat down by the fire. His wife then said, "Here is a stranger come in out of the storm for shelter, and he has been asking if he may stay and lodge with us to-night, as it is not fit for any one to travel in the snow and storm." Her husband looked at Mr. Clough, and said, "Well, you shall stay with us to-night; for I think you will do us no harm, by the look of you." Afterwards he said to Mr. C., "Will you go with me to our chapel, as we have preaching there this evening?" Mr. C. said, "O yes! I will go with you, with pleasure; but what sort of man is going to preach to-night?" The farmer said, "He is a stranger, coming from a distance, but he is what I call a *milk-and-water* sort of preacher, if you know what that means." Mr. C. said, "I think I understand what you mean." They both went to the chapel; and, although a stormy night, the little chapel was full of people to hear the stranger that should have come; but he, as well as Mr. Clough, had been prevented by the storm and the snow. So there was a chapel full of people; but no minister to preach to them. The farmer turned round to Mr. Clough, and said, "Would you have any objection, my friend, to giving out a hymn and praying for us? We are put to the lock." Mr. C. said, "I will try and do what I can." So he went into the pulpit, gave out a hymn, and prayed; and then gave out another hymn; and when that was sung he read a text, and preached from these words: "Ye must be born again." Only a few of the people knew that Mr. Clough was not the man who was appointed to preach; but the thing doubtless was of God. The Lord blessed that preaching to the soul-profit of the people, and to one man in particular, as Mr. Clough told me.

About nine years afterwards Mr. C. was engaged to go and preach an anniversary sermon about sixty miles away from the same place; and when the service was over in the evening, a poor thin-looking woman, worn down with labour from attending to a brother of hers who had been confined on a bed of affliction for many months, said, "Will you come with me and see my brother, who is very ill?" Mr. C. went; and as soon as he entered the sick man's chamber, the poor man said, "That's the man! That's the man!" Mr. C. said, "What do you mean, my

friend?" The sick man, who had not been able during six months to turn himself in bed, raised himself up in his bed, and said, "You are the man who preached in such a village one stormy night about nine years ago; and that was the time God saved my soul." Mr. Clough and the man wept together, and rejoiced together.

"Wonders of grace to God belong."

"He must needs go through Samaria."

We must conclude this memoir with two or three letters written by Mr. Clough to Mr. Blyton, of Peterborough, a deacon of the church in that city, meeting for divine worship in Salem chapel; and one addressed to that church. They breathe out the affectionate desires of a warm and ardent spirit for the welfare of that church and the prosperity of the friend to whom the letters are written.

My very dear brother in a precious Jesus,—I have just put a few things together; if you please to read them to the friends. I feel worse every day, and the air here seems too strong for me. Yet there seems no other way as yet opened for me. I feel often very dead and dark in my soul. I have a little encouragement at times; but feel so weak and sinful that sometimes it seems impossible for me to be saved. What a great thing is salvation! How important! What trifles are all other things in comparison! I know your charge is great, and your cares multitudinous; but He is able to bear, who hath said, "Casting all your care upon *Him*, for he careth for you." What a blessing is this!

I trust your dear spouse is reviving. You have a most harassing life, with her affliction and other things, and yet you are a highly-favoured man. Beloved of your God, and called to be a saint, and promoted in the dear church of God to be an elder in Israel. Your devotion to the dear church of God will not go unrewarded. God is not unmindful of your work of faith and labour of love. What a blessed thing it is to act from right motives!

This is a foggy day here, and I am exhausted; but remain,

Your affectionate and afflicted brother in the dear Lord,
Siddal, July, 1877. "THE COLLIER."

My dear Friend and Brother in a precious Jesus,—I can truly say, "The Lord is good" in providence; and what I want is his love more fully shed abroad in my heart, that I might praise him. I sometimes fear I am totally out of the secret, and that the end will prove it; but blessed be a gracious God, though I cannot love him as I would, I trust I do love him, and that he loves me.

I hope dear Mrs. Blyton is improving, and that the dear children are well. What cares we as parents have, for grandchildren come; and then we look forward to the day when all shall stand before God, and desire ours may be found on the right hand of the dear Lord. Ah! how little they know our anxieties about

them. Well; we can pray for them, and leave them in the dear Lord's hands.

Miss M. tells me Mr. B——n preached an excellent sermon from the honey dropping in the wood. Certainly, an accommodated sense is sometimes allowable in the Scriptures, if analogous to truth. One man some time ago preached from the words: "A riband of blue;" but whether there is real spiritual profit or merely novelty-produced excitement must be left to the future conduct to develope. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

I am sorry to say it is too true that neither fine weather nor good nursing produces any good effect; for I get weaker and weaker, and seem to be hastening to my end. I do so much want to feel the dear Lord sealing me his, and assuring me that I am his, and he is mine; but I am full of confusion, and seldom clear about my interest in him. O how desirable is a clear evidence of interest in him where I am!

I do hope the dear Lord will guide you, and hold you up, and prosper you in body, soul, and estate, and send you ministers who will be a great blessing to the church. I do not forget you, and can indeed seek your good, and I trust you will find, notwithstanding all the opposition you meet with, that the dear Lord is with you. With those who oppose his truth and people is Satan and malice, but with you, I trust, is the living, and true, and eternal Jehovah; and what have you to fear?

I cannot say when I shall move from here. I am trying the air, to see if I get any stronger. With love to Mrs. B., the family, and all friends,

Yours affectionately in the Gospel of a precious Jesus,

"THE COLLIER."

9, Rose Hill, Manchester Road, Bolton, July 18th, 1878.

My very dear Brother in a precious Jesus,—I am glad to hear that the dear Lord has so graciously laid me upon the hearts of the dear friends at Peterborough. I can assure you I am in such a condition, notwithstanding I have the best of food and drink, a good airy room to sleep in, and every thing that we can call comforts, that still I am sinking. I have a terrible cough, and bring up a great quantity of phlegm. This wastes my strength; so you must get all the supplies you can for the winter, and not reckon upon me at all; for I am sure there is not the least hope that I shall be able to speak, if even my life is spared. I suffer severely from my breath, and cannot get out to chapel, even in a cab.

I am glad to hear such an account of Mr. Jackson, and hope you will be able to secure his services, and Mr. B., as much as you can. I know your mind is much exercised about the dear church at Salem, and its welfare; and my prayers join yours at a throne of grace, when no eye sees us but our God, for its spiritual increase and growth. What an awful day of a wicked profession! Truly, if the dear Lord had not left us a remnant, we should have been nationally as Sodom, &c. Whatever you

do, get all the supplies you can for the winter; and the dear Lord direct you, and give you success.

I should be glad to hear of your dear spouse's improvement, and do pray she may be long spared you and the dear children, if the dear Lord will. My love to the dear friends, whom I dearly love and pray for, and hope the like favour from them. Will you kindly remember me to dear Mr. Tryon.

I remain, with love to your dear spouse and family,

Yours affectionately in Christ,

"THE COLLIER."

9, Rose Hill, Manchester Road, Bolton, Lancashire, Aug. 9, 1878.

The following is the short but affectionate address to the church :

To the dear and beloved Elders and Members of the Particular Baptist Church of Jesus Christ, meeting for Divine Worship in Salem Chapel, New Road, Peterborough.

Beloved of God and of my soul,—In consequence of your kindness shown in your prayers for me, and in ministering so bountifully to my temporal necessities, I feel bound to remember you in my poor petitions, and in my affections before that dear Emmanuel that bought his dear church with his own most precious blood, and still pleads his people's cause before the throne of God. "Seeing," says the apostle, "he ever liveth to make intercession for us."

What a mercy, my dear friends, that, in the midst of so much profession of Christianity, and fair show in the flesh, you are taught by the Holy Ghost to look for the power. Not that which is to the puffing up of the flesh, but that which humbles the soul into the dust, and softens the heart, and leads us more and more to loathe ourselves, and cleave by prayer and a diligent use of the means of grace, to the dear Lord. For as sure as a careless walk is induced, so surely is suffering being sown, which we as certainly reap as the dear Lord is faithful to his Son and to his Word.

I am nearly 63 years of age. The dear Lord called me when about 19 years of age; and you may be sure I have learned something of the deceitfulness of sin, Satan, self, and the world; and my experience is that sin is a dreadful and awful thing. It is the whisperer that separates between chief friends; the petrifier that hardens the heart; and as Hart truly says,

"All creation groans through thee,
Pregnant cause of misery."

Well, my dear, dear friends, for such you are, however desperate our case, however benumbed by this death-dealing monster, we have a blessed precious *Friend*, whose precious Word frees us from its damning power, and from its dominion. O what a *Friend* is this precious Jesus! To free us he was bound! Alas! Alas! To bless us he was cursed. To save us he was condemned, and died a malefactor's death. O precious, precious Jesus! Give thy poor people feeling hearts!

I have no doubt the dear Lord will come with the dear ministers, and bless their testimony; and I hope you will not cease to pray for them and me.

Family prayer, when you have the gift and the opportunity, should be attended to. And closet prayer is a blessed privilege when access is granted; and when not, we are to be instant in season and out of season. As Hart enjoins:

“Without cessation pray;
Your prayers shall not prove vain;
Our Joseph turns aside to weep,
But cannot long refrain.”

I feel weak, and must bring this scroll to an end. And now, my dear brethren and sisters, pray for one another; love one another; bear with one another; and I do trust the dear Lord will warm your hearts with his love, and lead you to see the battle will soon be over, the journey soon ended, the voyage soon accomplished, and the haven gained, the treasure secured, and the victory won. Strange that the lame take the prey, beggars an incalculable inheritance, and poor bankrupt sinners everlasting life!

God for ever bless and increase you in all good.

Your affectionate friend,

“THE COLLIER.”

We here bring our memoir to a conclusion. It is well known by our friends that Mr. Clough died suddenly. He left therefore no actual death-bed testimony; but really his last months, not to say years, were a sort of lingering death; and through all his bodily weakness and sinkings the Lord sustained him, and to his faithfulness and power he thus bore witness to the last. Indeed, one of the letters we have inserted carries us very nearly to the end, and we may feel very sure that the God of his mercies did not fail or forsake his servant when that end really came.

Obituary.

On Dec. 2nd, 1879, aged 69, after a few days' illness, Joseph Savage, of Hailey, near Wallingford, for many years minister of the gospel. He was a member of the church at Goring Heath.

Jos. Savage was born at Ipsden, March 9th, 1810. He spent his youthful days in rather a gay manner, being fond of various amusements. Nevertheless, at times, something seemed to tell him his was a wrong course; and at length he became so solemnly convinced of his state as a sinner before God that he could see no way whereby such a sinner as he felt himself to be could possibly be saved. He then became very religious, attending church regularly, receiving the sacrament, &c. However, the lines of the poet were true of him:

“The more I strove against sin's power,
I sinned and stumbled yet the more;
Till late I heard my Saviour say,
Come hither, soul, I am the way.”

The writer is not acquainted with the exact date when he was set at liberty, or the instrumentality employed; but he soon began to speak

in the Lord's name. I believe he spoke first at Henley, where he supplied monthly for more than 40 years. He preached his last sermon at Wallingford on Nov. 23rd; was taken ill the Thursday following, and died the next Tuesday.

I saw him on the Saturday, and found him in a blessed frame of mind, perfectly resigned to the will of God. He said the hymn commencing:

“My soul, with joy attend”

had been so precious to him that morning; and repeated it all through.

I saw him again on Monday, and found him then very ill; and in reply to a question, he said he had not lost his hope. The following words and others had been very precious to him: “When I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not.”

On the morning of his death, he said to his daughter, “I have had a dreadful conflict;” but soon afterwards a friend arrived, and found him exceedingly happy. He said, amongst many other precious things, the following: “The dear Lord is going to take me to himself. I shall not get better, but shall be glad to go, not to be a trouble here. I long to see him face to face. He has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. I am not ashamed of my hope. And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee;” and again repeated the hymn above mentioned all through. He also said,

“‘Whate'er men say, the needy know

It must be so; it is the way.

Just before breathing his last he said, “No condemnation.”—J. P. K.

The friend who sent us this obituary accompanied it with a letter containing the following remarks, to which we need only add that the obituary of this good man and respected minister would have appeared sooner in our pages if we had not waited for a fuller account, which we had some reason to expect would be sent.

“Friend Savage worked on this farm 45 years; and a more honest or consistent man it would be difficult to find. I intended saying in the notice that for some years he was very much tried in circumstances; and after working hard the whole of the six days, very often walked 30 to 40 miles on a Lord's-day to preach the gospel.”

ELIZA DUNHAM.—On Sept. 30th, 1879, Eliza Dunham, aged 76. She was a member of the Particular Baptist church, Haynes, Beds, having joined that church in August, 1852, and continued as a consistent member in union with it until her death.

I cannot say much about our departed friend's call by grace; only this I can say, that she was very zealous in the things of God, and contended for a free-grace gospel. Nine years previous to her death she had a paralytic stroke, from which she never recovered, and seldom could get out to chapel. In the present year she had another stroke, which took away very nearly all the use of her limbs. In this sore trial, and as she drew near her end, the dear Lord very much favoured her. O how she longed to be gone, and leave her clay tabernacle behind! She could say with dear Newton:

“My soul, this curious house of clay,
Thy present frail abode,
Must quickly fall to worms a prey,
And thou return to God.”

And again: “I feel this mud-wall'd cottage shake;
And long to see it fall;
That I my willing flight may take
To him who is my All.”

She would say in an ejaculatory manner, “Come, my precious Jesus; I

want my precious Jesus." When I have gone into the room to see her, she would look towards the Bible, and make a motion with her lips for me to read a portion of the Word of God, and spend a few minutes in prayer. She was often melted into tears, and when her son-in-law, Mr. Roberts, one of the deacons, has gone in to see her, she has kept on until exhausted, talking, as far as she could be understood, about her precious Jesus. I spoke to her about Toplady's sweet hymn:

"When langour and disease invade
This trembling house of clay," &c.

These lines were very sweet to her:

"There shall my disimprison'd soul
Behold him and adore;
Be with his likeness satisfied,
And grieve and sin no more.

"Shall see him wear that very flesh
On which my guilt was lain;
His love intense, his merit fresh,
As though but newly slain."

But she had to undergo another sore trial. The dear Lord withdrew the light of his countenance, and again she was in trouble; whilst the devil hurled his fiery darts at her, and she mourned in her complaint and made a noise. She had to prove, like all poor sinners, that we are saved by rich grace and sovereign favour, and that no man hath power over the joy of faith to retain it. But her religion had a root which held fast in the time of her affliction; and "a little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked." She, through grace, had dug deep, and her foundation was upon a rock; and when the floods came, and the storm arose, and blew and beat, it could not overthrow the building. "I will see you again," says Christ, "and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man taketh from you." So it was with the departed. Thus the dear Lord brought her through many afflictions, and she proved that as her days were, so her strength was, and that the arms of everlasting love were underneath her, to bear her up. Thus she proved him faithful unto the end.

A few days before she died, she seemed to take very little notice of anything, but gradually sank into the arms of death.

"One gentle sigh her fetters broke;
We scarce could say, She's gone,
Before her willing spirit took
Her mansion near the throne."

Stevenage, Herts, Nov. 21st, 1879.

ELI FOX.

MEDITATIONS ON Christ's sufferings produce a deadness towards sin, and a life unto righteousness. For, while the believer seriously considers the sufferings and death of Christ, he undergoes in his own soul some of the bitterness, pain, and torture, though mingled with sweetness, which Christ suffered in a greater degree. He views the melancholy scene, and utters groan for groan, and sigh for sigh, till his soul is overwhelmed with sorrow and grief; and this produces a kind of death within. And again, when he sees the mighty Conqueror rising triumphant from the tomb, his soul is transported with joy, and ascends with him to the mansions of bliss. Thus we die and live, with and through Christ; and thus we are enabled to mortify sin. See Rom. vi. throughout. Sin will never appear in its own deformity and horrid nature, till we see it in its effects on the Son of God, till we behold the Lamb of God taking it away. Christ crucified, like a magnifying glass, exhibits to view every feature of this hideous monster.—*T. Charles.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

MAY, 1880.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

SPECIAL PRAYER-MEETINGS.

To the Editor of the "Gospel Standard."

Dear Brother in Christ, and Fellow-labourer in the Lord,—I so fully fell in with the remarks made by your correspondent in a neighbouring town, and with your reply, that, although during the past year we have had sundry days set apart in this parish with a view to humbling ourselves before God, and beseeching him, "in the midst of" deserved "wrath to remember mercy" in regard to our guilty land, yet I at once resolved to unite with you in your proposal for a special prayer-meeting on Monday evening, the 5th of April.

I was confirmed in this intention by the following circumstance. Just prior to the service this morning, one connected officially with the church came into the vestry, and, whilst speaking for a moment of the exciting electioneering scenes of the past week, he said that a son of his—a deaf and dumb, but most intelligent youth—had laid his head upon the table and actually wept at hearing that an avowed infidel had been sent to Parliament as the representative of an important constituency. I had previously heard that such was the case, but could not believe it; and, in the list to which I referred, found no such return. Upon the fact, however, being confirmed, I felt humbled indeed. The words of the prophet Jeremiah at once came to my mind: "Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord; and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

From the reading-desk I therefore announced the prayer-meetings which you, as the editor of the "Gospel Standard," had proposed, and stated my intention of seeking to co-operate with you and with all those upon whose hearts the Lord the Spirit might graciously operate, at this most solemn crisis of the nation and among the professing churches.

I am sure, dear brother, if ever there was a time when it behoved us to sink minor distinctions, and, where we agree one with the other in the grand essentials of our most holy faith, to unite together in oneness of heart to plead with the Lord for his continued forbearance and long-suffering, it is at the present most critical juncture.

O! how does it behove us to give heed to this word: "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly. Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts; let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?" And do mark, dear brother, what is added to this merciful and condescending exhortation: "*Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people.*" Observe how emphatic—"His people!" Does he not preserve the land, yea, the world at large, for the sake of the salt—"His people"—that are in it? Further, we read, "Yea, the LORD will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith." (Joel ii. 15-19.)

And have we not been the eye-witnesses, dear brother, as well as again and again read in the history of our country, that, in spite of all the abuse to which such days may have been subjected, the Lord has countenanced the times which have been set apart professedly to humble ourselves before him as a nation, and to plead with him that, in the midst of all our ill- and hell-deservings, he would still exercise towards us that mercy in which he delights.

Well do I remember such a day as that to which I have referred being appointed, in connection with the famine which was then raging in Ireland, and towards the relief of which your readers so generously contributed by the hand of the then editor, the late lamented Mr. Philpot. By those very means, and others of a similar character, I was enabled, in the most timely and effectual way, to minister to the all-but perishing multitude. I was about, however, to remark that a "day of humiliation," so called, was announced from the throne; and was duly observed throughout the United Kingdom. Whether such an act was regarded by the Lord acceptably I will leave you to judge from the following fact: The very day after the one to which I allude, a fleet of ships, laden with bread-stuffs, arrived in the Cove of Cork, with which the poor famine-stricken people were supplied. Moreover, it comes to my recollection at the moment of writing that the sermon attended with the most blessing, as far as my knowledge goes, was one which I was permitted to preach in a church in your town of Leicester, upon one of these officially-appointed days.

Permit me to add one thought which has pressed itself upon my mind since I sat down to this letter. Is there no way in which we can set the example about sinking differences with respect to those secondary matters to which I have referred? I cannot, under existing circumstances, ask *you* to *my* pulpit, nor

am I at liberty to accept *your* invitation, should you make such a proposal to me; but I can, notwithstanding, ask you to speak or to take part in a united gathering or prayer meeting in our School-house or Mission-hall; and this invitation I give you with all my heart. In that School-house I have listened with a glowing heart to the beloved Sears, and to the beloved son of my old and valued friend, the late John Warburton. I have likewise listened with similar interest to my dear brother-in-law, Mr. Densham, whose name appears on your cover from month to month, when he has taken the service at our Mission-hall.

Most gladly, therefore, do I throw out this invitation to you, to your co-editors, or to any who, in the spirit which I suggest, are prepared to waive minor distinctions, and to hold out the right hand of fellowship to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. O how gladly would I hail such a day and such a gathering, in sweet and blessed anticipation of ere long sitting down, as one united and redeemed family, in our Father's house above, there "to know even as we are known." No party names nor petty distinctions there! No, never! never! blessed be God!

Your affectionate Brother and Fellow-labourer in the Lord,
St. Luke's, Bedminster, April 4th, 1880. D. A. DOUDNEY.

We gladly insert the above letter of Dr. Doudney. We wonder not that the young man wept. We only wonder that our own heart and the hearts of the truly godly are not more affected when we see the most notorious infidels and avowed Socinians, whose principles pronounce the Lord of glory accursed, returned to represent this nation in Parliament. "O my soul, come not thou into their secret." "Gather not my soul with sinners. Lord, keep thy dear children and the writer aloof from such things as have so evident a tendency to put contempt upon thy Name, and to provoke thy judgments."

We quite agree with our brother in the two things to which his letter refers,—1. The advisability and usefulness of special and united prayer. Our prayers may not be answered just as we expected. Nay, it may be the very reverse, at any rate, at first, and in appearance; but they will not prove in vain. By terrible things in righteousness God answers us. He is wiser than we are. When the Angel's intercessory prayer, enveloping and perfuming the prayers of all saints, had gone up with acceptance to God, there were thunders and voices, and an earthquake upon the land from whence the prayers of saints had ascended; and the first trumpet sounded. Still, let us pray. God can either, in reply, avert evils, rolling back the torrent of ungodliness and sin from our country, or he can set upon us individually his secret preserving mark; so that when calamities abound, we and ours shall be preserved and hidden. (Ezek. ix.)

2. The desirableness of sinking as much as possible minor differences, and uniting in the common object of defending and holding forth the truth of God in such a day and generation. This

can be done without any compromise of principle. As our brother rightly observes, certain things cannot be done because they would be inconsistent with the principles we profess, and the positions we hold. But our wisdom undoubtedly is, in such a dark and dangerous day, not to be finding out how much we can disagree, and how far we can get from one another; but to see in how many essential points we do agree, and to what extent we can unite with one another as children and servants of one eternal Lord. Let us, then, be careful not to compromise truth and principle; but let us also be careful, in all matters where truth and principle are not compromised, to obey the apostolic injunction: "Let brotherly love continue." We do not think that in accepting our brother's kind invitation to speak in his school-room we should be in the least denying our principles as a Nonconformist. We came out from the Church Establishment upon conviction, and, as we believed, because the Lord applied to us the words: "Come out of her, my people." We could not, then, do anything to deny those convictions, or that, as we believe, divine leading. But accepting our brother's invitation would not, so far as we can see, do this. Therefore, if health had permitted, we should have been pleased to show how much we see the importance of Christian unity, especially in these days. Ah! where would be many of our strifes and contentions, if a time of persecution came again? We should then be only too glad to lose sight of a number of grounds of present differences, which we now magnify into undue proportions. With the wolves around us, how would the sheep huddle together! Now, alas! instead of the emblem in Ezekiel being manifestly fulfilled—"Bone came to its bone," the bones of the house of Israel are scattered in the valley, and are "as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth." Or, worse still, the bones of the house of Israel are apparently united in an unholy alliance with different sorts of bones; such bones as Ezekiel saw in a subsequent vision. Alas for the day when the children of God are scattered amongst the heathen, and learn their ways! When they are separated from one another by endless and needless strifes and contentions, and joined to the ungodly in an unholy alliance! Israel never dwells in safety but when alone. May we pray, then, for and follow after Christian unity, and cry with the psalmist, "Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy holy name, and to triumph in thy praise." God has said it, and will perform it likewise, "The people shall dwell (together) alone, and shall not be reckoned amongst the nations."

SOLDIER of the living God,
 Steward of the mystic word,
 Use the gifts on thee bestowed
 To the honour of thy Lord.
 Free from him thou didst receive;
 Man of God, as freely give.—*Toplady.*

A WORD OF PROMISE.

(Concluded from p. 153.)

"And thy judgment as the noonday."—Ps. xxxvii. 6.

WHEN a poor convinced sinner meets with the word *judgment*, he shrinks away from it; it wears a terrible aspect unto him. Sensible of what the divine justice is in the law, and his own utter inability to stand in the judgment, if an infinitely just God were extreme to mark what he has done amiss, he cries out, "Judgment! How can I bear judgment? Must not noon-day judgment be, to such an one as I am, even as a destruction from the Almighty?" Thus the poor distressed soul, through the influence of a legal spirit, and under a legal apprehension of things, stumbles at this word *judgment*, and says, with the men of Bethshemesh, "Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?" But this proceeds from a misapprehension of God's words, and from not perceiving that there are two sorts of judgment spoken of in Scripture: a legal judgment, in which no man living can stand; for in it God makes a strict inquisition for sin, and requires the very last farthing, and renders unto the subject of it according to his own deeds; and a gospel one, in which God deals with the poor and needy sinner, the broken-hearted, and sensibly destitute of righteousness, in accordance with the perfections to be found in Christ Jesus. The former judgment, of course, is condemnation. The latter is nothing but justification; and it is this latter which is alone spoken of in the verse chosen for our text. The fact is that Scripture sets before us two kings, kingdoms, and laws. The one kingdom is that of the old covenant, and in it God reigns as the strict, inflexible law-giver; and the law that is enforced throughout that realm is the Mount Sinai law; the holy, just, and good law, which substantially is contained in the ten commandments, or, more briefly, in those two enunciated by Christ: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself." For though, during the old dispensation, precept was given upon precept, precept upon precept (Isa. xxviii.), here a little and there a little, to meet the multiform appearances of sin, which, like a flourishing tree, was ever putting forth fresh shoots, which had to be nipped off; still, the sum of the law is contained in the root-commandment of love, as the sum of sin may be included in the word *enmity*. Now, in this kingdom, with God as King in the old covenant, and promulgating and enforcing the law of works, judgment is entirely according to a man's own deeds. Here justice reigns in awful severity; and here no man living can be justified.

The other kingdom is that of the new covenant. Here God in Christ Jesus reigns, and the law that obtains in this realm is the law of grace, of kindness, and of liberty; in other words, the gospel. And here judgment is a very different thing; in

short, it is justification; for there is now no more any condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. These two things are most strikingly represented to us in Scripture, by Sinai and its accompaniments, and Zion and the things connected with it. At mount Sinai all is terror, and blackness, and darkness. The mount itself is a barren, briery rock, and the region around it the burning desert of Arabia; but at mount Zion all is blessedness. "The hill of Zion is a fair place; the joy of the whole earth." Around it lies the fruitful land of Judæa; and "there the Lord promised his blessing, and life for evermore." Sinai blights, as it were, everything in its neighbourhood. A fruitful land it turns with its withering judgments into barrenness, for the wickedness of those that dwell therein. But Zion spreads blessedness and fruitfulness all around. It makes a desert to blossom as the rose (Isa. xxxv.), and by its gospel judgments of justification through grace, it takes away the rebuke of God's people from off the face of all the earth. (Isa. xxv.)

These things, then, being borne in mind, we shall see that the bringing forth the poor and needy sinner's judgment as the noon-day has nothing of wrath and terrors, but everything of hope and consolation, about it. It represents the Lord Jesus Christ setting up his kingdom of grace and kindness and liberty with power in the sinner's heart and conscience; and judging him in accordance with the law of kindness, and not the law of works, which killing letter, on the contrary, this law of liberty delivers him from.

Now, this bringing forth of judgment may be referred briefly to two things; but it always is in accordance with one law, and that the law of kindness, which alone is, in Christ's mouth, properly considered, for the poor and needy. In the first place, it may have respect to a person's standing generally, and acceptance in the Beloved. In the second, to the particular circumstances of a child of God at any period. We will endeavour, with the Lord's blessing, to speak about these two cases in order.

I. As it respects assurance of faith, or a persuasion of interest in Christ Jesus, we find the Lord's people in very different states. Some are all at uncertainty; greatly tossed to and fro upon the point, and unable to come to any satisfactory judgment; while others have attained to a far more stable condition of soul, answerable to Peter's words: "The Lord, after ye have suffered a while, stablish, strengthen, settle you." (1 Pet. v.) The former are little children or babes in grace; the latter, young men and fathers. The former, when they have a little sweet feeling under the preaching of the gospel, a little enlargement of heart at a throne of grace, a little glowing of spirit through the influence of some sweet word of Scripture in reading, are for a brief interval satisfied that all is well with them; but then anon the clouds return (Eccles. xii. 2), the vision is closed, and they return to their former comfortless place of endless misgivings and questions. Have they faith? What is true faith? Do they pos-

ness it? Do they love the Lord? Can ever God dwell here? Are they elect? Did Jesus die for them? Are their sins forgiven? and a thousand other questions eat up the comfort of their souls, and gnaw upon their hearts.

But the latter are by no means so much and so grievously and so continually tossed about. They have a clearer, well grounded, divinely-wrought, and more ordinarily stable persuasion of their interest in Christ, and place in God's everlasting covenant. These latter probably, through many a deep, and dark, and troubled place, have been brought forth at length into a far more ordinarily stable confidence of their interest in Jesus; and this assurance is not dependent upon lively sensations of joy. It is a living, yea, a lively persuasion, for it carries a man forward in the way of the cross and path of obedience; but it does not fluctuate as once was the case, rising and falling in the exact proportion of joyful sensations, or the contrary.

Now, neither of these states is to be despised. It seems most foolish to speak against a more stable condition of soul, as though it were not the very thing to be aimed after, and as though the Scriptures did not most distinctly set forth such a state as desirable, and, through grace, attainable. Let not the weak judge the strong, or the babes take the seat of the scorner; but let them respect the young men in Christ, and rise up before the hoary hairs of the fathers. But, on the other hand, let not the tried, tossed-about, fluctuating souls be despised, for theirs, too, is the kingdom of heaven; and, waiting upon Jesus for it, an abundant entrance shall be administered unto them (2 Pet. i.) into the joy of the Lord.

Indeed, to these last, as the more needy, the words of our text do especially address themselves. "He shall bring forth thy judgment as the noonday." Wait, then, I say, on the Lord. He numbers your sighs, sympathizes with your tossings to and fro, is secretly making your bed in your sickness, puts your tears into his bottle, gathers the spices of your poor, feeble, and to yourselves defiled, prayers, and has promised to bring forth gospel judgment to gospel victory over doubts, and fears, and sins, and Satan in your hearts and consciences; and until judgment thus returns unto righteousness, all the upright in heart will seek for it.

But here we will notice some of those things which, perplexing the judgment, tend to keep the soul off from peace, and coming to a satisfactory conclusion concerning its interest in salvation.

1. And, firstly, some of God's people, really humble, God-fearing persons, are much exercised about *the beginning of their religion*. They have read the experiences of others, and find that those persons can give a clear, decisive account of how they were at such and such a time, perhaps, suddenly and surprisingly arrested in a course of sin or false profession; but they cannot themselves give so clear an account, and thus exactly decide

when the Spirit began in truth with their souls. Brought up in the midst of profession, and having early the truth brought before them, they sank more imperceptibly into a sense of their abject ruined condition. Now this difference of their experience from these models, as they suppose them to be, perplexes them. Especially as they have heard various masters in Israel lay down the law in such cases very peremptorily. Consequently, they fear things cannot be right with them. But I believe their troubles are groundless, provided they have arrived at the scriptural spot of having their mouths stopped, and their souls brought in guilty before God; so that, deeply feeling their entirely lost condition by nature, they are looking unto Jesus, and hungering and thirsting after his righteousness, and desiring above all other things to be found in him. If, connected with this feeling after Jesus, there is a tenderness of conscience, and a fear of God in the walk and conversation; if a person is here, I don't feel very anxious about how his religion began, for I am persuaded it began by the Holy Spirit. No man could arrive at this spot unless God were with him. I believe some who tell us they have been suddenly arrested and shaken over hell may go into hell after all; for they bear none of the marks of spiritually-taught persons. There is no tenderness of spirit, sensibility of conscience, and habitually influencing fear of God. I believe, therefore, that the poor soul I have been speaking about may adopt James's words, and say to some who are much clearer in their account of a supposed beginning, "Show me thy beginning without the fruits of it, and I will show you my beginning by the fruits." A good tree bringeth forth good fruits; so by the fruits we may pretty well guess what was the root of the matter.

2. But, secondly, as some are perplexed about their beginning, so some are about *the continuation*. They find that some of God's people appear to be so much more highly favoured than themselves. They know but little of catchings up into the third heaven; and while the Lord seems to satisfy some of his people as with marrow and fatness, and the choicest honey out of the Rock in great abundance, he keeps them, comparatively, very low. Now and then a taste, a drop of honey out of the comb, but they don't appear to dwell in the land flowing with milk and honey, like others do. In fact, they are not favoured as some appear to be; neither do they sink as low, nor rise as high, as they hear of others doing. Well, this again is no real cause of doubtfulness as to a man's state. In these things the Lord is a Sovereign, and the reasons which determine his actions are usually far beyond our limited vision. We cannot argue that God does not love us because he carries us onward to our rest in this or that way. Neither should we conclude that he especially regards those whom he favours more with sweet manifestations. If we are hungering and thirsting after Jesus, feeling ourselves poor and needy sinners, he assuredly loves us, keeps us, and guides us, and will in the long run make us as rich and happy

as heart can wish, giving us, with all his children, himself, a full Christ, as our everlasting portion.

3. A third perplexity arises from Divine teachings so completely falsifying natural expectations. It is in our hearts naturally to suppose that the Lord will make us strong, wise, holy in ourselves, and in a sort of independence of the Lord Jesus. We secretly expect that union with the vine is to qualify us by degrees for setting up as vines for ourselves. But we find that all the Lord's dealings tend to make us feel in ourselves, and as apart from him, more and more weak, worthless, foolish, and helpless. We find, instead of setting up for ourselves, we less and less can do without Jesus. With him we are strong; wander, as we sadly do, from him, and we fall a prey at once to devils without and beasts within. How all this perplexes us! Ought this to be so? If God were teaching us, ought we to feel such poor helpless creatures? Does not Scripture say, "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory"? And, again, does it not say, "They shall go from strength to strength"? Such are the questions which arise; and we cannot deny that the Word so speaks. But, then, these passages must be properly interpreted. The image we are made conformable to in beholding, is the image of a dying as well as rising Redeemer. Hence we are to become more nothing at all, that Jesus Christ may be All in all. As we die to self, and sink, as it were, into the sepulchre, we shall rise again thence, as Jesus did, by the glory of the Father. Out of weakness God's people are made strong. Just in proportion as we, in a sense of self-nothingness without him, are brought to lean upon the arm of Christ, we shall be seen as the spouse in the Song (Cant. viii.), leaving world and sin behind us, coming up out of the wilderness. Directly we become anything in self, we become weak in Jesus; and then we fall a prey to sin and worldliness. And as for going from strength to strength, why, for the substance of things, this means, we go from our own strength into Christ's, and so become stronger and stronger, not in self, but in our true strength, even in the Beloved.

4. But a fourth perplexity arises out of *God's providential dealings with us*. There are troubles for the child of God usually in world, and church, and family, and property, and oftentimes in body. There are more martyrs than the world knows of; men of martyr-like sufferings, and martyr-like spirits. Well, these trials, especially from their number, variety, and continuation, sorely perplex the mind at times. Is it possible that God can love us? Can he be our Father? Is he not, on the contrary, striking us as wicked men in the open sight of others? (Job xxxiv. 26.) Is not this incessant plaguing a sign of the Divine displeasure? O no! in the sanctuary (Ps. lxxiii.) this perplexity soon passes away; for we see that this is God's way with his people. He gives them a fellowship with a crucified

Saviour. "To you it is given on the behalf of Christ . . . to suffer." (Phil. i.) When we see this way of God in the light of the true sanctuary, then we say, "O! let the worldlings have the quails; the Lord give me as a child the manna. Better is a dinner of bitter herbs where the peace of God is, than a stalled ox and divine wrath and hatred therewith. Let heart and flesh fail, if God be the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."

5. A fifth perplexity arises in many cases from those *horrible injections of Satan* which some of God's people long and bitterly suffer under. Atheisms, infidel doubts and disputings, and horrible blasphemies, horrify the conscience, and break down the judgment. Now, these things must be mentioned, because many of God's people walk long in these terrible places, and they suppose they are alone in them. So it was with myself until I met with the writings of Bunyan, especially his "Grace Abounding," which showed me this was no strange thing that was happening unto me. My own experience as to these things has been briefly as follows. I never felt the bitter infidelity that was latent or hidden in my heart, until God made me a believer. I never dreamt of being an atheist until I had a spiritual knowledge of God. I never supposed it possible that my heart could have such motions and voices of blasphemy against God in it, until the Lord had put into it a holy principle, which delighted in his praises. In short, I never knew the depths of iniquity which were in the old man, until there was a new man of grace to call forth his latent enmity, to make it worth the devil's while to act upon that enmity, and to see and feel the horrible nature and exceeding sinfulness of sin, the sin which dwelleth in us. Then these hidden things came forth to the light, and then vain was human reasoning and creature power. The leviathan was raging (Job xli.), and the hand of God alone could bridle and control him.

6. Another perplexity arises out of *our prayers*; particularly when the Lord, having favoured us with a very sweet outpouring, appears not to answer the petition offered; but to act just in contradiction to what this outpouring led us to expect. The fact is, that sometimes the Lord answers us, as Isaiah signifies, while we are praying (Is. lxxv. 24). He gives us a sweet feeling of nearness in prayer, bows down his ear from heaven to listen to us, gives us a sense of our adoption, a filial confidence, and near access; and in doing this he has already answered our petition, if not in the letter, yet in a tender Father's own way. He gives us himself. He shows us that he is ready to give us anything good for us. He then denies us our request in the letter of it, and then we argue that he rejects our prayers, and therefore that we are not children. O folly! The testimony to childship in the act of prayer was designed to fortify us against the apparent denial of us in the refusal of the actual thing prayed for. It is as though God said to us, "My child, what you ask for I would

willingly grant, yea, to the half of my kingdom, but it is not for my glory or your advantage. Here, take this present token of my favour, and when I appear to deny you, look upon it, and say, 'My Father knows best what is for my good. He withholds and deprives, as well as bestows, in love. He has kissed me in my prayers with the kisses of his mouth (Song i. 2) that I might bear, after prayer, the woundings of his providence.'" Sweet leadings, yet how often misinterpreted, and for a long season dispiriting to the heart, to the very shutting of the mouth of prayer. Thus the ark must be turned aside for a time by offended David into the house of Obed-edom.

7. The last source of perplexity I shall briefly hint at is that arising out of *our very comfortings*; through the divine rule of proceeding that grace shall be tried. The Lord gives us a sweet opportunity in hearing, meditating, &c.; then comes a fresh season of bitter trial upon us. We said in our joy, our mountain stands strong. We say in our haste, all men are liars, and our comforts surely must have been of the flesh; they cannot have proceeded from God. But this is all a mistake, and proceeds from our heart-ignorance of the divine ways. We forget that if there is faith given, there must be the trial of it (1 Pet. i.); and if the hundred and forty-four thousand are sealed (Rev. vii.) with the seal of God, then the four winds are to be loosed, and there will follow the hurricane. God bestows grace upon his people to meet a coming trial. God bestows trials upon his people to purge their dross, and purify their graces.

Well; such are a few of the things which perplex the child of God, and break down his judgment; but they are designed for his ultimate good, that he may learn to wait, as weak in himself, upon the Lord, who will bring forth his judgment as the noonday.

And here again we must make two or three remarks about this *bringing forth*. As in the case of righteousness, so in that of judgment, the words "bring forth" firstly signify that judgment is laid up somewhere for the child of God, and so our Lord says, in Isa. xlix., "Yet surely my work is with the Lord, and my judgment with my God." And God will in due season at the hand of Christ bring forth gospel judgment to his people unto victory. (Is. xlii. 3.)

Secondly, they signify that creature strength is not sufficient here. Consequently David prays: "Judge me by thy strength." Human reason is far too weak to stay and support a perplexed spirit, and bring the heart of a child of God to a stable rest. I remember at one period when I was far from sweet assurance, yet greatly desiring and seeking after it, that I tried to bring my soul to rest in the following way. I knew well that the believer in Jesus had everlasting life. I had had some blessed indications of divine favour, as I thought. Well, then, I tried to reason myself into peace thus: "I was a believer. Did I not believe at such and such a time? and therefore I should assuredly be

saved." But O! I found it would not do. There was one thing wanting, and that was a divine testimony. I was without God the Spirit in the reasoning; and this being absent, I was only my own witness; a dead one, too, under the circumstances; for I was reasoning in the flesh; and a dead witness could carry no real weight with him in the court of a living conscience.

Thirdly. These words signify that God will himself come and do the work. "I will come and save you." (Is. xxxv.) And when this is the case, the soul is brought to a sweet and blessed rest, sealed by the Spirit unto the day of redemption.

Now, the word *noonday* here must, in the fulness of the expression, be referred to the life to come. The noonday of the perfect day, in which the perfection of the divine promises in Christ is to be enjoyed, must be hereafter. There will remain during this life a something of the shadow, though in some saints, undoubtedly, the sun has shone exceedingly bright, especially during their last days. But though the fulness of such an expression must be referred to the world to come, there is a sweet foretasting to be enjoyed and followed after below. There are breakings in of light and glory which make us cry out with rapture, "My Lord and my God!" "I shall be saved! I shall be saved!" "Nothing shall separate me from the love of Christ." There are pourings into the heart of the spirit of adoption, crying, "Abba, Father!" which make us exclaim, "This is heaven! What can heaven be more?" There are bringings-in of the firstfruits into the temple of the heart, which make us feel so overwhelmed beneath the love of God, that in the strength of this meat we feel that we could go through hell itself, and in the lion's den should fear no evil.

Well, these earnest, foretastes, crownings, anointings, sealings, are to be longed after; and to those who wait upon the Lord to have the doubts, as to their interest in Christ, removed, the promise of our text shall surely in due season be fulfilled. God will bring forth their gospel judgment as the noonday.

II. But now we must proceed to notice briefly the second case in which a child of God requires the bringing forth of judgment. Sometimes a child of God may be under a dark cloud, as it respects his character and conduct, and that in spite of his having walked before God in a gospel uprightness of spirit, and with much integrity, exercising himself to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man. (Ps. xxvi.) He may be greatly misjudged by the world, and even by the church, the very household of faith itself. Thus Paul was counted a pestilent fellow, and charged with sedition before Felix; and Job pathetically laments not so much that he was the song of the drunkards, as that all his inward friends abhorred him. (Job. xix. 19; xxx. 9.) David also (Ps. vii., &c.) and other godly persons were evidently acquainted with this same trying path. Moreover, when a man is in this spot, Satan is sure, as far as permitted, to come in and accuse him to his own conscience;

and there is always so much defectiveness and even evil in the child of God's best, and so much pollution, that the accuser of the brethren will not be without abundant legal grounds to go upon. Well; for a time there usually works under these trials some degree, at any rate, of wrongness of spirit. We want to avenge ourselves upon our enemies, like David with foolish Nabal. Or we, in undue anger of spirit, want God to avenge us: "Lord, shall we call down fire from heaven upon them to consume them?" We want to act the part of Elijah rather than that of Jesus on his cross, who said, "Father, forgive them."

Again. There is frequently a working of self-righteousness. We can hardly understand our receiving such returns, whether from God or men, for all our good deeds done, as we think, unto this people (see Nehemiah v. 19); and we too much expect God to appear for us on the score of those good deeds, and our own integrity. But if these things have an undue magnitude in our own eyes, the Lord is sure to cast, as to our experience, a law and not a gospel eye upon them, and then it will be poor work even if with Job (xxx. 36) we bind them as a crown unto us.

Again. There is usually much vain-glorious fretfulness come in; I mean fretfulness arising out of wounded vanity. We wanted to live too much in the praises of men's mouths, and be as a perfume in their nostrils; and God suffers us to die as it were in those mouths, and to be a stench instead.

Again. We usually try what creature-help can do in the business. But the effect of all these things is to keep the Lord at a distance, and to make the cloud thicken. But at length the Lord brings us to a better mind, and we fall down at his feet broken and helpless; then he bears a sweet and surprising testimony to us as accepted in the Beloved, and well-pleasing even in our walk through the Beloved, being viewed with eyes of grace as dear children (Mal. iii. 17; Ephes. v. 1) seeking to serve him. Thus the accuser is cast down out of the heaven (Rev. xii.) of conscience; and that is the principal thing.

Then, again, the Lord leads us to argue in such ways as these: O! after all, if my ill-judgers knew as much of myself as I do, they might indeed have some cause to speak and act as they have done. I will view them, then, as unwillingly my Father's reprovers, and admonishers of my sins, which well deserve the utmost ignominy. Truly I have cared too much about men's opinions, and desired to be thought highly of by them; but this is very base; it is a sort of pilfering, a wanting to obtain a paltry kind of advantage under false pretences. And what, after all, does it signify if my worthless name be cast out as evil? Why make so much ado about being despised when Jesus was the very scorn of men and outcast of the people? Besides, if my character in these things is never cleared in this life, it will be in eternity. Well, then, Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me. I have glory enough in thee, my covenant

God. If thy glory requires my conduct to be cleared, then, Lord, clear it for thy own and people's sakes; but if not, Lord, teach me to endure the cross, and despise the shame, and follow a world-despised Master unto a throne of real glory.

Now, when the soul gets here, the Lord will be seen to work in some degree, even in this world, and to bring forth gospel judgment as the noonday, clearing the man before the churches, and even before the world. A sweet illustration we have of all this in the case of Job. When he was humbled at the feet of Jesus: "Lord, I am vile; I will answer no more; I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes," then the Lord actually says of him, "My servant Job hath spoken right of me." (xli. 7, 8.) When, Lord? Why, at first (i. 21), with some outbreaks of faith and confidence (xiii. 15; xxiii. 10) here and there in the middle; and more fully at last. (xl. 3, 4, 5; xli. 6.) Love, therefore, purging out all the weeds of rebellion and fretfulness, fastens together the flowers of faith and humility, and bears this wonderful testimony: My servant Job hath spoken well of me.

THE FEAR OF THE LORD.

"Let not thine heart envy sinners; but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long."—PROV. XXIII. 17.

THE fear of the Lord differs much, both in nature and effects, from the actings of a mere natural conscience. For the dictates of natural conscience are always in conformity with the conceptions of what is a moral obligation, or legal duty which ought to be performed. Thus Paul, led by the judgment of reason, as educated in the Jews' religion, believed that a moral obligation was imposed on him by the Word of God to persecute the church of God, "being," as he says, "exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." (Gal. i. 13, 14.) So that he could, with what he thought to be a good conscience, shed the blood of those who believed in Christ, without the least remorse; but would rather have died than eaten bread with a Gentile. If there is no fear of God before the eyes of natural men, and it is positively affirmed by the word of truth that there is not (Rom. iii. 18), the best moral training only produces in the minds of men the idea of self-righteousness, free-agency, free-will, and the right of disposing of themselves for heaven or hell. The higher the training, the more enmity is manifested against the sovereignty of JEHOVAH.

If, then, the ideas about moral obligations are erroneous, conscience will also be erroneous. It is quite possible for persons to act conscientiously in the observance of superstitious rites and obligations which may be imposed on them. To act conscientiously may be far from acting in the fear of the Lord; for such acts may be in direct opposition to, and even in open enmity against the Word of God, as with some papists, who would not dare to disobey the priest, and yet would throw the Bible in the fire.

It is from self-imposed obligations and rules, or those imbibed by training, or even from a misconception of the requirements of the law of God, that a slavish fear arises in the conscience, which binds its victim, as with a chain, to the strict observance of such imposed rules under pain of some heavy calamity or curse. How diligent are such persons in the performance of their prescribed task! The papist dares not pass by an image of the virgin and child without paying reverence and devotion to them; but will shed the blood of his fellow-man without any fear of displeasing God.

There is, then, a slavish fear that holds so many prisoners within its intolerant grasp, saying, "Do, do;" like the horse-leech's two daughters, which are ever crying, "Give, give." (Prov. xxx. 15.) This fear is always accompanied with a dread of death and hell, except the task is performed; and if it is supposed to be accomplished, then a false peace ensues. It is not Christ revealed that gives them confidence, but work done; and if the thought should happen to pass through the minds of such persons that perhaps God may reject their works, and call them "workers of iniquity," the most dreadful enmity will arise in their minds against him. Such dare not come before God as sinners, hanging on Jesus alone; but trust to the performance of their self-imposed obligations or duties, which brings a sort of satisfaction to them, of which they misjudge as if it was the peace of God. This was the case with Paul; and so it is with others.

The fear of God and slavish fear may both be found to be dwelling in the same person; but yet the fear of God struggles to rise above slavish fear, which only works for wages, and not from principle. Slavish fear is cast out when love is perfect. (1 Jno. iv. 18.)

1. The fear of the Lord is a new covenant blessing, and a free gift of God's grace. It is implanted in, and, indeed, a part of the new heart which God gives his people at regeneration; and is produced by his supernatural operation alone. (Ezek. xi. 19.) For so it is written: "I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." (Jer. xxxii. 39, 40.)

2. It will be seen by the above passage that it is given to keep the soul from departing from the Lord. It sets God as the chief Object, and his Word as the grand rule of obedience; and its effects are to cause the soul to cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart. It will also balance the weight of present things against that of future ones, as was the case with Moses and Paul, who were enabled thereby to esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, and to count all things but dung and dross that they might win Christ. (Heb. xi. 24-26; Phil. iii. 8.) This is the grace by which a person is

enabled to cleave to God and God's things, and forsake all others. The child of God does not at first know what it is that gives him so much strength and firmness of character, whereby he feels enabled to part with father, mother, sister, brother, or any other person, as well as any other thing; but it is the fear of the Lord that binds the soul to God, and all other things must give way to him.

What a blessed privilege it is to have the whole heart cleaving to God! How different is this to the loose habits some professors imbibe; exhibiting little, if any, of the fear of the Lord. For if the fear of the Lord is to keep men from departing from the Lord, how few possess it! And how little it is in exercise where it is possessed! How little self-denial is to be found among the professed people of God! How little of the fear of God there is before their eyes! And how much bondage, on the other hand, there is often existing amongst them! Slavish fear and bondage, though, as we have said, they may accompany, do not arise out of the fear of the Lord; but the contrary. For it brings a spirit of freedom and childlike simplicity with it. It generates a liberty in the will, by which the will moves Godward, and thirsts for the water of life because it feels to need it. So that the soul comes under the gracious invitation of God: "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. xxii. 17.) This invitation belongs to the fearers of God's Name; for they have fervent desires to possess the power to live *only* to God. Yea, when this fear is ruling in the conscience, their anxious souls long to be free from sin, and be like the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus a poor sinner is enabled to feel after the Lord, and to wait for him, and upon him. The fear of the Lord never leads a person to pamper a vitiated appetite, and to adorn the body after the vain fashions of the day; but it gives a tenderness to the conscience, and dictates what should be, and what should not be done. Its object is to please God, and do his will, for

"In pleasing him their pleasure's placed."

Hence it is free in its own nature from any legality, and works for the pleasure of pleasing a gracious Lord, to whom the soul is bound by the ties of infinite love. It has, then, a most noble and sanctifying end in view; and is the producer of holy and reverential feelings and thoughts towards God; and binds the affections to God, and sets them on heavenly things.

"Let terrors fright the unwilling slave,
The child with joy appears;
Cheerful he does his Father's will,
And loves as much as fears.

"Let fear and love, most holy God,
Possess this soul of mine;
Then shall I worship thee aright,
And taste thy joys divine."

3. "The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom." (Prov. xv. 33.) Every man by nature being destitute of the fear of the

Lord, he is necessarily an entirely ignorant man in all spiritual matters; and, having nothing but a natural conscience to be operated upon, he can never be spiritually instructed in the things of God. As Paul writes, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. ii. 14.) He may receive a moral training in natural things, obtain some idea of God, and some notions of his law, and believe he is morally obliged to act in conformity to his will; but as all his notions are erroneous, his conformity is erroneous likewise. For, as it is written, "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." (Rom. iii. 11.) There must be of necessity, then, a new spiritual life before there can be any spiritual instruction received. Thus the natural man is destitute of the fear of God, for it is written: "There is no fear of God before their eyes." (Rom. iii. 18.)

Paul had a moral and religious training of a very high order; and he was also a very apt scholar; but what did he say of his acquirements? "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." (Phil. iii. 7, 8.) This great change took place after he had received the new heart, wherein was the fear of the Lord. Then all his former knowledge was turned into foolishness, and the pupil found himself in other hands, receiving lessons from a tutor he never before felt the authority of; and he never received such instruction from any one else. This tutor spoke as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Thus a person receives instruction in spiritual things; and this instruction is conveyed into a spiritual understanding, and quite overturns all the previously imbibed notions. There is a new beginning; there are new lessons; there is a new teacher, and a new subject. "Behold, all things are become new." The law of God, in its reality and spirituality, enters the soul, demanding the spirit's obedience to its commands. The look must be chaste, the thought pure, the words true, the actings of the mind in undeviating conformity to the will of God, and the whole soul and body and life holy. This is new, and strange. It makes the soul stagger and tremble. Corruption is now discovered, not so much by the external deeds of the body as by the internal acts of the soul. Here the naturally moral and immoral are brought down to one common level before God; *before God, mind*: not before men. Now all things are perceived to be "naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Heb. iv. 13.) With what a crushing force does this cast down all human superstructures of religious notions reared by natural religion! Especially so when the person discovers that he is corrupt from head to feet, and has come entirely short of God's glory. (Rom. iii.

23.) The workings of sin also are perceived to have existed, and a mere practising of error under the name of virtue. Now all the man's comeliness turns into corruption, and his righteousness into filthy rags.

By those things persons become instructed in the truth of the law of God, and conscience, though quickened and renewed, apprehends a dread of God because of his holiness, and some knowledge of his inflexible justice; knowing that he will in no wise clear the guilty. These instructions now being received, inform the soul of its relationship to the Creator; and as no method appears as yet to be sufficient to restore the lost standing in original holiness, legal bondage seizes the soul, and a working hard for life ensues. This working failing to obtain the desired end, despondency sets in, in some degree. For however well a person may understand the doctrines of grace in the letter, as soon as the Holy Spirit convicts him of sin, he finds he knows no more of what Jesus Christ came to do, and who he really is, than if he had never heard of him, so far as relates to his own salvation. He finds himself a poor ignorant creature; but he labours hard to get wisdom, righteousness, and holiness. Nevertheless, the more he toils, the farther he gets off from the coveted condition.

Wisdom may now show him the use of Jesus Christ, who he is, and what he came to do. This causes him to pant after him, and to believe that every one who has an interest in him is the happiest person in the world. O how blessed the real child of God appears in his eyes! How safe are God's people! This he can see; and longs and prays to be one of them. "O," says he, "what would I give to be right! O that I was one of God's elect!" How he admires them now, and would wash their feet with a hearty good will. He loves the God of these people; although he dare not call it love, he feels too unworthy for that. Yet it is love, and strong love too; but not perfect love. For he would gladly, under this frame of mind, part with all things, and all natural friends, for their sakes, and cleave to God and his people, at any cost. This is the effect of the instruction of wisdom as the fear of God.

When it pleases God to reveal more fully his Son to the soul, the man then receives instruction that makes him wise to salvation; and the line upon line, and precept upon precept he has to receive, makes him think at times he gets a greater fool every day of his life, rather than wiser. Nevertheless, he perceives a greater need for Jesus, and has a deeper insight into the depths of the fall.

It will not do to pursue the life-long lessons given through the fear of the Lord.

If, then, "the fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom," how is it that we have now-a-days so many who refuse to be taught in the way of the Lord more perfectly? This did not Apollos. (Acts xviii. 24, 26.) Is it not better to wait upon God by prayer, and to search the Scriptures daily, than to utter

erroneous views of experience?—views of experience that never came through the instruction of wisdom? The novices in religion verily are often at fault in this matter; and the more so that they speak with so much confidence. Godly experience and wisdom will go hand in hand together.

(*To be continued.*)

A MERCIFUL AND FAITHFUL HIGH PRIEST.

“For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.”—HEB. II. 18.

Now let us read the Father's love,
 In language of Immanuel's groans,
 And sing, with happy saints above,
 The blood which for our sin atones.

The Joy of heaven, that fairest One,
 Came down to dwell in human clay:
 Here's grief to feast our love upon!
 Here's love to chase our griefs away!

Love dwelt in our Redeemer-God
 Before the direful curse began;
 And when this lowland earth he trod,
 Compassion shone in Christ the Man.

To him what loads of suffering came,
 Borne by the fainting sons of grief!
 The blind, the leprous, and the lame,
 From his dear hands obtain'd relief.

But fiercer billows o'er him roll'd,
 To fill his sorrows to the brim,
 And fiery clouds of wrath untold,
 Between his Father's face and him.

In vain we search the realms of light,
 Or these dark shades of sin below,
 For wider triumphs of his might,
 Or richer love, or deeper woe.

Dear Lord, and didst thou give thy blood
 To be the life of souls like mine?
 Such love can ne'er be understood;
 'Tis too mysterious, too divine!

Yet faith delights to linger near,
 To feel thy sweet compassions move,
 And mourn the sin that took the spear,
 And drain'd thy heart of all but love.

And hast thou less of pity now
 Than when stern Justice saw thee bleed?
 Shall I beneath a sorrow bow,
 And not give thee my cause to plead?

When some malignant, black design
 Shall seek my final overthrow,
 'Twill take the bitterness from *mine*
 To view *thy* conflict with the foe.
 Should half the joys of time depart,
 And earth appear a gloomy place,
 Renew the glowing of thy heart,
 Though dark afflictions hide thy face.

Thy pitying care, thou Best of friends,
 Shall cheer me all the desert through,
 And when my hour of warfare ends

1879.

Will smooth my dying pillow too.

W. WILEMAN.

IT IS ONLY A PRAYER MEETING.

"Where prayer was wont to be made."—ACTS XVI. 13.

"To the beds of spices."—SONG VI. 2.

MORE than fifteen years have passed away since I went one evening to what was our usual prayer meeting. I had the chapel key, and after sitting until a quarter of an hour beyond the time alone, I began to conclude no one would come, which proved really the case. I felt troubled, and in mind greatly blamed our people; then became angry, and self-pity worked in me. I thought, if I sit here the time, what will those in the cottages around think to hear no singing? It will have a bad appearance; and they will notice me going out alone. But a softened feeling came over me; envy and self-pity gave way; and I was helped to read, pray, and sing aloud; and although no singer, went through the service as usual, and it was to me no vain opportunity.

When spiritual persons, especially members of churches, having health and time, absent themselves from these meetings and speak of them slightly, it shows a low and unhealthy state of soul. When we see one come in from the distance of two miles, another four, another six, as is often the case, it causes a feeling of sorrow and shame for the state of able absentees who live near, and seems to say one's own locality must be very spiritually unhealthy. Such persons having little regard for the prosperity of the church and the Lord's honour or cause, one goes to the door or window and says, "I think it will be wet this evening; and *it is only a prayer meeting*. I do not feel inclined to go." Another has a friend call in to tea, and says, "I did think of going out this evening, but shall not now you have come. *It is only a prayer meeting*." Another expects that So-and-so may call; or some other hindrance crosses the mind, and so thinks it best to stay at home; particularly *as it is only a prayer meeting*. Others, instead of using a little salt, in kind entreaty to their brethren, will excuse their non-attendance by finding fault with the light irreverent way one prays, or the long tedious prayers of another, or the monotonous and repetitions

of another; and they also justify their absence by this: "*It is, after all, only a prayer meeting.*"

Now, in reality, what does this mean: "ONLY A PRAYER MEETING?"

1. It is a direct command from the Lord: "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is." So it means *disobedience!*

2. It has the promise of the bestowment of more grace to the soul, strength for trials, light for the dark, stumbling heart, and increase of exercise for the graces of the Spirit God has given. So it means *indifference to the soul's welfare!*

3. It is to promote love and union one with another. Thus prayer meetings are often more profitable than preaching meetings. So it means *indifference to union and love!*

4. The Lord *Himself* has promised to be there, even where two or three meet in his name. O who would not go to meet the Prince of peace, the Lord Jesus himself? This is what is often lightly called "*only a prayer meeting;*" but it means *a contempt put upon, and indifference displayed towards the King of kings and Prince of princes.*

Chelsea, Jan. 28th, 1880.

A. B.

SHORT PAPERS.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE RICH.

"And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour."—Psa. xlv. 12.

THE psalmist having written, as he proposed to do in the first verse, many very blessed things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, goes on to describe the court and attendants of the great King. Amongst those who are represented as waiting upon him, or, if we may so say, appearing at court with gifts and petitions, are some of the most unlikely. "The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour." As to the daughter of Tyre, we shall only here remark that the people of that city were remarkable for their mercantile pursuits. Her merchants were as princes. She grew wealthy and great by means of traffic; and, as we know, there was much in that traffic of a very iniquitous nature. In a late paper or two we have dwelt upon this subject; enlarging upon the words, "the iniquity of thy traffic." (Ezek. xxviii. 18.) Traffic is not necessarily iniquitous in itself; but there may be much that is iniquitous about it. Now, it is refreshing to find even the daughter of Tyre at the feet of the Lord Jesus with a gift. We do not suppose for a moment that when that gift was presented the daughter of Tyre was continuing in the iniquity. No; the meaning clearly is that such was the conquering almighty power of the Lord Jesus's grace, that even the consciences of Tyrian merchants and traffickers were pierced and penetrated. Even her covetous tradesmen were brought down. The arrows

of the King were sharp in the hearts of those persons who were at one time his enemies; but were now his enemies no longer; for they, subdued by grace, had fallen under him. Like Matthew leaving the receipt of custom, so these persons had renounced their unjust gains for the sake of Jesus. The same idea is given in Isaiah xlv. 14. There, again, those labouring in Egypt after the things of this world, those trafficking in Ethiopia and Sheba with an eager, absorbing pursuit of gain, are made by divine, all-conquering grace to come over to Jesus, even in chains, and beg for mercy. No doubt the words imply what a wonderful thing it is for grace really to overcome such sinners. Thus, too, we believe it is one of the triumphs of grace in this day for the Lord really to bring men away from their eager pursuit of this world, and to make persons thoroughly honest and earnest in divine things who are engaged in the businesses of this world. To find a man or woman occupied, as many must, of course, be, in the affairs of this life, and yet really seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness is, we believe, a very rare sight. For one who makes Christ and the concerns of the soul and of eternity the first thing, and worldly interests and prosperity the second, we may find ninety and nine, we think, who reverse all this, and make Christ second, and the world the first.

Well, grace can conquer; and where grace is, conquer it will. Grace won't leave its objects merely grovelling here below in such a fashion. (Ps. lxxviii. 13.) It will make a man a true disciple, a real follower of Christ. It will bring him in his spirit to forsake all for Christ. Christ shall be first, and the world last. The struggle will be great. The world through the flesh will mightily contend for the throne; but one of the things which we can make "touching the King" is this—that he shall conquer where he wills, and those he loves; and therefore the daughter of Tyre even shall be there at his footstool with a gift, paying tribute.

But we pass on, as it is the second part of this verse we want principally to dwell upon; "even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour."

The apostle Paul says, "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." Christ himself says that "it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle," a proverbial expression, as we suppose, for the naturally impossible, "than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." Nevertheless, grace is sufficient even in this case also; so that here we have the rich at the feet of Jesus sweetly entreating his divine favour. In the ark were creatures of all sorts. In the great sheet let down from heaven before Peter, this was also the case. Christ must manifest the riches of his grace in saving also the rich amongst the people. This is sweet, and very comforting. When, in Lu. xvi., Abraham is represented as refusing and repelling the request of the rich man, he does not say, *Be-*

cause you were rich, you are in hell. No! This rich man was one who trusted in the multitude of his riches; they were his "*good things*"; the things his heart and soul longed after and trusted in. Thus they were his idols upon earth, and he had nothing for or in eternity. The rich man in Lu. xii. also is not set forth as a reprobate because he was rich; but because he, as well as the other, trusted in his riches. He was covetous, grasping, and avaricious; rich in possessions, but not rich towards God.

James sorely reproveth rich men in the fifth chapter of his epistle; but it is not because they were rich. He denounces a woe upon them because they got their riches by violence, fraud, and rapacity; they kept them avariciously, or they used them in luxury and self-indulgence. This was their crime. This was to bring down God's sore judgments upon them. It was not the riches, but the rust, in the case of the avaricious, the rust of unused mercies. It was not the riches, but the way of obtaining them, in the covetous, the fraudulent, and the violent. It was not the riches, but the self-indulgent, luxurious use of them, which heaped up treasure of wrath for these rich persons unto the last day. Abraham, the friend of God, was rich; so was Solomon. It is not, then, the being rich which is blamable, but the having our hearts set upon riches. It is the "*will be rich*" which pierces men through with many sorrows.

We write these things because we believe that sometimes the poor veil their own enviousness under this covering;—they will hardly allow that a rich man can be a child of God at all. Scripture does not warrant any such idea. Grace can master the heart of a rich Zaccheus, a learned Paul, or a noble in Cæsar's household, as well as that of a cobbler or a coalheaver. Some persons, perhaps, think that rich men, if partakers of grace, have fewer trials and smaller difficulties to contend with than the poor. This, again, is a mistake, and very unscriptural. The word "*even*" in our text implies a host of difficulties: "*Even the rich amongst the people shall entreat thy favour.*" No doubt it was a victory of infinite grace when Peter, James, and John forsook their fishing nets for Christ. But was it a less triumphant victory of the same grace when Matthew left the receipt of customs? When Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor," &c.? Or when Paul cast aside his birth-position, his learning, and his reputation to become a follower of Him he once persecuted? Certainly not. We do not sometimes do anything like justice in our thoughts to the wonder-working efficacy of divine grace as exhibited in bringing the learned, the rich, the noble, truly to the feet of Jesus. Was it little grace that made Moses, when he came to years, refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ, the worst part, if we may use such a word, concerning

the dear Lord Jesus, of Christ, greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt?

The trials and temptations, the sorrows and difficulties of the poor, when called by grace, are great. Agur wisely alludes to this: "Lest I be poor, and steal." There is a danger of departing from paths of strict integrity, of fawning upon and flattering the rich, of having men's persons in admiration because of temporal advantage, of murmuring against God, of envying others, attends the path of the poor man who seems dependent upon others. How hard to let the eyes look right on, to only enquire what is the Lord's will, what is right, and just, and proper, to do what the Word and Spirit of God direct, to neither swerve to right or left, when such conduct threatens us with poverty and loss and want of the things of this life! How hard to be uncompromising, when compromise would seem to benefit! How hard, with Abraham, in a noble integrity to lift the hand to the Most high God, and renounce the gifts of the king of Sodom; choosing honest poverty, yea, want, rather than polluted gains. To the faith of Abraham, poverty or a furnace of fire would be better than the gains of iniquity.

Poverty, then, has its trials, its hindrances, its sore temptations. But shall we in a littleness of spirit say that riches and birth and learning and natural position have none? Depend upon it, Almighty grace is wanted to make a rich man, a wise man after the flesh, a noble man, a man of birth, forsake all for Jesus. It is no easy thing to come out and be separate, as saith the Lord. For a wise and learned man to renounce in divine things his own reason and understanding, and be as a little child at the feet of Jesus, is a mighty victory of grace. So it was with Paul, with Luther, Calvin, and our great Reformers. Their learning, subjected to the grace of God, became tributary to Christ, and useful to his people.

For a man who has associated with the noble and refined of this world to throw in his lot amongst the poor and illiterate is, again, a triumph of divine grace. So, again, for a rich man to renounce the world, to give up its luxury and self-indulgence, and to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth; here, again, is a triumph of the grace of the Lord Jesus. It argues a narrowness of mind when we fancy learning, riches, birth, position by nature are in themselves disadvantages. In themselves they are not so. They have their dangers; and these are very great. This Scripture shows. But, then, they in various cases serve to illustrate the power of God and the riches of his grace whenever the rich amongst the people entreat Christ's favour. Let not, then, the rich, the learned, and the well-born who possess the grace of God stand aloof from, despise, or look down upon their, as to this life, poorer brethren. This were, as James says (ii. 1-3.), to respect persons, and be convinced of the law as transgressors.

Let not the poor, on the other hand, think lightly of, foolishly

disparage, or envy their richer or more learned brethren. This were only to display a littleness and meanness of spirit by no means characteristic of the truly ennobling grace of God. No! In Christ rich and poor, wise and unwise, learned and unlearned, meet together upon the sweetest footing: "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Therefore, says James, "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted,"—not in this world, but in Christ; "and the rich in that he is made low" and little in himself, and has been brought away from trusting in natural wisdom, strength, righteousness, or in uncertain riches. Let him rejoice that he is one in whom the sweet words of the psalmist have had a blessed fulfilment: "Even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour."

THE TRIALS OF THE POOR.

To the tried and afflicted children of God.—Beloved in the Lord,—May grace, mercy, peace, and love be abundantly multiplied unto your souls, to cheer you on in your pilgrimage through this waste, howling wilderness. I have many times thought of the many dangers, difficulties, toils, cares, sorrows, temptations, and trials that attend the followers of the Lamb as they pass along the strait and narrow way that leads to the celestial city. What a little there is in this world to comfort or even encourage the saints of God! Yes, Zion's sons and daughters sooner or later find that there are thorns and briars all along the road, and also that there are many gins, traps, and snares laid to catch their erring feet; and we are seldom able to see where the great enemy has placed his net or wily snare to entangle us, that by taking heed thereto we may escape. No, friends; Hart truly says,

"And seldom do we see the snare
Before we feel the smart."

O how needful it is that our cry be like the real cry of the psalmist, and that we also say, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips;" "that I sin not with my tongue, even when the wicked are before me." The psalmist knew how unable he was to keep himself free from blemishes when in the company of the ungodly; hence he cried unto the God of all grace, and entreated him to keep back his servant from presumptuous sins, and from running with the giddy multitude to do evil.

Is it not our mercy that we have still a God to fly to in every time of need? How many of us are surrounded daily with the ungodly! And how their actions and their words, sometimes, deaden our minds to all spiritual things! And alas! too frequently are we captivated, and brought into trouble by them. This burdens our souls, deadens our hearts, confuses our minds, and tarnishes our consciences. Prayer then is both a task and a burden. We cannot altogether give it up. We feel we ought to pray, yet know not how. Sometimes, at this stage of our

experience, the world creeps into our hearts to an amazing degree; and shall I be saying too much if I say that our hearts too frequently get entangled with the world, and we are put to our wit's end to discover any distinguishing marks of grace at all in our hearts, or to perceive any spirituality in our minds? This brings on a very unhealthy state of soul. There is much felt darkness, coldness, and deadness; and by a careful perusal of our state, and bringing our minutest matters to the test of God's Word, we find that the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. And it is here we learn by painful experience that from the crown of our head to the sole of our feet there is no soundness, but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.

Thus we are led into a variety of things, and most solemn thoughts possess the poor mind lest after all we have embraced the wrong religion. "O!" says the soul, "what a solemn thing it will be when I come to the end of my journey to find that the root of the matter is not in me! O! and if my name should be left out when God writeth up the people! How shall I bear this piercing thought?" says the soul. Here, then, the poor sinner is tried above measure. He tries to pray, but he cannot. He tries to get into God's Word, but it is barred against him. Nor can he sing any of the songs of Zion, for his heart is out of tune, and his harp upon the willows. He feels unfit for everything and everybody. He feels much too miserable for the company of God's people; yea, he dare not come near them, lest they should see at once what a poor, worldly-minded wretch he is; and as for the world, he hates it with a real hatred, inwardly wishing he could live outside the world, so as never to be again overcome by it; for, says the poor, dejected sinner, the world is so alluring, so bewitching, so enchanting and enticing, that it has sadly overcome me. It has now barred out my soul from God, yea, from the living God. O that I could have stood my ground as a Christian, and as a godly man, and not have yielded to the temptation of the enemy! But I, wretched sinner, was powerless. I had no strength of nature to withstand him. He was stronger than I, hence he prevailed.

Here it is the man feels acutely the hidings of the Lord's face. His mind is filled with gloom, his heart is over-charged, and his soul is full of heaviness and sorrow. He mourns in secret; he maketh a noise in his soul. He is minished and brought very low, through oppression, affliction, and sorrow. He thinks he is tried above many, and he concludes that his path is one never trod by mortal man before. If he goes abroad, he hangs down his head like a bulrush; and if he goes to the house of God, he sitteth alone in silence, and, as the hymn says,

"His bones keep waxing old,
By reason of his groans."

Moreover, he painfully learns that he is a dying man, and he knows not but the next opening grave may yawn for him. But, says he, how can I expect to be saved in this fearful state? This,

I fear, is the state of the non-elect; and as for my hope, I greatly fear it is the hope of the hypocrite, whom God hath appointed unto wrath and eternal misery.

This, then, is a pathway of trials; and this poor sinner is a tried son or daughter of the Lord Almighty; and he is a citizen of Zion; and it is such as these my soul has a great love unto. I know there are many in this our day who cry out strongly against such an experience as this, and treat such things with contempt. But I know, from the experience of God's chosen saints in both the Old and the New Testament, and from what the Holy Ghost has taught my own soul, that it is the way to heaven; and I will go so far as to say it is the only way. The man in business who has a spark of divine grace in his soul; the man who works at the bench or in the factory; the labouring man in the field; and those of the toiling millions who have to wait upon "His grace," or "My lord," or upon any of the upper ten thousand; yea, and all who have ever known the plague of their hearts, and have ever tasted of the Lord's mercy, who are exposed in their daily avocations to an ungodly world, and come in contact with wicked men, and with the glitter and glare of an alluring world, know to their sorrow that they too often get tripped up by the heels, overcome by the world, and too frequently get entangled in the meshes of the enemy's net. I know some are ready to say that such persons do not live up to their privileges. Be it so; but, blessed be God, we live up to them in a sweet way and manner when the dear Lord the Lamb lives precious in our hearts; and it is then we can and do live a life of faith upon him.

But what are the inmost feelings of the souls, and the strong desires of the hearts, of these poor things who have been overcome, allured, and have wandered into the wilderness in a solitary way, and can find no city to dwell in? Let us try and find out, if we can.

Now, the man of God who has had much to do with the world, with the deceitfulness of his own heart, and with ungodly men, will be taught his own utter helplessness and inability to stand against any enemy or any temptation. Hence he will cry to the Lord mightily—that is, with groans and sighs, and bitter tears—that the Lord will give him strength to enable him to withstand all the wiles of the devil. If he be a business man, how he will importune, implore, and beseech the great Father of all mercies to go with him by his most blessed Spirit into the world, and teach him what to say to the ungodly, and how to say it in the transactions of business. And he begs earnestly of the Lord that he will plant a godly fear in his heart, that he may buy and sell, and transact all his business, as in the fear of God; for he well knows that if he is left to himself he will be sure to make some grievous mistake. Hence his cry is, "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe!" The godly man at the bench or in the factory will, under the Spirit's teachings, plead before the Lord

before he sets out for the day amongst his ungodly companions for a crumb of his sweet mercy to rest upon his soul; yea, he will say, "Do, dear Lord, give me a word to-day upon which my soul can hope, and keep me much in thy fear all the day long, that I may not be drawn away by the ungodly to do evil." Then the servant, who is called upon to wait upon his master, and the maid upon her mistress, I mean those in whose hearts the good Lord has put his fear and love, these poor things will have much wrestling and pleading with the Lord that he by his Holy Spirit will make them strictly honest and upright in their various capacities, and especially keep them from taking what does not belong to them. Moreover, their great desire will be that the Holy Ghost may dwell richly in their hearts, that they may honourably serve their employers in the fear of God; and further, they will earnestly beg of the Lord that he will make his holy word a lamp to their feet and a light to their path throughout all the changing scenes of their mortal life. Also the godly labourer in the field, and others who have to earn their very scanty pittance by the sweat of their brow, who are at one time bronzed by the sun, and at another time almost pierced by severe frost and snow, and who have to stand the penetrating influence of a cutting east wind from morn to night, these poor things are men of prayer; and the reason is because they have much to pray for. But there is comfort in the Word of God for them, for it is said, "Blessed are the poor; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." And the dear Redeemer, when pleading before his Father, exclaimed, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Again, he tells us that the Father hath chosen the poor of this world rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom. How these sweet and telling portions of the Word of God sometimes stop the poor toiling labourer from complaining at his hard lot; and often they bring comfort and consolation into his poor soul.

(To be concluded.)

THY VISITATION HATH PRESERVED MY SPIRIT.

Dear Friend,—I hope you will pardon me for taking the liberty of writing to you; but as the words—"Declare his doings among the people" rest with weight upon my mind, I have ventured to do so.

About two o'clock this morning, I was awakened by hearing, as it seemed to me, a loud noise, as if some one was knocking at the door. I listened, expecting to hear it repeated, but did not hear it again. I said, "What is it, Lord? What is it, Lord?" Soon afterwards these words were spoken, the lines of the hymn coming powerfully to my mind:

“No music's like thy charming name,
Nor half so sweet can be.”

My soul pondered these words till a blessed gracious melting power flowed into it, carrying the heart's desires and affections towards the blessed Jesus. The feelings of my mind were brought to enter into the precious saying, “None but Christ! none but Christ!” I felt I did not want any but Him. I lay blessedly awake, in my soul inwardly talking to the Lord, humbly confessing my sins, and asking him to give me a word to satisfy my soul I was in a pardoned state before him. The words then came into my mind: “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.” The heart-softening power of the blessed Spirit of Christ prompted me to be fervent and rather bold in asking favours of the great God. Yet I am sure it was not a presumptuous boldness, but caused by my soul being under his mighty humbling hand.

While under this soul-refreshing visit, it came into my mind that there were three Divine Persons in the Holy and ever-blessed Trinity; and it seemed to me as if the Father's gracious presence was very near to my soul; and I felt such an openness of heart before him while I used the language of the prodigal son, “Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.” O how my poor yielding heart was drawn to him as “the Father of mercies!” I am quite sure that it is only under the gracious visits and teaching of the Holy Ghost that the blessed truths of the Bible are known savingly. I felt my confessions to the Father of mercies were acceptable in his sight, and could thank and praise him for his great mercies to me, an unworthy sinner. I never felt any love to the Lord while wilfully committing sin, but I have felt a love to him when truly and willingly confessing it.

It then came into my mind to speak to God's dear Son. And O! when I began doing so, such a sense of my baseness and sins rested upon my heart, and how he had suffered for them out of love to my soul, and to redeem me from them. He appeared to be near my soul, not in anger, but in pity, sympathy, and power, which kept up quite a precious heart-warmth within. I felt there was a meaning in the words: “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.”

It then came into my mind about the Holy Ghost, and how I had grieved him, and had been so ungrateful to him for what he had done in my soul. Here was I, a poor hell-deserving sinner, telling the great *JEHOVAH* all I could think of about my sins baseness, backslidings, and ingratitude; and here was the dear Lord pouring in his goodness, Word, and blessing into my soul, so as to “overcome and win my heart.” My poor soul was now full, and my eyes overflowing with tears. I had hard work to refrain from breaking out aloud. Fear of waking others in the house caused me to refrain therefrom.

After speaking in my heart to the Holy Ghost, in a way I am

sure he approved of, it came into my mind about Ruth gleaning in the field of Boaz. I felt I was led into the fruitful field of the gospel Boaz, the Lord Jesus Christ; and was enabled by the Holy Ghost to glean therefrom that which did indeed strengthen my heart. "None but Christ! None but Christ!" is the quickened soul's food.

The fire was then kept burning by the words being brought to my mind (Zech. iv. 7): "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain; and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it!" Something secret within seemed to tell me that God would make these words good in my experience, and that all the great mountains of my sins, guilt, darkness, and misery would be removed by my great Zerubbabel, and that through him I should triumph at last, shouting, "Grace, grace unto it."

As my feelings subsided a little, the 23rd psalm came to my mind, and it repeated itself in my heart as if it was for me. He was leading me beside the still waters, restoring my soul, spreading a table before me, and following me with his goodness and mercy.

While thus musing, it came to my mind about my present position, which is rather an outcast one; but I soon said that the Lord knew all about it; and all I could do was feelingly and willingly to fall into his ever-wise, powerful, and gracious hands. This is a safe place, and the only one. I felt willing for him to do what he chose with me. Ah! it is the felt blessing of the Lord that produces true resignation to his will.

The clock now struck three. How glad I was to be kept so nicely awake for one hour by Him who never slumbers nor sleeps! I have not had such an hour before for years. I feel these are clearing-up, clearing-out, refreshing, favoured, confirming times, when the true knowledge of the Lord and his words, works, and ways are made known to the soul in some small degree. I feel these things are intended not for my soul to rest in, but as encouragements for me to be looking unto Jesus only.

I cannot relate all that passed through my mind on the occasion, but from it I do know this,—that God is good, gracious, and merciful; that Jesus is the real Friend of real sinners. One found not at big dinners, but in hard-up times, and that no real profit can come to a sinner's soul but by the gracious inflowings of the Holy Ghost.

O to be a God-pardoned sinner! What a high favour! And all for Christ's sake, and through his precious blood.

Such new life flowed into my heart, that led to the service of thankfulness and praise: "Bless the Lord, O my soul!"

And now, dear friend, I feel very timid about sending you this, knowing how weak my heart is. But I know you will not be offended at hearing of the Saviour's lovingkindness to a poor unworthy sinner.

I hope you are well, and that the Lord will richly supply you

with the useful and harmless grace of patience. I am sure you need it in the trying position you occupy.

I remain, yours faithfully,

99, New Street, Ashford, Feb. 12th, 1880.

F. FARVIS.

Mr. Hazlerigg.

In a subsequent letter friend Farvis has informed us that he is no longer in the same "rather outcast" position; having received an invitation from the friends at Basingstoke to become their settled minister. We are glad of this, and hope the Lord will keep him by his power, and make him truly useful. Unless the Lord hold the stars in his right hand, they fall to the earth;—in other words, unless the Lord uphold his ministers, as Newton writes,

"Ambition, pleasures, praise, or gain
Debase the shepherds' views."

A DEBTOR TO MERCY ALONE.

"Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, my Father, thou art the guide of my youth?"—JER. III. 4.

Dear Mr. Editor,—In these days, when error aboundeth, and the love of many waxeth cold; when the work of the Holy Spirit is set at nought, and a gospel is preached by many which is no gospel, being of the flesh and of the will of man; it behoves those whom the Spirit hath quickened to speak out boldly of the things which have been given to them of God; and if entrusted with only one talent, not to wrap it up and hide it away in the napkin of modesty or nervousness.

During a pilgrimage of 20 years it has been my lot to experience many tossings to and fro. My position during this period appears to myself to have been somewhat similar to that of a vessel riding at anchor in a gale; at one time on the crest of the billows; then plunging into the foam, the waves surging around but not engulfing me; and though always in motion, yet ever kept to the same spot, being held firmly by the anchor of hope in Him who is within the vail. I have often been driven by the violent winds of temptations, or drifted by the insidious current of my own heart's lust to the extreme length of my cable; but the omnipotent voice of Him who ruleth the winds and waves hath said, Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther. And when the Holy Spirit, as the Remembrancer, enables me to take a retrospective view of all the way the Lord my God hath led me during these 20 years; how he hath edged me in on every side; made darkness light, and crooked things straight; taught me his truth, one branch after another, as I was able to bear it; brought my soul out of prison, and set my feet in a large room, I am fairly lost in wonder, love, and praise. It seems indeed marvellous in my eyes; and thinking a brief and simple account of the Lord's calling of me out from darkness into light, and of the path by which he has since been pleased to lead me, might, by the application of the Spirit, be made useful in some way or other to some

poor perplexed child of God, I have been induced to put it upon paper. O may that same Spirit so guide my pen that what I write may redound to the praise and glory of a Triune Jehovah, and the comfort and spiritual profit of some of his poor, tried, tempted, and afflicted people.

In July, 1857, when 18 years of age, I embarked with my regiment for the East Indies, to take part in stemming the tide of the great Indian Mutiny. My state at this time might be accurately described in the words of the apostle: Walking as other Gentiles walk, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in me, because of the blindness of my heart. Those who are at all acquainted with the life led by soldiers in most garrison towns will not require any further description when I state that I was one of the most reckless and abandoned among my fellowsoldiers. I was eager to be foremost in every species of wickedness and abomination; and though constantly exposed to danger, and liable any moment to be hurled out of this world by a violent death, nothing could induce me to look forward to or believe in another. Who that had known me at this time would have thought it at all probable that our God, who is rich in mercy, and free in the sovereign manner in which he dispenses it, was about to manifest his power and goodness on such a wretch as me, and to make me a monument of his goodness, and a vessel of mercy which should hereafter show forth his praise. Oh! when I am led to trace on memory's page what I once was, and what great things the Lord hath done for me and shown to me, how humbled do I feel before him! The remembrance of his lovingkindness melteth my heart, and brings me in gratitude, love, and abasement of spirit into the dust before him. O! who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, transgression, and sin?

In the summer of 1859, a comrade whose eyes the Lord had opened, requested me to accompany him to the Baptist chapel. Having nothing particular on hand, and being naturally of a kindly disposition, I consented, thinking it would give him pleasure; but I afterwards bitterly repented it, as I came away very uncomfortable. The words the Lord gave that servant were as nails driven home with power. They were to me piercing arrows, penetrating to the joints and marrow. About this time, though I cannot recollect by what means, I became possessed of James's "Anxious Enquirer" after salvation. O the anguish of soul, as I read page after page! And though I could read my condemnation in every line, I was held to it as by an invisible hand. I could not let it rest until I had read it to the end; but the Lord alone knows what it cost me to do so. Now and then I would close the book; and, covering my head with the bed clothes, would groan and moan with anguish. Great was the astonishment of my comrades as they beheld my woeful plight; and after trying in vain to rally me by their vain conversation, declared to one another their belief that I had turned "new-light."

It now came to my turn to go on duty at the Fort, which our companies occupied for a month by turns. It was a great fortress, built by Akbar, and covered several acres of ground, with subterranean passages running in all directions beneath it. I shall never forget this period of my life, if I live for a century; for here the Lord showed me by terrible things in righteousness what an evil and bitter thing it is to sin against him. I trembled as I lay in bed, dreading to go to sleep, lest I should awake up in the bottomless pit. As soon as I had answered my name at roll-call, I would be off into those underground passages, penetrating as far as I could to get as far as possible from every human eye. I could now point out the very nooks and corners where I used to kneel, and make the vaulted arches ring with my groans and cries of distress; while the bats, aroused from their slumbers, flitted about me by scores in fright and bewilderment at such unwonted sounds disturbing the silence of their dark and musty abodes. The Spirit of the Lord did indeed convince me of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. I could feel, with the psalmist, "My sin is ever before me." The law of God I was constrained to pronounce holy, just, and good; but I found it exceeding broad, reaching to the very thoughts and intents of the heart. I felt condemned by it totally, and could see no loophole of escape. The sound rang continually in my ears: "For the Lord will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing." In vain for me did the natural sun clothe the earth with beauty. In my state of mind the heavens might have been brass, and the trees and flowers of a dead leaden hue. I was solely occupied with one subject,—the fearful looking-for of judgment and indignation which should overtake the ungodly.

I continued in this state about three months, when our heavenly Father, by the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, was pleased to reveal his Son in me. He showed me that help was laid upon One that was mighty, who had become Surety for me, and who bare my sins in his own body on the tree. My feelings, when the light of the Spirit showed this to my mind, were simply indescribable. My soul was in raptures. In comparison to my previous state, it was as heaven to hell. I have walked about for hours without feeling the ground, my soul in an ecstasy, longing to fly away to my adorable Redeemer. The worldling or carnal professor may curl the lip, and say such language is exaggerated; but those who know what such soul-travail is, who have been brought through deep waters, and have experienced a rich deliverance, know well that all words are utterly inadequate to express the intensity of their feelings, either with regard to their agony or of their subsequent joy. I experienced a peace of mind which passeth understanding, feeling that I was reconciled to the Father by the death of the Son; and that, being united unto Christ by faith, I should not come into condemnation, but had passed from death unto life.

And now, having tasted of the lovingkindness of the Lord, and

been made a partaker of the unsearchable riches of Christ, I was spoiled for the world, and was constrained to come out, and be separate; and, like Moses, chose rather to suffer affliction with the children of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. I therefore, in the ordinance of believers' baptism, made a public profession of my faith in the Lord Jesus. Many of my scoffing comrades came for the purpose, as they said, of seeing me dipped; but what were their scoffs, their jeers, and their taunting ridicule to me now? Was I not redeemed by the precious blood of Christ? Had not the Holy Spirit applied that peace-speaking blood to my heart and conscience, and revealed the glorious Person of Jesus to my soul as the Chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely? They might call me a fanatical new-light, and a raving lunatic; but none of these things moved me. My Beloved was mine, and I was his; and this was a joy that no man could take from me. Many were the petty persecutions to which I was subjected; the most virulent of my persecutors being the pay-sergeant of my company, who, I believe, hated me with a perfect hatred, simply for the love I bore to the Lord Jesus. The position in which Providence had placed him enabled him often to manifest it, much to my discomfort; and I could often say, with one of old, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen upon me." I will give an instance out of many. As we were about to change stations, we had orders to go to the pay-sergeant's room for our new summer clothing. I went three times for mine, but failed to get it. He told me several of the things were packed up, and mine were very likely with them; so I must wait until I got to the next station. There also I failed to get them; and when I threatened to report the matter to the captain, he made me a prisoner; and when before the commanding officer, he said I had lost my clothes through my own neglect, and been very insolent. The officer believed him, and ordered me to pay for a new suit of clothes, and said it was only on account of my previous good conduct that he did not give me a severe punishment. I had also placed several pounds in the Savings' bank, which should have been entered every month into my account-book, but which for several months he failed to enter. Knowing the character of the man, and greatly distrusting him, it was laid upon my mind to go to him one morning, and insist upon having it entered in my book. I threatened to go straight off to the captain, unless it was done. He looked at me as though he could slay me; but seeing I was determined, he at last entered the amount. And now, reader, mark well! This was in the morning. In the afternoon he was out playing cricket, when he was seized with cramp, taken to the hospital, and in a few hours the cholera had done its work, and he was a corpse. When his books were examined, it was found that several pounds which he had received to place in the Savings' bank had not been forwarded. Where he had entered the amounts in the men's books,

the captain had to make up the amount; but where this was not done, the men themselves had to be the losers. Had I not acted as I was led to do that morning, I should have been one of the sufferers. The thought of these things deeply impressed my mind; and as we returned from laying his body in the ground I could not help mentally exclaiming, "The Lord, who delivered me out of the mouth of the lion and out of the paw of the bear, hath also delivered me out of the hand of this Philistine." "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

How many are the mercies, how manifold the blessings, I have received at the Lord's hands, which soon were buried in forgetfulness! What dangers I have passed through, temporal and spiritual! what narrow escapes from death, in the dust and smoke of battle, from the noisome pestilence, and from cruel and treacherous foes, and from no less treacherous pretended friends! How dark has been my mind at times respecting eternal truths! How perplexing my path! how bewildered my judgment, from surrounding circumstances! When I think of the dulness and stupidity I manifested, the darkness and ignorance of my heart, and the perversity of my rebellious will, my ingratitude, self-pity, and repining at thy dispensations, O Lord, and the inclination I showed to murmur because of the way; and contrast these with thy wondrous patience, long-suffering, and forbearance towards me, I deeply feel like one of old: Lord, I was as a beast before thee. My soul is often filled with shame; and if I am not consumed, it is because thou art God, and not man, and because thy compassions fail not.

When on the North-western frontiers of India, I have sometimes climbed the slopes of the mountain. When setting out on my journey, I could clearly see the end at which I aimed. The top of the height was in full view; but as I advanced, I soon lost sight of it, and became entangled in the thorns and brambles of the thick underwood. Now and then I would emerge at prominent points, whence the goal again became visible. Then again it would become lost in the darkness and intricacy of the thickly-wooded slopes. As I neared the top, I could at times get a view of part of the way by which I had ascended; how often and far I had strayed from the direct line, and what unnecessary labour I had often entailed upon myself by my wanderings. But when I reached the summit, I could see the whole of the way from the bottom to the top; could trace its various windings, see the precipices over which I had narrowly escaped toppling, and the chasms into which I had been nearly plunging.

In spiritual things, my path has been somewhat similar. When the Holy Spirit testified unto me of Jesus, at the time of my first love, in the warmth and joy of my espousals, I was enabled by faith to see clearly the end of my journey, the kingdom of my inheritance. I thought it would always be so. "My

mountain stood strong;" and in my childlike ignorance I thought it would "never be moved." When any of my fellow-pilgrims, under the hidings of the Lord's face, were filled with fear and despondency lest they should perish by the way, I fear me they found in me a Job's comforter. I could not understand their case, and thought something must be wrong with them; for I felt no dangers could appal me, no foes affright. Like David, I could run through a host, or leap over a wall, for I had now been favoured with great love and liberty for several months. Spiritual pride thus began to creep in, and developed rapidly. The Lord saw this. He could trace the first bubblings of this bitter spring; and knowing what fed and nourished it, in his gracious love and infinite wisdom he saw it was time I was weaned from the breast. He therefore varied his dispensation towards me, and withdrew the light of his countenance. This filled me with dismay, and I fretted under it with the peevishness of a weaned child. The enemy also came on me like a flood, and the archers shot sore at me. Where was now my confidence? Could I dare to speak to my comrades again of the blessedness of rejoicing in Jesus? Surely I could see, the enemy suggested, it was all a sham and a delusion, so had better give it up, think no more about such matters, and enjoy myself as I used to do.

These are the kind of suggestions Satan poured into my mind; but he went too fast and too far. With all his malice and subtilty, he has never been able to this day to prevail upon me to quite believe I had been deluded in the experience I had passed through. There was a divine reality about it which he could not subvert. Bless the God of all goodness for having wrought it so deeply into my soul. Nevertheless, my heart was filled with bitterness. How had the fine gold become dim, and light, and joy, and peace given place to darkness, sorrow, and trouble! Wave rolled upon wave, till it seemed as though all his billows were passing over me. I must now, too, be deprived of the ordinary means of grace, the ministration of his word, and the ordinances of his house. We changed stations, and I had to leave the home of my second birth. This was a grievous trial to me. I felt that here my best friends, my kindred, dwelt. This ancient Indian town, notwithstanding its position in the midst of a heathen and idolatrous country, was endeared to my affections beyond any spot on this beautiful earth. It was a very Bethel to me; for here I had met with the God of Israel, and, like Jacob, had wrestled mightily and prevailed.

Another trial awaited me. The enemy soon sowed dissension in the ranks of our little band. One or two joined themselves to the Wesleyans, one or two went over to the Church, and some went back to the world. I was in a great strait. Go forward I could not; go back to the world I dare not. I had no human friend of a kindred spirit to advise or counsel me; so I laid the matter before the Lord, and begged him to lead me aright, and to uphold me in my goings. I came to the resolution that I

would walk alone; and, without making any mention of religion to my comrades, that I would keep aloof from their vanities. But, alas! there was too much of self and pride about this step to make it acceptable to the Lord. This cursed self-ability was for years my greatest bane. I *would* do this, and I *would* do the other. The sweet and precious doctrines of grace were holden from mine eyes. The total depravity of human nature through the fall of Adam; the love of God the Father in choosing a people to himself, and placing them in covenant purpose in his Son Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world; Christ undertaking on their behalf to take upon him human nature, and to fulfil the law's demands by a perfect obedience, and satisfy the requirements of justice by suffering the punishment due to their sins; and the blessed and Eternal Spirit's part in the covenant transaction in ratifying it, and engaging to quicken into divine life every member of the elect body of Christ, to abide with them as the Spirit of adoption, of light, and of consolation, to overcome all opposition, and never leave them finally until they were brought home to glory; man's utter helplessness in all spiritual matters, and his total inability to think even one good thought without the power of this blessed Spirit; these truths, though running through the Scriptures of truth like a golden thread, and though I might have had some confused notion of them in my head, had never yet been received from the Spirit into my heart. I was as the ass or mule, which have no understanding, and had to be kept in with bit and bridle.

But the Lord knew how to bend my stubborn will, to bring down my stout heart, and lay me in empty nothingness at his feet; and then to raise me from my low estate, to set my feet upon the rock, and establish my goings, and to cause these gracious doctrines to be exceedingly sweet and precious to my soul; streams of consolation flowing from them when I have been under many a trial.

(*To be concluded.*)

THEY say the times are very dark; they seem so to us. Clouds and darkness are about his throne; but light will in due time shine out. He is carrying on his work by a straight line. If you or I were engaged in a plan which we had much at heart, we would not suffer anything to hinder our purpose, if we could prevent it; much less will He who has all power in heaven and on earth. Even the wrath of his enemies shall praise him; they are permitted to do nothing but what shall be found subservient to his design. Not only was Cyrus his servant, but Pharaoh and Sennacherib likewise; they sought their own will and glory, but promoted his. . . . We may leave all in his hands safely; yet there is a part for us to act. . . . Perhaps the steps he sees fit to take may touch his own people in their temporal concerns; but his glory ought to be the dearest object of their souls. It is better we should suffer a little, and for a little while, than that his enemies should triumph. The love of self and the present world makes us terribly afraid when anything seems to threaten our ease and prosperity; but what are these when compared with the glory of our Lord and the welfare of precious souls?—*John Newton, July 18, 1795.*

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

“Whilst the long cloud of witnesses Shows the same path to heaven.”

My dear afflicted Friend,—As it is only a few lines that my little spare time will admit of my sending you, I will lose neither time nor space of paper in mere formalities. Let me then at once give you an extract from a letter of good John Newton, which much cheered and revived my poor depressed heart the other day. Mr. Newton, in writing to a friend, writes as follows:

“You say, ‘It never came with power and life to my soul that he died for me.’ If you mean that you never had any extraordinary sudden manifestation, something like a vision, or a voice from heaven confirming it to you, I can say the same. But I know he died for sinners, and I know I am a sinner. I know he invites sinners that are ready to perish; I am such a one. I know, upon his own invitation, I have committed myself to him; and I know by the effects that he has been with me hitherto, otherwise I should have been an apostate long ago. And therefore I know that he died for me; for, had he been pleased to kill me, as he justly might have done, he would not have shown me such things as these.

“‘If I must perish, would the Lord
Have taught my heart to love his Word?
Would he have given me eyes to see
My danger and my remedy?
Reveal’d his Name, and bid me pray,
Had he resolv’d to say me nay?’

I know that I am a child, because he teaches me to say, Abba, Father! I know that I am his, because he has enabled me to choose him for mine; for such a choice and desire could never have taken place in my heart, if he had not placed it there himself. By nature I was too blind to know him, too proud to trust him, too obstinate to serve him, too base-minded to love him. The enmity I was filled with against his government, righteousness, and grace was too strong to be subdued by any power but his own. The love I bear him is but a faint and feeble spark, but it is an emanation from himself; he kindled it, and he keeps it alive; and because it is his work, I trust many waters shall not quench it.”

Thus wrote John Newton, and I fancy, dear friend, the extract rather, and perhaps very much, meets your case. I assure you there is not a desponding fear expressed in your very spiritual and profitable letter, which I have not known in the most painful way since I saw you. Like yourself, my way has been tribulatory in the extreme, and continues to be so. I am a wounded man until I die, and my wound is in my deepest heart's affection. Still, I wish with meekness to say, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” And I think, why should I wish my beloved darling back to this sin-stained, groaning creation? And yet, because it is a sin-stained, groaning world, a voice of *nature* cries within me for the companion-

ship, converse, and pleasant greetings of the days gone by. The enemy, too, has of late thrust at me with side and shoulder. Deep has cried unto deep. The deep of Satan's devices, and the awful deep of felt darkness, and the deep of dreadful unbelief, have all cried out together; and the floods of great waters have seemed as if they would threaten my destruction. It was whilst in an experience of this kind that the extract I have written out from Newton really gave me a lift, and particularly the latter part of it; and I repeat, dear brother, that I fancy it applies to you as much as myself. Neither you nor I may be able to go as far as Newton, and say, "I know that I am his." But certainly you cannot deny but what there is in your heart a faint spark of love to Jesus; and you cannot deny that you have known times and seasons when that spark has kindled up, under the blessed Spirit's breathings upon you, and made you feel the motions of divine love too strongly to dare to doubt the reality of the same. And I am at rest on the last *point* in the extract, viz., that the tiniest spark of real genuine love to the Lord Jesus is an emanation from himself.

I wish I could have an hour's chat on the best things with you; but I cannot. Kindly remember me with sincere Christian love to your mother and sister; also to friend Guy, and any other friends.

This is but a poor scribble, but perhaps better to you than nothing. Accept it as a proof of my not being able to forget you.

Yours affectionately,

Devizes, Feb. 3rd.

C. HEMINGTON.

My dear Friends,—I received the card of your mother's death, but was not surprised, as I thought, when I was last at L., that she was likely to go very suddenly. This, I should judge, was the case. Was there anything more manifested in her conversation? I had some hope there might be before she was taken. I like the texts you have put on the card. They will afford me something to press upon the minds of those who are concerned in the visitation God has brought upon you. This event will remind you of the death of your dear father, as now breach upon breach has been made upon you as a family. This makes those words more personally important: "Be ye therefore ready also." None of us can be exempt from death, so we ought not to be careless or undecided, but to make it our chief concern, our personal work, to consider whether we are ready. Remember, no one can be ready who is out of Christ. Our poet says truly,

"Out of Christ, almighty power
Can do nothing but devour."

And the Word saith, "If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature," gathered out of an ungodly world, gathered to the truth of Christ, and into the ways of Christ, and to the people of Christ; and brought to hunger, pant, and breathe after Christ. Such souls will say, "Give me Christ, or else I die."

The uncertainty of life, and the certainty of death, will act as a spur to quicken such souls in seeking the Lord, and calling upon his Name. May it do so for all your souls. Whatever you feel to want, God hath encouraged you to ask for it, in Christ's Name. "Seek," he says, "and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

My dear friend has very delicate health, which will make this affliction seem the heavier; but God can give strength according to your day. I know what seeking souls have to feel and labour under, and how often they are ready to faint. The Word saith, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." And of Christ it is said that, "being in an agony, he prayed the more earnestly."

The Scriptures encourage us also to a more diligent seeking of his face, and to a calling upon him with all the heart. The Lord draw you of the family that are left to himself in holiness and righteousness, that you may glorify him upon earth.

How are the friends at L.? If ever I should come again, no doubt I should find others gone besides your poor mother; for it is a dying world we live in. Will you give the enclosed note to —, and also present my love to your brother and family, one of whose sons I believe I shall find at Petworth the next time I go. Do give my love to all friends at L.; and believe me

Your ever affectionate Friend in the truth of Christ,

Chapel House, Cranleigh, Dec., 1862.

GEO. HOLDEN.

Dear Friends,—Herewith I return your books. The perusal of them has afforded me both pleasure and consolation; pleasure in the review of the various dealings of God with his church in times past, and consolation in a present view of the security and stability of his covenant to his own people, amidst all the convulsions, plagues, and winds of error and delusion which are coming—nay, indeed, already have come—to try those who dwell upon the earth. God has said that the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. So that we see man can go no further than permitted of God, and that out of the evil which attends trouble and persecution God brings good to his own people, and praise to his own Name. We are told in God's Word that the kingdom shall be obtained by flatteries. Is not this to be seen in almost every act and motion of the Man of sin? but particularly in that liberality of sentiment manifesting itself in the members of the Church of Rome, which liberality seems to have extended to the head of influence itself—the new Pope, who, it is said, intends to abolish the celibacy of the priesthood.

There is one thing in the present day I lament over much; and that is, that there is so little communion among the saints of God. We are told to "exhort one another, and so much the

more as we see the day approaching." But in this respect Satan has got a sad advantage over us; and this I have seen coming on for some years, till by feuds and heartburnings he has almost divided the children of God, and has partly accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people; for the power they possess lies very much in unity. When two on earth are agreed as touching anything, it shall be done unto them. But where is this unity? Broken up. So then, though the privilege of meeting together, and hearing God's Word, is still granted unto us, and the powers of earth protect us, still the power which the church has when she appears terrible as an army with banners, is gone; and the few good things which remain in her are ready to die. But O! to have a hope that we are amongst the few names in Sardis is worth a thousand worlds. I find daily the greatest difficulty I have to encounter is to keep a clean garment in this evil day. But, thanks be to God, who has declared that Christ is made unto us both wisdom and righteousness. Therefore it is to him I would look for wisdom to direct me in my way, and for righteousness wherein to appear before him.

O may God grant that both you and I may be found in him, so that when he appears we may meet him with joy; and may he give unto us his grace, and enable us to walk before him in truth and soberness amidst a crooked and perverse generation.

Yours in the bonds of the covenant,

Sheepshead, May 29th, 1829.

THOS. BARKER.

My dear Friend,—I am much the same as when you were here. Sometimes my cough is more troublesome. The disease in the throat is painful. At times I fear I shall not come to Abingdon again; and sometimes I hope that I may. Sanctified afflictions are great mercies, but not pleasing to the flesh. A lingering illness is a heavy cross. It is one thing to be in a furnace, and it is another to look on. The lookers on do not prosper in soul like the afflicted. Many are envied for their worldly prosperity; but not for their soul-prosperity if in a furnace. The flesh dislikes such a path, and seeks ease. If we are to be in heaven, we must be made fit. There is no smooth and easy path to glory. The real children of God must be followers of the Lamb.

I have learnt some profitable lessons in this school of affliction. When in the fire we find what dross we have. What a very great mercy to know anything about a divine calling, and for the Spirit of God to witness with our spirits that we are the children of God, and also to know that all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose.

Mr. Young, of Brinkworth, was here last Lord's day. The friends heard him well in prayer, and he was blessed in his soul. I have not been to chapel since you were here on the 15th of November. I should consider it a great favour to be allowed to preach again. I hope that I should exalt Christ more, and be more faithful. In our right minds we wish to please Christ

when in the pulpit rather than man. Paul testifies faithfully against such pleasers of men, as if they could not be God's servants. We live in a dark day. There is not much real religion in the established Church of England; and there is not much experimental preaching amongst the Dissenters that will encourage and comfort the outcast and needy of the Lord's family. God's people know what path is profitable to ministers if they are to be blessed to their souls. Like people, like priest. What a very great mercy not to be a blind leader of the blind! What a mercy to be out of hell! What a mercy to be well laid in the grave! There is something great in real religion.

May the Lord bless me with patience. May the Lord send ministers to the Abbey chapel whom he will bless. Give my love to friend Hicks, friend Doe, and friend Viner, and all inquiring friends, specially the sick and afflicted. Friend Knill did not come. May the Lord's people pray for me. Yours affectionately,

Oakham, Dec. 11th, 1863.

WM. TIPTAFT.

To Mr. Porter.

My dear and beloved brother George,—It is with the deepest feelings of affection I once more address you, now I am as it were returning from the borders of the grave. I must tell you I have found that sweet verse of the immortal Hart most sweet in my affliction:

“Now the grave's a downy bed,
Embroidered round with blood;
Say not the believer's dead,
He only rests in God.”

And again:

“In Christ his ark he safely rides,
Not wreck'd by death nor sin;
How is it he so fast abides?
The Lord has shut him in.”

I have wept for sorrow of heart, and I have wept for joy of heart in this affliction. I have taken my books in spiritual matters. The ledger has been overhauled, the debt-book cast up, and the balance-sheet prepared; and I find I am in debt ten thousand talents, and have not one mite wherewith to pay, and never, no, never, the least chance of doing so; but I am adding to the vast account daily. All I can do is to fall at his feet, and most sincerely and humbly beg forgiveness and pardon for the enormous sum. And O the superabounding love, mercy, and kindness of our precious Immanuel! He sweetly and powerfully applied these sweet words to my soul: “I have pardoned according to thy word.” I searched for them, but my dear sister Eliza found them in Numbers xiv. 20; and as I found they were spoken by the lips of truth, by Him whose mouth is most sweet, I had a second benefit.

I would say to you, my beloved brother, for his sake cheer up; look forward. That religion we have sought for, travelled for, which our spiritual eyes have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life will do to die by. It is bomb-proof

against the artillery of Satan, the world, and all gainsayers. The last stone shall be brought with shouting, "Grace, grace, unto it;" and I know

"'Tis no wild fancy of our brains."

No; "redeemed, redeemed, by Jesus' blood redeemed." Yes; Satan cannot bear the blood, the precious blood. It cleanses from all sin whenever applied; doubt it not.

You will be pleased to know I have been watched over with the most tender care and sympathy. I bless the Lord, and I thank them; and I bless the Lord for your dear letters. They have been very dear to me, being the precious truth of an unfeigned heart.

But I must conclude, as my head is very weak, and gives out. I have not penned a line to any dear friend since my illness. May the Lord bless you abundantly, my dear brother, with the choicest blessings. The Bible and Hart's hymns are my daily companions. I wish no other books; for

"None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good."

I find Christ is all in all. All's well; mind that. Yea, and it shall be well with the righteous.

"'Tis well when on the mount
We feast on dying love;
And 'tis as well in God's account
When we the furnace prove."

The love of the Father, the love of the Son, the love of the Spirit, be with you both. This is the prayer of
Your loving brother,

Jan. 27th, 1869.

JOHN.

My dear Friend,—Others as well as myself are anxious to know how you are going on. We trust you are improving. We should like to know whether you have any idea how soon you may attempt to preach again.

How we prove the truth of the word, that we soon wither like grass! Our mercy is that afflictions do not spring out of the ground. The very hairs of our heads are all numbered; and "the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." I have no doubt that there have been some searchings of heart, looking over, and weighing up matters, a confessing of some things, and praying for grace to live more and more to him; to have your loins girded and lamp in hand. What a turning things over there is when the Lord lays his hand upon us! How much we let go, and are willing to part with that we were pleased with before! What we thought was real we find will not do for a dying bed. When closely looked to and weighed up, what a little real religion we seem to have! But it is having the reality that brings us to heaven.

I trust you have had some resignation and submission, and some access to the God of all comfort, and that at times you have felt under it—"It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good." O! five minutes at a time of these things is highly prized.

I feel for your dear wife, as well as yourself. Accept my sympathy and good wishes for you both. Yours truly,
Wandle Road, Croydon, Sept. 24th, 1879. F. COVELL.

Obituary.

PETER LEIGH.—On Sunday morning, Feb. 22nd, 1880, Peter Leigh, surgeon, of Liverpool, aged 62 years.

For nearly eleven years he had been afflicted with paralysis of the lower limbs, which was attended, about two years from its commencement, with most intense suffering from spasm of the legs. In this state, as he says, he must soon have succumbed had not the Lord in his great mercy caused one of his physicians to recommend what has since been to him an invaluable remedy.

Writing in the year 1873, he says, "It is nearly four years now since the Lord brought this great and sore affliction upon me. At first I felt it terribly, and fretted, murmured, repined, and rebelled against him greatly. Had any one told me at that time, and I could have realized the fact, that at the end of four years I should be in the helpless state I am, I believe it would have killed me outright. I could not possibly have borne it. What made the affliction so much more grievous was the fact that, for nearly thirty years, I had been more or less in debt, at one time nearly to the extent of £1000. I had only paid the last instalment of the last debt I legally owed twelve days before this affliction seized me. I had a very nice lucrative practice, and could easily have saved several hundreds a year. I thought it was quite time to begin to lay up for my children, as the apostle exhorts in 2 Cor. xii. 14; but here again I had to prove the scripture I have previously quoted. (Isa. lv. 8, 9.)

"It was a long time before I could acquiesce in the Lord's will in sending this affliction. I said, 'Thy will be done,' because I found I could not help it. Do what I would, I could not get rid of this affliction. I found that 'he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with him.' (Job xxiii. 13, 14.)

"After many months' trials, through the Lord's superabounding grace, my soul was brought into sweet harmony with his divine will, so that I could feelingly say, 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted;' and since then, so blessedly has the Lord caused this affliction to work, that I have many times been enabled to bless and praise him for sending it, and would not have been without it for all the world. The Lord has indulged me so much of late—given me such sweet and blessed foretastes of heaven—that I shall see Jesus as he is, and be like him, clothed in a body like unto his glorious body, to spend eternity in his blissful presence—that I have enjoyed a little heaven upon earth. My room has been a Bethel to my soul at such hallowed seasons. I have envied no one upon earth, and would not exchange places with the greatest saint now living. My soul has been so full of glory, that it seemed almost impossible to me that I could enjoy more of the bliss and blessedness of heaven on this side eternity."

Since then, although he has had to pass through much tribulation of various kinds, he has been at times greatly blessed in viewing the wonder-working hand of God in supplying his needs at a time when he was rendered so helpless, and in a way and to an extent he had no

expectation of; so that he has often said, as in the case of Job, the Lord had blessed his latter end much more than his beginning.

Several serious attacks of illness gradually impaired his strength, and for the last six months he suffered much from his chest. Until within a fortnight of his death, he was able to be carried down stairs, and keep up his correspondence, but he then felt the time had come when he must die.

Four days before his death he was greatly blessed whilst his daughter J. was reading to him out of an abridged edition of Elliott's "Horæ Apocalypticæ." An extract from his diary, which he dictated afterwards, will best express his feelings:—

"Feb. 18. Feel very ill in body and very ill in soul. Often wish I was well laid in the necropolis, for I shall get no permanent relief till I get there. My soul is greatly cast down within me at times. J. read some sweet things out of the 'Horæ' for me about the certainty of God's election, which was so sweet that I told her to stop while I gave vent to my feelings in a flood of tears. If those things are true, which I believe they are, I am as certain of being in heaven as though I were there now. It is indeed blessed to know that one's name is written in heaven, through the precious work of the Holy Ghost. I think after all it will be well with me in death, and throughout a never-ending eternity. While these things are all in all to me, they seem to be of little consequence to professors generally. I feel it cause for much thankfulness that the Lord has given me a soft and tender heart, for Satan has been sadly buffeting me of late, causing me to fear my religion was altogether wrong. To feel such carnal mindedness as I have latterly done made me long for death rather than life. In telling —, I was greatly overcome and melted to tears, so that I can sweetly say, as in days past, 'He is come again; He is come again.'"

After this he did not appear to be particularly blessed, though the reading of Hart's hymn on sickness was much enjoyed by him.

For the last thirty-six hours his breathing had become so short and distressing that, though conscious, he was able to say very little, and after turning from one side to the other, peacefully and quietly passed away.

J. D. L.

[The subject of the previous memoir will be known to our friends as the author of several tracts bearing upon the evils of the papacy, which have been advertised from time to time in this periodical, and made, we trust, very useful. He also published a little work containing the earlier stages of his Christian experience.]

DAVID DANN.—On August 20th, 1879, aged 59 years, David Dann, of Bodle Street, Sussex.

He was a deacon of the little church meeting at Mayfield, and worshipping in union with the writer of this account, who feels that the memory of the just is blessed. The church, with their poor imperfect pastor, feel they have had a loss indeed, for he was a man of much prayer; and though he had only a very poor education, the Lord made him very useful amongst us. I feel we have indeed lost one of the main pillars of the church and cause. Many times, when I have been led to experience something of the Lord's goodness in trials, and thus have opened up something further in his precious Word than I had been able to bring forth before, how has he been comforted in thus proving that the Lord heard and answered his poor prayers! Sometimes he would say he had been praying for a long time for that very thing. I could say much more, but I forbear, lest some should think I wish to make a display of myself. I only mention a little to show how great my loss is. Some

look at the most wealthy of a cause as the greatest supporters; but I feel the really poor in spirit are the helpers of the poor preachers, for they often beg that they may be led to come with something for them.

I do not know the exact time of his life when the Lord began the work of grace on his soul; but that he did begin in earnest will be seen by a letter he wrote some time after to an uncle who he hoped knew the truth. In that letter he will speak for himself:—

“Dear Uncle,—As I have the opportunity to convey a few lines, I feel an impression as well as inclination to relate a little how the Lord was pleased to stop me in my mad career, and to

“‘Change my heart, renew my will,
And turn my feet to Zion’s hill.’

Hoping and believing that you know the truth, and have received the truth in your heart in the love of it, and that the truth hath made you free, prompts me on to tell you a little of what God hath done for my soul.

“As I was born in sin, I lived in sin, and delighted in sin. I moved in this my element until the bounds of my habitation were fixed after marriage in my father’s house, where the Lord was pleased to quicken my soul into life, which manifested death in my conscience.

“‘Then guilt and terror seized my breast,
Disturb’d my peace and broke my rest;
The curse pursued me night and day,
And ev’ry comfort fled away;”

for when the commandment came to me, sin revived, and I died to all hope of being saved by that law wherein God appeared to be holy, just, and good, and I unholy, unjust, and evil. Thus he followed me up with such a sight and sense of his justice in his holy law that I had no time to walk in that way of works that often seemeth to be right. For he stripped me of my self-righteousness, and brought down my heart with hard labour, and brought me to his bar to take my trial for eternity. There he brought me in guilty, owing ten thousand talents, and not one mite to pay. This had such an effect on my spirit that I feared to close my eyes in sleep, and had a light burning continually during the night, expecting to see him who goeth about as a roaring lion come visibly to take me to that place where I thought I was doomed to go.

“One night, in the time of this distress, I thought I heard my father call me with as audible a voice as ever I heard in my life, which astonished and agitated my mind; the more so that I felt, like the psalmist, ‘O that I had wings like a dove! Then would I hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.’

“Very shortly afterwards, circumstances took place to remove us back to Mayfield, and my guilt, terror, distress, condemnation, dejection, despair, despondency, and fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation, which I expected would devour me as an adversary, all accompanied me. The first Sunday I went to Heathfield, as at this time there was preaching at Mayfield only once a month on the Sunday, to hear Mr. Norman; but it was not a peace-proclaiming time to my soul, nor did there seem any hope of it.

“The next Sunday I went to Hadlow Down, but the year of release was not come, nor the time for the prisoner to show himself. The following Sunday I went to Mayfield chapel to hear that dear man of God, Mr. Burch. When he had taken his text, he began to speak of the state of a sinner in the fall, and how God brought him to an experimental knowledge of it, and how God became a swift witness against him, and came near to him to judgment; how he arraigned him at his bar; how he stripped him, emptied him, humbled him, and condemned

him, till he fell down, and there was none to help, so that the sinner put his mouth in the dust, if so be there might be hope. Whilst Mr. Burch was preaching these things, the word was like a two-edged sword to me. It cut me up, root and branch, and cut me off; so that I sank in deep mire, where there was no standing, and I thought I should lose my natural life. As Job says, 'My breath is extinct; the grave is ready for me,' so it seemed; for I verily thought that I should be carried a corpse out of the chapel. But Mr. Burch made a pause, and said that if there was a poor soul in the state he had been describing, and the subject of such feelings as he had spoken of, they had got a religion that would stand in death, and last to all eternity. These words raised a hope in the mercy of God in my soul. They opened a door of hope to my soul in the valley of Achor; and when I came out of the chapel, I rejoiced in hope of the glory of God, and felt that assurance that I should live and reign with him who was manifested in the flesh, and who magnified the law, and made it honourable, and became the end of the law for righteousness to me who was brought to believe in him.—Mayfield, Feb. 11th, 1863."

Here our friend ends his account of himself to his uncle. Another friend has given the writer some further particulars, which he remembers hearing him relate as to this period, so I will here give them in his own words:—

"I have heard our friend Dann say that, after he was raised to that sweet hope in the mercy of God, he was soon tempted to believe he was nothing but a Judas. 'Nothing but a Judas' was before him night and day, so that he was troubled to do his work. He was employed on Crabtree Farm, Mayfield, at that time. One day, as he was working, with all the horrors of feeling he was a Judas, it began to rain, and the man he was then working with said he did not want to get wet; so they left off. The other man went home, and he turned into a barn. In one part of the barn there was a quantity of straw, into which he got to hide himself, with all the horrors of soul, thinking he should soon sink where hope could never come. But, to the joy of his heart he had such a faith's view of the Saviour on the cross bleeding for him that, as he said, he could realize by faith his pierced hands and feet. I have heard him say he walked nearly all night blessing and praising the Lord. He wanted everything to praise him for such unspeakable love. How long that comfort lasted I have forgotten, but it was for some length of time. I have heard his wife say that when he came home, he wept for joy at the Lord's goodness, and told her heaven was his home whenever he died."

I will now come to his last days. He had been ailing for a long time; but not so as wholly to give up work until a few months before he died. The same friend, who gave the foregoing account, says he was taken much worse about half-past six in the evening, and wished me to be called in to help make his bed. As soon as I got into the room, he began to fall from his seat. We ran to his assistance. He was quite unconscious for a few moments, so that his wife and myself thought he would soon be gone. When he came to himself a little, he broke out blessing and praising God for his goodness to such a poor sinner. As he was doing this, I said to him, "You will soon cast the crown at his feet." He said, "Yes, yes;" his countenance beaming with delight. When we got him into bed again, he said, "It is gone again;" meaning that flow of heavenly joy. I said to him, "I wish I was like you. I should like to be gone." He spoke out very sharply, "The spirit of Christ is all one thing;" meaning as to the reality of it. He lay very calm, and had no fear of death. He said he could speak much to us if

he had breath. We never heard him murmur; he was so patient through it all. He said he wished to fall into the Lord's hands. He also said, "Dying is hard work." These appear to be nearly the last words he spoke. So gently did he at last pass away, that those about him could scarcely tell when he was gone.

I visited him whilst he was confined to his bed. I never found him in great joy; but like a vessel for the most part lying at anchor, firmly fixed on the Rock of eternal ages. He said one day he had been in company with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. May my last end be like his. I would just say, the last time he was able to get out to hear, he sat in the vestry. He was much blessed that afternoon. It appeared like the anointing to his burial. He said to me when I came down into the vestry, "Now I can live or die, just as the Lord sees fit." I believe he never sank so low after this as he had done. Previously he had often complained of much darkness, which had many times distressed my mind, fearing the fault was in me.

Yours in love,

To the Editor of the "Gospel Standard."

ELI PAGE.

TRUE NOBILITY.

"And their nobles shall be of themselves."—JER. xxx. 21.

ONCE I was blind, but now I see
Saints are the "true nobility;"

All born of heavenly birth;

A special people unto God;
Redeem'd by Jesus' precious blood
From all the lands on earth.

These, by the Trinity foreknown,
Were set apart to be God's own,
Before the world was made;
Preserv'd when in their sins and blood,
And when at enmity with God,
Secured in Christ their Head.

In time of noble spirit born,
Grace does these heirs of God adorn,
Each with a kingly mind;
They seek a kingdom to possess,
Where dwelleth nought but righteousness;
They seek it, and they find.

Earth's honours lightly they esteem;
Christ crucified becomes their theme,
And all besides is dross;
In competition with his blood,
There's nothing valuable or good;
Without him all is loss.

Lord, give me, then, a grateful heart,
That mine should be this better part;
And let me daily see
That though on earth of small esteem,
Yet being Christ's, I am, through Him,
Of true nobility.

A. H.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

AUGUST, 1880.

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

ADOPTING LOVE.

SERMON BY MR. FENNER, JULY 3RD, 1864.

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.”—JNO. III. 1.

To these words the apostle adds: “Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.” So then they who are the sons of God, the sons and daughters of the Almighty, are hidden, as such, from the world. The people of the world know not the life which they have within. Their life is hid with Christ in God. The men of the world are strangers to the food they feed upon; called the hidden manna. They have meat to eat men know not of. The way in which they walk is altogether hidden from the wise and prudent of the world. The company they enjoy is a hidden company to the world. They do indeed at times keep too much company with the world; but when rightly exercised they are out of their element in so doing. As Erskine says, so they feel:

“When I'm in company, I groan,
Because I then am most alone;
Yet in my closest secrecy,
I'm joyful in my company.”

They have heavenly company to converse with; and when enjoying this companionship they are hidden to others. “The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.” Their conversation, as touching the matter of it, they know not of. Even the wise and prudent of the world are strangers to that which the children of God do enjoy. Christ says, in addressing his divine Father, “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight;” revealed them to new-born babes, which are the sons and daughters of the Almighty.

Then the apostle adds: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God.” It must not be considered that the sons spoken of are only so by name, and therefore so called. “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” For in the text just quoted, that

they are sons indeed is plainly stated. "Beloved, *now* are we the sons of God." He then goes on: "And it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Therefore, what we shall be we know not; but we do know that when the Lord shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. There has been much controversy upon this point, and pamphlets have been published upon it, representing that what we shall be may be described by man here below; but here it says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but when he shall appear, we shall be like him." If we knew what the appearance of Christ would be, we should know what we should be; for we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. That sight of him will be transforming. Beholding his glory, we are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory. But at present we know not what is in his glorified humanity. Therefore we know not what we shall be. Those persons, then, who write about it know nothing of the matter.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us!" What manner of love is this which is bestowed by the Father? It is certain that this love which constitutes us the sons, the children of God, is like himself, who is love. "God is love." This love of God is from everlasting, irrespective of anything in these children naturally as occasioning his love. The cause of it is in himself, and from himself. "The Lord did not set his love upon you," says Moses, "and choose you, because ye were more in number than other people, for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you." He loves his children because he will love them. And it is that love which originates in himself towards them that has made them his sons and daughters. This love of God is everlasting love, and this not merely because it will have no end; but it was from everlasting, for it never had a beginning in time in God's heart towards them. There is no beginning in God's nature. He is one eternal day, one eternal now; and there is no rotation of time with him. "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God." Therefore, his love towards the objects of his love never can have had a beginning in time. It was from everlasting; and if we look back, then, where shall we find the beginning? Sometimes he is graciously pleased to tell his people this: "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love," a love of eternity; "therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." So when he speaks it home to their hearts, it is seen to be an ancient love. It is love from all eternity. It is love that never had any call for its movements but in himself. God so loved that he gave his only-begotten Son to work the great work of redemption and salvation for his people.

Their sonship, therefore, may be considered from everlasting, for they were predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, and predestinated to the adoption of sons. But when did

that predestination begin? "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." This love of God is opened up in the covenant engagements of love for the redemption and salvation of his people; and their sonship begins to emerge forth and appear then. But it comes forth to them in their regeneration. They are said to be the sons of God, "which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." And being born of God, they are the children of God, as actually born again.

The love of our text is the love of a father towards his sons. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." It is saving love. It is distinguishing love. "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." There is discrimination and distinction of persons in his love. "Having loved *his own*, he loved them unto the end." From everlasting the objects of his love, to everlasting they will be the objects of his love.

This wonderful love of God to his children is paternal love, for it is adopting love. It is by his love that he has made them children, and his dear Son to be the first-born of all these brethren.

This love of the Father to his children is the same as his love to his dear Son, as their Head and Mediator; for Christ says, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God." So that they are all joint-heirs with Christ. God is their Father as well as his Father, and their God as well as his God. They are his sons, as Christ is the Son of God; only he is a Son in a higher sense, being, as to his divine Person, the only-begotten Son of God. And it is through his sonship that they become the sons of God; and it is through his sonship that the blessed Spirit of God bears witness to theirs. So when he bears witness to the sonship of his people, he bears witness through Christ. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

Now, this love of God exceeds everything; and their being constituted sons and daughters is the highest privilege that can be conferred upon them; for hereby they become heirs. "If children, then heirs." If sons, then heirs. Heirs of what? "Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." So that God is the portion of his people. He is their estate. He is their inheritance. They are said to be heirs of the Almighty. As it is written: "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." Again: "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul." Again: "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance." God, he would say, is my everlasting inheritance. He is his children's heritage; he is their inheritance; he is the portion of his people for ever. Is there any portion to exceed this, to enjoy him for ever? to be a man's All in all through all eternity?

Well, mind, now, amongst these sons of God that are interested

in the love and favour of God are numbered both men and women; for in another verse it says, "Ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." And all alike, if children, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. Not only children and heirs of God, but joint-heirs with Christ. What he is heir to, they are heirs to; and so heirs of all things. For it is said of Christ, "The Lord has given all things into his hand." Therefore, "all things are yours, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." He is their God, as he is Christ's God. All the blessings of God to Christ belong to them. All the love, mercy, and goodness of God to Christ belong to them. "I have declared unto them thy Name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them. It is the self-same love of God to them.

Well, then, may the apostle break out in the words: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Is it not a privilege to be so? Is there any other estate or condition to which such happiness can be attached? Is there anything so enduring? It is a privilege that surpasses all other privileges.

Now, perhaps some of you are ready to say, "O! I wish I was a son of God, a daughter of God. O! I wish I had that blessed adoption." Shall I say, in answer, that all that are partakers of grace have the sufficient evidence to themselves of their sonship? No; for a person may have grace, and give evidence that he has it, and his sonship may thus be plain to another; but not be at all so to himself. For there must be a powerful witness to this matter to satisfy a godly person. "Because ye are sons," mind that, "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts." It is through that blessed Spirit bearing witness to our hearts that we are the sons of God that we are assured of it; and we do not get to this assurance unless the blessed Spirit does so witness to us. "Because ye are sons." A man may be a son, but as yet it is not evidenced to his own satisfaction. "But ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Now the apostle does not say, Ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby ye cry, Abba, Father; but, "whereby we cry, Abba, Father." As though he should say to one weak in the faith, as well as others, but ye have received that self-same spirit whereby we cry, Abba, Father; and by and by that blessed Spirit will bear witness to your spirit, and then you will be able to say, Abba, Father, without presumption and without fear.

Paul also says, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Shall we therefore say that every one that is led by the Spirit of God has the enjoyment of that sonship? No. We may not say so. The blessed Spirit may lead the soul on so as to give it evidences of interest in Christ; and by and by the blessed Spirit bears witness to those evi-

dences as genuine, to its relief, gladness, and joy. A person that is born again is born of the Spirit, and led by the Spirit; and the person that is convinced of his spiritual poverty is led by that blessed Spirit. A person that feels his need, and is hungering after the righteousness of Christ, is led by the Spirit of God. A person that is hungering and thirsting for the spirit of adoption is led by the Spirit of God; for thus he is drawing the person after Christ. Assuredly the person that is led in soul concern and desires after the things of Christ, is led by the Spirit of God; because Christ says, "What things soever ye desire, believe that ye receive them;" for in the gift of God, and in the promise of God, they are yours; "and ye shall have them" in possession in the Lord's good time.

There are abundant evidences that the person is led by the Spirit of God before he has the witness of his sonship. Therefore he may be exercised about his state; exercised with needs, exercised with wants, exercised with longings. Thus the Lord is leading the person on, and drawing the person after that which he will communicate in his good time.

Now, as touching the mercy of God, pardoning iniquity, is not that what the person wants? His free grace, is not that desirable? His love manifested to the soul, would the man not be glad to enjoy it? So likewise as to the things of Christ that accompany salvation. His righteousness that he has wrought out, there is a hungering and thirsting for it. The salvation he has completed, there is a wishing to experience and enjoy it. There is a panting to live; a breathing to live; a wishing for the upspringing of life, and that life moving in a godly life to the Lord. Is not that desirable to a living soul? To be brief; the things set forth in the gospel of Christ are made by divine teaching most desirable to the child of God. The blessed Spirit takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to the soul; and when the children of God partake in some degree of them, they are truly refreshing and excite eager desires. The blessed Spirit of God, in leading on the people of God, convinces them of their miserable state by nature, as it is opposite to God and godliness; and this works concern and trouble in the heart in consequence of it, and also inquiries and desires for that which alone can relieve the soul.

Again. Such a seeking soul, what is he after? What does he wish to find? Why, that which constitutes the evidence of a child of God. He wishes for the witness of the Spirit that he is one. Again. He wishes to have the matter sealed home to his heart by the blessed Spirit of God, in the godly realizing of it. If his mind goes towards eternity, what does he need to the entrance there? Is it not the earnest of the future inheritance? Of the portion that awaits the children of God?

Are you after these things in reality? Are these things and matters your need and desire? and are you exercised in heart after them? We read of Paul exhorting the saints to "cleave to

the Lord with full purpose of heart." Are you cleaving to the Lord for these evidences?

Now, know that God, as the Father of his people, is said to be the *living* God. Therefore they are said to be sons of the living God, children of the living God. And are they sons and daughters of the living God, the life-giving God, and yet without life? If there is life in a man, he that has it is a son or a daughter of the living God. Such a person has a new life, and that life longs to live. "Quicken me, O Lord, in thy fear." "Quicken me in thy loving-kindness." "Quicken me in thy way." "Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee." There is life; and there is the opposite of that life. So that it does not spring up as he wishes it to do. What opposition! He will groan under the burden of his deadness, coldness, worldly-mindedness. The devil besets him, and works by deadening gloom, deadening temptations, deadening besettings. David says, "The enemy has persecuted my soul." That enemy, then, is a spiritual enemy. "The enemy has persecuted *my soul*. He has stricken my life down to the ground. He makes me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead." So he gets more dead, more dull; and the body of sin and death gets more oppressive and weighty. O! I can't feel to live! No springing up in me! Well, if there was no life, there would be no crying after life. For what does this exercise of mind mean? Why, it signifies that there is that below the surface which wishes to spring up into spiritual life to God and godliness. Try yourselves by these things.

The child of God, therefore, who is a son or daughter of the living God, pants to live; cries to live; groans that he is so beset by that which deadens him to God, and makes him so wretched and miserable. But yet he longs to live. "Quicken me in thy loving-kindness; quicken me in thy fear; quicken me, quicken me;" over and over again. He longs to live, and to live to God.

These are some evidences of sonship; and there is attached to the sonship of the children of God a future life. I mean the everlasting life; for it is said he brings his ~~sons~~ sons to glory. It is eternal life that is attached to this sonship.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Christ in the heart is the evidence of the inheritance that awaits the sons of God. And what is this evidence? Why, the hope that has got it already in a blessed expectation. The hope that is full of glory, immortality, and eternal life. Thus Paul writes: "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Now, they that have Christ in the heart will have Christ in view, and as their vision goes more into futurity their hope will spring up into gladness. "Rejoicing in hope of the glory of God." It is the blessed Spirit of God evidencing their interest in Christ, and in the inheritance: "Who is the earnest of the future inheritance." And as they come into this blessed experience, faith will go forward into the glory for them. For though faith and hope will not go with us to heaven, as there

is no need of faith and hope where vision and fruition are, nevertheless faith goes to heaven while we are here below, and brings down the godly reality of it into the heart. "Faith," we read, "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It substantiates and makes real that which we hope for; and thus hope is drawn up and drawn forth to look forward with expectation. It looks forward to that which awaits us, namely, the heavenly glory. And as this hope becomes strong, it becomes the assurance of hope, and then the will becomes bent heavenward: "Willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord." And the desire craves it: "Having a desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better." Thus the Old Testament saints desired a better country, that is, a heavenly; and when the will is bent that way the affections go straight to it. "Set your affection on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God; not on things on the earth."

O that we may have this blessed evidence of our sonship; for, as the Word says, "He will bring his sons unto glory." O that we may have impressed upon our hearts the mark of this celestial seal. And this impression is not only the evidence of sonship, but the godly reality of it. May the Lord add a blessing.

THE FEAR OF THE LORD.

(Concluded from p. 270.)

7. "THE fear of the Lord is to hate evil." (Prov. viii. 13.) Are we really anxious to know whether we are God-fearing persons or no? Do we in our hearts hate evil? Is it a sore grief to us? Do we long to escape from it? This is the testimony of God concerning Job, that he "feared God, and eschewed evil;" and this witness is repeated three times. (Job. i. 1, 8; ii. 3.)

It is the fear of the Lord in lively exercise that brings a person to experimentally know what Paul means in his seventh chapter to the Romans. To such as fear God the subject is clear. "For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." (ver. 15.) Thus, being a regenerated man, he knew he was a fallen creature, a sinner, for he perceived sin in his thoughts; he breathed it, and its actions were more or less discovered to be still put forth by the carnal mind against his will, and without his consent. He felt the influence of its inward working, and hated the thought in which it was embodied. He hated its actings, and cried out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 24.) We fear there are many who cry out about and against sin, and make much ado about their knowledge of sin, who, notwithstanding, are ignorant of its real nature, and seldom, if at all, grieve on account of it. Certainly it does not make them wretched, or we should see the effects of their wretchedness. There would be some humbleness of soul, and an abhorrence of that which caused so much

distress. For men cannot enjoy and take pleasure in that which makes them wretched. No; they hate it. Sin to a God-fearing person is like an occupant of a house whose presence and conversation are alike detestable, and whose actions are held in utter abhorrence by the other inhabitants of that house; and the more so in that such an occupant cannot be turned out. To make the wretchedness yet more wretched, sin at times gains an audience of the soul, and by its cunning inveigles the mind to dwell on its carnal deceits until, by its subtle twining influence, it arouses the lusts and passions of the carnal mind. Here the soul, having been betrayed to enter the company of its bitterest enemy, can do no other than hate so deadly a foe, and grieve over his own folly in thus being seduced into snares and pits laid to catch the feet; and the more does the man grieve because they have been laid by an old and well-known adversary.

8. "The fear of the Lord tendeth to life; and he that hath it shall abide satisfied; and shall not be visited with evil." (Prov. xix. 23.) Thus, as it receives the holy influence of the "spirit of the fear of the Lord," it leads onwards to the fountain of life, from whence it obtains fresh supplies of grace. It leads the soul from legality; because it leads to life. It leads into the spirit and power of gospel obedience, and not into the letter, for "the letter killeth;" so that it cannot become legal. It works because it loves to please God, and rejoices in a gracious nearness to God. It loves to sit at his feet and hold a pleasing familiar intercourse with God on divine realities; and draws fresh supplies of life from the very path in which it is led. Does it dwell in the bosom of a servant? It will then lead him to serve his employer for Christ's sake; "Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart." (Eph. vi. 6.) Is he a master? He will treat his servants as having a "Master" also in heaven; and a Master who does not respect persons. (ver. 9.) From which we gather the fact that the fear of the Lord is a principle of honesty, making and keeping the conscience tender before God and man. For in both the servant and master the idea of slavery and lordliness is excluded. Neither does it bind the two simply by law; but, "with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men;" and, "knowing that your Master also is in heaven."

So also in all the precepts of the gospel, the fear of the Lord therein tends to life. For every step is impregnated with life from God; and the pleasure arising from the unction of the Holy Spirit sweetly softening the whole soul causes the person to cry out, "Draw me; we will run after thee." (Song i. 4.)

The fear of the Lord enters largely into the mystery of vital godliness; and by it the soul is allowed to see the covenant of life, from whence flows the blessed incomings from the fountain-head. Here he obtains the knowledge of the secret of the Lord, and discovers the source of the divine outgoings by which the children of God are daily renewed in mind and spirit. (Psa. xxv. 14.)

A God-fearing person necessarily becomes an exercised person, from the many changes and fluctuations to which he is subjected. Carnality and hardness at times make strange havoc in the soul, so that there appears scarcely any proof of the fear of the Lord being present.

The fear of the Lord causes to hate an alluring world, and to abhor the corruptions which are within the soul, because of their deadening effects. This fear tends to life; those corruptions to death; for "the fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death." (Prov. xiv. 27.) Thus, there flows from this fountain of life living waters, which render the soul fruitful, and soften the heart, carrying the affections heavenward. It creates a spirit of contrition, and a tenderness in the conscience, by which it becomes quickly sensitive of the presence of evil and the tendency to deathliness. What death is engendered in the soul by the "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life!" But the fear of the Lord has a keen eye to discern the hand of death, bringing its wasting, withering, and parching influence over the soul, until the fruitful land becomes a barren field, and mourns on account of the grievous famine felt within. It longs to flow over the barren waste, and turn the dry land into water-springs. It has a quick and sagacious scent by which it smells the ill savour emitted by the miry places of the carnal mind, and detests the sickening effluvia continually arising therefrom. Death and corruption flow from these miry places; hence the fear of the Lord avoids them, its own tendency being unto life. It has a clean foot, and walks warily in the midst of snares and temptations, quickly feeling the presence of the snares of death, and departing from them.

9. The fear of the Lord is the law of the wise: "The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death." (Prov. xiii. 14.) It is written: "Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed; but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded." (ver. 13.) The words of the Lord are more to be desired than gold, "yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward." (Ps. xix. 9-11.) These warnings are received and embraced in the heart of those whose consciences are made tender in the fear of God; and it desires to "make straight paths for the feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way." (Heb. xii. 13.)

The fear of God never leaves the paths of uprightness to walk in paths which are crooked; the eyes look right on, and the path of the feet is pondered. (Prov. iv. 20-27.) When the soul has gone into wrong paths, the fear of the Lord discovers them to the soul, and makes it to feel they *are* wrong paths; and being a lover of righteousness, it works self-loathing in the heart for departing from the living God; and an honest, humble confession begins to flow from the heart, and the bitter-

ness of turning out of the straight path is keenly felt. The soul is humbled within itself on account of its manifest weakness, ignorance, and folly. These wrong paths may be known by the fact of the walker therein finding no peace: "They have made them crooked paths; whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace." (Isa. lix. 8.)

Reader, dost thou find peace in the paths thou art walking? If not, are they not then crooked paths? Does the Word of God give thee no warning? Does not conscience flash convictions of evil in thy face? The Lord stir up alarms in the heart of all God-fearing persons who are walking in crooked paths; "and let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." (Eccles. xii. 13.)

TOUCHING AND TREMBLING.

"But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth."—MARK v. 33.

TREMBLER, take courage! Venture forth;

See here thy sister one;

Fear not to press as she hath press'd,

And do as she hath done.

Jesus the Healer still is nigh;

The same sweet name he bears,

And still a garment *touchable*

He mercifully wears.

Heed not the intervening crowd,

Whatever it may be;

There's a peculiar one for each,

A fitting one for thee.

Think most of Him thou followest;

Thine eye be on him too;

And thou, midst thronging scenes, shalt find

A blessed passage through.

Then comes the touch, the look, the word,

(No frowning to repel),

And thou mayest tell him all the truth,

Who knoweth it right well.

Deem not thy every-day concerns

Too trifling for his ear;

If falling sparrows are observed,

Then what hast thou to fear?

O! Friend, excelling all the rest,

A Brother born to be;

'Tis wisely plann'd that errand-griefs

Should bring us unto thee.

LOVE'S ABHORRENCE.

"Do not I hate them that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them mine enemies."—PSA. CXXXIX. 21, 22.

Away with a spurious charity! May we love, and love far more fervently than we do, all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. But shall we prove traitors to our King by an unholy alliance with those who are his declared enemies? Shall we be the willing companions of those that despise, and not of those who fear, God? Of those who deny his being and perfection, not of those who know and reverence his great Name? Of those who oppose and revile his grace and precious truth, and not of those who own and love and are made conformable to it? It was not so with the psalmist David, with the man inspired by the Holy Spirit of God, with the sweet psalmist of Israel. He renounced the false and treacherous universal charity so in vogue in our day. He had no wish to be in league with those who hated God. Nay, he dreaded the very thought of being numbered amongst them, either here or hereafter. Therefore in another psalm he cries out, in a holy anxiety unto God, "Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men." Christ, we read, was not only separate from sin, but "from sinners," except to save them. So should his people be as he was. This was the psalmist's desire. He wanted no *ungodly* association with those who loved not, sought not God.

Here, in this psalm, he tells us that he hated the avowed antagonists of Christ with perfect hatred; he counted them his own enemies. Yea, he appeals to God himself, the God who had searched him and known his heart, the God from whom he knew there could be no disguises, and the God of infinite love and purity, at whose glory he trembled, upon the point. Now, if this feeling of his heart had been wrong; if it had been opposed to God's holy law in the truth and spirit of it; if it had been in opposition to the mind of the Holy Spirit, he could not, with a heart governed as his was by the knowledge and fear of God, have thus lifted up his eyes and made his appeal to the God of heaven. His feelings, then, were not wrong. His zeal for the Lord was not offensive to him. Nay, had his feelings, and his zeal, as it were, eaten him up, almost consumed him, it would not have been wrong; it would not have been excessive, it would not have been offensive unto his Maker. Christ himself says, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up;" and with his whip of small cords he drives in his zeal the buyers and sellers out of God's temple. O that we had more zeal! Burning seraphs round God's throne, enflamed, as in his immediate presence, with the holiest love, are filled with zeal for God's glory. This fills the desires of those spirits before the throne.

But some one may say, The psalmist did not in these words mean his fellow-men, but only his own lusts and corruptions. Away, we say, with such glosses as these put upon God's words,

whereby we rob them of their true signification! We do not, of course, mean that the man who wrote these words had no indignation against his own heart's lusts. Far from it. We believe it would have been the veriest hypocrisy to have pretended a mighty indignation against the evils of others, and at the same time allowed the deadly opposition of his own evil heart to go unmourned and unresisted. The man who truly is grieved with those who rise up against Christ round about him, will grieve over that which rises up against Christ within him. He who hates the revelation of the Man of sin without, will tremble at and abhor the revelation of the man of sin within. God's saints are no hypocrites. Searched by the Lord, the psalmist saw enough in his own heart and ways to make him tremble. As he writes in another psalm, "The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, there is no fear of God before his eyes." He saw the inward transgressor, the fearless man of sin within, and this enabled him to clearly see, with a heart-discernment, the true character and condition of the transgressor without.

But though all this is true, let us retain his words in this 139th psalm in their integrity. He points to the haters of God, to those who rise up against God and his Christ and his truth in the world. Of these persons he writes: "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee?" But some one may say, Is not this contrary to the law, which says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" and to the gospel which writes the law of love in the heart? Not in the least. This is no hatred of men, as men; no personal and private vindictiveness. Nay, it may be combined with the warmest love to men's persons generally. No doubt, the psalmist David could have most heartily rejoiced in the triumphs of God's grace in the true conversion of any poor creatures to God, however much they might have sinned and rebelled against him. He was himself a sinner, and he knew it. The man who could pen the 51st psalm was no little sinner in his own eyes. He was not one who could imagine that naturally his heart was better than those of the worst of his fellow-men. Far from it. He deeply grieved over its immense depravity. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity." What language can be stronger? As though he said, The very shape, spiritually considered, of my heart is that of iniquity. Out of it have proceeded all my evil ways. Murders, adulteries, and all practical abominations, have their origin in the utterly evil condition of my heart by nature. The psalmist David, then, well knew that grace alone had made him to differ from the vilest, the worst of the haters, the most hardened of the rebels against God.

Well, then, it was not poor sinners that the psalmist hated. It was not men's persons that he abhorred. He was no misanthrope, no hater of men. It was men considered as hating and reviling and rising up in opposition to God and his Christ; men, as inspired by Satan, with a deadly hatred against the truth and with the love of lies; men taking the seat of the scorner, and

standing up in the way of sinners to oppose God. The words point more particularly to those who, through a principle of hatred to Christ and his ways, his grace and his kingdom, rise up against him and determinedly oppose the truth. These are not ordinary sinners so much as sinners against the light; the determined antagonists of the gospel of the grace of God; such persons as Paul paints in Heb. x.; men given over to a reprobate mind, and left to act out the evil of their hearts; men so under the control of Satan that they rise up into avowed and open opposition to Christ, and his ways, his gospel, his people, and his kingdom. Of course, even of those who appear to be the most outrageous opponents of God's truth, some, like the apostle Paul, may be vessels of mercy ordained unto glory. In these God will change their minds, and bring them as little children to his footstool. Or, as Isaiah writes, "in chains they shall come over" unto Christ, submit to his sceptre of grace, and say that God is in him of a truth. The persons of any such the psalmist would not hate, though their ways of rebellion would be abhorrent to him.

But, then, there are numbers, like the Scribes and Pharisees of old, and determined opponents of Christ and his truth in after-ages, who sin against light and knowledge, and from deep enmity of heart rise up against the Lord. Now, with such as these the Psalmist would have no agreement. With such he could keep no terms. From such as these he fled away in his spirit. As rebels against the Lord, as haters of God's Christ, as sinners against the light, he can say of them, "Do not I hate them that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those who rise up against thee?" &c. Indeed, how could the psalmist have really been a lover of God and his Christ if this had not been the case? Do I truly love even a fellow-man, and yet not feel grieved with those who do him injury? Can I love a person, and feel no repugnance to those who unjustly hate him? This cannot be. Nature itself may teach us here. Do we love those who hate our children? Are we not grieved with the ways of those who injure them? Where, then, can be our love to God and his Christ if we can see or hear of men rising up against them, and feel no grief, no indignation, no repugnance to them and their ways in our spirits? Depend upon it, if, when we see transgressors, we are never grieved, if we can hear of God's Name being blasphemed and feel no indignation, if we can see God's truth despised and opposed, God's children scorned and ill-treated, God's cause trampled under foot, God's dear Son Christ insulted, our love, if any, is very, very small, and we are little under the leading of his Spirit. The poet says,

"A faithful friend of Grief partakes."

What! pretend, then, that we love God, his truth, his Christ, his ways, and yet feel no intensity of indignation when we see irreligion and even avowed atheism exalted into high places? When we see that which is of the most antichristian

character helped forward in its advances? When we see the cause of God and his truth undermined and subverted; the cause of error and evil, indeed, of Satan, promoted? Depend upon this, it is time for us to look well to our own states, to examine into the real bias of our own minds, when personal interests, individual prejudices and partialities, or mere political opinions, with such like paltry considerations, yea, even wishes for our country's material or outward prosperity, can make us look with toleration and even complacency upon those who hate God, and upon the ways of those who, as his deadly antagonists, rise up against him. We may well try the state of our minds by our likes and dislikes, by what we love and what we feel a repugnance to. The love of God produces an antipathy to that which is opposed to him: "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil." This, then, will necessarily make us cleave and adhere to those who love and fear God, and have his Spirit in them, and as necessarily disrelish the society and ways of the wicked, and shun and avoid, as well as be grieved with, those who hate and rise up against God. If we truly love the Lord, we shall, we must have an inward repugnance and abhorrence to that which opposes his interests upon earth, grieves his Spirit, and manifests a determined hatred towards him.

THE TIMES OF SAINTS IN THE HAND OF LOVE.

(Continued from p. 259.)

5. WE now come to an exceedingly important time, as it respects the child of God,—the time of *the new birth*. There is a time for him to be born again; and it is entirely in the hand of God.

In noticing this time, we will begin by defining what we mean by a new birth, as well as giving a few accompaniments of it.

By the new birth, then, we mean the implanting new and divine principles into the heart; and this takes place the moment the soul is really quickened into life by the Holy Spirit of God, as the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Now there is a something in the man which was never in him before, nay, not in Adam at his first creation. This the Lord clearly shows to Nicodemus. "That," says he, "which is born of the flesh is flesh." It cannot rise above its origin. Cultivate it to the highest degree, it is only flesh. Yea, man at his best state in paradise was only a living soul; but "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Here is something not only different in degree to what can be found in man naturally, but different in kind,—spirit. The Second Adam is made a quickening Spirit. When this new principle, this new creature, as it is called in Scripture, being a new creation, is implanted, a man possesses a higher, holier life begun in his soul than that he lost by the sin and fall of Adam.

This distinction must be remembered, or else natural religion and spiritual will be confounded together. All the future spiritual growth and course of the child of God arise out of this divine new birth. Glory itself is but the seed now implanted in the soul unfolded, or in its final full development.

Here we get the distinction between what man may properly be required to be and do as unconverted, and what is wrought in and by the new-born child of God. Man by creation was under the law, and there he remains until by a new birth translated out of his first condition; and to him the law can and does speak. It loses not its full power to command and condemn because man through sin has lost his power of yielding a true obedience. But even his best obedience in Adam could not entitle him to the paradise of God, as given freely to his new-born sons and daughters in Christ. "If any man be in Christ Jesus," says Paul, "he is a new creature;" and all here is new, and all of God.

Now, from the implanting of this new nature there will arise certain effects. Now the man possesses spiritual senses, a capability, in respect of the new nature, of perceiving spiritual things in their true light. This no man possesses naturally. He may have intellect, he may be moral; but he cannot discern the things of the Spirit of God; these are beyond the reach of his natural powers. All creatures in their integrity are endued by God with their proper capacities. A worm and an angel have each their powers. And so Adam in innocency and the new man in Christ have each their proper capability. Nature discerns naturally what is in the power and scope of nature. The new man discerns supernaturally the deep things of God. Hence arise new feelings, new actings. Nature feels one way; grace another. Thus a man may have a naturally kind, tender, benevolent heart; but spiritually his heart is a stone. The new man has alone the heart of flesh; that is, in this case, the properly-feeling heart in the things of God. Now he begins to think anew, speak anew, act anew. The wind bloweth, the results follow, though men understand them not. Now there begin to be movements of the soul towards God. When Saul of Tarsus was quickened on his road to Damascus, the Lord's report of him soon was: "Behold, he prayeth." The sense of a man's condition by nature, the apprehensions of the majesty, justice, and holiness of God, with some glimmerings of hope in his revealed mercy in Christ Jesus, produce prayer. The new-born publican smote upon his breast, and said, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

That all this work is in the hand of God is evident. Dry bones cannot raise themselves, or breathe into themselves the breath of a new life. The dead in trespasses and sins cannot quicken their own souls. The nature of the life implanted proves all must be of God. This time, assuredly, with all its accompanying effects, is in the hand of God.

But, further, the providential disposing of things, in respect o this man who is newborn, leading up, as we may say, to the blessed issue, is of God. See this as illustrated in the history of the dying malefactor. This poor thief was an elect vessel of mercy. Behold, he runs a headlong career of sin; it brings him to a cross. But, as it happened, on the cross beside him hung the Saviour of the world. There, on a cross, he doubtless heard the dying words of Jesus: "Father, forgive them." The man who began by railing, ends by praying. Surely here was the hand of God, disposing the events of the poor thief's life, whilst he himself was sinning madly, to the divine glory in the conversion of that poor man. He was born again on a cross, and translated thence into paradise. Paul and Silas, saints of God, must be thrust into a dungeon for the sake of a brutal jailor. Onesimus, in the overruling providence of God, ran away from Philemon, possibly to be born again, and then made the freedman of Jesus at Rome.

Then in the *means* and *mode* of the new birth, how the hand of God appears! All is sovereign. The usual and common means, we believe, will be the Word of God, in the hand of the Spirit of God. We leave out here secret things, such as the new birth of infants. The ordinary way of God is to use the written or preached Word, as James writes: "Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth." And Peter: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God . . . and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." But, then, this word is only the seed of a new birth when accompanied by the Spirit of God. So that invariably he who is born again is born of the Spirit. And here time and everything is in the hand of God. A man may read the same words hundreds of times, and remain a natural man. He reads them again, or hears them from the lips of a preacher; the time is come; the Spirit accompanies the words; the dead hears the voice of the Son of God, and lives. A man sits under the best of preaching; he remains unrenewed; he goes into some chapel, hears some uneducated man, with hardly any gifts; God uses the word; and he there falls down, and confesses that God is in the word of a truth. One is laid upon a bed of sickness, and there truths often heard, but never really felt, are brought with a divine life and power upon the heart; and he is born again.

But the ways of God in this matter are infinitely various. In reading, in hearing, in thinking over what has been read or heard, when what has once been known in the letter of it is well-nigh forgotten; with the word, as written or spoken, as read or heard, or, indeed, if the Lord so pleases, without the word, as written, or spoken, or read, or heard, as in the case of Saul of Tarsus; in all sorts of states, in all sorts of places, under all sorts of circumstances, the time may come, and the Spirit of truth visits the heart, quickens the soul, implants the divine principle, and the man is born again. Thus the truth, in the hand of the Spirit of truth, in the time appointed by the

God of truth, enters the soul, and the new birth of the man unto eternal glory has taken place.

6. We now come to another time,—*the time of the law*. And by this we mean that period in experience when the legal spirit prevails and predominates in the soul; so that the man, though really having a new nature in him, is, as to his condition, experimentally of a legal spirit. He greatly views God as One who will deal with him according to a covenant of works, of the nature of which covenant he now begins to have some true apprehensions. To understand this we must remember that man was originally created to be a servant of God under a covenant of works. This covenant he was bound to keep. If he obeyed God perfectly, the law said he should live; but death was the penalty attached to every disobedience. Consequently, man naturally being under that law, was properly of a legal spirit; or, in other words, rightly regarded God as the Supreme Lawgiver, who would deal with him according to the law of works. Now, the implanting of a new nature does not root out in this life the old. Nature remains, and grace is present likewise. The legal spirit, then, is present in the new-born child of God, and, indeed, now begins to be felt in a way not the case with natural men. In the profane sinner the legal spirit is dormant. In the pharisee it is rampant. But in the child of God it is present; and Ishmael both mocks and torments Isaac. The divine life usually at first is comparatively the small thing, the grain of mustard-seed amidst the trees of the field or forest. And though grace is born to rule, it comes to its throne out of a dungeon.

Of course there are great varieties of experience in this matter. The time is in the hand of God. But usually the child of God has a long toiling career under the predominance of a covenant of works, and can enter into the poet's words:

“Long time beneath the law I lay
 In bondage and distress;
 I toiled the precept to obey,
 But toiled without success.”

Now, this time may be properly divided into two parts: one in which the poor soul endeavours to please God by something in or of himself; and one in which, finding in himself nothing but sin and misery, he falls down, and there seems none to help him. Most of us have known what it is to endeavour by good deeds, tempers, frames, legal or so-called gospel obedience, doing our part, improving grace, and various other things, to please God, and gain his favour; and not only so, but to fancy for a season that we were getting on nicely in this way; borrowing perhaps grace from Christ to enable us to work out a sort of righteousness wherewith to buy his favour and blessing. But, as the work went on, this was all found to be labouring in the very fires. What we built God pulled down; yea, the very lusts of our hearts, and temptations of Satan, tended to the overthrow,

so that the sore began to run in the night season, the house to be found utterly leprous; and at length we fell down utterly lost and undone.

“Quite powerless to repent, believe, or pray.”

O the dreadfulness of these last days of the time of the law! The heavens brass, the earth iron, the law cursing, and God indignant; the soul in the deep dungeon, and no help appearing.

Now, all this is in the hand of God; all managed by him. Were it not so, there might be a Cain- or Judas-like issue of the conviction of sin; but God gives the soul some insensible support, even at the worst; so that though there is much despairing, there is not full, complete, black despair. God pulls down, either directly, or indirectly and permissively, the false building; God supports the soul amidst the ruins and sinkings of nature; God times all, rules all, controls all. Satan and sin, and law and terrors, can go so far, and no farther. The soul may sink as into a bottomless pit, and yet shall not perish there. God is in the midst of the bush thus burning with the flames of Sinai. Our times at that mount are in the hand of God.

(To be continued.)

PROPHETIC HINTS.

II.

My dear Friend,—You tell me that you have felt embarrassed and perplexed at the very outset of your attempt to understand the book of Revelation by your ignorance of the language of prophecy. The Holy Spirit has been pleased to use particular terms and symbols in making known his mind; and with the meaning of these you feel very unacquainted. You are inclined, and perhaps not unjustly, to complain that, amongst all the sermons you have heard, you cannot call to mind one in which the sure word of prophecy, in its prophetic meaning, was spoken upon. Many times you have heard it applied to the soul's experience, but hardly ever explained in its primary and proper signification. Consequently, now that you are wanting to know what that word of prophecy says in this, its grand scope, you feel like one who has to acquire a knowledge of the very elements, the A B C of prophetic information.

What you complain of arises from various causes. Numbers of the hearers in our chapels, I speak of the godly, are so exercised about their interest in Christ, and so unassured of it, that they necessarily can pay little or no attention to what appears to them only to bear in a very small degree upon this, to them, all-absorbing matter. Thus ministers have little encouragement from the state of their hearers to bring the subject of prophecy before them. Again. Many of the ministers are themselves very little fitted for such investigations. There are only a few in our denomination whose minds are capable of the patient and schooled application which is required in order to gain such a

clear and definite view of the subject as is necessary for men who attempt to teach others. A due amount, too, of historic information may be wanting. We should find it very difficult in these days to find the men of information, patient thought, profound research, deep godliness, and wonderful acquaintanceship with things noted in the Scriptures of truth, which past generations have brought forth. Nevertheless, He who made Owen, and Goodwin, and Gill mighty in the Scriptures, can equally teach us.

It seems, then, to be regretted that ministers are not rather more exercised in considering the mind of God in the prophetic Scriptures, and that they should almost studiously, or at any rate habitually, keep back from their hearers a part of the truth which may be very profitable to them. Who can tell how soon the season of great darkness and temptation, so constantly spoken of in Scripture, may come on? Everything appears to indicate that it will not be long delayed. The church of God will want all its supports whenever that time comes. One, divinely given, is the word of prophecy. Can it be wise, then, to almost ignore, as many do in these days, the very subject of prophecy?

But, however it has arisen, you complain that the subject has never in any degree been brought by the ministry with which you have to do under your notice. Consequently, you now feel the needs-be of receiving some instruction as to the very elements of this knowledge. It may, then, be of some use to you just briefly to throw out a few hints as to the meaning of prophetic terms and symbols.

But here let me remind you that no instruction, or rather hints, of mine can take the place of or compensate for your own prayerful patient consideration of the divine Word. The very same terms may be used now in one sense, now in another; at one time literally, at another as symbols. The scope of the passage, and the context, must determine the meaning, in each particular passage, of the terms which are used therein. Here, then, you may see how much you will need a divine Teacher. It is so in all the Scriptures; and the sure word of prophecy is no exception. In that word you will read of heavens, and sun, moon, and stars; of the earth with its mountains, hills, streams, grass, and trees; of the sea, with its islands and living creatures. Now, a person, ignorant of the language of prophecy, and supposing that by these terms the literal heavens, earth, and seas only were intended, would probably draw very wrong conclusions as to the Lord's meaning in various prophecies. Take, for instance, the last verses of Rev. vi. How easily might a person conclude that by such expressions as are there used, the end of all things must be intended; when we have reason to believe that the end of the Roman Empire, as in its pagan form, is really set before us. And here, by the way, I cannot refrain from pointing out that a proper knowledge of scriptural language may preserve the mind of a child of God from being troubled with certain

infidel doubts which derive their force from ignorance. For example, when a child of God who has some little knowledge of astronomy reads about the stars falling to the earth, he may, if he understands the terms literally, be troubled in mind. This trouble vanishes like others of the same sort before the light of a clearer scriptural knowledge. This is of importance; for though the great, unerring, infallible evidence which a child of God has of the truth of God's Word is its quickening, regenerating, divinely-illuminating effect upon his own soul, for as the poet writes :

" 'Tis God that speaks; and we confess
The doctrine most divine ; "

yet he may be puzzled and bewildered by the sophistries of Satan, wicked men, and his own heart, and thus robbed and spoiled. " My people," says God, " are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

Well, then, I will now attempt to give you a few hints in reference to, and explanation of, the prophetic symbols, and the language of prophecy.

One symbol or emblem used is that of the universe, as we have already noticed; that is, the heavens and the earth together. Now, by this the Lord at times is pleased to represent to us kingdoms and empires. The application of the emblem is very simple; for the Scriptures are written not only for learned, but unlearned persons. Indeed, chiefly

" To men unlearned and to fools
He makes his gospel known."

Now, an unlearned mind, laying hold of the main idea, may readily see that in such an emblem " the heavens " must signify the ruling powers of a state. The constitution of the country, with the chief magistrate or ruler, and other high officers and dignitaries, are aptly represented by the heavens, and their garnishing of sun, and moon, and stars. In fact, we may say that by these luminaries in the prophetic word we have set before us kings and queens, and princes, and superior rulers of a nation. Then the earth will as aptly represent to us the lower orders of society, and also inferior magistrates, who may be set before us by the mountains and hills. Mind, I am only giving hints, and not attempting to enter into niceties and details. These a prayerful, thoughtful mind must fill up for itself.

Sometimes the Lord varies the emblem, and uses merely the earth. In this case, a mountain may represent the king or chief ruler, and hills inferior magistrates. Then, again, in this case the grass of the earth may signify inferior persons, the trees those of superior condition and quality. In Isa. xlv., to show the real superiority of God's people above the ordinary professors with whom they may be associated naturally, the former are said to spring up as *amongst* the grass. Through a work of regeneration and divine grace, they become distinguishable, as the Lord's excellent, from those about them.

Sometimes the earth and the sea are connected together in a symbol. In this case, our minds may be led to two things. The earth may represent to us a settled established state of affairs, or countries in a settled condition; the sea with its waves, its fluctuations, that which is very unstable and unsettled, or countries disturbed by revolutions or invasions. Or, again, the earth may represent to us the professing Christian world; the sea the professedly heathen nations. Thus in the emblem there may be a contrasting christendom, as it is called, with the heathen world. Sometimes the earth is to be limited in its signification to that part of the earth which was the seat of the four great empires of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Dan. ii.), or of Daniel's own vision (ch. vii.), or of the Roman Empire in its largest signification.

In noticing the emblem of the heavens and the earth, I just hinted that not only the chief rulers may be aptly represented by sun, moon, and stars; but the very constitution of the state may also be signified by the heavens. I may add that an ecclesiastical dominion and constitution may be represented, as well as a civil. Thus we read of the English constitution, in accordance with which the Government is carried on; or the constitution of the Church of England or Church of Rome. This may help us to see what is intended when, in reference either to civil or religious institutions, the heavens themselves, as well as their furniture of sun, moon, and stars, are said to pass away. Thus the pagan constitution of the Roman empire passed away, as in Rev. vi. 14. in the days of Constantine the Great; but the empire remained.

But to pass on. Sometimes we have fountains and springs, streams and rivers used as emblems. Now, streams and rivers, as flowing through a land, and properly fertilizing and enriching it, may at once lead our minds to such things as the laws, the literature, and the religious teaching of a country; to streams of justice, and of instruction, secular or religious, to streams of opinion and sentiment, which, flowing through a country, may, if of a healthy kind, prove its blessing and its glory; but if the reverse, a source of the greatest evil. Then, again, fountains and springs, as the sources of these streams, lead us to consider those fountain-heads of the laws and opinions circulating through a land, the legislators, and authors, and ministers of religion. In this view of the matter, how terrible must the judgment of God be when, in prophetic language, he gives the inhabitants of a land blood to drink! When the fountains of justice, literature, and religion are all poisoned, and dispense through a country nothing but deadening and destructive influences! When, in fact, in prophetic language, the streams and rivers are themselves turned into blood; and thus God gives a bloody people blood to drink in his righteous and awful judgment. (Rev. xvi. 4-7.)

To illustrate this, let any one just take a glance at the past history of France. Behold the massacre of St. Bartholomew and

the cruelties of Louis XIV. Then see a generation of infidel writers pouring through the country streams of irreligious and revolutionary opinions. Then see the land deluged with the blood shed in the days of the great Revolution and those of Napoleon, and it seems impossible not to see how God has given to that nation in those days blood to drink, and almost equally impossible not to entertain fears of what may be coming upon our own country.

One more thought about fountains and rivers. The latter symbol may very fitly represent to us particular wide-spreading families; and the former the common progenitors of such families. Thus we read (Deut. xxxiii. 28): "The fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine." To my apprehension, by the fountain of Jacob is meant the descendants of Jacob; and the prophecy intimates their possession of the land of Canaan—a land, when blessed by God, flowing with milk and honey.

Of course, in reading the prophetic word, and especially the book of Revelation, you will become familiar with the use of the symbol of a beast. Generally speaking, too, it is a beast with horns. Now, this is the well-known symbol of an earthly empire or kingdom; and the horns represent the ruling powers of that empire or kingdom as embodied, so to put it, or summed up in the head of the State. A horn is properly the emblem of power; and so it is used for a kingdom, or the head of the kingdom in whom the power of that particular State is supposed to be vested. Thus Louis XIV. of France used to say, "I am the State." A horn, remember, does not necessarily represent one individual, or even one dynasty, or succession of rulers of just one family. It may possibly only mean one individual, as in Dan. viii., where the great horn could only mean Alexander the Great, as his family ended with him. Or it may mean a succession of kings, as in the cases of the four horns which took the place of the one horn, on the he-goat in that vision. Thus the four kingdoms into which Alexander's empire was partitioned are represented with their successive kings.

But again. A horn may represent a succession of dynasties, or ruling families, as in the case of the ten horns upon the beast in Rev. xiii. Different dynasties, for instance, have ruled over France, one of the kingdoms so represented; and yet I suppose to the end of time it is still represented by the same horn. A beast, I may here remark, usually seems to symbolize a secular empire; but not, I think, invariably. Thus the two-horned beast in Rev. xiii. appears plainly to point to the papacy, or more particularly the papal hierarchy, as a sort of religious empire. But there it is fitly represented by a beast, and spoken of as rising up out of the earth; to show, amongst other things, that it is of the earth earthy, and, in spite of all its pretensions to religiousness, and of those who form a part of it to being pre-eminently spiritual persons and the religious ones, a beast, that is, a something merely in its very nature sensual as well as devilish. Thus

it looks like a lamb, but speaks like a dragon, and has its two horns of religious and secular pretensions, whereby it aims at pushing all true religion and rational liberty from off the face of the earth.

I must here allude to what to my mind was a mistake, or rather an error of judgment, in our translators. The word beasts in Rev. iv. and other places, where we read of the four beasts in the midst of and round about the throne, should have been *living creatures*. In the original it is ζων, not θηριον,—a living creature, that is, and not a savage wild beast; which latter is the emblem the Holy Ghost uses when describing earthly and evil kingdoms.

But I must draw my letter to a close. A woman, you well know, is the proper emblem of a church, true or false. Thus in Rev. xii. we have the woman clothed with the sun, and crowned with twelve stars, and the moon beneath her feet, whereby is vividly represented to us the true church of Christ. She continues in the apostles' doctrine and real fellowship; is clothed with Christ as the Lord her Righteousness; and triumphs over merely creature things. She is seen in heavenly places, and really rises and stands above the world and creature things. On the other hand, the false church is represented in Rev. xvii. by the woman riding as on earth upon the beast, with the wine cup of deceit and abominations in her hand; arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked out, harlot-like, with gold, and precious stones and pearls, and drunken with the blood of saints. Who that has a spiritual understanding can fail to see in the latter representation the apostate Church of Rome? Not clothed with Christ and beautified by his Spirit, but with earthly glories and meretricious ornaments. Not rising above the world, but cleaving to it, and seeking to domineer over its rulers and inhabitants, in order to further her own ends of self-aggrandizement. Not the mother, like new Jerusalem, of the true saints; but the persecutor of them, and dyed with their blood. The mother of numerous harlot churches like herself, and of abominations of the earth. Nothing really can be plainer. The Holy Spirit seems intentionally to leave us in this case no possible ground for hesitation or making any mistake. For this same false church is not only thus symbolized by this woman arrayed in scarlet, but, further, by a city, which, again, we know is the frequent emblem in Scripture of a church. Thus the true church of Christ is called New Jerusalem. Then, to mark distinctly what particular church is meant, a particular locality is assigned to it. Seated upon the seven hills of Rome, it is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth. What can this be but Rome? Remember, the Roman is the fourth empire in God's estimate, and in his Book. (Dan. ii. and vii.) This fourth empire lasts to the end of time; the three others have their dominion taken away long before. Rome has no successor of an earthly kind; but remains until, as in Dan. vii. 18, "The saints of the Most High shall take the ki-

dom." That portion, then, of the earth comprised in the old Roman empire, is ordained by God himself to have a predominance unto the end. This may be resisted. At periods it may seem to decline and be threatened with extinction. It is again and again revived, and reasserted in one form or another. Rome, somehow or other, is to be an imperial city, and bear sway.

Surely these things are well calculated to arouse our minds, and cause us to watch and pray. Surely this is particularly the case as we see this harlot church, this domineering system of the papacy, so recovering lost ground in our own land,—one of the countries forming a part of the old Roman empire. If instrumentally I can help you to such an intelligent consideration of the prophetic scriptures as will arouse your mind, and excite you to additional watchfulness and prayer, I shall not have cause to regret writing these prophetic hints.

Believe me, yours very sincerely,

"A BABE WHO WOULD BE WISE."

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

"Whilst the long cloud of witnesses Shows the same path to heaven."

My dear Brother,—You may rest contented upon the point respecting your baptizing. If I am enabled, by the Lord giving health and strength, I hope to attend to it, in solemn obedience to his own command. "Whosoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father with his holy angels." This great word came to me and upon me ten days ago; and it has removed my tremblings, and laid low my objections to administer the ordinance, in likeness of his death who I hope lived for me, even me, and died for me; who as I have been enabled to feelingly believe, hath redeemed my soul from death.

This has been a very anxious time with me. You know but little of the conflict I passed through fifteen years ago respecting the ministry. I could never open it to mortal ears at the time. It was on my mind for over three years, and since then I have found it was on the minds of the people of God I was with more than that time. Yet, after having been asked repeatedly to enter a pulpit, I never could until the Lord spoke home with solemn power these words: "Go in this thy might." I answered, "Lord, I have no might." But again that word came: "To them that have no might he increaseth strength;" and "My strength is made perfect in weakness." In much trembling, weakness, and insufficiency, therefore, I have continued unto this day, testifying, as I am enabled, the manifold grace of God; a poor sinful man. I do assuredly know the Lord will make willing in the day of his power. You or all men may have all knowledge; but O! give me the power of God. I am ashamed of myself, and of all and everything I attempt; but I can say with

Paul, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." We read of one that "the word of the Lord tried him;" and it has tried me in a measure; and there is nothing like the word of the Lord to help one. It is worth waiting for; for when it cometh in power it is a tree of life.

You are still up and down, tossed about as the locust; but you must learn, deeply learn, what it is to wait, wait, wait. "Let thine eye look straight on." You dare not run out of the battle. Gird up the loins of your mind, and hope to the end. I counsel you to keep the field, in spite of flesh, opposition, kindred, or the devil. What! put down the weapons, and turn thy back? Where would you go or fly to? Your Captain has always paid thee well; to whom can you go?

I hope you will soon be better. Accept my kind love. Tender the same to Hannah and the two girls. I hope to see you soon.

Yours affectionately,

Baldham Mills, Wilts, Sept. 17th, 1875.

N. MARSH.

Dear Brother and Companion in that trying path which leads to everlasting glory,—Wishing you the enjoyment of every new covenant blessing, I proceed to give you a proof that I have not quite forgotten you; though my long silence may have led you to conclude such to have been the case. But if so, I will venture to say it is not the first time you have drawn wrong conclusions. If it is, you are not like me. My life has been one continued scene of false inferences. When God turned my captivity at the first, I concluded I should never see war or trouble any more; that my peaceable soul would maintain its stability for ever. Thus, when I was a child, I thought as a child, &c. And O! what a novice and fool do I still remain in the divine life! When my comforts abated, and darkness flowed in, I concluded I had been deceived. But when Jesus appeared again, I thought I should never be such a fool as to doubt again, though this very shortly was the case. When under the word, and sweet comfort ensued, I thought it was natural passion which I could command at pleasure; but experience in bondage and darkness convinced me of the contrary. When unbelief, rebellion, and temptations prevailed, I again and again have concluded that

"The Lord had forsaken me quite;
My God would be gracious no more."

When his candle has shone on my head, his comforts have delighted my soul, his instruction has been sweet, and my path smooth, I have fancied I was so growing in grace, holiness, &c., as to be getting better in myself; but by-and-bye I have passed through such a storm to kill this lurking pride, and have felt myself such a devil incarnate (alas! this is often the case) that I have then concluded it was utterly impossible for such a one to be a saint. When faith has been in exercise, I have

thought I should doubt no more. When unbelief has prevailed, I have concluded I should never go forth in the exercise of faith again. Sometimes I have thought myself wiser than my fellows; then I have been left to feel myself the veriest fool in everything under heaven. More or less, I go on in the same way to this day. "O fool, and slow of heart to believe," will ever be applicable to me.

If in all this paradox you or Mrs. H. can read your own experiences, we may perhaps safely conclude that we are very much alike. Pride, worldly-mindedness, deceit, lust, yea, iniquity of every kind,

"Still in my ransom'd soul abide,"

and make no small stir, and cause me no small share of trouble. My temper appears to get worse; yea, I seem to get worse in every sense. O what a hard matter it is to relinquish all which appertains to self, and rely on Jesus for all we need. It is easy in theory, but we by painful experience know it is not so in practice; for, as Luther says,

"Nature will stir up all her strife,
Foe to the flesh-abasing life."

When Jeshurun waxed fat, he kicked. The awful and truly lamentable divisions in the church, James says, come of our lusts. When one said, I am of Paul, another, I am of Cephas, &c., &c., the great apostle of the Gentiles attributes it to carnality. I wish those who are most engaged in the broils of the day were better employed. They are fermented chiefly by hypocrites who are strangers to their base original, the fearful depths of the fall, and the horrible depravity and deceit of the human heart. Through their craft, the real children of God are sometimes almost driven mad, and are frequently drawn aside; and through prejudice or one delusion or another of the devil, are brought to take quite a wrong view of things, and condemn and wound a real child of God. But be this forgotten never: with whatsoever measure we mete, it shall most assuredly be measured to us again. Sooner or later there will be good measure, shaken down, and pressed together. My own heart has deceived me so often that I dare not trust it a moment. I know something by bitter experience of a law of retaliation, of good measure, &c.; which I hope has taught me to be careful when I condemn.

How have I rambled on about false inferences and dissensions; occupying my whole letter with these themes. My parents and relations are well. I am the same. I hope to see you before this year is out, to rectify all mistakes, to pay you a visit, pay your bill, &c., &c. Tender my unfeigned affection to your unbelieving, fearing wife. Tell her Jesus is ever the same. My love to T. Clark and J. May. Greet all the saints at Loughborough and Sheepshead, &c., by name; and ever remember

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Barkston, Oct. 30th, 1884.

THORPE SMITH.

Dear Benjamin,—From the contents of your last I gather your anxieties are considerable on account of the temporal interests of your parents, your brothers, &c. This, my dear son, is very proper in its place, and it would be a pleasure to me to write to you that trade is in a flourishing state as regards myself individually; but I have, painful as it may be to you or myself, to say the reverse is the case. However, I trust this state of things will not continue long; but that if it pleases him who “opens and no man shuts,” and who shutteth and there can be no opening, to appear for me in a providential way, all will be well. I desire to be thankful to God for the many mercies I daily partake of. I know and am persuaded that if he enters into judgment with me, I cannot answer him one of a thousand. But there is forgiveness with him that he may be feared; and he is a God that pardoneth iniquity, and that “passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage, he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.” Still, the power of his anger is great indeed; and the terrors of God are terrible when set in array against us. One says, “While I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.” But the Lord has promised that he will lay no more upon us than he will enable us to bear; and for our encouragement says, and I believe it at times, that all his chastisements are in faithfulness and in love to our souls.

Are you aware, my dear son, that the path to the celestial city is one of many difficulties, trials, temptations, sorrows, and perplexities. O Lord, thou knowest that by these things men spiritually live, and in all these things is the life of our spirit. Let us, then, not be discouraged; for truly blessed is the man whose God is the Lord. And he says, “Fear not,”

“For I will be with thee thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.”

The Lord's fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem. Into this fire he frequently throws his precious metal, in order that the same may be purified, and that its dross may be taken away. The Lord's people are compared to gold and silver, and he says he will bring them through the fire, that they may offer a pure offering. O how earthly-minded are believers at times! “My people,” he says, “are bent to backslide.” “All we like sheep have gone astray.” But he says, “I will heal their backslidings; I will love them freely.”

I know not whether what I have written may be acceptable to my son. I write freely to you, hoping and believing that your mind is somewhat exercised about these subjects. I trust the one thing needful is uppermost in your mind, and that you are coveting the best gifts. Remember the promise, that “in due time we shall reap if we faint not.” And we are exhorted to give diligence to make our calling and election sure. And Wisdom says, “I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.” Let my dear son duly consider the passages I have quoted; and may the Holy Spirit lead your mind

into; the true import of them, and make them a blessed encouragement to your soul; that you may with delight walk in the paths of Wisdom; and at last be made wise unto salvation. The Lord mercifully grant to you the blessed knowledge of himself as revealed in his dear Son. This will be a favour indeed; and when obtained will take up an eternity to praise and bless his Name for.

Sarah's health is about the same as when I wrote last, though for this last few days she has not been quite so well. This has been occasioned, we think, by a slight cold. The rest of the family are quite well. I wish you to give my best regards to Mr. P. and Mrs. P. Your brother and sisters unite in best love to yourself, not forgetting dear mother, and accept the same from
Your very affectionate Father,

Loughborough, Oct. 3rd, 1846.

HENRY HACK.

P.S.—Let me beg of you, when you write again, to give yourself a little more time, if possible, and send us a little longer letter; and do not be long before you write. Remember Christmas will soon be here.

Dear Friend,—I hope you may be enabled to believe for yourself. (Heb. xii. 6.) I say *enabled*, for I well know how impossible it is in time of affliction without the Spirit. The Lord loves his people too well to let them alone; but how hard to regard divine chastisement as the "privilege of a saint," the portion, or a part of the portion, of a son. But so it is, and the comfort of it the Lord will give in his own time. The "third part" is the Lord's portion, and that part he will bring through the fire. (Zech. xiii. 9.) There he will refine them; there will he try them. O! heavy, painful work! specially when, as in refining silver, the dross first rises and appears; when the depravity and defilement of our fallen hearts are seen and felt. But He who sitteth as a refiner and purifier of silver not only sees the dross, but also knows what silver there is in the sons of Levi.

But this is not all. In the fire they *shall*—from necessity by divine teaching—"call upon my Name." How unspeakably great is the mercy of being a praying person! There are none such by nature. Then, further, there is a most gracious promise—"and I will hear them;" which means, I will answer them. As we read: "I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil." This most merciful promise the Lord makes good in drawing near and saying, "Fear not;" in staying the feeble mind upon himself, even in the dark, in reviving hope, in giving some assurance of a good issue, in working sweetest resignation to his holy sovereign will. O! blessed answer! answer of which my dear friend is not, I hope, ignorant.

There is yet another word: "I will say, It is my people." Blessed, comforting recognition! Where now are all the cruel suggestions of the father of lies? Where the thousand misgivings of an unbelieving heart? Who could have expected such

a resting-place in a fire? "Certainly," said the Lord, in another case, "I will be with thee." And here, in the fire, the purifying fire, the fierce fire, which has destroyed many hopes, burnt up much wood, hay, and stubble, and has left only a naked, needy soul, the Lord comes and says, "Thou art mine. I will bring thee *through* this fire." What a sweet effectual work is this! It enriches most abundantly the person who is favoured to receive it.

The same blessed enriching work the Spirit describes under another figure. The Lord promises the church her vineyards from the Valley of Achor. From the valley of trouble comes peace; out of the wilderness vineyards grow. Who would go into the wilderness, to the Valley of Achor—that gloomy vale—to look for a vineyard? But trouble, conflicts, divine chastisements, painful discoveries of our deep depravity by the Spirit, greatly enrich the soul in godly fear, in living desires to know, love, and be found in Christ; in earnest prayer, in cleaving to the Lord with purpose of heart, in deep feelings of nothingness in self, and in a high esteem for Christ, and all he has for *poor* persons; and in a full enjoyment of heavenly things. And when the last word comes: "It is my people," back, then, flies the response: "The Lord is my God." Not earlier could the confidence be found to say so great a thing; now it cannot be restrained. Better wait till the Lord says that before we say this. I do hope, my dear friend, that you may find a quiet resting-place in Jesus, and be favoured to feel that

"It is the Lord, whose matchless skill
Can from afflictions raise
Matter eternity to fill
With ever-growing praise."

Now my pen has run on very rapidly. I hope you may find some help and comfort from the word upon which I have hurriedly written a few hints. I beg you will not think of answering this; no, not by the scratch of a pen, while you are weak. It is not worth an answer; it is but the utterance of a few thoughts which perhaps you may find somewhat suitable to your present case.

With our united love to your dear parents and sisters,

I remain, yours very truly, in hope of eternal life,

Liverpool, March 14th, 1879.

J. K. POPHAM.

THIS very one thought—that God is the principal agent—will be of sovereign power to cool any heat that might rise in thy heart, or rage in thy tongue, against his instruments. So David: "I was dumb; I opened not my mouth, because *thou* didst it." Joseph looked beyond his brethren's barbarous dealing with him, and said, "*The Lord* sent me before you;" Job, beyond the Chaldeans' lawless outrages, and said, "*The Lord* hath taken away;" David, beyond Shimei's dogged rancour, and said, "Let him curse, for *the Lord* hath bidden him." Jesus Christ himself, blessed for ever, looked beyond the Pharisees, Jews, priests, Judas, and the soldiers, to his Father's cup: "The cup which *my Father* hath given me, shall I not drink it?" when he commands Peter to sheath his sword.—*Bolton*.

CHRIST, THE SINNER'S SUBSTITUTE.

"Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust."—
1 PET. III. 18.

LORD, didst thou suffer once for me
 To bring my soul to God?
 And didst thou all my ransom pay?
 And did it cost thy blood?
 And was thy love so vast, so free,
 For one so very vile,
 That thou could'st see me sunk in sin,
 Yet love me all the while?
 And didst thou leave thy throne on high,
 Thy bright celestial throne,
 And come to bear my curse away,
 To make my cause thy own?
 And in return for love so great,
 Is mine so very small
 That I can seldom quite conclude
 I love thee, Lord, at all?
 O let me not continue thus;
 Thou art a mighty King;
 And thou canst form my heart anew,
 And teach my tongue to sing;—
 Sing of thy love, sing of thy blood,
 Sing of thy wondrous grace,
 That stoop'd so low, endured so much,
 To save a ruin'd race;—
 That conquer'd all our mighty foes,—
 Satan, sin, death, the grave;
 A ransom'd sinner ne'er should cease
 To sing thy power to save.
 And Zion's daughters, too, should hear
 Their little sister's voice;
 And, joining in the sacred song,
 In chorus all rejoice.
 Thou didst thyself the victory get,
 And then resume thy throne;
 Our praises all are due to thee,
 The honours all thine own.
 'Though while we walk the wilderness
 Our singing times are few,
 Oftener we would thy acts recount,
 Often our songs renew.
 "Worthy the Lamb" has oft been sung,
 And should be oftener still;
 His praise resounds in heaven above,
 And all the earth should fill.

Through sin we share thy cross below,
 Yet but in small degree;
 Soon thou wilt take thy church to heaven,
 To share thy crown with thee.
 O sweet anticipation here,
 Of happiness in store,—
 To dwell with my Redeemer, God,
 And that for evermore !
 This bliss shall all thy ransom'd share,
 In that secure abode;
 And ceaseless sing his praises there
 Who brought them home to God.

1879.

H. L. G.

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Advance of Popery. By the late J. C. PHILPOT.—London: J. Gadsby, 18, Bouverie Street.

HAVING so lately noticed in this periodical "The Advance of Popery," by its former esteemed editor, Mr. Philpot, it is unnecessary for us to insert a fresh review of that work. Our design, then, at this time is merely to call the attention of our readers to the issue of a new edition, and to give a slight sketch of its contents. Our former notice, whilst on the one hand it answered the object for which it was written, by arousing in the minds of our readers a great desire to possess, and even circulate the work, proved on the other disappointing. The stock in hand was found to be quite inadequate to the greatly stimulated demand. Thus a large number of persons, who would gladly have responded to our advice by buying and distributing the book, were unable even to procure a copy.

We are glad that Mrs. Philpot has been led to take a step which we believe will be highly agreeable to the lovers of truth and advantageous to the cause of God. We hope, too, that now great numbers of the new edition will be rapidly purchased, and largely distributed, in our land. If, at the time when this work was first published, Roman Catholicism wore a threatening aspect, it is much more the case now. Since that time, an event which the author supposed possible has really taken place. The temporal sovereignty of the popes has been overthrown. But is the papacy weakened thereby? No! As our author plainly proves would be the case (p. 41), it is even strengthened. Undisturbed by the petty policies and family matters of particular popes, it can now give its undivided attention to the one grand object of obtaining universal dominion over the souls and bodies and properties of the inhabitants of the world, and especially of this our native land. A Liberal Government, with the prime minister of 1868 at its head, and an immense majority at his back, is again in power. He who, when prime minister before, so conspicuously was advancing the cause of

popery as to alarm the minds of many only too ready to say, with Simple in the "Pilgrim's Progress," "I see no danger," is in power again. How, too, does he signalize his readvent to power? Why, by sending out to India a popish Viceroy, and placing a papist over her Majesty's household, and denying, in justification of these acts, the plain sense of the words which he wrote against the Vatican decrees. Can anything be more significant? And yet universal charity and party spirit will readily condone these faults, and those who could hardly be aroused from slumber seven or eight years ago will be in a deeper sleep of carnal security at the present time.

Mind, in these remarks we write not as politicians. We wish not to notice such matters in this publication any further than they have a direct bearing upon the cause of God and truth in our land. We wish not also to write anything improperly disrespectful against any man; much less against those who are advanced into places of power and eminence. It is not Christian-like to speak evil of dignities in a rash and unadvised manner. Besides, we dare not place confidence in any natural men; for the Word says, "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man." We merely, then, dwell upon certain things in the past and present conduct of one who is now at the head of the Government which, we sadly fear, indicate the bias of his mind, and point to future actions giving a further stimulus to the papacy. We confess to having the fear that an individual's popularity and various political interests are sadly blinding numbers of even professing persons in this country to a danger which is imminent.

The work we are now briefly noticing, as well as that of Dr. Wylie, which we also reviewed, is well calculated to disturb this ominous repose, if anything can. It should, then, be circulated far and wide by those who are at all alive to the danger; and may, with God's blessing, check, at any rate for a time, the onward march of popery. Let those who think there is no danger read, and if possessed of the spirit of grace pray, over its pages. If such soul-stirring writing will not arouse professors, we fear it is a fatal symptom of that judicial lethargy which is the usual prelude to the speedy accomplishment of the very things which, however threatening, men cannot be made to see the danger of.

But we must not prolong these remarks, our object being to call attention to the work itself. We shall therefore now give our readers a sort of outline of its contents, in order that they may see in how systematic and masterly a manner the author has depicted the Advance of Popery in our native land, and, as we hope, be led with the greater interest and eagerness to explore its pages.

The work commences with a general introduction to the subject, in which the author points out that the principles of Roman Catholicism being unchangeable, it is impossible to say

that it would not, if it had the power, react the bloody scenes of persecution of former days. The religion that devastated the Netherlands, drove the Huguenots into exile, and "burned our fathers' bones to dust," as Cowper writes, is unchanged in its nature, and may perform the same kind of things again. Indeed, to our mind, the sure word of prophecy indicates that to some extent it will. It does not repudiate, but avows and glories in the deeds of the past, and thus, impenitent and unalterable, it is still symbolized by the woman clothed in scarlet, and drunken with the blood of saints. But our author, for argument's sake, supposes that in compliance with modern ideas, it should not appear as the papacy of Hildebrand and the middle ages. Still, he points out how much it is to be dreaded in a social and national point of view, as well as in respect to the souls of men. Socially, it is dreadfully demoralizing;—witness the confessional. Who would not dread the priest-plague invading the family circle, and attacking the members of the household? Nationally, it is destructive to liberty, both civil and religious, and finally ruinous to a nation's prosperity. In respect to the soul, it ripens for the manifestation of the wrath of God. It is a religion injurious to men's bodies, men's properties, their liberties, their lives, and manifestly most destructive to men's souls. In complete antagonism to the gospel of Christ, it leads into a God-denying and soul-stupefying idolatry. It sears the conscience, hardens the heart; and whilst pretending to open the gates of heaven to its votaries, leads them blindfolded by its errors, and with a lie in their right hand, down into the pit of destruction. "For they know not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell." (Prov. ix. 18.)

After this general introduction to the whole subject, the work is divided into five parts.

I. Popery viewed under its general aspect as *a compact system for obtaining earthly power.*

II. Popery viewed as *gradually advancing in strength and influence in these realms.*

III. Popery viewed under its *special religious aspect*, as an advancing creed.

IV. Popery viewed under its *special political aspect*, as an advancing power.

V. Popery viewed as *advancing under the form of Ritualism.*

I. Under the first of these headings the author points out that popery is a system of error of which the essential characteristic is that it aims at universal empire over all men and all things upon earth. Nothing can really content it but the universal subjection of all persons, both as to their souls and bodies, and, therefore, as to all that belongs to them, to its sway. It would cease to be popery if it aimed at less. Our author plainly and powerfully assigns the reason for these aspirations. The pope, so the papal religion asserts, is Christ's vice-gerent upon earth. He represents Christ, and exercises his authority in this

world. All men and things, therefore, are, of course, put beneath his feet. The papal church is the one only church of God, the bride of Christ. It ought, then, to be universally submitted to; and salvation cannot be outside its pale. What the papacy has decreed is infallible truth, and, therefore, ought to be universally received and implicitly bowed down to. Such are Rome's astounding pretensions. She virtually dethrones Christ, and enthrones a poor wicked man in his place. She substitutes a harlot church for the bride of Christ, and the lies of fallible popes and councils for the pure truth of God, and then demands, as if infallible, universal submission. Never should it be forgotten, or lost sight of, that, give up these pretensions and lofty aspirations, and she is no longer the Church of Rome. It was, and is, and must be her aim to exalt herself upon earth above all that is called God. She seats her head and representative, the pope, as supreme in the church, and then, as enthroned in that temple of God, of course, she claims for him supremacy over all. Such is the main drift of the first heading. We only aim at giving a brief sketch, and so pass on.

II. Under the second heading—"Popery viewed as gradually advancing in strength and influence in these realms"—our author shows how various things which are taking place in our land favour this advance. He instances—1. The enervating effects of the increase of wealth and luxury. These things sap the manly vigour of a nation out of it, and at the same time its rational love of liberty. 2. The simultaneous strengthening of papal energies, and weakening of Protestant resistance. As our author says, "Our weakness is her strength." She sees the worth of the prize, the conquest of free England, and bends all her energies to attain it. 3. The invasion of an ever-increasing number of parishes by Ritualistic clergymen; Romanists in heart, though Churchmen by profession. Thus the minds of old and young in the congregations are secretly leavened with popish principles. 4. For the poorer classes, Rome has her schools in which she gives a cheap if not gratuitous education, and places before the eyes of the scholars the symbols of her doctrines. As our author says, "She has ways to work on youthful minds by pictures, images, crosses, representations of Christ and the saints, on the school wall and in books," &c. And here we cannot help noticing that her designs are likely to be forwarded by the similar pictures which the unfortunate children see on the walls of their Protestant homes. Again, if we go into some of our infirmaries, we see, under the pretence of diverting and benefiting the patients, the walls and chapels decked out in a way to make us for a moment or two fancy we must have unwittingly intruded into some Roman Catholic institution. Then we have Romanizing lady superintendents substituted for matrons, and semi-religious sisters dressed like a sort of sisters of mercy for the former nurses. Respectable gentlemen, professedly Protestant in principle, connive at all

this Romanizing work, either through a secret leaning to high Churchism and Ritualism, or even popery itself; or else because too weak and half-hearted to offer any real and effectual resistance.

But we must not enlarge. One author adds to these things—
 5. The increase of the Irish population in our principal towns.
 6. The chronic discontent in papal Ireland. 7. The state of political parties in and out of Parliament. And lastly, the then recent event of the disestablishment and disendowment of the Established Church in Ireland. All these concurrent circumstances favoured the advance of popery at the time when this book was first published. Surely there are more of such circumstances combining together to the same end in the present day, and calling upon us, in the language of our author, “*with a loud and ever-increasing voice, not to sleep at our post, but pray and watch.*”

III. Under the next heading—Popery viewed under *its special religious aspect*, as an advancing creed—our author dwells particularly upon the following points:—1. The doctrine and practice of confession. 2. The doctrine of transubstantiation. 3. The worship of the Virgin Mary, and the saints. 4. The peculiar and mysterious influence which popery exercises over the minds of men as a religious system. He enlarges much upon the confessional and its odious abominations, its dreadfully polluting and corrupting influences; and in dwelling upon this and the two following subjects—Mariolatry and the Mass—he writes with the most scrupulous fairness, giving the opinions of the Roman Catholic Church from its own acknowledged writings and standards of opinion. The Council of Trent, the Creed of Pius IV., and the declarations of Rome’s most eminent authors, are the sources from which he gathers his information and proves his assertions.

When our author comes to notice “the peculiar and mysterious influence which popery exercises over the minds of men as a religious system,” he very justly points out that it is absurd to suppose that a religion which captivates alike the minds of a Manning, and a Newman, “noble peeresses at the court of St. James, and Irish apple-women in the court of St. Giles,” can be one the power and danger of which may be thought lightly of. No! it is one of the masterpieces of hell. It is wonderfully adapted to fallen human nature. It is a plant of hell, and it strikes its roots deeply into a soil congenial to it. It is, too, the growth of ages. It is not a system of error invented and perfected by an individual, and coming speedily to maturity. Age after age antichristian corruptions in ungodly men professing Christianity have developed themselves in doctrines and practices opposed to the truth, but suitable to such fallen creatures’ hearts. It lays hold of and adapts itself to that which is corrupted in man. It appeals to the natural intellect, affections, and conscience. It captivates the senses, and excites the imagination. It is, we firmly believe, Christianity carnalized

and adapted to the unregenerate heart, and therefore to unregenerate men. True Christianity is upon earth a root out of a dry ground. It is a heavenly plant, supernaturally planted, watered, and nourished by God himself. As of Christ, so of real Christianity, it is true that it has not on earth where to lay its head. All in the world and all in man naturally is against it. Where Christ comes, he must make room for himself by a work of new creation. Where Christ reigns, he must reign by the Almighty all-subduing power of his Spirit. Thus the Head of the true church is in heaven. The true church is spiritual, and seated with Christ in the heavenly places. The doctrine of the gospel is from heaven, and he who enforces it is the Holy Spirit. But in popery all this is altered. All is humanized. As the Scribes of old lowered God's perfect and holy law in order to make it fit in with human weakness, and thus destroyed it in its proper effects as a convincer of sin; so that masterpiece of false religion, that summing up and grand development of a fleshly Christianity, popery, lowers the gospel to make it fit in with the wisdom, the righteousness, and all the apostate principles of the flesh. This is the secret of its power, or at any rate one secret; for of course, as the masterpiece of Satan, by which he opposes the gospel, he gives it both his seat and his power. No doubt, there is a mighty satanical influence accompanying it, and bewitching the minds of unconverted sinners.

Here, then, we see popery after all in its most alarming aspect. What is there to keep the whole world of the unregenerated from wondering after it? Adapting itself to what is in man, it has its allurements, or its terrors of various kinds for the carnal mind. We wonder not, then, if the sons of men worship, as in Rev. xiii. 1, the beast and his image, or at least receive his mark, or have the number of his name. The angel almost seems to reprove John's astonishment (Rev. xvii.) in the words: "Wherefore didst thou wonder?" As though he said, "Why should you wonder at even such a manifestation of iniquity and folly as this, when you know that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked? Why wonder that a corrupted Christianity, adapting itself to fallen man's corrupt nature, should thus reign over the kings of the earth?"

The fourth and fifth chapters—"Popery viewed under *its special political aspect*, as an advancing power," and "Popery viewed as advancing *under the form of Ritualism*," we can hardly attempt to sketch. They are very important, and must be read to fully enter into them.

Our author in the first plainly shows how the papacy acts in various ways upon the leading statesmen and politicians of our country. She takes advantage of the condition of political parties in the state to continually advance her own interests. Utterly, according to her very principles, unscrupulous as to the means she uses, and aiming with the utmost directness at certain ends, she will ally herself with Radicals, Whigs, or Conservatives.

She will make use of atheism and infidelity, even of socialism and communism themselves, with the simple design of playing off one set of persons and principles against another, in order that she herself may in the end sit as a queen triumphant over all. So she did with kings and emperors in olden times. So she does now with statesmen and senators, and even with the unstable multitude. Thus she sits as of old, or at any rate aims at sitting, as in Rev. xvii., upon many waters.

In the chapter upon Ritualism we have an unfolding of the way in which those disguised papists, the ritualists, are gradually, indeed, rapidly, transforming the Established Church into a papal likeness, and thus not only taking possession of one of the bulwarks of Protestantism, as it long appeared to be, but turning the guns of that bulwark against the city.

But we must desist. We hope we have said enough to whet the appetites of our readers, and make them eager to enter upon the perusal of the book itself. We believe they will rise up from the consideration of its pages instructed, awakened, and profited. It will be indeed strange if they can rise up from that perusal unaffected and unalarmed. Our civil and religious liberties are at stake. The comfort of our homes, the sacredness of our hearths, the prosperity of our children and those we love, are all threatened. Where will be our national prosperity and England's glory when her Protestantism is overthrown, and by fraud and force exchanged for the abomination of popery? O that God's people were led to fear and led to pray! O that each child of God might ask, "What can I do to aid in stemming the tide of popery?" Then might the Lord perhaps be gracious to our land, and turn back the threatening danger; or, at any rate, might hide us and our loved ones in the day of evil.

Obituary.

WILLIAM FAWCETT.—On Feb. 17th, 1880, William Fawcett, of Hunsford, aged 73 years.

He suffered from shortness of breath for a number of years, so much so that with great difficulty he ascended a hill. This was a trouble to him, as he was over five miles away from a place of truth, and was one that could only feed upon the pure word.

He was for a number of years a member and class leader amongst the Methodists or Wesleyans, but God in his own time and way brought him under the sound of the gospel at Thurlstone. He occasionally heard Mr. Kershaw, and others of the same faith and order, until at last he was constrained to say, with one of old, "This people shall be my people, and their God my God."

On the 22nd of July, 1856, he was baptized by Mr. Kershaw, together with three others who had been associated with the Wesleyan body. He was enabled to live a consistent life; though often complaining of his shortcomings and unworthiness, through a felt sense of his depraved nature and the weakness of the flesh. So much was this the case, that I have often heard him lay the creature low in the dust of

self-abasement, and exalt a precious Christ in all his glorious perfections, as to him the chiefest amongst ten thousand, and the altogether lovely. At one time he quoted with much earnestness to one of his daughters Psalm lxxiii. 24, 25, 26: "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory," &c. At another time, under a feeling sense of his loneliness, through not being able to get to the means of grace, he broke out in the language of Psalm xlii. 1, 2: "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God! My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" His Bible, Gadsby's Selection of Hymns, the "Gospel Standard," and Philpot's Sermons were his companions; and I have often heard him say that many blessed times he has had under the influence of the blessed Spirit while reading the above.

He was enabled to maintain family worship to the last. The dear Lord saw fit to take him to himself unexpectedly. He had got up and dressed, and was being assisted downstairs, when he sank, and died. Thus was added one more of the jewels to our Conqueror's crown.

ADAM BRIGGS.

BENJAMIN GORE.—On Jan. 2nd, 1880, Benjamin Gore, of Trowbridge, aged 26.

My dear brother was in a delicate state of health for nearly five years before his death.

In the spring of 1875 he brought up several small quantities of blood. He saw a physician at Bristol, in addition to his own medical man, and both said his heart was very weak, but they did not pronounce it diseased. He was obliged to give up active business for several months; but after a change of air, and rest, he improved considerably, and was again able to attend to business.

His condition caused myself and family much anxiety, as we found that any cold or excitement brought on the threatening symptoms again. Finding this to be the case made us, at times especially, anxious about his eternal state; as, although he was brought up under the sound of the truth, and had ever manifested a particular regard for it, and for the people and servants of God also, we longed to see some signs of a real change of heart. There were many favourable indications of this; but it was not until the summer of 1877, at which time he appeared much better in health, that he showed, by his increasing desire to hear the word, his distaste for the company he had formerly sought, and his appreciation of the society of God's people, as well as in many other ways, that there was a change in him, and that he could no longer be satisfied with mere worldly things.

But at this time, though always glad to hear, or even speak, of spiritual things, he was afraid to lay claim to any interest in them; saying, "I have not been taught like the Lord's people. I want to be like them. I know that the things which once gave me delight are no pleasure to me now; yet this is not enough; I want something more." This is the way in which he often expressed his feelings to my wife. His continued delicate state of health, and also the leadings of God in providence, were all calculated to be very trying to his naturally buoyant disposition; and it was the spirit manifested by him in regard to such matters that gave much hope that he had passed from death unto life. He often observed many things in business, which some would have passed by as too trivial for notice. These he regarded as interpositions of providence, and evinced such a spirit of thankfulness as showed that his heart was sweetly influenced by the fear of God.

His health appeared on the whole to improve slightly until the March

of last year; when he had a return of his old symptoms, and brought up a little blood on two or three days in succession. He much dreaded hæmorrhage of the lungs, and I went with him to Bath to a medical gentleman who had seen him two or three times before. He gave us a very discouraging report, and assured us that his heart was in a very critical state indeed, and that the slightest hurry or excitement was almost sure to be fatal.

However, the means were in some measure blessed so as to control, if not remove, the dangerous symptoms. But from this time he very gradually became weaker, and we all became very apprehensive about him in view of the coming winter.

I was glad to find that he was more and more exercised about divine things, and during the summer received many little sweet intimations from the Lord, of which he, from time to time, spoke to my wife, with whom he felt at this time more freedom upon spiritual matters than with any one else; being naturally reserved with others upon things regarding his own soul's feelings.

For several weeks in August and September he suffered much from neuralgia, which brought him very low, both in body and mind, as he got but little rest either by day or night; and when the cold weather set in he was very weak indeed. He was unable to leave the house much all through the month of November.

On Dec. 6th, in the evening, he complained of his breathing. It had become difficult. The day following, which was Sunday, he was very unwell; and on Monday still worse. It proved to be an attack of jaundice, with inflammation of various organs. He became day by day much worse, and by Thursday, Dec. 11th, he was unable to leave his room.

The day following he spoke to my wife of the 32nd psalm, that it had been very sweet to him, and just what he felt to need, especially the 8th verse: "I will guide thee with mine eye;" also the words: "I will keep thee as the apple of mine eye." "And," said he, "I feel, whatever the issue of my illness may be, if these promises come from the Lord, all must be well."

Referring to the inclemency of the weather, and the foolish remarks of many people concerning the causes of it, and their propositions to alter it, he said, "If I had the ability, I feel I have courage and love enough for the honour of God and the truth of his Word, to combat all such, and to reject their idle words with disdain. But," added he, "I fear that the love I have is not what will save my soul." My wife speaking further with him of the blessedness of a manifestation of pardon in the near view of death, he said, "Yes; but I want *that*, whatever comes; for if I live and get better, I feel I cannot rest without it any more than I can now."

After this he grew rapidly worse. Dropsy set in, and he was obliged to take to his bed, though his breathing was so difficult and his heart so weak that he could not lie down; and we expected the end at any hour for several days. During this time his mind was very calm; except one night when his sufferings were very acute. He was overcome, and his feelings gave way; but he revived after a little while, and his sister Lucy, who was with him, heard him, as if in continuation of a train of thought, quote the lines:

"Parents, native place, and time,
All appointed were by him."

And a little while after:

"He is able,
He is willing; doubt no more."

He was after this in earnest prayer, apparently forgetting his sister's presence.

During the next day or two he spoke of the little helps he had been favoured with in times past. He particularly mentioned one occasion, when hearing Mr. Coughtrey from the words: "One thing I know; whereas I was blind, now I see." And again, on a certain Tuesday evening, when hymn 736,

"Show me some token," &c.,

was given out. On both these occasions, though he had not that complete deliverance he wanted, yet he was raised to a sweet and comfortable hope in the mercy of God.

After being in the state before described for about a week, he appeared to rally a little, much to the surprise of the medical man and all concerned. And though from the state of his heart, there could be no hope of his leaving his room, yet we hoped he would at least be spared to us a little longer. He kept much the same until Christmas-day; when he was very comfortable in mind, and was able to sit up in bed and read two or three hymns, and said a good deal about the kindness and mercy of God to him. He remarked what a blessing his long-continued affliction had been to him; how it had prevented him from running into evil just at the time when he was ripe for it; but his affliction had been the means of preserving him from snares into which he might readily have fallen. I replied, "Then you cannot take credit to yourself for your moral life?" He said, "No; for if I had not been kept, I should have gone as well as others."

Being a little better, he would have said more at this time, but we were strictly cautioned by the medical man not to make free with him; as the least surprise or excitement, though but momentary, was likely to prove fatal. On this account, we did not initiate any conversation with him; and therefore his remarks from time to time, as given here, were quite spontaneous.

On one occasion he spoke of the comfort he had found in prayer; saying he could not remember exactly when he first began, but it was at a time when various matters began to press heavily upon him; and he felt he had neither wisdom nor strength to deal with them, and was obliged to fall upon his knees, and cry to God to undertake for him, and bless and keep and manifest himself unto him. Then he added, "I have for two or three years past been constrained day by day to read a portion, and fall upon my knees and try to pray before leaving my room in the morning. I have often been tried about it, fearing I was mocking God; and then at times I have felt helped in prayer, and encouraged to pray, so that I could not give it up." He mentioned one particular occasion, when a matter of business pressed heavily upon his mind, and he could not see whence help or deliverance was to come. At length it was suggested to his mind that help would be sent from a certain quarter. But this appeared so unlikely that it seemed *absurd* to expect it. "However," said he, "I was obliged to go to my room, and beg the Lord to undertake and send deliverance in what way he would; and to have mercy upon my poor soul." He had not returned into the shop more than five minutes before deliverance appeared, in the very way, and by the very means, which had seemed so unlikely.

A day or two after Christmas-day, he again grew worse; and by Monday, Dec. 29th, he appeared to be rapidly sinking. He had now lost the comfortable feeling he had enjoyed during the first part of his illness; and, while his sufferings were so acute as to be almost unendurable, a cloud was over his mind, and he sank very low indeed.

On Tuesday, the 30th, he was very ill. To his sister Sarah he said,

"I feel weary in mind and body." She tried to comfort him, saying, "We have been much together, and have helped each other to bear many burdens and cares; but though I cannot help you now, the Lord can. He can ease your pain, give you sleep and rest, and, above all, bless your soul." He looked up, and in a piteously earnest manner exclaimed, "O! Sallie, Sallie! what shall I do in the coming trial if the Lord leaves me?" She replied, "He cannot, he will not, I am sure." She afterwards read two or three hymns to him, including the one beginning:

"Show me some token," &c.

"Ah!" he said, "those two first verses include all I want."

After this she, with my wife, had some talk with him, reminding him of the many instances of the Lord's goodness to him which he had formerly spoken of. The same afternoon his eldest sister asked him if he felt unhappy because he was so very ill. He said, "No, I do not; but I want another manifestation, one more token that I am right; and then I shall not fear." She tried to encourage him; but he said, "If I should be deceived after all, what a dreadful thing that would be!" She reminded him that this concern was not a new thing with him; but that, for a very long time, those around could see a change in him; and further, that God had through all his affliction kept a longing anxious desire to be right alive in his soul. He said, with much earnestness, "I can say that is true."

I saw him in the evening, and found him somewhat revived in spirit, but very weak for want of rest, not having had any real sleep for nearly 48 hours; and not being able to lie down, his position was most painful and trying. He said to me, "O the many times I have cried:

"Assure my conscience of her part

In the Redeemer's blood;"

and though I have hoped again and again that I *should* be blessed with this assurance, yet my comfortable feelings go away so quickly that I fear they are not of the Lord."

The same evening, when wishing one of his sisters good-night, he quoted the last hymn in the Sunday-school hymn-book, altering the words to suit his own feelings:

"O *could* I join to praise him!" &c.

And referred to other hymns which had been sung in the school. He tried to remember one especially which had been particularly sweet to him, but he was too weak to call it to mind.

He passed a much better night than was feared; slept quietly for some hours, and was much refreshed and more calm in the morning. But he was evidently getting weaker. He spoke but little during the early part of the day; but in the evening, as his eldest sister was with him, he began speaking of his feelings, and quoted the words:

"Those feeble desires, those wishes so weak"—

adding, with much emphasis,

"'Tis *Jesus* *inspires*, and bids you still seek."

He said, "When I awoke this morning, I could have sung:

"Though painful at present, 'twill cease before long;

And then O how pleasant the conqueror's song;"

for I felt that prayer had been answered on my behalf, and the Lord had granted me some quiet sleep; and I was encouraged to hope that he would grant me all I need. But O! last night's blessing will not do for to-night, nor this morning's comfort for now. I do not want to be deceived myself, nor deceive others." His sister told him she could not think the Lord would have showed him what he had, if he had meant to leave him at last; but that God could satisfy him without such a great or overpowering manifestation as he perhaps was looking for.

He complained that he felt so weak and confused that he was not able to put words together to express his desires to the Lord; and said that if the blessing depended on his putting *two* words together in a connected form, he could not get it. "But," said he, "*it's only to trust.*"

After a pause, he inquired if there was a hymn beginning:

"Not all the blood of beasts;"

and then quoted the whole verse; also the one beginning—

"The dying thief rejoiced to see."

He then went on to speak to those who were with him of the sweetness he felt and enjoyed. The change in his feelings was very great. He appeared to want all in the house to know of it.

After this he had a little sleep. When he awoke, he was anxious to see me. I went to him at once, and soon perceived the change. He was sitting up in bed, panting for breath; but his countenance showed the peace he felt within. I said, "You are not now afraid of being deceived, or deceiving any one else?" He replied, in his usual affectionately familiar way, "No, Gid.; I feel a sweet confidence that all is right." I read the hymns he had referred to earlier in the evening. He then asked me to read a portion of Scripture, and pray with him, as he feared he should soon be worse, and not able to bear it. Finding his brother John was in the house, he wished him to be called. His cough and breathing were most distressing; but he said a few words, further expressive of the peace and confidence he was experiencing. I read the 23rd Psalm, and, with a heart too full for many words, I tried to thank God for his tender mercy manifested to him. I felt that I had no need to ask for more for him; but that if the Lord's will, he would ease him of his distressing pain.

He evidently thought his end very near, as he was very anxious I should not leave him; saying, "I know it tries you to lose your rest; but the Lord will give you strength."

On his father wishing him good night, he said, "O what a privilege to have so many with me who fear God!" He said, "I felt this morning that I could say, 'sweet affliction'; and I was constrained to tell the Lord that I would not exchange places with the brightest mortal upon the earth. For I have seen the vanity of all below; and compared with the things of God, it is worth no more than a handful of nutshells." He said further, "The other evening, whilst I was a little better, after you had read and prayed with me I felt so particularly happy that I did not know what to do. I wanted to sing and praise the Lord, and I can look back now and remember several times when I have felt something like it before; especially that time when I heard Mr. Coughtrey; and again when hearing Mr. Eddison, and several other times when hearing Mr. Spencer and Mr. Hemington. I felt at each of these times such a hope that I was right, and that all would be well with me that, for the time, I did not know how to contain myself. But then," said he, "this sweet feeling left me so soon, sometimes almost before I left the chapel, that I feared it was all a delusion."

After this he sank into an uneasy slumber; which continued for the greater part of the next day, January 1st, with only now and then a lucid moment.

About nine o'clock in the evening he had a very severe fit of coughing; after which he somewhat revived, and asked for me, that I might read and pray with him as usual. I intimated to him that I feared he was too ill and weak to bear it; but he replied, "O no! that will not hurt me." There happened to be two or three of his sisters present at the moment; and he pressed them to stay, pointing each one to a seat in a perfectly collected manner. I read a part of Jno. xvii. We all felt it

to be a solemn time. After a few words in prayer I left him; and my wife and his eldest sister stayed with him. In a short time he became unconscious, and very restless for awhile. But soon after midnight he became more quiet again, and recognized them both, calling them by name; and then in a perfectly calm manner, as though speaking to himself, he put out his hand and said, "No, none, no, none need despair, since I have found mercy, after such a long dark season of distress and sorrow. And I shall *crown him, crown him, crown him, Lord of all.*" Then, in a clear voice, though panting for breath between each word, he quoted the verse:

"The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there have I, though vile as he,
Washed all my sins away."

I was with him again at 2.30 a.m. and found him much worse. He could not see, though he knew who was with him when he heard our voices. I asked him once how he felt. He replied, "*Happy.*" At about half-past six a change took place. He appeared to be quite conscious, and called both my wife and myself by name; and after a short, but painful struggle, he lay very quiet, and breathed his last. This was at 7 o'clock a.m.; January 2nd.

G. G.

Trowbridge, March 16th, 1880.

JOHN WRIGHT.—On Thursday morning, April 22nd, 1880, John Wright, of Moore Park Terrace, Fulham, aged 31 years. He was buried on Tuesday, the 27th, on which day he would have reached his 32nd year. Some of the readers of the "Gospel Standard" will remember him by name, as they so kindly helped him when lying in the Orthopædic Hospital for eight months with spinal disease, in 1873. His sufferings while there were very great. His backbone was twice burned with hot irons; but he came out much better.

The first I knew of him was in 1869, when he came to work for me, and remained with me until he married Miss Lord, the adopted daughter of our late friend, Mr. T. Ford, of Stepney. He was to me most honourable, and properly conducted, but had no saving knowledge of God when he first came. He went about to one church and another at that time until one day he said, "May I go to the chapel you go to?" I said, "Of course; it is open for any one." He went the next Lord's-day; and never again left.

About a year after, he began to be very concerned about his state. He did not open his mind to me, but as he slept in a room under mine, I could hear his groans and cries and prayers. After some months, he was more cheerful, and would speak more freely to others; but not to me. He told me some time afterwards the way the Lord had delivered him; and he very tremblingly expressed his desire to be baptized and unite with the church; which took place the last Thursday in May, 1873. I believe the friends felt a union of spirit with him. He always seemed at home in the company of spiritual people; and to see the evidence of life and love in him was no small comfort to me, as he was as my own son.

After he married, he prospered very much in business; and having a little family, the cares of this life for a time deadened the fervour of his spirit Godward. But about 18 months ago, the Lord again laid affliction upon him, which gradually increased; and to our grief we saw that the hollow cough, and weakness with pain, would take him from us. A fortnight before he died he felt and really thought himself well, and went to his doctor at Peckham, who told him there was nothing the

matter with his lungs, and he required no more medicine. He was elated by this; but in a day or two showed symptoms of sinking. No doctor is to be commended for such mistaken kindness. It only strengthens the deceiving nature of the complaint, and prepares for a heavier blow.

He now fell into the Lord's hands, and felt quite resigned to his will. On the 18th he spoke freely to me of the Lord's mercy to him, and said, "What a favour it is that I have not now to seek salvation. No! it is mine; and I long to go home." Again he said, "Ah! that verse (Isa. xli. 10) was my deliverance!"

When I went the next day, Monday, the 19th, three days before he died, to bury his little child, there was a great change in him. He could say very little, only that he was ready to go, and that he wanted to be with the Lord. The following letter I had from him while in the hospital:

"Dear Sir,—A line or two to let you know how I am getting on. I sometimes feel so free from pain that I can scarcely believe it is John, and I do not know how to be thankful enough to the Lord for his great deliverance. But he 'worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;' and 'all things work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose.' And I trust by his mercy he has called me from the pleasures of this world, and preserves me from the outward sins; but I have many backslidings of heart; and this often causes me to cry out, 'Can there be any love in me?' Man's heart is desperately wicked and deceitful. I find enough sin in me in one day to sink me to hell, if it was not for his mercy. O that the Lord would give me more patience, and keep me from murmuring or finding fault with his dealings. Please remember me to those at home, and all kind friends; and will you send me the number of this hymn:

"Did Jesus once upon me shine?

Then Jesus is for ever mine.'

"I am, dear sir, yours truly,

"JOHN WRIGHT.

"National Orthopædic Hospital, Bolsover Street,

"March 13th, 1873."

The following I received from his dear widow:

"My dear Friend,—I am told you wish me to write down what was said by my dear departed husband during his illness. You will no doubt remember that shortly after we came to this house he was taken ill with pleurisy, from which he never quite recovered. Last year, the week before Whitsuntide, he said to me one morning, 'My dear, I awoke with these words just as if some one was speaking them to me, and they keep ringing in my ears, and I can think of nothing else: 'His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace; of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.' I replied, 'I should think we have some great trouble before us; but O what a mercy to have such a gracious God to go to.' About two days after, he awoke with these lines, only that he appeared much more happy:

"Once they were mourning here below,

And wet their couch with tears;

They wrestled hard, as we do now,

With sins, and doubts, and fears.

"I asked them whence their victory came;

They, with united breath,

Ascrib'd their conquest to the Lamb,

Their triumph to his death.'

“When he told me, I could not rejoice with him, but was greatly troubled, fearing the trial before us was that I should lose him. On the Monday following, he took a chill, which prostrated him. I think you know that a few weeks before his death, he thought he was getting well, and that when he went to see the doctor he was told by him that such was the case. You will recollect sending him a note, telling him you believed he was deceived with regard to his recovery, that you thought his time here was very short, and should like to see his mind more prepared for what was before him. He just looked at your note and was greatly troubled. I read part of it to him. He then said, ‘From the strain of Mr. Brandon’s note he thinks I am very wrong in wishing to get well. It is true, I feel a shrinking at death; but still I am not really afraid to die. My only anxiety to get well is for your sake, and on account of the dear children. Surely that is not wrong? If it was, do you think the Lord would manifest himself to me as he has done lately? Yesterday and the day before I was sitting in that chair, leaning on the table, trying to lift up my heart to the dear Lord; and each time he came to me in a way he had never done before; and O! the sweet communion I had with him! It was as though I could not leave off; such nearness and freedom!’

“On the Saturday before his death, when I told him the doctor had said he knew that he would not live long, but did not like to tell him so, thinking it would damp his spirits, he was greatly troubled, and said, ‘What a cruel man to deceive me. I trust that I am prepared to die.’ He closed his eyes, and moved his lips for some time, as if in prayer, and shortly after became quite calm. He then said, ‘Now I have done with earthly matters.’ During the night, I read a few verses out of the Bible to him; also a hymn. He appeared to enjoy it, and would say at times, ‘Is not that nice?’ Towards the morning he said, ‘I want to go home. I can leave you in the Lord’s hands. He can take better care of you than I can. I have no wish to get well. I want to go home.’ He then repeated that verse, with his countenance full of joy:

“‘Yes, I shall soon be landed

On yonder shores of bliss;
There, with my powers expanded,
Shall dwell where Jesus is.’

He afterwards looked at me with such a happy expression. I put my ear to his mouth, and he said,

“‘Though painful at present, ’twill cease before long;

And then O how pleasant the conqueror’s song.’

“A little while before the last struggle came on, he said, ‘Bless you, my dear; we part, but we shall meet again.’ O how keenly I feel this stroke! We were so united in spirit. I do indeed feel to need the prayers of the Lord’s people; and I thank you very much for all your kindness and sympathy.

“Yours in Christ Jesus,

“CATHERINE WRIGHT.

“10, Moore Park Terrace, Fulham.”

The foregoing obituary was sent us by our friend Mr. Alfred Brandon, and will no doubt commend itself for its simplicity and sweetness to our readers.

GEORGE MORTON.—On Tuesday morning, May 25th, 1880, aged 69 years, George Morton, of Dunham Massey, Cheshire, Baptist minister.

I gather from my father’s account of the Lord’s dealings with him that he began to be awakened to a sense of his lost and ruined state before God when about 23 years of age. His parents were in poor circumstances, so that he was sent to service when very young, and to

use his own words, there he learned to take God's Holy Name in vain, and to profane his holy sabbath, and also to indulge in some of the most sinful practices. But God, who is rich in mercy, in his own time and way, brought him to a knowledge of his sinful state, both by nature and practice, and put a cry into his heart for mercy. He was brought to humbly confess and acknowledge his sins before a heart-searching and rein-trying God, and to confess that God would be just in sending him to hell, as the due reward of his sins and transgressions. But when God the Holy Spirit brings a poor sinner here, he does not mean to send him to hell. O no! God hath not appointed such a one to wrath, but to obtain mercy through Jesus Christ our Lord.

However, like all God's children who are under the law, he began to think he must do something to merit the favour of that holy God whom he had so greatly offended, and whose laws he had broken. Therefore he began to go to churches and chapels and prayer-meetings, and tried to keep the sabbath day holy. But God the Holy Spirit brought many portions of Scripture to his mind, such as—"Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them;" and "he that offendeth in one point is guilty of all." These made him feel the burden of guilt upon his conscience to grow heavier, so that he could truly say with the apostle Paul, "When the law came, sin revived, and I died."

In these days he used to go to different places of worship, but none of the professors he met with could point out or meet with his case. He was like John Bunyan's pilgrim in the "Pilgrim's Progress," with a great burden of sin and guilt upon his conscience. He wanted to be eased of his burden; but he found too many worldly-wise men who directed him to Mount Sinai. This made his burden to increase so greatly that he thought it would sink him to the lowest hell; but no evangelist could he find until it pleased the Lord to send a minister to Dunham Massey from Manchester, whose name was William Gadsby. Of him my father had heard some very bad reports; but he was so wretched in his feelings that he said he could not make him any worse, so he would go to hear him. This he did; and it pleased the Lord to deliver his captive soul with those words (Psalm ciii): "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies." It is not in me to describe the joy and gladness which flowed into his soul when these words dropped into his heart like the dew, under the preaching of that dear man of God. He was like John, when in the Isle of Patmos, almost ready to worship the messenger which brought him such good news and glad tidings of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

How long he continued in the blessed enjoyment of the presence of his dear Lord and Saviour I cannot tell; but he was eventually baptized by that same dear man of God, William Gadsby, at Manchester, where he became a member; and from thence was sent out as a preacher of the gospel. My father preached as a supply at many places in Lancashire and Cheshire until the year 1846, when there was a small church formed by him at Dunham Massey; and he preached for them without being paid for his labour. The seats were all free; only there was a small collection every quarter to pay the rent of the chapel, and for the cleaning and heating. Most of the members died before him; so that the chapel had to be given up, when he gave up preaching; because no new members sprang up to fill the old ones' places.

He was obliged to give up preaching in 1877, through being greatly afflicted with asthma and bronchitis. His friends can testify that he was a good and gracious man. When I look back upon his past life I can truly say, though of course he had his infirmities, that I never knew him do a wrong or unjust action. He was always very honest and upright in his dealings with his fellow-creatures; always aiming at doing unto others as he would they should do unto him. He was a good and loving father to his children, setting them a good example. He would never allow them to say a rude word. Truly the memory of the righteous is blessed; yes, the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance. He was one that did all the good that he could, but never placed any confidence in his own goodness. He trusted entirely to the merits of Jesus Christ, his only Lord and Saviour. The doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ was to him a delightful theme. He used often to say, if that failed him, he had no other refuge.

I will now give a few extracts from his diary.—“March 19th, 1878. O! sin, sin, what hast thou done?

“Thou hast ruined wretched man,
Ever since the world began;
Thou hast God afflicted too;
Nothing less than that would do.”

O my soul, but for the superaboundings of grace over the aboundings of sin, thou must have perished for ever. Sin is a deep which no human line can fathom; but Christ has fetched his redeemed from the bottom of it, and virtually seated them at God's right hand in glory.”

“July 11th, 1878. O Lord, I have been about 67 years in this vale of tears; and it has been my lot to labour most of that time for the bread that perisheth, and also to labour in the Lord's vineyard for over forty years; and in that time I have tried to preach more than 4000 times, with what result the Lord only knows. That portion hardly seems applicable to me: ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.’

“‘Apace the solemn hour draws nigh,
When I must bow my head and die;
But O what joy this witness gives—
Jesus my Sanctuary lives.’”

“September 14th, 1878. Here I am, a monument of God's discriminating grace and mercy; and his mercies toward me are new every morning; and great is his faithfulness. My mercy is that my salvation depends upon God's faithfulness, and not mine. I have a most harassing and distressing cough; and also I have every comfort that I can desire. O Lord, would it please thee to relieve me from this harassing cough in thine own way. I have tried many things, but find no relief.”

It will be seen from his own diary that he was greatly afflicted for the last few years of his life, which brought him down to so weak a state that sometimes he was quite rambling in his mind; but still he always knew his Christian friends. A few days before he died, two friends called to see him, when his face beamed up with joy, and he said, “Here are my best and heavenly friends.”

In his very last moment, when both speech and reason failed, he was very happy in his soul, his countenance nearly always smiling. Death to him was only a falling asleep. He was buried necessarily at the parish church. We sang a hymn, and one of his Christian friends, Mr. Cowsill, gave a short address before we left the house. “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.”

GEORGE MORTON.

HEAVEN LOOKED FOR.

“He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”—HEB. XI. 10.

THERE is a city far above
 Earth's dark and dreary place,
 Where Jesus reigns, the God of love,
 And shows his smiling face.
 With firm foundations, built by God,
 There saints and angels join,
 Upholding grace, redeeming blood,
 To sing in strains divine.
 Of old the patriarchs look'd with joy
 Toward that heavenly place;
 They hoped to reach that rest on high,
 Their Saviour's sweet embrace.
 Now in a strange and foreign land,
 Like them, we're mourning here;
 In tribulation's path we stand,
 And still look, sighing, there.
 Here sin and Satan grieve us sore;
 But there, when met at last,
 They'll grieve and vex our souls no more,
 And soon time will be past.
 Here snares and dangers throng the way,
 But there no fear can come;
 On earth we have not long to stay,
 And heaven's our destined home.
 O happy home, O sacred place,
 Where Jesus' presence is!
 Lord, bring us there, on him to gaze,
 With sweet immortal bliss.
 O what a blessed end will be
 To all our troubles there!
 Dear city! Now we look for thee,
 In hopes thy joys to share.

G. T. C.

THE only bulwark against popery is the unflinching maintenance of the “everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure;” for there, you know, we shut out contingencies. We leave nothing for *masses*, and nothing for penances; we have nothing to pay the priest for; we have no confession and absolution, except it be the confessing our faults one to another; and that sort of confession and prayer I would always delight in. If you take away the contingencies, there is nothing for “the beast;” he has no carrion left. No; it is the doctrine of eternal certainties that popery cannot receive; and, therefore, wherever a man is over-scrupulous at receiving the doctrines of grace, set him down as journeying towards Rome. Wherever you find a man that scruples at eternal election, personal and particular, eternal redemption, eternal security, that man is on his way to Rome.—*Irons*.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

SEPTEMBER, 1880.

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

LIFE FROM THE DEAD, OR DIVINE
QUICKENING.

SERMON PREACHED BY MR. COWLEY, AT BATH, ON LORD'S DAY
MORNING, DEC. 31ST, 1876.

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."—
EPH. II. I.

If the Lord pleases, I will endeavour to make a few quiet observations; for I have no strength to make a noise, even if you wished it.

Man by nature is spiritually dead; that is, in soul, he is entirely dead to all that is spiritually good. This is through sin. It would be of as much use to go to a dead body, and say, "Arise, and perform the natural actions of life," as to go to dead sinners, and say, "Arise, and act after a spiritual manner." This I am quite sure of from observation, from the declarations of Scripture, and from my own personal knowledge of things; for I was once thus dead. All warnings and admonitions from my parents, all afflictions and trying providences, failed to quicken me into spiritual life, until the Lord saw fit to accomplish it himself; and I trust I can say he did it. I have professed many years that he did, and I hope my profession is not vain: It will be proved soon, when I come to die, what it really is.

Man by nature, as it respects spiritual things, is dead. He may have a mighty mind with regard to natural things. Some have very extensive minds, and wonderful natural powers. They can dive into the things of nature, and comprehend much in respect to the earth and heaven; by that, of course, I mean the visible heaven; but after all this, in the wisdom of God they know not him. Here is God's wisdom displayed. They search into knowledge; they admit that there is a Divine Being; but as it respects spiritual matters, they are void of understanding.

If you read in the first and second chapters to the Corinthians you see how it is there set forth, and how the apostle concludes at last about the natural man. Now, by the natural man, I do not think he means merely an inferior, debased, sensual cha-

racter, but rather an intellectual refined person. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Jesus, too, speaking of such, gives thanks to his Father thus: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." You see in these words how divine sovereignty prevails; as the Lord said: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." Some have said, "Then it is no use to instruct children religiously; it is no use to teach children to read the Bible." That does not follow; for it is useful as showing them their duty as creatures toward their Creator; and God himself has blessed such things to many in after-life. When I was a boy, I was taught a hymn by a lady:

"When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies;"

and I have found it useful for many years; I have indeed. When I have heard it given out, I have felt a kindling in my soul, which always makes me try to join in the singing.

Again. It is useful as exalting the Creator, and showing that all the inhabitants of the earth are called upon to revere God as their Creator, and search into the knowledge of him. They are called upon to retain that knowledge; if they do not, it is iniquity in God's sight. Now, if you will just look into Romans i. and ii., you will find what is said of the heathen world; how they had the knowledge of God in the light of nature; but by and bye they became so corrupt and wicked, they did not like to retain God in their knowledge. Now you see that was very offensive to God. They had a light given to them which declared God powerful and eternal; as Paul writes: "For the invisible things of him from the foundation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." (Rom. i. 20.) And in speaking at Athens, he points out how these things had a voice which called upon men to search and seek after the Lord, "if haply they might feel after and find him."

But the creature man goes from bad to worse, if left to himself; and he has no power of his own to do anything spiritually good. Let him reform his outward conduct, let him improve in judgment as he may, he cannot get into spiritual things. Quickened ones know this by degrees. They do not find it all out at first. They struggle on, and get to know it by hard labour and divine teaching, as it respects some parts. He that is made alive by God finds he is a sinner; that is about the first thing. The doctrine of sinnership and the penalties due to sin have to be learned one after another, by the teaching of the Spirit of God, who guideth into all truth. But I say he finds himself to be a sinner; he is convinced he is such because his conscience, in accordance with the Word and truth of God, tells him so when

it is spiritually quickened. A natural conscience may have much effect upon a man; it may accuse him, or excuse him; it directs him, and he sometimes does his best in accordance thereunto. And sometimes he finds he has a good conscience, that is, one that does not find fault with him. Paul thought he was all right when he was trying to obey the law; but, friends, he that is spiritually alive feels and knows that he is a sinner. His words and acts come to him which he spoke or did long ago. Lies and deceitful things come to mind, which he said or did in order to take advantage. He may have lied, sworn, or been deceitful in the past; now he fears an oath. Now he cannot use flattery, or tell lies to screen himself. If he sees it would be apparently to his advantage to do so, he cannot forfeit his word.

O! friends, he that finds he is a sinner will want to be free from sin. Whatever he has been in times past, he is broken off from former courses; this is an evidence he has life in his soul. Now he turns to religious duties, and goes to a place of worship. He may think all places are consecrated to the Lord where the Bible is read, whether church or chapel. I know it was thus with me. One place was for a time as good as another, when I felt I was a sinner, and wanted help. So he tries to put all his religion, reading, praying, and goodness together as well as he can; to make a garment in which to appear before God. He does not know any better, friends. O, no! he thinks it is by obedience and humiliation that he can get God to save him.

Now these are some of the toilings under the old yoke, the covenant of works. He observes what it speaks of externally; but he cannot get acquainted with what it says of the internal part until he is searched and proved. If he has committed adultery, he cannot do so any more. If he has indulged in taking liquor unto drunkenness, he cannot continue that. If he has gone into all manner of pleasure, he cannot do so now. O no! If vain song-singing has been his delight, it is not so now.

Thus it is that he tries to make his case as good as he can, till by and bye his heart is searched by God. God lets light into his soul, discovering to him the wickedness of his heart. He may have made the outside clean; but now the inside is shown to him. He sees vain thoughts, lustful, envious, murmuring, rebellious thoughts; and however much he trieth, he cannot get rid of them. He sees in the law of the Lord that love is called for, and that any intermission of it calls for condemnation, whereas he feels there is enmity in his heart. He cannot pray in subjection to God's will. He finds there is that in him which would do things contrary to God's law. Here he is searched, and finds out, to his dismay, that he has no power. It will distress a man to find out this. He is commanded to love the Lord with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself; but he finds he cannot do it. He may strive, but he cannot perform it. This sinks his soul.

My friends, these are some of the things that indicate spiritual life. Those who have that see that, instead of being clean within, they are altogether unclean; and the more sin is resisted, the more it rages within: as Paul says: "Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me." Like water which, when stopped up, will burst through all bounds; or like some children who, the more you correct them and show them what is right, the more troublesome they will be; it is just so with a man's heart when the Lord by his law is searching him, and showing him how corrupt he is. Sin does not, may be, flow forth into action. It rages, but it cannot break its bounds, unless God suffers it to do so. Have you not found it thus? Have you not been forced to exclaim: "O wretched man that I am! Unclean without and within! Whither shall I go for help and cleansing?"

These are some of the things that need divine help, my friends. Self-importance cannot live under this searching, as you probably know, friends. When in this state, men cannot do otherwise than acknowledge themselves as men of pollution, deserving hell, and accept the punishment of their sins, justifying God should he see fit to pronounce their eternal condemnation.

But here is a wonderful thing. There is a little hope, underneath all their trouble, that God may show mercy. There is a belief that he is able to do it. The man does not know where it comes from; but there it is; and it keeps him from despair. This little hope, with prayer, secretly supports him. The case is sad, the disease is intolerable; but there is a little hope; and this gives rise to a prayer: "God, be merciful to me a sinner. Have mercy, O Lord God! I have sinned against thee as much as I could; but do thou have mercy." He knows nothing clearly of the true channel through which mercy comes; that he has to learn; all he knows is that, according to Scripture, God can show it through Jesus Christ, therefore he seeks for it.

I suppose you will agree with what I say from your own personal knowledge. Seeing God can show mercy to sinners, the poor thing hopes on, goes to hear the word, or to hear if man can give him any encouragement. When he hears that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, it encourages him. He thinks, What news! Did Jesus Christ come into the world to save such a sinner as I am? Though he does not understand clearly who or what he is, yet there is the persuasion that he is a Person of great eminence and importance; a messenger from God and an intercessor with God; and one that brings good tidings; and such a one believes him. Is it not so?

These are children, babes, not young men or fathers in Israel; and I have heard it remarked that the babe, though it cannot speak, is as much a member of the family as a full-grown young man. The babe, too, is generally much thought of. It cannot help itself. It must be led along, guided, and protected, and it will attain to manhood by and bye. I do not think we have many fathers in our day. There may be many young men.

Young men, you know, are very liable to commit errors in judgment and practice, and to give imprudent advice; fathers are not so; they know better by painful experience, and heartfelt knowledge of God.

But here the poor creature is; and he shall be helped on. He shall know, by and bye, that Jesus is a most glorious, incomparable, wonderful Person. That he has more than one nature, and that in his being God and Man his mightiness consisteth, and his power to save us. We read the church of old, having a revelation of him, said, "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." The answer is, "I" (you see, Jesus will speak to any that enquire after him) "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." There he is in his divine and human natures, one most glorious Person, which makes his work of salvation and regeneration most glorious too. And when a sinner sees this, it takes his mind most wonderfully. O what a marvellous Person he sees Jesus Christ to be! He cannot understand how two such natures as weakness and mightiness should become one Person; but he believes that Jesus Christ is such a Person as combines the two natures, and that he is "able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him." This is seeing him as set forth in the gospel, and receiving him by faith. He becomes then to that soul a saviour, and the bestower of all heavenly blessings.

What is said regarding the kingdom of God, faith reiterates in the poor sinner's soul. Faith is the substance of things not seen. It gives a reality to them, beloved. By this a man knoweth they are true, and is sure of them being right; so he goeth on in the strength of this.

Our text says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." These persons have some very wonderful privileges. They become, that is, it is manifested in and to them, that they are sons of God; that they have "a name better than of sons and of daughters;" that they are united to the Lord Jesus Christ. They are imperfect without him, and he would not be perfect without them; for he is the Head, and they the body. He is the King, they the subjects. So Christ and his people must be united, for there must be perfection in the body.

The beginning of a life of faith is small, so to speak; but it increases in the poor thing's soul by the Holy Ghost leading him along; and he has access to the Father, through Christ Jesus. The Father showeth that he hath patience with such a one, showeth that he hath made ample provision in his Son to meet the necessities of all such. Hence it is the Father of mercies is called upon, and approached unto; and the Spirit declares that the seeking ones are sons, and gives them the spirit of adoption.

It is a great thing to be a son; and how blessed it is to know it. It is indeed. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the

Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Paul says, "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Every soul that is brought out of nature's darkness into marvellous light is an adopted child, though not every one who is so, can call God Father; yet he is a member of the family. A babe cannot at first speak, but its attempts to speak are listened to; and it is very pleasing to a father and to a mother when it begins to say, "Father." It is indeed; and it is pleasing to God to be addressed as Father spiritually. It is honouring to the Son; and it is the production of the Holy Ghost. So here is the Trinity in Unity well pleased with this claim. You, my friends, who have good ground to make it, and wish to make it, but are afraid; what can you do? I will tell you how I do. I inwardly cry, "Lord God, help me to say, My Father. I should like to say, My Father. Do indulge me with that confidence I have had at times."

How blessed it is to think our safety does not consist in this confidence, or the want of it, but in Jehovah's being unchangeable in his purposes of grace, and in the redemption and salvation accomplished by Jesus Christ. He has made "an end of sin;" he is "the end of the law for righteousness." Paul found it so, and others also, as they put him on, and walked in him; and Jesus Christ is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

So the quickened ones are drawn by the Father. They become acquainted with him, and the Son is their delight, as the channel of communication from the Father to them, and of their access to him. No wonder if they raise the Name of Jesus high in their thoughts and songs. O! friends, that is as God the Father would have it. He has said, Christ "shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high." These quickened ones find they need all Christ has. They do not want a part of him, but all. They are not like those who are satisfied with the thought that God has done his part, and they must do theirs; but they want him to do everything. They want his blood to cleanse, as well as to atone. They want his righteousness to beautify them, to exonerate them from all law charges, and to deliver them from condemnation. They want the promises made to him to be fulfilled in their behalf; they want the Spirit which proceeds from the Father, and is sent by the Son, to sanctify their affections, to keep their minds upwards, and cause them to press towards him.

Paul writes about the prayers of the saints, and shows that they want the blessed Spirit to help them in prayer. They cannot pray without him. He is the Spirit of grace and supplication; and the Father said he would pour him forth,—that is, in his gifts and grace. We receive that in measure which Jesus received without measure. So it is, we become penitent sinners, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the glorious eternity

he has in reserve for all such characters. God's people supplicate for preserving grace, that they may be enabled to persevere, for they are distressed when they read of those who have failed. Is it not so? I know it is with me. Hence it is, those who are quickened have many tremblings. The Spirit is needed to guide them into truth; to show them who Adam was, how they stood in him as their federal head, and became sinners by his one transgression. This is mysterious, that the whole race should be in that one man; yet God made him a covenant head, so that when he sinned, I sinned. Yes; by his disobedience I am made a sinner. What a fall that was of our first parents! What a corrupt nature we have derived from them! It is derived by us through our immediate parents, from Adam, the first parent of all. This is how I became a sinner.

O! what a thing, then, to be led to Jesus, and to see how men become righteous! By the disobedience of one, many (that is, all naturally) were made sinners; by the obedience of One,—the Second Adam, the Man Christ Jesus—many (that is, Christ's seed) are made righteous. Now the extent of the expressions is not alike. Adam is the federal head of the whole human race; Jesus is the head of the election of grace. He bore their sins, and wrought out a righteousness for them, by which they become righteous. Therefore every one that Christ saved shall hear his voice, because they are his. He said to some, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." Then, friends, is it not a wonderful thing to be a quickened soul? It is indeed.

Notwithstanding all the after-changes in experience, that seem to make against such a one, and which make him feel as if he must die, yet he can never perish; he can never be dead in trespasses and sins again. He hears the Lord's words. He has a heart to understand; he cannot be as he was before. Christ's words are enough to settle that. "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." And to Martha he said, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." The quickened sinner cannot die, my friends. He may have death frequently working in him; then he will have to cry for quickening grace, and he shall be heard. Godly things shall be spirit and life to him again. He shall know again what it is to go forth in the dances with them that make merry.

If you look at Hos. ii., the Lord says, "I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness." Then when he has brought her there, he says, "I will give her her vineyards from thence; and she shall sing as in the days of her youth."

The words in Joel ii. 21 were once a very great help to me. I lay in bed on a Sunday morning, not feeling very well, and yet had seven miles to go to preach. I thought, My strength will not let me go. I can say something about being poorly; but that came in: "Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice; for the Lord will do great things." I leaped out of bed, dressed as quickly as I could, and went seven miles without breakfast. I

could not have gone if I had not been quickened, comforted, and anointed afresh. So it is that the lame take the prey; not the strong. Hannah learned that "by strength shall no man prevail." May God give you to prove it.

THE TIMES OF SAINTS IN THE HAND OF LOVE.

(Continued from p. 354.)

WE next come to a very important time in a Christian man's career,—*a time to wait*. We have seen the child of God under the law, and at length brought down into the dust, with apparently none to help him. The law has by divine power wrought in him its proper effects; as Paul writes: "That every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God." When the child of God is brought here, and shut up as in a prison-house in his conscience, the Lord as a sovereign can, of course, deal with him as he pleases. In some cases, no doubt, deliverance comes suddenly. Experiences in these divine matters will vary. Some are suddenly plunged by conviction into the depths of misery; and some as suddenly delivered from those depths. In such cases, the waiting time we are intending to write about is not experienced; but in the greater number of cases there will be what we have called "*a time to wait*" before a full deliverance comes.

The character of this time is, for the most part, as follows:—The poor soul, having been brought down into the dust of self-abasement through its toil and trouble under the law, is raised up to some degree of gospel hope and consolation by divine intimations of mercy. Some touches of the blessed Spirit, some glimpses of God's love, some visits of Christ in the word of promise, have raised up faith and hope in the heart. Some discoveries, too, of forgiveness of sins and imputation of righteousness in and by Christ have stirred up great desires; or, in Scripture language, hungerings and thirstings after the possession of these blessings in the sinner's heart. These things put the soul into a waiting posture. Hope and desire mingling together in the heart stir it up to seek, and make it wait for the things sought after. Misery and wretchedness felt in the heart, mercy in some degree revealed to that heart from heaven, and faith the gift of God, mixing, as will then be the case, with the things revealed, excite desires, animate hopes, and produce a waiting upon God for the things so absolutely needed.

In this condition the man may be kept for a lengthened period. Some have gone for years before they have attained what their souls were seeking after,—a satisfying persuasion of their interest in Christ, and the enjoyed pardon of all their sins. Many are carried forward for a long time between hopes and fears; the Lord from time to time giving them little helps and sweet glimpses

of his mercy, and then withdrawing himself, so that they again are at great uncertainty, and grope for the wall as the blind. Now these poor souls, though not happy, are really safe. The man truly on the road to the City of refuge shall not perish. We are not justified before God according to the degree of our faith; though we are greatly dependent upon that degree, so far as peace and joy of conscience go. Moreover, all those intimations of mercy we receive, those incomings of the Word of God, those visits of his Spirit, are not in vain; they communicate a little strength to the soul, and thus enable the man to hold on and hold out until the blessing comes. They are not a full deliverance, but they are foretastes and earnestings of it, and enable God's Jacobs to wrestle on until they carry off the full blessing.

David, in his Psalms, excellently describes this waiting time of which we are writing, and shows us how it is produced, and what it effects, as illustrated by his own experience. The poor man had been in depths—depths of guiltiness, felt corruptions, temptations, and fears. Into these his poor desponding soul had been sinking. He had been well-nigh plunged into the gulf of even black despair. But the Lord had not left him to himself. At the worst, he had secretly supported him. Consequently, he had looked about to see if there was any way of deliverance, any ground of hope for one in such a deplorable case. The poet well describes such a state in these words:

“Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord,
Whose hope, still hovering round thy Word,
Would light on some sweet promise there,
Some sure support against despair.”

Thus the psalmist began to make diligent search into things. And, first, he considers his state in relation to the law, or covenant of works. But here he could find no relief whatever. That law he knew was most perfect, and most strictly and justly severe. According to that law, and as it respects those under it, and those therefore who sought to stand before God through their own obedience to it, God, he knew, was One who marked iniquities. The psalmist knew that such a marking of iniquities must in his case be inevitable ruin; and therefore he renounces all legal hopes, and all attempts to appear before God on any such footing, in these words: “If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?” He knew that he could not answer God one of a thousand of such legal charges. Hence there is produced in him a holy self-despair. But it is not black despair; for his faith looks from the law to the gospel; from God in the law to God in Christ Jesus. Here views of mercy meet his look. He sees that in Christ there is forgiveness with God. He means such a forgiveness as is worthy of an infinite God, and such as a poor utterly lost sinner stands in need of. This is plain. The whole state of the case proves that it is no little half-and-half forgiveness which the psalmist by a divine faith espies. It is a forgiveness sufficient for a man in depths to rest

a weary soul upon. It is a forgiveness which an infinite God, who in the law marked iniquities, could righteously bestow upon a sinner. It was a forgiveness, too, "with God," that he might bestow it upon the man who needed it. Not with God as if God himself was enriched by it, but with God freely to bestow upon a begging sinner. This, too, is clear, for it was with God that he might be feared, that is, approached in a way of prayer by the poor trembling sinner.

Now what was the effect of this sweet and blessed discovery of forgiveness? He himself tells us: "I wait for the Lord; my soul doth wait." The believing discovery of forgiveness of sins, as revealed in God's Word and by his Spirit to the psalmist's heart, brought him to the place we are writing about, or introduced his soul into this time to wait.

There are three things about this time to wait very noticeable. First, it is produced by faith's discovery of the truth of God's Word; as the psalmist writes: "And in his word do I hope." Secondly, it is a *diligent* waiting, as he again says: "My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning." And of course these things imply that there is a diligent use of appointed means. A Word-produced waiting will be a Word-regulated waiting likewise. And, thirdly, it is a *patient* waiting; as the psalmist further describes it in the 40th psalm: "I waited *patiently* for the Lord."

O what a blessed place is this to be in! We do not say that it is a comfortable place; but it is a blessed one, and it is a place of promise of sweet and comfortable and glorious things yet to come. "Blessed," says Isaiah, "are all they that wait for him." And, again, it is written (Isa. lxiv. 4): "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him." We always consider that there is as great a display of the Almighty power of the Spirit of God, and as great an exercise of faith in this waiting time of a child of God, as in his most triumphant seasons. "Here," indeed, we believe, "is the patience, and the faith, of the saints." Here they are put to the trial, and manifested to be genuine. No hypocrite or false character can stand this test. Nature can run forward without the Lord, or come to a mere dead standstill and a resting upon notions, false things, and in the flesh; but true grace alone can hold on its way during the time to wait, and keep a man still patiently and diligently seeking the Lord until he has mercy upon him.

This time, then, is in the hand of the Lord. It is his own work, by his Spirit's application of his gospel word to the poor distressed heart, to bring a man into this waiting posture. It is his continued work by the same blessed Spirit to keep the man still waiting on in spite of all oppositions, hindrances, and apparent delays, in spite of the workings of the flesh and its lusts, the world and its seductions, and the devil and his temptations.

O how often is it suggested to the poor harassed mind: "This evil is from the Lord; why wait any longer upon him? God's mercy is not for such as you are. Your case is exceptional; unto which of the saints will you turn for a resembling experience? The very time you have waited proves the mercy you want is not for you. Others, indeed all the true people, get the blessing much quicker. Besides, it is your own fault that you have not got it; you ought to believe, and thus get the comfort. Why cannot you do what so many tell you they both can do and have done? God works no such miracles as you suppose. He offers you Christ if you will have him, and it is now your part to take him as thus offered; and if you do not do this, there is no hope for you. You cannot be saved." A thousand suggestions of this kind will perplex and torment the poor man's mind; especially will this be the case if the man has to wait his thirty and eight years at the pool of Bethesda, and sees many another carry off the healing and the blessing, whilst he lingers solitarily on.

But what a power of the Lord is with this man! How this time is in the hand of God! Through sinkings and risings, through changing frames and feelings, through seasons of greater earnestness, through fits of coldness and indifference, through a thousand killing fears and deadening circumstances, he must go forward. The length of this waiting time was fixed by God from eternity. The man cannot shorten, and Satan cannot lengthen, these days. It is absurd to suppose that what depends upon divine sovereignty is in the control of the creature. God must create the fruit of the lips—"peace, peace," to this troubled person.

All the events of this waiting time are also in the hand of God. What helps the man shall receive, when and to what degree he shall be left to himself, that he may know what is in his heart, and learn truly to depend only upon God; all his decays in diligent seeking; all his entanglements and hindrances; all his revivings and the fresh stirrings-up of his mind to eager pursuit after the blessing; all these things were written in God's book, and are under the overruling hand of his grace and providence.

The end, too, of this time, for it shall have an end, sooner or later, is in the hand of God. It is a time designed for the wearing out of a man's natural strength, and teaching him the freeness and fulness of God's grace; and to the accomplishment of these ends it is managed by infinite wisdom. Very possibly, according to Scripture language, "the end thereof shall be with a flood." The devil may have wrath, and be permitted to display it, "knowing he hath but a short time." The poor man thus may be just at the brink of hopelessness; his hope and his strength apparently perished from the Lord; his life drawing near to the destroyers. Thus the poor man's time of extreme need shall prove the time of the Lord's full discovery of mercy; and God shall give the soul that blessing which it has long waited for and almost despaired of attaining; and the word shall be fulfilled ex-

perimentally: "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

(To be continued.)

PROPHETIC HINTS.

III.

My dear Friend,—I must now give you a few words of caution. If, in endeavouring to understand the mind of the Holy Spirit in the word of prophecy, you read various authors, you will most likely be troubled and perplexed by finding in them a variety of opinions upon the same portions of the prophetic word. I by no means say that it is wrong or unwise for you to read different works upon prophecy. If you read with caution, reverence, and prayer, this may enlarge your views, and be very profitable. But I am warning you of a danger. Finding such various and even disagreeing opinions, you may be shaken in mind as to the certainty of the word of prophecy itself. You may be tempted to think that, like the heathen oracles of old, it has no sure and definite signification. I warn you to pray against such a thought. Remember, too, that everything which is of God must have that superhuman wisdom and glory, that divine finish and excellence about it, which will be sure to surround it with difficulties to finite minds. In the 5th chapter of this very book of Revelation we find that John "wept much because no man (*Greek*, "no one"—*i.e.*, no creature) in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon."

What we require, then, in coming to the Word of God is a humble teachable mind. Pride, and arrogance, and self-sufficiency, are poor students in divine things. Besides, it is to be remembered that all writers upon prophecy have not necessarily been even men of faith and prayer, or truly taught of God. What then? Through the sublime nature of the Word itself we may expect ignorance, and therefore diversity of opinion, even in the true children of God; and, from the nature of the carnal mind, false opinions of a very injurious character are almost sure to be advanced by the ungodly. Nothing leads to greater perversion of the truth than the unsanctified intellect of man meddling with the Word and truth of God. As the old Scotch divine wisely said to Halyburton, "Sirrah, unsanctified learning has done much harm to the kirk of God."

I would have you, then, in your reading of authors, very careful. Pay particular attention to those of whose godliness, and spirituality, and divinely-produced knowledge in the things of God, you have good reason for thinking the most highly. At the same time, pin your faith upon no man. So far as implicitly receiving his opinion goes, swear by no man. The divine oracles are alone fully inspired, and therefore infallible. It is folly to despise the wisdom of the dear and well-taught men of God

who have gone before us. It is also folly to so give up our private judgments in deference to theirs as to have no opinion of our own. In this sense, we should call "no man father." We have a right to a private judgment, so as that judgment is formed in the fear of God and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In the writings of the truly godly and God-taught we shall generally find much to instruct and edify; but at the same time, some things which the Lord may lead us not to receive, but even reject.

Now, these reflections lead me on naturally to notice a point in which I believe some who fear God have held very different opinions. You will of course have observed that the Lord has been pleased not only to give us the character of particular periods, but also to assist us by certain numerical computations. He has been pleased to give us some idea of how long certain things are to last, by numbering the days, months, or years of their duration. Thus we read of a time, times, and the dividing of a time in Dan. vii. 25, and again in Rev. xii. 14. Then we read of weeks in Dan. ix.; of days and months in Rev. xi. 2, 3; xii. 6; xiii. 5. Also of months in Rev. ix. 10; and of an hour, a day, a month, and a year in Rev. ix. 15. See also Dan. viii. 14, and xii. 7, 11, 12.

In all probability you are aware that different views have been held in respect to these days, months, and years. Some have taken the words literally, understanding by them nothing more than a literal day of 24 hours; a literal month of 30 days; a literal year of 360 days. Others have considered, and we cannot but believe correctly, that these terms are symbolical, or in other words that a day stands for a year, or 360 days; a month of 30 days for 30 years; and a year of 360 days for 360 years. Then, according to this way of computing, a time, or one year, is 360 years; times, twice as much, or two prophetic years, *i.e.*, 720 years; and the dividing of a time 180 years, or half a prophetic year.

I cannot, in a short letter like mine, which merely pretends to give hints, enter into the arguments which have been used on both sides. As is usually the case, both sets of interpreters have a goodly quantity of reasons to urge why their view must be the correct one. The wisdom of the wise is to weigh up such reasons, and see in this way on which side truth lies. To my own mind, one of the most weighty arguments in favour of what is called the year-day opinion, or that the day in symbolical prophecy stands for a year and so on, is contained in the following quotation taken from a little book entitled "The Telegraphic Sign:"

"It is argued by some who contend for the literal meaning of time, that the word 'day' in Daniel always signifies a day. It is admitted that 'beasts' are emblematical; but days are insisted on as literal. But if a *beast* emblematically signify a kingdom, why may not a day emblematically signify a year? It is thus that duration in the Word of God is set forth in miniature. A prophecy concerning future events is a

picture, or representation of the events in symbols; which being fetched from objects visible at one view, or cast of the eye, rather represent the events in miniature than in full proportion. It would hardly seem consistent to describe a beast, ravaging during the space of 1260 years; or a witness, if he were a man, prophesying so long; or a woman dwelling in the wilderness so many years. Therefore that the duration of the events may be represented in terms suitable to the symbols of the visions, it is reasonable to expect that the symbols of duration be also drawn in miniature; or in a proportionable arithmetic to the symbols of the events, which are also in miniature. So that as a lion, a leopard, a bear, may represent vast empires, and a woman the whole church, and the like; it is more proportionable to the nature of those things that are thus used for symbols, to express their acts by such short measures of time as bear the same proportion to the duration of that great event which is represented by such small matters."

This appears to me forcible and good reasoning. When we have God setting things before us in literal language we must interpret all literally; but when he is pleased to convey his mind in the way of symbols, in which one thing stands as a sign for another, it seems by no means improper to consider that the language used generally is symbolical, both that which represents or sets forth the events, and that which sets forth their duration, or time of lasting. Thus, for example, when we see the literal man, Nebuchadnezzar, as in Dan. iv., in a state of degradation, we naturally understand the expression seven times, as in ver. 23, to mean literal years; but if we were to conceive of Nebuchadnezzar as the type of something greater, we as naturally should suppose the seven times to indicate a vastly enlarged period.

I think, then, that those who have conceived the idea of a day in prophetic language as frequently meaning a year were led to this thought by the Holy Spirit himself. But when I say this, do I wish to utterly reject all that has been advanced by those who have held the other opinion? I do not think this would be wise. Those who take the literal view necessarily consider that a great part of prophecy is unfulfilled, and that what is set forth will take place in a very short space of time. Now is it not very much in harmony with what we know of the Lord's methods, if we combine the views of those who, holding the year-day theory, consider the greater part of the prophecy of John fulfilled, with the views of those who believe the greater part by far yet unfulfilled. Thus we may recognize that much has indeed already had a fulfilment, but that in all probability there may yet take place events in the nature of a more complete fulfilment, events of vaster magnitude, and condensed into a comparatively brief space of time? Is it unscriptural to suppose that there may yet be in reserve, a sort of prophecy-fulfilling climax, in which iniquity shall assume its final shape of God-denying abomination, and bring upon those who dwell upon the earth, and are carried away with it, *swift* as well as terrible destruction? May there not be a continued fulfilment of prophecy taking place through a length-

ened period, as those who hold the year-day theory believe? May there not also be some grand climax of accomplishment occupying the shorter periods of time of three and a half, or 1260 literal days? May not, too, this last grand climax be foreshadowed from time to time by certain resembling events?

I think a little consideration of Scripture and God's methods of acting, as set forth therein, will lead us to readily entertain the ideas I throw out in these hints; ideas reconciling to my mind apparent disagreements in the views of the godly.

But I must draw my letter to a conclusion. I do not want you to be stumbled at the disagreements of the godly, whether real or apparent. I desire, too, that you may not be unduly troubled by finding that godly men have made the most positive assertions as to when certain events shall take place, and yet those assertions have proved to be mistaken ones. I would not have you think there is no certainty in the revelation of God, or, at any rate, no value in what good men have written, because they have sometimes been too rash, and far too dogmatic and positive, and therefore have made very serious mistakes. If they had written more modestly, they would have written better. If they had said that the numbers given by the Holy Spirit indicated that certain events might be expected to take place about such a time, they would, to my mind, have spoken more scripturally and more wisely. They have too much overlooked, it appears to me, the design of the Lord in giving these computations of time, and also certain things connected with those computations themselves. God's design, I believe, is not to make us carnally secure, but watchful and prayerful. Could we tell the precise day or year of Christ's coming, or of certain terrible and trying events, would it not rather tend to prevent and injure such a state of mind than to cherish it? Whereas for the Lord to have given us the character of the times preceding and heralding so great an event as the Lord's coming, and numerical computations showing about the period when events more immediately going before and connected with it might be looked for; is not this a plan which we might have expected infinite love and wisdom to have adopted, both to comfort and also keep in a watchful, prayerful, considering state such poor creatures.

I cannot help observing, in conclusion, that one or two things seem to have been a little overlooked in respect to these computations. The destruction of that which is represented by the beast has been looked for at a particular time, and has been dogmatically fixed for a particular year by some who believe it to mean the papacy. Dating the beginning of popery in a particular year, and considering it is to be destroyed 1260 years afterwards, they have only had to work out an easy sum in arithmetic in order to say when its end should take place. But is such a method very reliable? To say nothing about the difficulty which attends the assigning an exact date to the rise of the papacy, does not Scripture itself, as in Rev. xi., clearly point out that the beast

will have, so to speak, his dying struggles? It is after the 1260 days of their prophecy that the beast is said to slay the two witnesses, who then lie dead three-and-a-half days. May not we, therefore, expect that after the beast has continued his *judicially* assigned period, that period in which he was ordained by God himself to afflict the church, and try the sons of men, he will still permissively be allowed to make a sort of dying effort in which he will be exceedingly terrible? Just as God raised up Pharaoh to oppress the children of Israel in Egypt, or various nations to harass them on account of their evil doings in the land of Canaan, or Nebuchadnezzar to carry them captive to Babylon, so, no doubt, both Turk and Pope have been raised up by the Lord for trial, discipline, and judgment. Also, just as in days of old, as soon as the Lord's judgment had been executed and his people and cause brought low, he rose up against the oppressor and on behalf of the oppressed (see Jer. xxv. 9-14; Dan. ix. 1; Zech. i. 12-16), so also in the cases of both Eastern and Western antichristian powers. But, then, as in the former cases, some lengthened period might elapse from the Lord's first rising up before Israel was freed and the oppressor overthrown; so in the latter cases also. Thus the days of judgment may be over before the days of trouble, which, nevertheless, have their assigned limit, are ended.

I think, then, that the prophecy was given to show us the character of the times and seasons, also by numerical calculations to give us some idea of the period in which our lot is cast, and some expectations, as the time for their fulfilment draws on, of certain events ere long taking place. Then these numbers may enable us to consider how everything is from eternity ordered and arranged by God. No trouble can really exceed its appointed time. If the beast has his dying throes, they are permissively ordained by God. This is perhaps one of the sweetest and most consoling views we can take of the prophetic numbers. We may not from them be able to foresee the day or hour of an event. Even the godly and the spiritual may not be able to do that; much less the ungodly and the careless and carnally-minded. But the children of God may say,

"All our times are in his hand;
All events at his command."

The days, months, years of every trouble, of beast, false prophet, and dragon, are all numbered.

Believe me, yours in sincerity,

"A BABE WHO WOULD BE WISE."

As the least worm of the earth, in the order of the old creation, is no less a creature than the sun, yea, or the most glorious angel in heaven; so in the order of the new-creation, the least spark or grain of true grace that is from the sanctifying Spirit, is a new creature, no less than the highest faith or love that ever were in the chiefest of the Apostles.—Owen.

THE TRUE AND THE FALSE CHRIST DISTINGUISHED.

“Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many.”—Matt. xxiv. 5.

THAT many did arise before Jesus came in the flesh, and give out they were the Messiah, history shows; and history also proves that since the Saviour's incarnation some have arisen of the same class, and have deceived many, who were ordained to be deceived by such liars. “Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?” He is antichrist. He hath neither the Father nor the Son. All such bold pretenders could give no evidence to spiritual men, either before Christ came or since, that they ever came forth from God; but were filled with pride, presumption, free-will, and every delusive error. And their doctrine led their hearers, very naturally, into many extremes of folly; insomuch that the civil power was often obliged to interfere to keep public order. Still, many were deceived by them, which is a striking confirmation of the Saviour's words: “*They shall deceive many* ;” but not one of the elect. These have an unction from the Holy One, and are taught of him as the truth is in Jesus. No false Christ, no damning error, shall fully and finally deceive any elect vessel of mercy.

Without doubt, every false Christ was raised up by Satan with a view to defeat the eternal purposes of Jehovah; for Satan, though he has received a deadly blow, is so filled with desperate malice and presumption, that he cannot rest until the day comes called “the judgment of the great day;” when the devil, and those who have been deceived by him, shall receive their final doom, and suffer the vengeance of eternal fire.

Now, a right knowledge of the true Christ is the greatest mercy that any sinner can have in this world; a deception in this matter is the most awful thing that a living man can contemplate. Upon a right knowledge of Christ hangs his eternal all. “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” Where there is a true knowledge of Christ there is a true knowledge of the Father; and in that man's heart where the Father and the Son dwell, there also dwelleth the Holy Ghost. “Ye are the temple of the Holy Ghost;” and “God dwelleth in you.”

London, July 1st, 1833.

When I was last at Maresfield I hinted to my friend that I had attempted to write a line touching the true and the false Christ, and you requested me to send it, finished or unfinished. Now, my brother, the above is what I had written; and as such I send it. I had intended to have enlarged, but I am again laid aside. I have been a prisoner in bed for the last ten days; and what with bleeding, medicine, &c., I am left extremely weak. This I can say,—it is good for me that I have been afflicted.

Not that I have been favoured with high enjoyments; no, but a close cleaving to Christ; and his Name, Person, promises, grace, and eternal salvation, have been a sweet prop, amidst many pains and many temptations. Indeed, my friend, the doctrines I have received of the Lord and preached to others have been the joy of my heart; and could I have found strength on my bed I would have sung loudly,

“A debtor to mercy alone,” &c.

I wrote to Mr. Weller, I believe, the day or two before I was laid aside, hoping I was better; but our times are with the Lord, who is most wise and most gracious in all he does.

My love to Mrs. Mannington and all the brethren in Christ whom I love; and I pray that great grace may rest upon them and on you. My physician considers me much better, and I believe I am; but when I may be able to preach again I know not. The Lord grant me patience, and a continual resting upon him. With love,

Your poor, but I trust sincere Friend,

To Mr. Richard Mannington, Maresfield.

HENRY FOWLER.

THE HOUSE OF GOD.

Suggested by the occasion of the Re-opening of Gower Street Chapel, May 18th, 1880, after it had been shut up for various alterations.

GOD-HONOUR'D house! Again within thy walls
 With grateful pleasure we for worship meet;
 And memory with refreshing thought recalls,
 Past seasons, sweet and sad, or bitter-sweet.
 Awhile thy walls resounded with a noise,
 Far other than was wont thy peace to break;
 And different workmen lifted up the voice,
 For our convenience and our comfort's sake.

May God preserve, if such his gracious will,
 While time shall last, this house unto his praise,
 Set like a beacon on a lofty hill,
 To guide and warn, with truth's unerring rays.
 The Lord send such as he will own and bless,
 As preachers his deep mysteries to declare,
 The flock to lead in paths of righteousness,
 Nor e'er let "Ichabod" be written there.

How many servants now are gathered in
 To heaven's blest haven of eternal rest,
 Who laboured there, 'gainst Satan, world, and sin,
 To impart the good wherewith themselves were blest.
 There many saints now round the throne of God,
 Have sweetly joined in worship while below,
 And had, whilst journeying on fair Zion's road,
 Sweet foretastes of that fulness now they know.

The wanderer there hath had his footsteps turned,
 'To see if he, mayhap, a place may find,
 Where aught of hope or mercy can be learned,
 'To ease the anguish of a guilty mind;
 "Lo here! Lo there!" has been the blind guides' cry;
 Do this; do that; and ye shall surely live;
 Till, spent with toil, he feels he'll live and die
 Like Cain, a vagabond and fugitive.

He hears, and sweetly feels the charming power
 Of peace and pardon through a Saviour's blood;
 A houseless, hopeless, wanderer no more,
 He finds a place of rest, in Christ and God.
 What wondrous power the "joyful sound" contains,
 When heard with grace and unction from above!
 How blest the change a sinner's soul sustains,—
 The power of terror, to the power of love.

How sovereign is the Lord of heaven and earth!
 He calls his people how, when, where he will;
 Of baser parentage, or nobler birth,
 As seems him good his purpose to fulfil.
 The lofty Pharisee shall love abase
 To cry, like Job, "Behold, I'm wholly vile;"
 The vilest profligate his saving grace
 Can raise to honour with a pardoning smile.

His word shall be a piercing two-edged sword,
 Or hidden, fretting moth, as suits the case;
 The purposes in each event accord,
 'To kill the soul to every hope but grace.
 But time, and space, and utterance would fail,
 'The exceeding grace and goodness to declare,
 Wherewith the Lord doth oft his saints regale,
 When gather'd in his house, for praise or prayer.

The hungry, thirsty, poor, and needy here,
 Receive of food and help, a sweet supply;
 And souls oppress'd by foes, or sin, or fear,
 Bring help from heaven, "with loud and bitter cry."
 The weak, and faint have here their strength increased,
 The dry and barren are afresh bedew'd;
 The guilty conscience sees God's wrath appeased;
 And faith, and hope, and love, are oft renew'd.

The ordinances, instituted by
 The Saviour, when he dwelt with mortal clay,
 Are there observed; and Jesus from on high,
 His saints doth bless, as they his will obey.
 But who can comprehend, much less describe,
 The depths of love, and grace, depicted there?
 The tongue of angel, and the pen of scribe,
 Fail half the blessed import to declare.

The baptism the Saviour underwent,
 All righteousness in order to fulfil,
 Pre-figuring sin's most direful punishment,
 And in obedience to his Father's will;
 This privilege and honour has the saint,
 To follow Jesus through the watery grave;
 Indeed their love appears but cold and faint,
 Who, knowing what Christ says, obedience waive.

The supper, in the forms of bread and wine,
 Bring Jesus' blood and body to our view;
 His awful sufferings here we have in sign,
 Anew set forth, as oft as this we do;
 The broken bread in figure feebly shows
 The direful agony the Saviour bore,
 As o'er his soul wrath's flood of vengeance flows,
 And nail, and spear, his human nature tore.

O house, blest house, where God doth condescend
 To meet with sinners, and his love make known;
 The meanest place in thee, with God my Friend,
 More honour hath than highest earthly throne.
 There may I often, while I sojourn here,
 With saints assemble, and God's favour prove;
 And when this earthly house shall disappear,
 Ascend to heaven's eternal house above.

C. J.

OWEN ON COMMUNION WITH THE SON JESUS CHRIST.

IN return hereunto, for the carrying on of the communion between them, the saints delight in Christ; he is their joy, their crown, their rejoicing, their life, food, health, strength, desire, righteousness, salvation, blessedness. Without him they have nothing; in him they find all things. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ." (Gal. vi. 14.) He hath from the foundation of the world been the hope, expectation, desire, and delight of all believers. The promise of him was all, and it was enough, that God gave Adam in his unexpressible distress to relieve and comfort him. (Gen. iii. 15.) Eve perhaps supposed that the promised seed had been born in her first-born, when she said, "I have gotten a man from the Lord;" so most properly denoting her view of the case; and this was the matter of her joy. (Gen. iv. 1.) Lamech having Noah given to him as a type of Christ, and salvation by him, cries out, "This same shall comfort us concerning our work, and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed." (Gen. v. 29.) He rejoices in him who was to take away the curse, by being made a curse for us. When Abraham was in the height of his glory, returning from the conquest of the kings of the east, that came against the confederate kings of the vale of Sodom, God appears to him with a glorious promise. (Gen. xv. 1.) "Fear

not, Abraham; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." What now could his soul more desire? Alas! he cries, as Reuben afterwards upon the loss of Joseph, "The child is not; and whither shall I go?" (ver. 2.) "Lord God, what shalt thou give me, seeing I go childless?" Thou hast promised that in my seed shall all the earth be blessed; if I have not that seed, ah! what good shall all other things do me? Thence it is said that he "rejoiced to see the day of Christ; he saw it, and was glad." (Jno. viii. 56.) The thoughts of the coming of Christ, which he looked on at the distance of 2000 years, were the joy and delight of his heart. Jacob, blessing his sons, lifted up his spirit when he comes to Judah, in whom he considered the Shiloh to come (Gen. xlix. 8, 9); and a little after, wearied with the foresight and consideration of the distresses of his posterity, this he diverts to for his relief, as that great delight of his soul: "I have waited for thy salvation, O God;" for him who was to be the salvation of his people.

But it would be endless to instance in particular. Old Simeon sums up the whole. Christ is God's salvation, and Israel's glory (Luke ii. 30, 31); and whatever was called the glory of old, it was either himself or a type of him. The glory of man is their delight. Hence in Hag. ii. 7, he is called "the desire of all nations," him whom their souls love and delight in, desire, and long after. So is the saints' delight in him made a description of him by way of eminence (Mal. iii. 1): "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in." "He whom ye seek, whom you delight in," is the description of Christ; he is their delight and desirable One, the person of their desire. To fix on something in particular.

In that pattern of communion with Jesus Christ, which we have in the Canticles, this is abundantly insisted on. The spouse tells us that she sits down under his shadow with great delight (chap. ii. 3); and this delight to be vigorous and active she manifests several ways, wherein we should labour to find our hearts in like manner toward him.

1. By her exceeding great care to keep his company and society, when once she had obtained it. (chap. ii. 7.) "I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my beloved until he please." Having obtained sweet communion with Christ, described in the verses foregoing, of which before, here she presses her delight in it, and desire of the continuance of it; and therefore, following on the allusion formerly insisted on, she speaks to her companions as one would do that had rest with one she loved: I charge you by all that is dear to you, by the things you most delight in, which among the creatures are most lovely, all the pleasant and desirable things that you can think of, that you disturb him not. The sum of her aim and desire is, that nothing may fall out, nothing of sin and provocation happen,

that may occasion Christ to depart from her, or to remove from that dispensation wherein he seemed to take that rest in her. O! stir him not up until he please. When once the soul of a believer hath obtained sweet and real communion with Christ, he looks about him, watcheth all temptations, all ways whereby sin might approach, to disturb him in his enjoyment of his dear Lord and Saviour, his rest and desire. How doth the soul charge itself, not to omit anything, not to do anything, that may interrupt the communion obtained! And because the common entrance of temptations, which tend to the disturbance of that rest and complacency which Christ takes in the soul, is from delightful diversions from actual communion with him, therefore is desire strong and active, that the companions of such a soul, those with whom it doth converse, would not by their proposals and allurements divert it into any such frame as Christ cannot delight nor rest in. A believer that hath gotten Christ in his arms, is like one that hath found great spoils, or a pearl of great price. He looks about him every way, and fears everything, that may deprive him of it. Riches make men watchful; and the actual sensible possession of him in whom are all the riches and treasures of God, will make men look about them for the keeping of him. The time of choicest communion is a time of the greatest spiritual solicitousness. Carelessness in the pretended enjoyment of Christ is a manifested evidence of a false heart.

2. The spouse manifests her delight in him by her utmost impatience of his absence, with desires still of nearer communion with him. "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm, for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave, the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame." (ch. viii. 6.) The allusion is doubtless from the high priest of the Jews, in his spiritual representation of the church before God. He had a breastplate, which he is said to wear on his heart (Ex. xxviii. 29), wherein the names of the children of Israel were engraven, after the manner of seals or signets; and he bare them for a memorial before the Lord. He had the like also upon his shoulder, or on his arms (ver. 11, 12), both representing the priesthood of Christ, who bears the names of all before his Father, in the holiest of holies. (Heb. ix. 24.) Now, the seal on the heart is near, inward, tender, love and care, which gives an impression and image on the heart of the thing so loved. "Set me," saith the spouse, "as a seal upon thine heart." Let me be constantly fixed in thy most tender and affectionate love; let me always have a place in thine heart; let me have an engraving, a mighty impression of love upon thine heart, that shall never be obliterated. The soul is never satisfied with thoughts of Christ's love to it. O that it were more! that it were more! that I were as a seal on his heart, is its language. The soul knows indeed, on serious thoughts, that the love of Christ is inconceivable, and cannot be increased; but it would fain work up itself to an apprehension of it; and therefore she

adds here, "Set me as a seal upon thine arm." The heart is the fountain, but close and hidden; the arm is manifestation and power. Let, saith the spouse, thy love be manifested to me in thy tender and powerful persuasion of me. Two things are evident in this request; the continual mindfulness of Christ of the soul, as having its condition still in his eye, engraven on his arm (Isa. xlix. 15, 16), with the exalting of his power for the preservation of it, suitable to the love of his heart unto it; and the manifestation of the hidden love and care of the heart of Christ unto the soul, being made visible on his arm, or evident by the fruits of it. This is that which she would be assured of; and without a sense whereof there is no rest to be obtained.

The reason she gives of this earnestness in her supplications is that which principally evinces her delight in him. "Love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave," or hard as hell. This is the intentment of what is so loftily set out by so many metaphors in this and the following verse. I am not able to bear the workings of my love to thee; unless I may always have society and fellowship with thee; there is no satisfying of my love without it. It is as the grave, that still says, Give, give. Death is not satisfied without its prey; if it have not all, it hath nothing, let what will happen; if death hath not its whole desire it hath nothing at all. Nor can it be withstood in its appointed season. No ransom will be taken. So is my love. If I have thee not wholly, I have nothing; nor can all the world bribe it to a diversion; it will be no more turned aside than death in its time. Also I am not able to bear my jealous thoughts; I fear thou dost not love me, that thou hast forsaken me, because I know I deserve not to be beloved. These thoughts are hard as hell. They give no rest to my soul. If I find not myself on thy heart and arm, I am as one that lies down on a bed of coals. This also argues an holy greediness of delight.

8. She further manifests this by her solicitousness, trouble, and perplexity, in his loss and withdrawals. Men bewail the loss of that whose whole enjoyment they delight in. We easily bear the absence of that whose presence is not delightful. This state of the spouse is discovered in chap. iii. 1, 2, 3: "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth; I sought him, but I found him not. I will rise now, and go about the city, in the streets, and in the broad ways; I will seek him whom my soul loveth. I sought him, but I found him not. The watchmen that go about the city found me; to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?" It is night now with the soul, a time of darkness and trouble, or affliction. Whenever Christ is absent, it is night with a believer. He is the sun; if he go down upon them, if his beams be eclipsed, if in his light they see no light, it is all darkness with them. Here, whether the coming of the night of any trouble on her made her discover Christ's absence, or the absence of Christ made it night with her, is not expressed. I think the latter; because setting that aside, all

things seemed to be well with her. The absence of Christ will indeed make it night, dark as darkness itself in the midst of all other glowing consolations. But is the spouse contented with this dispensation? She is upon her bed, that is, of ease. The bed indeed sometimes signifies tribulation (Rev. ii. 22); but in this book everywhere rest and contentment. There is not the least intimation of any tribulation but what is in the want of Christ. But in the greatest peace, and opportunity of ease and rest, a believer finds none in the absence of Christ; though he be on his bed, having nothing to disquiet him, he rests not, if Christ, his rest, be not there. She sought him; seeking of Christ by night, on the bed, that is, alone in an immediate inquest, and in the dark, hath two parts; searching of our own souls for the cause of his absence; and searching the promises for his presence.

i. The soul finding not Christ present in his wonted manner, warning, cherishing, reviving it with love, nigh to it, supping with it, always filling its thoughts with himself, dropping myrrh and sweet tastes of love into it; but, on the contrary, that other thoughts crowd in and perplex the heart, and Christ is not nigh when inquired after; it presently inquires into the cause of all this, calls itself to an account, what it hath done, how it hath behaved itself, that it is not with it as at other times; that Christ hath withdrawn himself, and is not nigh to it, in the wonted manner. Here it accomplisheth a diligent search; it considers the love, tenderness, and kindness of the Lord Jesus; what delight he takes in abiding with his saints; so that his departure is not without cause and provocation. How, saith it, have I demeaned myself, that I have lost my Beloved? Where have I been wandering after other lovers? And when the miscarriage is found out, it abounds in revenge and indignation.

ii. Having driven this to some issue, the soul applieth itself to the promises of the covenant, wherein Christ is most graciously exhibited unto it; considers one, ponders another, to find a taste of him. It considers diligently if it can see the delightful countenance and favour of Christ in them or no; but now, if (as it often falls out) the soul finds nothing but the carcase, but the bare letter in the promise; if it come to it as to the grave of Christ, of which it may be said, not in itself, but in respect of the seeking soul, "he is risen, he is not here;" this amazes the soul, and it knows not what to do. As a man that hath a jewel of great price, having no occasion to use it, lays it aside, as he supposes, in a safe place, in an agony and extremity of want going to seek for his jewel, he finds it not in the place he expected, and is filled with amazement, and knows not what to do; so it is with this pearl of the gospel. After a man hath sold all that he hath for it, and enjoyed it for a season, then to have it missing at a time of need, it must need perplex him. So it is with the spouse here. "I sought him," saith she, "but I found him not;" a thing which not seldom befalls us in our communion with Christ.

(To be concluded.)

MANY MEMBERS—ONE BODY.

“The election hath obtained it.”—ROM. XI. 7.

To the Editor of the “Gospel Standard.”

Dear Brother,—How true is that word which says: “Ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” And this oneness I have felt from time to time with those whose communications I am privileged to read in the “Gospel Standard.” Especially did I feel a oneness, dear brother, with that sweet sermon of yours, entitled, “The Cup Passing Away in the Drinking it.” Although time has flown since then, yet I have felt, and still feel, I must let you know that the Holy Spirit graciously attended the reading of it with melting sweetness to my poor soul; and though unknown by face, I trust you are known to me in the spirit. I feel without presumption I can say, We have been led by the one Spirit. Yes, the whole family of God’s elect are and shall be “all baptized into *one* body, and made to drink into *one* Spirit.” (1 Cor. xii. 13; John vii. 37-39.) All through the Word of God it is One and the same Triune Jehovah; the one elect body of one Christ; and the One and self-same Spirit who worketh in every one of the many members, yet *one body*, the church; which is Christ’s “fulness, who filleth all in all.”

In reading the sweet portions that appear in the “Gospel Standard,” I find that God’s people of to-day are the same. “They do all eat the same spiritual meat, and all drink the same spiritual drink.” And they, “being many; are one bread, one body, and are all partakers of that one bread.” (1 Cor. x. 3, 4, 17.) O! my very soul seems to overflow as I pen this wondrous truth. Why was I, a poor worm, ever made to partake of that one bread? ’Tis but a short time ago, dear brother, when I was greatly tried in many ways, cast down exceedingly, the plague within, fears without, hellish assaults on every hand, and my fair Lord Jesus had veiled himself from me. And in my soul’s deep distress, I sent up one bitter, earnest cry: “Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me.” Almost instantly, this word was sent from the King of kings, with majestic sweetness and power: “I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.” Who can describe what my poor soul felt? It is beyond my power to tell. I wept for joy, and praised my God. I was enabled to draw water, and to drink with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, from the deep well of eternal election. But, why me? through my joyful tears I asked my God; why me? A great many in this country say the water of this deep, deep well is “sour,” “poisonous,” “dangerous;” but it is a “false report;” and the secret of the matter is, they surely have never drunk of it. If the Holy Spirit should give them but one sip of it, they would indeed know to the contrary. The apostle Peter would never have told the brethren to drink of this well, saying, “Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure,” if the water thereof was “poisonous,” “dangerous,” or “sour.” It is in-

deed sweet. "One sip of this will bathe the drooping spirits in delight, beyond the bliss of dreams." And I am sure it must be wicked to call the sweet bitter. (Isa. v. 20.) O! "Ye lambs of Christ's fold, ye weaklings in faith," give heed to the counsel of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter; and "give diligence to make your calling and *election* sure;" and you shall indeed find the water of this deep and living well to be sweet.

The footsteps of the flock have been the same in all ages; and this Jehovah the Spirit sets forth by the Apostle Paul. "There is *one* body, and *one* Spirit, even as ye are called in *one* hope of your calling; *one* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism; *One* God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Eph. iv. 4-6.) Thus the intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ, as a Priest upon his throne, shall be answered: "I pray . . . that they *all* may be *one*, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also *may be one in us*; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be *one*, even as we are *one*. I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in *one*." (John xvii. 21-26.)

In God's book, "the Lamb's book of life," were written all the "members in particular" of the "*one* body," the church. Chosen in Christ Jesus their Head before the foundation of the world; and the "many members" of the "*one* body" are "members one of another;" being "*fitly joined together*, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part." (Eph. iv. 16.) And Christ loveth "*his fulness*," the members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones; for they twain are one flesh. I speak concerning Christ and his church. He does not hate his own flesh, but "*nourisheth and cherisheth it*; for he is "*the Head*, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." (Col. ii. 19.) All are not eyes; all are not apostles; all are not teachers; but God hath set them in the church as it hath pleased him. And all are for the edifying of the body, the church. "The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee;" and you, ye feeble ones, ye weaklings in faith, are necessary. (1 Cor. xii. 22; Isa. xxxv. 3, 4.) How precious to know "that both *He* that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified, *are all of one*." (Heb. ii. 11.) And

"If Christ is *my* Head, this with joy I remember,
His body to which with affection I glow,
Although I'm the most insignificant member,
Can't be full without me in eternity;—No!"

Christ's body, the church, is his fulness. (Eph. i. 23.) From eternity to eternity *one*. Precious, precious truth! Drink, O my soul!

I must close, lest I weary you. I intended to pen but a few lines, but my pen has run on to this length. There are some few

in these parts who know and love the truth, with whom I can have sweet fellowship. We can eat the same meat, and drink the same drink. And though thousands of miles separate in the flesh you from us, yet I feel, through what I read in the "Gospel Standard," we are "all one in Christ Jesus." When you tell of your sufferings, we feel with you; and when you are honoured, we rejoice. And my prayer is that you, dear brother, and the "whole family" may receive much sweet blessing from our covenant Triune Jehovah. Amen.

I am, I hope, one of the "members in particular" of the "one body, the church."

Newbury, Canada, Jan. 22nd, 1880.

F. W. KEENE.

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

"Whilst the long cloud of witnesses Shows the same path to heaven."

My dear Friends,—Your kind letter came safe to hand, for which I thank you. No doubt you have been looking for a reply before this, but we have been indeed in such deep waters of sorrow and affliction that I could not write before. Nevertheless, the Lord has indeed been good in staying his rough wind in the day of his east wind, and has made it plain that he is the Lord God, merciful and gracious, and a God hearing and answering prayer. It hath pleased him to take one of our dear children to himself, my dear Ruth, who we have sweet reason to believe was a Ruth indeed. And although so painful the stroke to nature, I rejoice that she is taken from the evil to come, and that we have some sweet token that she was beloved of God. So then we cannot sorrow as the world, or those who have no hope.

This has been a solemn blow of God's hand, and a most painful and humiliating representation and discovery of the sad effects of sin, which has and will mar all God's fair creation. But what a sweet thought and feeling arises from the words, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." It is a matter indeed of joy and rejoicing to know and sensibly feel that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

The dear child died last Sunday morning, about a quarter past six. O what a sight we have been called to witness! And how wonderfully the Lord has sent help and support in this time of trial and affliction; which I trust we shall never forget. The two top rooms were like a hospital; Mrs. G. and Ruth laid down in one room, and the four others in the one adjoining;—a sight heart-rending and humiliating indeed, which I shall never forget. When I had been from one room to the other, and was coming downstairs with my heart overwhelmed within me, then these words came in with such love and sympathy as a cordial indeed: "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me." Yes; and I believe he will stretch forth his

hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and his right hand will save me. "Blessed is the man that hath the God of Jacob for his help." And truly he has been as good as his word, and stretched forth his hand against the wrath of mine enemies; yes, and I can say sweetly with dear Hart,

"Although our cup seems filled with gall,
There's something secret sweetens all."

I had some feelings before this affliction that something was coming on. We had been sweetly favoured in our own souls. Also, after the first was laid down very bad, I shall never forget how when I went to the prayer-meeting, and was called upon, a sweet hymn caught my mind, which I could not get away from. I gave it out, and it was sung with peculiarly solemn feelings, I believe. The words are:

"My times of sorrow and of joy,
Great God, are in thy hand;
My choicest comforts come from thee,
And go at thy command.

"If thou shouldst take them all away,
Yet let me not repine;
Before they were possess'd by me,
They were entirely thine.

"Nor let me drop a murmuring word,
Though the whole world were gone,
But seek enduring happiness
In thee and thee alone."

These sweet words have kept springing up in my heart amidst all the sorrowing scene, and have often cheered and refreshed my spirit. Truly God is good to Israel, and has indeed been good to us. All his works must praise him, and his saints cannot help blessing him when he turneth the shadow of death into morning. He hath sent us help from the sanctuary, and strengthened us out of Zion; and I trust he has given us to see the rod, and who hath appointed it, and that it is all in love to our souls.

"Know whom the Saviour favours much,
Their faults he oft reproves;
He takes peculiar care of such,
And chastens whom he loves."

"Bastards may escape the rod,
Sunk in earthly vain delight;
But the true-born child of God
Must not, would not, if he might."

O what a mercy of mercies to be brought into the school of a loving Christ, and to have words from his own mouth to put him in remembrance of in the time of trial, temptation, and affliction, and to be indulged and encouraged to put him in remembrance of *the time of love*, when he passed by, and saw us in our sins and blood, and spoke such words home to our souls as made us live, and live in his sight. Behold, it was a time of love indeed, and this is my comfort, and has been my comfort and crown of my rejoicing. "Thy word, O God, hath quickened me." "Blessed is the man"—or woman—"who knows

the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." O how sacred! And truly what dear David said is known and felt: "Thou hast not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." But "goodness and mercy" have followed me "all the days of my life;" and this I can sweetly, with love and grief, set to my seal is a truth.

O what a mercy to have a Bible companion, and to know what communion of saints is! And to see and feel, while justice and judgment is the habitation of his throne, that mercy and truth go before his face.

"O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrain'd to be!
Let thy grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee."

My dear friends, we don't know till God shows us what an adulterous heart we have got, and how we provoke the Lord to jealousy by that which is not God. But in his tender pity and compassion he is pleased to lay his hand upon us, and in his mercy reasons the matter over in our souls, and shows us our folly, and what fools we are to set our affections upon any one or anything short of himself. Sanctified

"Afflictions make us see
What else would 'scape our sight,—
How very dull and dim are we,
And God how pure and bright."

In all his teachings, leadings, in all our crosses, afflictions, and losses, he discovers this; for he hath said, "My son, give me thine heart." "Thou shalt have none other gods but me." O what a mercy of mercies to be in the hands, and under the loving and moulding hand, of such a gracious, loving God and Father, who knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust; of one who hath so graciously declared that, "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

But I must not enlarge any further than just to mention how the dear Lord has drawn out the love and sympathy of his people to us in this affliction, and has made manifest and given us to prove that vital union of soul and that sacred love of the Spirit which many waters cannot quench, neither can the floods drown. His work is perfect, and he is a God of knowledge and compassion, and by him actions are weighed. Then let this suffice for the present,—that I can say, and I trust to the praise of his great and glorious Name, that as our afflictions and sorrows have abounded, so has he given us to see his love, mercy, and grace much more to abound in giving, amidst our grief, the consolations of his Spirit, and in touching and moving the hearts and hands of kind friends to help with needful supplies, to our astonishment. This was so much the case that our dear old friend, Mr. Moore, who came to help, and stayed nearly a fortnight, said, "Who can but see the good hand of God in

providing such help and succour"? Mrs. Allard, too, a gracious woman, who came from Horsmonden to help to nurse the children, could not but see how God had answered prayer. On Thursday morning last, they took their leave of us, as the other children were doing well, or quite as well as could be expected, and were in a fair way of recovering.

Well, all I can say is, The Lord bless them and us, and keep us humble at his dear feet, and give us grace to crown him Lord of all; and give his children to feel his sweet testimony and smiles in their hearts, for their work of faith and labour of love to one who is not worthy of the least of all God's mercies. Give our kind love to Mrs. Swonnell, and tell her we accept the will for the deed. The Lord often gives a willing mind and a loving heart, but we lack the power. How sweetly dear Hart sings of this, and with his words I shall close:

“Love all defects supplies;
 Makes great obstructions small;
 'Tis prayer, 'tis praise, 'tis sacrifice,
 'Tis holiness, 'tis all.
 “Descend, celestial Dove;
 With Jesu's flock abide;
 Give us that best of blessings, love,
 Whate'er we want beside.”

We are, yours affectionately for Christ's sake,

Croydon, Dec. 10th, 1864.

H. AND E. GLOVER.

My dear and much-esteemed Friends,—It is just seven years ago this day that we left Ticehurst. What a number of changing scenes have taken place in that time! We should be pleased to receive a letter from you, to know the state of the health of Mrs. Pert, yourself, and family. Mr. Knight sent a message to us to say he had received a letter from you, and that Mrs. Pert and yourself were better in health, and sent your kind love to us both; but that he was so engaged he could not come to deliver his message himself. I have not seen him so as to speak to him since you were here last, neither have I seen Mr. Vine to speak to more than once, and then he stayed about ten minutes.

I have only been to chapel once since the re-opening, and that was in October. We seem like speckled birds here. Hymn 118, Mr. Hart's, seems to express my feelings,

“Lord, pity outcasts vile and base,” &c ;

but I have to bless God that he has not forsaken us. I had rather have the approbation of God than that of all the men in the world. I was never more concerned in my life than I have been of late to be right in the sight of God, and never less concerned as to what I might be in the sight of men.

We have both been very sadly indeed this winter. I had congestion of the lungs in January, and my wife had bronchitis at the same time. I kept my bed for nearly a week. We are both still very poorly. I cough a great deal at times now; but I have to bless the dear Lord because he was pleased to visit me in my affliction.

The subject of death had been so much on my mind for some time, and I dreaded the thought of meeting the messenger. But the Lord was pleased to remove the sting of death, so that it was no terror to me. In the first part of my illness, I begged of the Lord that if he was about to take me away by death, he would prepare me to meet it. And I have to bless his dear Name that he was pleased to do this. I felt no more afraid to die than I was to put my hand out of the bed; and these words were so blessed to me:

“Hell is vanquished, heaven appeas'd,
God is reconcil'd and pleased.”

I had such a sight by faith of his reconciled and smiling countenance as I cannot find words to express. But the two hymns of Mr. Newton's, 198 and 469 in Gadsby's Selection, express my feelings better than I can myself. I felt such peace in my soul that I longed to be gone; the consolations of God did so abound over the afflictions. And when my complaint was a little removed, I felt so cast down I did so want to be gone. It seemed such a disappointment to me; but I was enabled to beg of him to grant me patience to wait his time. Last week I had such returns of bleeding from my nose and mouth as I have not had for years; and I do feel so very weak.

I hope you will excuse this scrawl; for my arm is so very weak I hardly know how to hold the pen. Our united love to Mrs. Pert, yourself, and family, and all inquiring friends, from
Yours affectionately,

Hailsham, March 25, 1875.

THOS. PULLINGER.

My dear Sister,—I have not forgotten you; but I have nothing worth communicating to you, and therefore think I might as well hold my peace. But I think perhaps you will take it amiss, if I do not try to say something. I wonder why you wish me to write to you. I feel just like a lump of lead, and as cold as an ice-house. So if I communicate this to you, it will make you worse than you are already, perhaps. But sometimes the Lord causes one poor heavy thing to make another light; and the cold are sometimes instrumental in making others warm. I know he doeth what he will, and as he will; and he worketh by little things to make his greatness known; by weak things to make his power known; and by foolish things to make his wisdom known; and by the most despicable things that he might manifest the glory of his grace, that no flesh might glory in his presence, but in the Lord alone. He maketh light to spring up out of darkness, as he did at the first, when he said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. And as he hath promised, saying, “Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness;” and also, “I will make darkness light before them;” and he hath done so many times for me. He also maketh sweet come out of the bitter, according to the saying of Jeremiah: “Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood

and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind; therefore have I hope." So our own bitters become sweet in the review. And the bitter pangs of a penitent sinner are sweet as honey to the strong in faith; and many a bitter pang endured by the preacher yieldeth sweetness to the exercised hearer. He also bringeth strength out of weakness; as when Gideon with the chosen three hundred slew the Midianites, who were as the grasshoppers for multitude; as when Samson pulled down the house upon the Philistines; as when the stripling David slew the great giant of Gath; and as when your poor weak correspondent treads the lion and the adder and dragon under foot, and out of weakness becometh strong, and waxeth valiant in fight. In all these things boasting is excluded. Praise ye the Lord.

JAMES SHORTER.

17, Manchester Terrace, Liverpool Road, Islington,
Sept. 11th, 1857.

Dear Brother in the Lord,—Many years have passed since I first saw you at Mr. Lewis's, and we slept together at the late Mrs. Wells's, after hearing, I believe, Mr. Parsons preach a funeral sermon on her death. I think it is near upon forty years ago; but it is still fresh on my mind, and also I think in my feelings.

At that time I remember your speaking to Mr. Lewis of God's dealings with your soul, and I felt afraid I knew nothing about the matter. But I felt such a concern and anxiety respecting my immortal state that none but the Lord could satisfy me on that point. I felt a cleaving to Mr. Parsons, and to the truth he delivered; and I continued many years anxious about my eternal state. I often felt encouraged, but oftener discouraged; being the subject of fears, which God alone could relieve me of. I felt as if I was not one of the Lord's when hearing or reading the deep experiences of God's family. I said, when forty years old, "I am now forty years of age, and do not know the Lord for myself;" and after that I felt such a deep concern for the Lord to decide that point, and entreated the Lord to decide the case whether I was his or not. O! how I thought and felt afraid I was nothing but a hypocrite. I felt as if brought to the bar of judgment, and condemned, with not a word to say against it; but I felt like Esther: I will entreat for mercy; and so I did; and if ever I was willing to part with all for Christ it was then. "Do, Lord, have mercy," I said; "I do not care what my position of life is, if thou wilt show mercy." I know I told my dear wife, when under the distress, that I feared I was a lost man. I got relief; but then it returned again. Mr. Pert was preaching at that time at our chapel; and whilst he was in prayer, I felt as a poor condemned criminal at the bar, waiting the sentence. But when these words of Mr. Hart were given out:

"Our Joseph turns aside to weep,
But cannot long refrain,"

I felt the compassion of Jesus so feelingly that I was melted into tears. I felt my bonds loosened. I went home under quite different feelings. But the enemy used to thrust at me, and my fear was that I was not right.

But, in a short time after, the Lord sealed home these words: "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel." I felt such peace and joy in believing, that I walked in the light of his countenance for a long time. I could only rest when I was at a throne of grace. The dear Lord granted such sweet peace, though not that ecstasy of feeling that many of God's family enjoy.

My first wife died many years ago, having been confined to her bed nearly four years. She had a fall, and was hurt internally; but the dear Lord was very gracious. Her death is inserted in the "Gospel Standard" of 1861. My last dear wife died on Jan. 20th in this year. Both landed safe, I believe.

My dear brother may conclude my trials have been great, but the dear Lord has brought me thus far; and bless his precious Name, he hath renewed the work on my soul in my old age. I am now in my 71st year, and I feel my breathing very bad. My first feeling after the death of my dear wife was an assurance that faith with her was turned into sight, and hope into blessed fruition; and I was so melted, and felt so assured, that I told my feelings before all. In a short time after that, the Lord saw good to lay on me an affliction; and he so blessedly appeared for me that I was enabled to tell the dear friends what he had done for me. I have had it on my mind to write to you, but I could not muster resolution. But should I not speak of it to his honour? I am astonished at his goodness in again visiting my soul. I did not think he was going to give me such a convincing proof of his love to my soul. My best times are at the throne of grace. There he meets with me, and blesses me; and I feel as if I cannot leave it till he does. And bless his Name, he does fill me with such an overwhelming sense of his love; and I tell the dear Lord I want to feel like Mary, when she washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. And he is pleased to grant me such an overwhelming sense of his love, that I am bathed in tears. These are blessed seasons; and I feel such earnestness, and say to the dear Lord in simplicity, "Do, dear Lord, give me further discoveries of thy love, and lead me to Calvary;" and I feel such love and sympathy for a precious Christ. I think of the judgment-seat, the crown of thorns, the exposure of his dear back, the mocking robe, the reed put in his hand, and then pulled out, and himself struck with it. And then to feel it was for *us*, and at the time for *me*. How overcoming! It breaks the heart, and causes us to exclaim, like the poet,

"Well he remembers Calvary,
Nor let his saints forget."

My dear brother, excuse me for sending this, but my time is

drawing to a close; and knowing you are one who loves the Lord, I feel encouraged to do so. May the dear Lord be with and bless you, and make you a blessing in the work of the ministry. Should you feel in your heart disposed to write, glad I should be to hear of you, and the Lord's goodness and mercy and grace to you.

Yours in a precious Jesus,

Midhurst, Nov., 1879.

THOS. AUSTIN.

My dearly-beloved Friends,—As you have sometimes said my scribble has not been altogether repugnant to your feelings, I feel a disposition in my mind this morning to drop you a line. Not that I have anything new to communicate to you, but that the remembrance of you seemed good and refreshing to my mind; for I have been wandering about this very very depraved town, where every species of evil appears to be very rampant, and where the children of the great mother harlot are in abundant numbers, and she has her schools to teach them her infernal tenets in great profusion, and where iniquity runneth down the streets like a mighty torrent. So that if there is a Sodom and Gomorrah in this world, I think it is here. I almost hope I may never be required to come into this town again. But still there is a large number of those who profess the things of God, and I believe a goodly number who have salt in themselves, or destruction must come.

I hope, my beloved friends, you are well in health, body and soul; and this last will be indicated by an appetite, and this is good. For, saith the Book, "blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness." Sickly folk have generally bad appetites; and too little exercise produces bad circulation; but sufficient exercise promotes good circulation, as is abundantly proved by Gen. xxviii. 10-22, and xxxii. 24-31; in which portions you will see that the exercise in the former gives strength enough to wrestle in the latter. For I hear wrestlers are those generally who possess strong hands, and are determined not to let go without the object be obtained. Say, my dearly-beloved friends, is it not so? Yea, you can without hesitation say it is. Doth not

"His love in times past forbid us to think
He'll leave us at last in trouble to sink;"

as well as bring us to say, with David, in every new trial, "I will seek thee *early*"? And then we can read Isa. xl. 29-31 comfortably.

I wish you a very happy new year. We began the year in this town by prayer. A large number met at six o'clock in the morning; and I believe a kindly spirit of prayer was granted. And I tried to talk to them by way of exhortation from Isa. xl. 31; and many said the truth of the text was realized. God grant it to be so. I hope I can say he has been good indeed to me here, and favoured me to feel a little like David when he called himself a dead dog and a flea, truly not a very large animal.

I am wondering if your dear sister is with you. How much she has been on my mind of late. I do not know why; but in spirit I have often said to her, "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." I feel the Lord will one day very graciously make her manifest. Should she be with you, please tender my warmest Christian love to her; but do not say anything about what I have here said concerning her.

I hope J. is well, and all the friends. I received a note from Mr. B. saying—was coming on the 24th. I should like to spend a few hours with him; but I fear I shall not be able; as you will see by the "Gospel Standard," my engagements are very wide this month; but, however, I shall try to do so.

Sickness and death are exceedingly prevalent here. Small-pox, scarlet-fever, and measles, still carrying off scores; and this they have been doing for weeks past. The people begin to be alarmed. I felt my old text good this morning—Ps. xci. 4-7; and I hope to return home untouched by these diseases. I expect to leave here on Tuesday next for Winslow, Bucks, and to return home on Wednesday before going to Cambridge on Saturday. Afterwards I shall be again with you, and think I shall feel glad once more to see you.

I must close, for my pen is bad, and my paper short, and your patience will be exhausted. Beloved friends, farewell. May Israel's Triune God be with you to bless, comfort, keep, and minister to your wants, temporal and spiritual. This is the prayer of

Yours ever affectionately, in hope of eternal life,

Northampton Jan. 6th, 1865.

JOHN VINDEN.

Obituary.

JOHN SAINSBURY.—On Dec. 22nd, 1879, John Sainsbury, senior deacon of Zion chapel, Trowbridge, aged 64 years.

The subject of this memoir was led in the providence of God to go to the Old Baptist chapel, Devizes, many years ago, to hear that dear servant of God, Mr. Beard, when he took for his text John iii. 6: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit;" when the Lord so completely stripped him under that discourse that he thought he was nothing but flesh. It lay with great weight upon his mind for a considerable time. In the providence of God he was led to Zion chapel, Trowbridge. Ten years had elapsed since hearing Mr. Beard in Devizes. Mr. B. preached again at Trowbridge, and took for his text Zech. iv. 12. Under that discourse the Lord brought him into the liberty of the gospel. He went into the vestry and asked Mr. B. if he remembered preaching at Devizes from the text in John. He said, Yes, he did; and often wondered what he went there for; and he told him the circumstance. Then he could see why the Lord sent him there, and they rejoiced together.

At the commencement of his illness he could not rest in bed; so he went down stairs, and sat in a chair. While there, he dozed off to sleep.

When he awoke, he came upstairs, and said, "I do not know what the dear Lord intends for me, whether I am to be heavily afflicted, or whether he is about to take me home. I have had such a blessed feeling I never had before in my life. I had lost sight of everything on earth. Everything was calm and serene. Not a word or portion was applied; but I was as happy as I could be. Not an angel could be more happy; no, not Gabriel himself. My poor soul was so full, it could hold no more." After this, he had four years of heavy affliction, borne with the greatest patience. He often asked the Lord to give him patience to bear all his will. He was very much favoured during his illness with the Lord's presence, and would often speak of the Lord's goodness to him. He said,

"The love of Christ is rich and free,
Fixed on his own eternally."

O if I get to heaven and see him face to face, what a mercy! I will bless and praise his holy Name for saving such a vile sinner. 'Tis all of grace from first to last.

"Grace, 'tis a charming sound, &c."

One night, when coughing almost all the night, he said, "O dear Lord, give me patience not to complain, and take me to thyself, if thy will; for as the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee. When shall I come and appear before thee?"

One night, he could not sleep, as his cough was so troublesome. Suddenly he broke out singing—

"To darkness, doubts, and fears adieu!
Adieu, thou world so vain!
Then shall I know no more of you;
To me to die is gain."

Never having heard him do so before, I asked him why he was singing. He said it was his heart that sang; for, added he, "all conflicts and sorrows will soon be over, and then I shall be with my precious Jesus. He is precious to me in all his characters. The angels will not be more esteemed than I shall be when I get to heaven, as a sinner saved by grace."

Once in his affliction he wrote to his brother, telling him he was very ill, and that he thought his end was near; but he had no clear bright shining. Still he was enabled to place himself in the hands of his covenant God, and believed that when he had done with all here, he should receive his crown, which was his mercy; for the dear Lord had promised never to forsake the work of his own hands. One morning I took up his breakfast, but found he did not hear me. I spoke to him. He said, "O! I was thinking of those blessed lines—

"Sovereign grace o'er sin abounding!
Ransomed souls, the tidings swell, &c."

O! it is too much for my poor soul. I feel so full of God's goodness to poor sinful me, that I don't know how to contain myself. Sometimes when I am favoured to read God's Word, it so reads my heart, it seems too much for my poor body. Also, when I meditate in the night seasons upon the sufferings of my dear Saviour. To think it cost his whole heart's blood to redeem poor sinful me! My sufferings, what are they compared to his? But bless his dear Name, he won't lay one pain more on me than I am able to bear; and he has promised to lay his left hand under my head, and his right hand shall embrace me, and to give me a crown at last. No perfection but in Christ. I shall be comely with the comeliness he will put on me. Bless his dear Name, it is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. I want the sweet smiles of heaven. Why does he stand aloof? for without his sweet

presence I cannot live here. Sin soon would reduce me to utter despair. I want to creep beside him as a worm, and see him bleed for me."

Once, when rather dark in mind, he said, "O that the blessed Lord would come and bless me again! He has done it, and promised to do it again; he cannot deny himself. Yes, he is all glorious, and his people are to be covered with this glory. No glory like his glory. What a grand and glorious sight! And if I, one of the most unworthy, should be favoured thus, what a mercy! I will bless his dear Name throughout the countless ages of eternity; for

"No clouds shall then obstruct my sun,
But all be life and peace."

O what fulness dwells in Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever! I shall never be satisfied till I awake in his likeness."

After suffering much pain from remedies applied, he asked the Lord to give him ease, which he did. He called out to all to bless the Lord; for, said he, "The blessed Lord Jesus, when he suffered, they gave him gall and vinegar to drink; and what are my sufferings compared to his? These light afflictions are but for a moment." I said to him, "Don't distress yourself so much;" for he had been talking of the Lord's goodness so much. He said, "O! these are brazen pillars, walls, and bulwarks of salvation. How can I help speaking of them? Bless his dear Name. I would call upon everything that hath breath to praise the Lord. He has opened the channel of mercy for me."

After a dear friend, who visited him, had left the room, he said, "O! how sweet that was!" I said, "What?" He said, "Those lines:

"In Christ's obedience clothe,
And wash me in his blood;
So shall I lift my head with joy
Among the sons of God."

O what a privilege for a poor sinner!" On another occasion, he said "I wish the people of God would pray that he would take me home; for I would not go back into the world again. I want to be gone. I should love to see his sweet countenance, and to be kissed with the kisses of his lips, for his mouth is most sweet. He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely to my soul."

After this, he was very much buffeted by Satan. He said, "I fear after all I shall be wrong. I have been praying to the Lord that he would lay it on the mind of one dear friend to visit me. Should he condescend to hear my cry, I shall think he has not altogether forgotten me." Strange to say, that friend was very much exercised about him, and came the same evening to see him. They both thought it was the leading of the blessed Spirit. They had a few sweet moments together in blessing and praising God for his goodness to one so vile and unworthy. The same night he had a sweet visit from the King himself. He said, "I can't tell you the sweetness of that visit. I had such a flow of language given me as I never had before to bless and praise his holy Name. I thought I was going home to be with him; but no; I have a little more to suffer yet. O! when these blessed visits come they cheer the drooping heart."

One morning, when I fetched away his breakfast, I said, "You have eaten very little." He said, "I have meat to eat you know not of. What a mercy for a poor sinner to have free access to a throne of grace, and to be made willing to die or live, to lie passive in his blessed hands, and know no will but his!" I said, "Then you have been favoured this morning." He said, "I hope I have. I feel so happy. No angel can be more esteemed than a sinner saved by grace. I can leave you all

now. The blessed anticipation of being with Jesus shortly took all my pain away. O! I shall be with him shortly. In his presence is fulness of joy; at his right hand are pleasures for evermore. O! what fulness is in these words!"

One night he awoke me and said,

"Fain would my raptured soul depart,
Nor longer here remain;
But dwell, dear Jesus, where thou art;
For me to die is gain."

Mine is a life of suffering. I want my Father to come and take me away. Lord, if thy will, make short work of it. I would gladly come, if thou wilt call; then I shall be out of the gunshot of the devil."

One day he was suffering great pain. He said, "I don't know what the dear Lord is about to do with me. Those words seem to follow me all day: 'That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold, though it be tried with fire,' &c.; but he has promised to lay no more on me than he will enable me to bear; and, bless his dear Name, I know he will not." He had a very trying night. When morning came he felt quite exhausted for want of sleep. He cried to the Lord to give him a little sleep, when he spoke these words with great power: "I will surely do thee good." He went to sleep for three hours, and was greatly refreshed.

At another time, when suffering great pain at the heart, and could get no rest any way, he cried again to the Lord to remove it, if his gracious will. He was graciously pleased to give him an hour and a half's freedom from pain and cough. He had not been so free for months. "How manifold are thy mercies towards me, gracious God! I would praise thee if I could."

One day, being very much tried with the enemy of souls, I read to him some obituaries from the "Gospel Standard." He said, "Ah, blessed people! They have passed away from their trouble; and who knows but the dear Lord will favour me as he did them, by passing away easily and sweetly?" The dear Lord did favour him so; for his cough and pain left him for several hours before his death. About three hours before his departure, he lifted one arm, and said,

"When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside."

Those were the last words he uttered. He never moved afterwards. We thought he was asleep. He quietly passed away to be for ever with his dear Jesus, who had done so much for him. W. S.

PETER SMALL.—On Saturday, Jan. 18th, 1880, aged 82, Peter Small, of Long Burton, Dorsetshire.

In his younger days he used to attend the village church at Long Burton, and, together with others, sang in the choir at church. As far as I can gather, his company was very much sought after both by the church minister and others, especially in the minister's house. But the great God, whose ways are past finding out, began to open his eyes to see the emptiness and vanity of those things with which he was connected; and to the great grief of his connections, he was obliged to give up all, not knowing where to go or what to do. The minister would oftentimes beg of him to come back again; but the arrows of conviction being within him, he was obliged to forsake all and seek that which as yet he knew not.

About this time a room was opened in the village by what were called Methodists, as all were styled who dissented from the church. There he heard a Yea and Nay gospel; but not being satisfied therewith, he

travelled on the sabbath day to Yeovil, a distance of 16 miles, to hear the gospel. In those days a Mr. Davis preached at the Tabernacle in Yeovil, where he heard with more satisfaction. One Sunday, hearing that a stranger was to preach at the church, he, with others, went to hear. The stranger proved to be the late Dr. Hawker, from whose lips they heard the glorious gospel of the blessed God. But it was the first and last time, for the dear man of God was not suffered to preach there afterwards. Mr. Davis, the minister at the Tabernacle, hearing that Dr. Hawker was to preach at the church, closed the chapel on purpose to go and hear him. The dear man took for his text in the morning Isa. xlii., 6, 7: "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles: To open blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house." The text from which the good man of God preached in the after part of the day, was Ezek. xvi., 14: "And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty, for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God." The friends closed their chapel to hear the dear man; and the church was closed against him, so that his voice was not heard there any more.

After this the Lord was pleased to lay his afflicting hand upon him, and bring him down both in body and mind, laying him upon a bed of affliction. His body was weak, and his mind conscious that he had not as yet attained that which his panting soul earnestly longed after. His sister in London, hearing of his affliction, came down to visit him. During her stay, she was a witness of the glorious way in which the dear Lord manifested himself unto him on his sick bed. So much was this the case that his countenance was lit up with the inward glory which shone in his inmost soul. He could rejoice indeed in the salvation of God.

After this, a few met together in a room in Sherborne, which ultimately led to the building of Providence Chapel, Sherborne, where they were highly favoured for many years. Here they were favoured with the ministry of the late Mr. Symonds, of Bristol; also with the correspondence of Nathaniel Marriner, whose letters have appeared in some of the numbers of the "Gospel Standard."

I may here say that the Lord has condescended to take to himself four more brothers of the same family as the subject of this memoir, in whom the grace of God signally shone. Although more than forty years have passed away, their memory still has remained alive amongst the good and gracious men with whom they were conversant.

The poet says:

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

That grace which was manifested in calling Peter Small when young preserved him through life as a consistent Christian character, and in an unmoved adherence to the true gospel of Christ. He is faithful who called him. Though in himself a poor man, with many infirmities, yet as he stood in Christ he was a good man, and as such, out of the good treasure of his heart, he brought forth that which was good. His words when he conversed were both weighty and savoury, as many can bear witness.

I desire to feel thankful to God for his providential care towards him in his last days, for to him the praise is due. The friends with whom he worshipped showed him much kindness and sympathy, which made his latter days comfortable.

It may truly be said of him that his end was peace. His remains

were brought to Long Burton, where he rests in hope of a glorious resurrection.

“The sweet remembrance of the just
Shall flourish when they sleep in dust.”
Yours in truth,

Bath.

THOMAS SMALL.

To Mr. Hazlerigg, Editor of the “Gospel Standard.”

WILLIAM HENRY HOLLOWAY, F.G.S.—On April 17th, 1880, aged 35 years, William Henry Holloway, at Ingoldsby, near Grantham, when on a visit.

William Holloway was born of praying parents. His father was a deacon of Rehoboth Chapel, Riding House Street, for 13 years, of which church his mother was also a member. My brother was therefore brought up to attend a place of truth. His mother died on Jan. 22nd, 1866, after a short illness, and he was present when she died; and the last words she said to him were:

“May I but safely reach my home,
My God, my Heaven, my All.”

These words were evidently very much impressed upon him, as he frequently repeated them during his last illness. I also very well recollect that shortly after our dear mother's death, when he went with me to visit her grave at Highgate Cemetery, he referred to her last words, and said he hoped we all as a family might be able to say the same when we came to die.

He very seldom said anything upon spiritual things, and it pleased the Lord in his sovereignty not to make him manifest as his until his last illness; although many circumstances tended to show that he was in concern of soul for some time previous to his death. Verily “it is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.” (Lam. iii. 26.)

His remains were interred in our family grave at Highgate Cemetery, on April 23rd, 1880.

Yours obediently,

H. HOLLOWAY.

Mr. Welman, father-in-law to the deceased, has furnished us with the following letter, with fuller particulars of his last days and triumphant end.

Dear Mr. Editor,—I shall be glad, should you approve of the few things of which I was eye and ear witness, previous to the decease of the above, my son-in-law, if you will insert them in the “Gospel Standard.” My daughter sent for me on April 15th, and I arrived on the 16th, and was not long absent from his room until he died. As soon as convenient after my arrival, with his hearty consent, we all bowed the knee, and sought the Lord by prayer and supplication on his behalf. I then told him that I could lift up my heart and pour out my soul for him, but that every one must seek the Lord for himself. And his answer was, “I think I do.” He then said,

“‘Am I his, or am I not?’”

I told him the Lord alone could decide the doubt.

All this time the disease, inflammation of the lungs, was making rapid strides. Of this he was not ignorant; but, as he could freely take nourishment, it was natural for him to cling to the hope that he might recover. But every hour showed that the complaint increased, and we could not hold out any encouragement that he would get better. His mind then became more and more anxious about his eternal state. He said,

“‘If I could read my title clear
To mansions in the skies;”

and these two lines:

"O may I safely reach my home,
My God, my Heaven, my All."

Much stress was laid on

"My God, my Heaven, my All,"

as words he wanted to use.

My daughter, his wife, who waited on him continually, says that in my absence he prayed, and said, "O for one token!" Seeing him distressed, she asked him if he was uncomfortable; and again he said,

"Am I his, or am I not?"

Making mention of seeing his mother before her death, he said that he had an intimation when she died that he should be one of the redeemed, and, said he, "I think I shall."

At another time, I asked him if he had got that testimony in his heart, and he quickly answered, "Not yet;" evidently showing that he was looking with some expectation for it. About midnight I went to lie down for a little rest, but was soon called up, as he had become restless, and evidently worse. Indeed, it was painful to witness his labouring for breath. This was truly a time for prayer, when all the help of man was proved vain. Once, when I was about to seek the Lord, I observed that I had better stand up, so that he might better hear; but he objected, and would, if he could, have himself knelt on the bed.

After I was called up, he wished to see his two dear children, and kissed them, and blessed them in the name of the Lord. His wife and myself kissed him, and shook hands with him. This was like our final farewell. We requested him, if he could not speak, to give us a sign by his hand that he had had a token for good.

About two o'clock on Saturday morning we raised him up, as he appeared uneasy, when he broke out into prayer with such earnest and fervent cries as only those can do who are in like circumstances. Surely the sorrows of death compassed him; the pains of hell got hold upon him; he found trouble and sorrow. Then called he upon the Name of the Lord. Some of his cries were as follow: "Have mercy upon me, O Lord." "Save me, O Lord." "Preserve my soul, O Lord." It would seem as if Satan stood at his right hand ready to devour him; for with piercing cries he said, "Turn him off, Lord. Turn him off, Lord. Turn him off, Lord. Mercy, mercy, mercy." This lasted some few minutes. Then he was still for some time, and we all bowed the knee, and sought the Lord, and entreated much that he would be gracious unto him, and give him a blessed manifestation of love; and also would pity us, for I felt as though my faith would fail without it. When I arose from my knees, this verse of Mr. Hart's hymn was present on my mind:

"Without cessation pray;
Your prayers will not prove vain;
Our Joseph turns aside to weep,
But cannot long refrain."

I sat down beside the bed with hopes and fears.

But, blessed be the Lord our God, we had not long to wait. He began to show some uneasiness, and we raised him up; and then he broke out with equal fervour, moving his hands and arms, saying, "Praise the Lord! Praise him! Praise the Lord! He's come! He's come! My God, my Heaven, my All."

I then said to him, "You can now say, *my God*;" and he instantly replied, "Yes; *my God*." Now our sorrow was turned into joy, and we could and did praise the Lord.

He said very little after this, and took little notice. His dear wife

up to this time was continually waiting upon him; but now all help or relief was vain, and all we now could do was to watch him, and it became very painful, seeing he so laboured for breath. It was therefore suggested that she should leave the room. But I said the Lord could relieve him; and we bowed the knee, and entreated the Lord that he would ease him. When I arose from my knees, the relief in his breathing was so evident that we could not but acknowledge the visible hand of the Lord in answer to prayer.

My daughter has lost a good husband, and his brothers and sister say they have lost a good brother; but their loss is his eternal gain.

Godalming.

A. WELMAN.

HANNAH LITHERLAND.—On Dec. 17th, 1879, aged 69, Hannah Litherland, the wife of Mr. Thomas Litherland, of Haydock.

Mr. Litherland was the principal instrument in getting men of truth to preach the gospel in the village of Haydock, near Liverpool; and was the principal man in procuring a chapel to be built in that place, after many years' struggle. The church was formed in his house on Sept. 24th, 1848, by Mr. William Vaughan, then of Liverpool, now of Bradford. At this place many of the old ministers of the gospel who are now dead used to preach in rooms in the village, until the new chapel was built a few years ago. Among these were Mr. Kershaw, Mr. McKenzie, Mr. Collinge, and Mr. Clough. Those men were dear to Mrs. Hannah Litherland, who is now gone to join them in songs of everlasting love. She was a lover of good men, and a lover of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sinner's Friend, of whom she could sometimes say, "He is altogether lovely." She was baptized by Mr. Vaughan, and joined the church at Haydock on Jan. 30th, 1850, where she remained an honourable member up to the time of her death. Her house was always open with a hearty welcome to receive the Lord's sent servants, both before and after the church was formed in her house; yes, from the time that the gospel was first proclaimed in that place. Her house was a lodging place for every man of God who proclaimed salvation, rich and free, to weary and heavy-laden souls. As the great woman said to her husband about Elisha, so Mrs. Litherland said to her husband concerning a servant of God, "Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick; it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in hither." (2 Ki. iv. 14.) Yes, and there God's servants had the best, the very best which that hospitable house could afford. She was a servant of the church at Haydock, and a succourer of many, and of myself also. (Rom. xvi. 1, 2.) Yes, and it may be said of her husband also, who is left to mourn the loss of one of the most tender-hearted and affectionate wives and mothers that ever graced a household, "the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee." (Phil. 7.) As Paul said to Timothy concerning Onesiphorus, so it may be said of this man and his household, "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain." (2 Tim. i. 16.)

Mrs. Litherland was a woman who feared the Lord above many, and thought much upon his name. She was not a great talker; but a very humble walker. She had very humbling views of herself, never presuming to say she was what she was not. Whenever she expressed her feelings, it was "with meekness and fear." She highly valued the grace of God, and said, "If ever my poor soul be saved, it must be by the free grace of God; for I can do nothing towards saving and helping myself." She would sometimes say, "I do hope I love the Lord, his people, and his ways." The Lord's own words to Peter would aptly

apply in her case, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" The writer can speak of one real mark of a child of God that this poor dear weakling possessed above many,—she loved the brethren. And, says John, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." (1 Jno. iii. 14.) In this she shone brightly; and this is one of the special marks of a child of God. It has the seal of heaven stamped upon it by the Holy Ghost; and

"The mark of that celestial seal
Can never be erased."

But she possessed other marks of a heaven-born soul, such as "a meek and quiet spirit," and "a tender conscience in the fear of the Lord." These are special marks of a child of God; but she had another; one that every regenerated soul has, in a lesser or a greater degree. This she carried in her heart, but she bore it patiently, and that was a large share of "tribulation." The Lord says, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but in me peace." (Jno. xvi. 33.) Mrs. Litherland both lived and died to prove the truth of that portion of God's truth; for in addition to much soul trouble about purely soul matters, she had a large share of family trouble.

Perhaps it would not be wise to enter much into family matters; but it may be well to name one or two things of a painful and afflictive nature to prove what has been said; for where God gives grace he tries it, sometimes as by fire and flood. Her husband was a collier, and was severely burned on several occasions in the coal-pit. On one of these occasions, Mr. Litherland was brought home from an explosion which took place on May 16th, 1831, charred to appearance like a cinder, almost burned to death. His life was despaired of. The neighbours say to this day that it was nothing less than a miracle that he recovered. This took place about two years after he was married to Mrs. Litherland. While this affliction was in the house, Mrs. Litherland gave birth to a son, who lived only ten years, and was killed by falling down a coal-pit thirty yards deep. That child was brought home dead on June 24th, 1841. A painful sight for a dear and affectionate mother to look upon. Another son died of a decline, at the age of twenty-five. A married daughter died of a decline at the age of twenty-eight, leaving three young children. A son, who is now at home, is totally blind. These are a few of the many sore troubles Mrs. Litherland had to pass through in the family circle. She proved the truth of what an ancient poet says in reference to "tribulation;" yes, and what the Word of God says of it too.

"No wider is the gate, no broader is the way;
No sweeter is the ancient path that leads to endless day;
No sweeter is the cup, no less our draught of ill;
'Twas tribulation ages since, 'tis tribulation still."

But in all these troubles she was upheld, supported, and strengthened by the hand of an unerring God. She was brought through all these trials, as well as many others that cannot be named here, with honour and credit, blessing and praising God for all his mercies to such a poor helpless worm. The Lord Jesus Christ was her refuge in all these "times of trouble." What a mercy that "he hears the needy when he crieth, the poor also, and him that hath no helper," and makes a way of escape.

This dear woman often spoke of God's mercies and goodness to her, to her husband, and to the children, and how he had raised up friends to supply their every need. At last she died, in her seventieth year, worn out with care and anxiety, weary of earth and sin, longing to be at home, where the weary traveller enters into rest. She has gone down

to the grave at a good old age, resting on the Rock of ages, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, and is now

“Freed from a world of toil and sin,
Eternally with God shut in.”

The day before she died she said to her husband, “I wish I was in heaven.” “Yes,” he said, “and I wish I was there with thee.” Almost with her dying breath she said, “I want heaven;” and the Lord kindly granted the desire of her soul, and took her home, saying, “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” (Lu. xii. 32.) She entered into rest without a struggle or a groan, to be for ever with her Lord.

To conclude. The end of Hannah Litherland was peace in believing in the Name and Person of a once crucified but now risen and exalted Redeemer.

Having known Mrs. Litherland personally for many years, I have been requested by a dear friend of hers to write a few lines, and to send them to be inserted in the “Gospel Standard.” D. S.

THE SPIRITUAL MERCHANTMAN.

“For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.”—PROV. III. 14.

“I know thy poverty; but thou art rich.”—REV. II. 9.

A MERCHANTMAN by grace am I,
And trade in things beyond the sky;
Things that invaluable are,
With which no others can compare.
Better than silver far, or gold,
Or precious stones, of worth untold;
All, all the things of earth are nought
To those in Wisdom’s market bought.
I without money go to buy
Of Him who hears the beggar’s cry;
I for his treasures humbly crave;
For “ask,” he says, “and you shall have.”
He knows that I have nought to pay,
And yet he does not answer nay;
But still invites me to his door,
And gives me grace to ask for more.
I always shall a beggar be,
While on this side eternity;
I have to beg for all I get;
Am rich, yet, strange, a pauper yet.
Dear Lord, I’m glad thou givest free;
Such gifts are gifts indeed to me;
If for those gifts I’d aught to pay,
I should be empty sent away.

July 12th, 1878.

A. H.

“THAT which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” Whatever it is that is so born, it is spirit, it hath a spiritual being, and it is not derivable by any means from the principles of nature. So it is said to be “a new creature.” (2 Cor. v. 17.)—Owen.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

OCTOBER, 1880.

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

THE HOPE THAT PERFECTS.

SHORT NOTES OF A DISCOURSE BY MR. SHORTER.

"For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God."—HEB. VII. 19.

THE Lord help us to attend for awhile to these three things, in his fear.

I. That the law made nothing perfect;

II. That the bringing in of a better hope did;

III. That by this better hope we draw nigh unto God.

I. *The law made nothing perfect.* Is, then, the law imperfect? No; that cannot be, because it was given by God himself. Nothing but purity ever proceeded from the lips of the eternal God. Moreover, Paul says, "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." And David says (Psa. xix): "The law of the Lord is *perfect*, converting the soul." And again (Psa. cxix.): "Thy commandment is exceeding broad."

But the law makes nothing perfect, inasmuch as it has no power to give life to a dead sinner. It had no power to give life to a man even when in a state of innocence; but in the day that he broke it, he fell under its curse, and death was entailed upon himself and all his posterity. "In the day that thou eatest thereof, dying, thou shalt die."

And we know that the *moral* law, given upon Mount Sinai, had no power to give life to those to whom it was given, for the prophets constantly testify that they were worse than the surrounding heathen. They were the most rebellious of all people.

But if you take the law in this passage to mean the *Levitical* law, it is as true that *that* made nothing perfect. Like the moral law, it proceeded from God, and therefore was perfectly adapted to its designed end, which was to be a representation of the fullness of grace and love hidden in the mind of God, and which was to be manifested at the appearing of Jesus Christ. Still it was but a perfect shadow, and a shadow, however perfect, is deficient in substance. It could not give life or purge the conscience. A remembrance was again made of sins every year, and notwithstanding all the vast expense incurred in offering sacrifices, not one conscience was thereby purged. It was not

possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin. O no! the worshippers must lay hold, by faith, on that perfect Offering of which these things were only shadowy representations, if ever they were saved.

Nor was there even a full exhibition of the grace and love to be hereafter revealed, for in the judicial portion of that law no sacrifice was allowed for the wilful murderer, nor for the man who had committed adultery, but he was to be stoned to death without mercy under two or three witnesses. Hence David, having committed both these crimes, together with vast deception and abominable hypocrisy, says, "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." That broken heart and contrite spirit got a view of the great Surety, who was to come.

But do not we know, some of us, by experience that the law makes nothing perfect? You know the law is briefly summed up by our Lord in this sentence: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself." The law requires that this be commenced with the first dawn of existence, and continued down to a man's latest breath, and at the first failure curses the sinner. Here, then, we see the foundation of a legal hope, and I can remember when this was all the hope I had, even to attain to heaven by my own doings. O! what a lie, what an awful lie, my hope then was! And yet I thought I was quite right. However, it pleased the Almighty in his mercy to appear for me, and take that hope away.

Now, when the law is applied to a man's conscience, it will always through his legal spirit tend to make a workman of him. He will work for his life; O yes! he *will* work for his life. But alas! it makes him only a workman to be ashamed. He will read, hear, sit up late at night, fast, give alms, &c.; and the more he does, the greater shame, loss, and confusion he feels. But the Lord applies it to the consciences of all his people in order that, being first well disciplined out of it, they may be fitted to love and prize the grace contained in the gospel. This was the effect it had on Paul. Like the rest of his brethren, he was familiar enough with the letter of the law, but it was never applied to his conscience until on his mad career to Damascus, to slaughter the Lord's beloved saints. "When the commandment came," says he, "sin revived, and I died." Do you know what it is for sin to be thus made manifest in you? To be, as it were, like a giant, a monster, in you? Now, it is not an easy thing to die naturally; and you may rely on it, it is not an easy thing to die this spiritual death. "I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." (Gal. ii. 19.) O what groaning, and labour, and sorrow, does the poor creature feel while under the law! For the law is not only a spiritual demander, but a

spiritual accuser, and as his conscience takes in its demands, it at the same time takes in its curses. And together with this, there will be a bitter feeling against the great Author and Disposer of his life, for the law never was a reconciler, and never will be. It makes nothing perfect. It will make a man a perfect wretch, perfectly miserable, but never reconcile him to God.

Thus, my friends, you see, we owe but little to the law, and yet I thank God it was ever applied to my conscience, because, as I said, it prepares the heart for the love and grace of the gospel, and to rejoice in a *free* salvation. And I have always found that the more people know of condemnation, the better acquainted they are with justification.

II. But the bringing in of a better hope did make something perfect. The better hope is our Lord Jesus Christ personally; and he is said to be "brought in," as in the first of Hebrews: "When he *bringeth in* the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." Again, it is said, "When the fulness of the time was come,"—at exactly the right time, "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law."

The first thing made perfect by the bringing in of this better hope is a *ground of hope*. It makes a perfect ground of hope. The man whose hope stands upon what the Lord Jesus has done and suffered, has a foundation for his hope which can never be shaken. You will say, "But my hope is often shaken." True; but you must learn to distinguish between the *ground* of your hope, and the *grace* of hope in your heart. Your feelings may vary many times in a day, but the foundation remains the same. The law said, "I demand perfect obedience." "Well," said the Surety, "demand it of me. I stand in their room and stead, to render thee all the obedience thou requirest." And he did so; he perfectly performed every one of its precepts magnified it, and made it honourable. And it will be a blessed occupation, if the Spirit lead you in it, to trace the steps of the Lord Jesus, and to see how perfectly he obeyed, one by one, all the commandments. He was, moreover, the substance and truth of all the shadows and types of the ceremonial law. And if you look a little farther, you will see that he was under a third law, which was between his Father and himself, by virtue of his having been sworn in to be a priest after the order of Melchisedek. By this law he bound himself to lay down his life, his own life, for the sins of them for whom he undertook to become a Surety. He says, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life." His human nature, too, having an incomprehensible, inconceivable union with his divine Person as the Son of God, his sacrifice is nothing less than God himself in our nature, offering up his own body and his own blood as our ransom. If you have seen, by faith, the Lord Jesus on Mount Calvary, and heard his dying

words, "It is finished," then you know that his righteousness does indeed make a perfect ground of hope.

It also makes a *perfect ground of love*, for hereby the sinner comes to know that the great God has loved him, and says, "Father, thou hast loved me with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness hast thou drawn me! Holy Redeemer, thou hast loved me, and given thyself for me, and art engaged to do all for me, and all in me, that I need."

If this fulness of love could always be realized, believers might walk along their way in constant comfort; but we live to prove the truth in this sense of our Lord's words: "Ye shall go in and out, and find pasture." After a while we go out of the sensible enjoyment of these things; but there being no change in God, only in ourselves, we return, as David says, to our rest again. Perhaps we may have another turn at the law, but the effect of that will ever be found to be the same as it was at the first; and it is only as the Spirit gives us a fresh view, by faith, of the great Mediator, that we can enter anew into the enjoyment of God's love.

III. *By this better hope we draw nigh unto God.* I would fain ask you one by one, but as I have not the opportunity, wish you to consider the question as though it were put to you individually, Do you ever, at any time, know what it is to draw nigh to God with comfort? It is impossible for a sinner to do so except by this better hope. Nothing but the doing and dying of the Lord Jesus can give the conscience of a sinner boldness to draw nigh unto God. "In whom also we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him."

But perhaps you will ask, what is a man to do if he should think on his sins, when attempting to draw nigh unto God? He is conscious of having committed many vile abominations, and what if they come into his thoughts, and fill his mind? Why, his wisdom is to confess them all before his God; but they will not necessarily strike him out of countenance, for he says, "I know I can never deserve any favour at thine hands; but here is Jesus. He has done all, suffered all, on behalf of guilty sinners, such as I am; let me be accepted in the Beloved."

May we all be favoured to draw nigh in this blessed way! Amen.

It seemeth to me that Christ is the stooping down of Jehovah; the arm of Jehovah on which we can lean; the eye of Jehovah, of which we can bear the glance, yea, whose look is love; the glory of Jehovah, upon which we can gaze unconsumed, and while we gaze are changed into the image thereof by the Spirit of the Lord; the voice of Jehovah, which is music, melody, and peace; the revealing of Jehovah. O infinite abyss of love, and joy, and peace, and grace, and truth, and holiness! My Christ, what is there not, what have I not, in thee? In vain I try to ascend the wondrous heights and explore the mighty depths. I am lost, overwhelmed, absorbed in love and thee, Almighty, boundless, matchless, endless love; for "God is love;" and in this dwelling-place I would rest for evermore.—*Ruth Bryan's Diary*, p. 104.

THE FALL.

THE truth exercises a great power on the consciences of some unregenerate men; and it effects remarkable changes in the minds of many natural men, as appears evident from Scripture. Such effects may take place without even being quickened into spiritual life. Take for example men like Balaam, Ahithophel, and others. For, as the word of truth is a light, it is made, for some wise purpose, to shine upon the natural understandings of certain men, who, like Balaam, become enlightened to see the doctrines of free grace with great clearness (Heb. vi. 4); and light, having once thus shone into the conscience of a natural man, it begets a natural faith in the letter of truth; which may become so strong and unwavering as possibly to remove mountains. (1 Cor. xiii. 2.) By this faith such men have worked miracles, as did Judas. But this light does not make manifest the relationship of the man to God as an utterly fallen creature, and cause him to stand before his face as a condemned criminal, with a spiritual feeling of godly sorrow for sin. It does not discover the hidden evils of the heart. It only reveals external objects; that is, actual outbreaks of sins, and what "may be known of God" by natural men. It enlightens persons to see in a notional way how God saves sinners; but not what constitutes salvation as revealed and experienced in a quickened sinner's heart. A man may see the letter of the covenant of grace clearly by this light; but he cannot see the real grace of that covenant, or what are the effects of that covenant when written on fleshy tables of the heart.

These enlightened persons generally hold the truth in unrighteousness, because they themselves are unrighteous ones, using their profession for their own ends and gain, and not for Christ's sake. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them." (Rom. i. 18, 19.)

These persons can see something of God, and the form of knowledge in the letter; but, being dead in sin, and destitute of a renewed mind, they are left to the vain confidences of poor fallen reason, instead of an exercised quickened understanding. The conscience never having been convicted before God, it remains an unpurged conscience, which misapplies the truth so plainly seen in the letter. Nothing is seen personally. Their sins are not uncovered; and of course their personal interest in the pardon of sin is not disclosed by this light. These are unhumiliated graceless professors of religion, unsanctified worshippers, presumptuous believers, and unexercised soldiers. Their heads may be as clear as Balaam's, but their hearts are as dark as the grave.

Satan can have fellowship with these, because he possesses light, and "believes and trembles," (James ii. 19.) What havoc

believing devils and believing dead professors frequently make amongst the flock of slaughter!

Mr. Philpot says: "To our mind one of the greatest mysteries in religion is the difference between the power of truth on the natural conscience, and the power of truth on the spiritual conscience; between the faith produced in the natural mind by the letter of the Word, and the faith wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God through the spirit of the Word. And yet in this lies all the difference between a professor and a possessor, between the damned and the saved. Here is the rock on which thousands split; here is the grand deceit of Satan as an angel of light,—that a man may have all faith, and yet be nothing. Yes; have the strongest and most unwavering faith in his natural mind, generated there by the letter of the Word, and yet live and die in his sins, an unpardoned criminal, an unsanctified rebel; may have the most implicit faith in Jesus Christ, and yet die out of Christ; may believe the promise, and have no interest in the promise; obey the precept, and yet be damned for disobedience.* This is the grand key of the cabinet; and he who holds not this key in his hand, be he preacher or writer that attempts to describe the work of the Spirit, will but fumble, for without it he cannot unlock one secret drawer of the heart, or penetrate into any one innermost recess of nature or of grace. Tremendous mystery! yet not more tremendous than true, that between a spiritual and a natural faith lay all the difference between David and Saul, between John and Judas, and that on it hangs life or death, heaven or hell, unutterable bliss or eternal despair!"—"Gospel Standard," 1855, page 191.

This witness is true, and until regeneration takes place, all is poor fallen nature moving in its own corrupt ways; nothing is clean, because it is corrupt; nothing lives, because it is dead.

Almost every error has its seat in an ignorance of the fall. The entire loss of the life of God which Adam possessed before his fall, and the consequences of that dreadful breach between the Creator and the creature, are subjects that can never be sounded to their depths. Adam did possess a life that could be lost, which was not the same as his being or existence; for that cannot be lost, so far as the soul is concerned; and the existence

* We are not, of course, to understand the writer to mean that a natural man can really believe the promise, or obey either the commandment of the law or precept of the gospel. The natural man cannot even so much as discern the true nature and meaning of either the promise or precept of the gospel; he cannot, then, receive the truth of the one, or obey in reality the other. So also, as the carnal mind cannot be subject to the law of God, the natural man cannot obey in truth the commandment. But he may have a natural conception of these things; and he may yield a sort of obedience; and at the same time yield no true obedience at all, but remain a rebel, and be damned for his disobedience to God. (1 Sam. xv. 12.) So also by the most implicit faith, we must not for a moment understand the tried exercised faith of a true believer; which depends upon the demonstration of the Spirit, and the constant power of God.

of the body itself will be resumed at the resurrection day. He had a life that could at once be lost; and this life *was lost* when Adam sinned. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. v. 12.) Something did at that instant cease to be; it lived no longer.

1. Let us see what that was which was at once lost in the fall. If, then, sentence of death was passed on all men, and all died in some sense at once in Adam, man ceased to be what he was before he died. He had a life prior to his transgression which he does not now possess. We will illustrate it by means of the gift of eternal life in the soul at regeneration. This life is not the natural life, or existence of either soul or body; but the life of God deposited in the heart, both spiritual and eternal in its nature. Now who does not see (who possesses spiritual vision) that the soul of man exists either apart from this life, or as in union with it? Without it he is dead to God, though alive as an existing creature; but in union with it, he is alive to God, possessing those peculiar emotions and sensations of spiritual life which the family of God experience.

The life, then, that Adam possessed, and which he lost, was a life peculiar to his created innocency, as a natural man. (1 Cor. xv. 45-48.) For he lived, though a short space, in the garden of Eden, in the image of God, in which he walked with God; he talked with him; and was even familiar with his Maker. He held intercourse with God as a pure and innocent man. All which proves that he did then possess a life of pure, innocent, and vital activity, which no man comes into this world as now possessing. That life he lost, and became dead in trespasses and sins. In this death his whole posterity was involved. (Eph. ii. 1-3.) Hence, as a morally dead soul could not commune with the living God, the union between the Creator and the creature was snapt asunder. For as easily could a corpse hold intercourse with a living being as a dead soul have fellowship with the living God.

2. Death having taken place, corruption immediately set in; which always does so in the corpse; for the old man is "corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." (Eph. iv. 22.) In this image Adam begat a son, and all his posterity bears the same likeness. Sin by the fall is deeply rooted in the heart, from whence "proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornication, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within, and defile the man." (Mark vii. 21-23.) What a forcible description is this, from the Lord's own mouth, of the depravity of human nature! This corruption cannot be stayed, because the soul is dead; and death is itself the cause of corruption. There is no life; and so rottenness spreads over the whole soul. This depravity manifests itself in one or more of the vile things enumerated by the Lord, as proceeding out of the heart. They are all there, whether they become manifest or not.

A person must, then, be born again, and become a possessor of eternal life before this corruptibility can be felt or perceived; and it is only a new life that can overcome the corruption which arises through the fall.

3. There is an alienation which has taken place on account of these wicked deeds: "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works." (Col. i. 21.) Again: "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." (Eph. iv. 18, 19.) Being "alienated" thus from the life of God, man has also become a naturalized subject of the prince of darkness, and is in allegiance to the "god of this world," (2 Cor. iv. 4,) and is thereby become an enemy of God by wicked works (Col. i. 21), existing in the same moral death as that of Satan himself. As "alienated" subjects, there is a breach that only becomes wider by the actions of sinful man; that is, man becomes the greater hater of God the longer he lives, and the more so if he should be brought in contact with the truth of God. Man being "alienated" from God, he cannot love him; because he has become a naturalized subject of "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." There is no exception, for it is further written: "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." (Eph. ii. 2, 3.) This being the fallen condition of man, he says, in his "alienated" heart, "Depart from me; for I desire not the knowledge of thy ways." (Job. xxi. 14.)

This is the solemn and awful condition in which every man and woman come into this world. All are alike "haters of God;" and, "there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Rom. iii. 12.) There are, it is true, many worshippers; and, almost every distinct class of professors has a somewhat distinct God, differing in some particular manner; but all agree to reject, in their hearts at any rate, the God who has a sovereign right to do whatsoever he pleaseth. All hate a sovereign Being, except the few who have been humbled by divine grace, and brought into subjection to him. There are only a very few believers in the world, if believers are to be counted by their genuine faith in him "that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation; and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan. iv. 34, 35.) If this is the character of the great JEHOVAH, and to doubt it is infidelity, are not real believers very scarce? And are not the great bulk of professors infidels in respect of their

denial of the sovereignty of JEHOVAH? For it is only to proclaim and maintain this doctrine of God's sovereignty to raise the enmity of fallen man, and to prove that man is an "alienated" being from this God. For some have gone so far as to say that they would "rather live in hell than be in heaven with such a God." These are nothing better than infidels; and every sentiment that practically denies the sovereignty of JEHOVAH is infidelity in heart. Thus men are enemies to God; dead in sin, corrupt, and at deadly enmity against their Maker; and in this state they live and die except God quickens the soul.

No one, too, has any power to recover his lost life, or help his fallen brother. None but God can quicken the soul; and "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (Jno. iii. 3.) Yet the dead in sin think themselves hearty and strong, and are the whole who need not a physician. (Matt. ix. 12.) For, although man is a dependent creature, he believes himself to be able to perform the most important part of salvation, which is to do living actions; but he is really under the dominion of Satan; subjected to him whose laws are against the laws of God, and determinately opposed to a sovereign God.

It is only by the life of God being imparted in the soul that this state and condition can be discovered, felt, and known. And this takes place only in the regeneration of the soul, by which gracious act it is snatched out of the hand of the prince of the power of the air, and is kept from the power of the destroyer.

RENOVATION.

THE troubler in Israel sendeth a few scraps as pills for his patient, wishing they may strengthen his knees, and clear any giddiness in his head; with peace and truth.

As you wish to have my thoughts about the renovating of the children of men and progressive sanctification, I give you them, as I have been instructed into the truth, I trust by the Spirit of God.

We read in the Scriptures that God made man in his own image, which was in uprightness, and told him that in the day he ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, he should die. Now, this was not only or chiefly natural death, for Adam lived many years after this, and had sons; and there is not a word in Scripture to show that God repented of what he said to Adam, or ever altered his mind. O no! What death was it then principally? Why, spiritual death. His body indeed in that day became mortal, subject to death; but his soul was cut off from God. We read that Adam begat a son in his own likeness; this was Cain, who was called a son of the wicked one, meaning the devil, who, you know, is dead enough to God and all holiness.

If we look into the Word, we shall soon see what Adam's sin brought into the world; for, says the apostle, "Through the offence of one many be dead." And again, "You hath he quickened, who were dead." And God, to his servant John, complains

that one of the professing churches in Asia had only a name to live, and was dead. But I must confine myself; for the Word abounds with proofs of our spiritual death by sin. One or two more examples will suffice.

Our Lord says that the Father raises up the dead; even so does the Son; and the Spirit likewise does the same. Again, he says, "The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live;" and this was fulfilling in the days of his flesh.

That man is dead to God, is plain from Scripture, and from experience too. For when God begins to form a man for himself, the man is created anew. He is called "a new man." It is set forth by a new birth, to show that the first is earthly and unto death, and the new from heaven. We read that "the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." It is called the new man of the heart.

The entrance of God's words giveth light; and this is one of the features of the new man, for in God's light we see light. Now, this light we have not by nature; for it is said, "Men love darkness rather than light;" and Christ Jesus is promised as a Light to lighten the Gentiles; and to the people that sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, upon them is the light to shine. We find that the Jews and people of old said that he had a devil, and did his miracles by that infernal spirit; and Simon, the sorcerer, who bewitched the people, was called by them the great power of God. Thus they fulfilled the Scriptures, which say that men call darkness light, and bitter sweet; so awfully blind are men by nature.

Now, as I said, this light being one of the features of the new man, you read: "That the eyes of your understanding being enlightened." Men are destitute of this light by nature. You may reason with them, persuade them to become moral, to attend a place of worship, and become members of churches. They may be reformed characters, and go a wonderful way. They may have a zeal like Jehu, have a gift in speaking, both in prayer and conversation, like Balaam, feed many, like Jezebel, and have another spirit, as Saul had, and yet never have the light of life. O! see what lengths Paul [Saul] went in religion. None to excel him. But when the light of God appeared in his soul, he says it was greater than the light of the sun. When it shone into David's heart, he cries out, "I have seen an end of all perfection; but thy commandment is exceeding broad."

The light that is attendant upon the new man sees sin in its true light, and God in his own rays. For God says that men think he is altogether such an one as themselves; but he will instruct them, and set their sins in order before them; that is, they shall be seen in his own light.

By this light the prophet saw the holiness of God, and his own sin; and the effect was that he cries out, "I am undone;

for I am a man of unclean lips . . . for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Again, we read: "The voice said, Cry. And I said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it." This is because the new man, and the light of God belonging to the new man, have discovered sin in its true colours.

Now, without being too tedious, for much more might be said, you will see that renovating the old nature in man will not do in this thing. You can teach a child to read that is born blind; but his reading what he may have learnt will not convince the child that he can see, or you either, when he cannot distinguish colours, or walk without a guide.

Again, *Life* is the principal thing in the new man; for we read that Christ brought life and immortality to light by the gospel. And, again, that God breathed into Adam the breath of life; and when Adam sinned, this he lost. Now the life of the new man can feed only upon Jesus Christ; therefore he is called the bread of God; and unless you eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God, there is no life in you. Now, that man has not this life by nature is plain; for the professed disciples of Jesus Christ said: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" And again: "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" and they went back from him. But when our Lord asks the others whether they will go away, they said, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life;" and God had taught Peter this, as our Lord says. Now, not all the electrifying machines in the world can give natural life to any dead man or animal. Though galvanism may make them move in their joints, yet, no sooner do you stop than they are motionless. Man is so totally dead that he cannot move towards God. You may make him move, when by alarming preachers he hears of death, eternity, and judgment to come; but no sooner is he away from the preacher's voice, and the sound is lost to his ears, than he has lost all his power to move. Hence God says, "They have not cried unto me when they have howled upon their beds." A man may be constant in his attendance at public worship, he may be a member, and be punctual in all his duties, and yet all this may not spring from life. Paul tells us what the life of God is and does. He says, "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God." And our Lord says that "the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life."

Now, this life of the new man can be satisfied with nothing short of finding Christ in reading, praying, or hearing the word. Not all the testimony of all the men in the world, not even the best of them, can satisfy this hidden life. It must be fed by God's own mouth. Now, where this life is not, if men can gain

the esteem of those who are called good men, or even good men's approbation, they are satisfied, and rest in it, and all their other works will satisfy a legal conscience.

Thus you see that a divine life is not in the heart of men, by nature; and not all the power that is in man can produce it; neither can preachers give it. Hence we read that "the first man is of the earth." The Second Adam is called a quickening spirit.

Without being tedious, you can see that you may morally improve a man, but you cannot spiritually renew him; and though the other may be good in its place, yet a man will never get to heaven if he is only thus changed; for it is only the black devil put off, and the white devil put on; or Satan transformed into an angel of light.

But again. Another member of the new man is *Love*. Now, men by nature are called haters of God. And, again, the carnal mind is said to be enmity against God; and men are called earthly, sensual, and devilish. You know that the devil hates God; and this spirit is in all men. Now, do not start back, or be frightened. It is a solemn truth; for we read that the devil is the god of this world; then all that are born in it must be his subjects, and he reigns over them and in them. We read, too, that he is king over all the children of pride. But God's elect are taken from this strong man by the omnipotent arm of the Saviour as trophies of his grace; for the apostle says, "You that were enemies in your minds hath he reconciled."

Now, without further proof of this, for the Word of God abounds with plenty of proofs, you see that man by nature hates God. You may give him a liberal education, and he may be reformed, as before stated; but now speak to this reformed man, and tell him that God has an elect people. He will cavil at it. Press the matter close home to him, and if he believes in election in the letter of it, yet tell him that all his works, duties, or other good, will avail him nothing, and he may be damned at last with it all; and ask him if he would acquit the Almighty. He will tell you, "No." His heart will heave against such a truth, and he will tell you that he does not serve such a God as that, neither could he love such an one; plainly showing that there is no love to the true God in his heart.

Now, we shall see that love is a member of the new man. First, God is love; therefore, he is the Fountain-head of all love, and from him it must proceed. We read that "the fruit of the Spirit is love." Now, God tells us that when he is pleased to visit us, he finds us cast out to the loathing of our person, and no eye to pity or to help us; for vain is the help of man. He says the reason of his compassion towards us is, because it is a time of love. We read of his everlasting love, and his drawing us with the cords of it; and he calls it drawing us with the cords of love as with the bands of a man. Now, our Lord tells the people of old that, although they did many things, yet because the love of God was wanting in their performances, it

availed them nothing, nor was it pleasing to God. We read that love is of God, and he that loveth is born of God.

But to come a little closer. No sooner is this member of the new man felt than it cries after its lovely Object, and says, "Whom have I in heaven or earth to be compared to thee?" Feelingly and sensibly this is felt, nor can it rest until it finds him. In vain are all the appointments of God's house, or his Word, unless it feels the love of God shed abroad, or is able to pour out its heart unto its Beloved. This love cannot be bought; for if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would be utterly contemned. Many have run for it; but the race is not to the swift. Many have fought for it; but the battle is not to the strong. Many waters cannot drown it; nor can all the fire of persecution, whether outward or inward, whether from friends or foes, ever quench it or stop its pursuit. It must embrace its divine Father, and have the kisses of his mouth. It rises up from whence it comes, and proves that it is of heavenly birth. How it may have to wait again and again! yet it cannot rest without him. As I said before, not all the changing and improving of a natural man can give him this divine gift; nor all the preaching or moral suasion of itself can produce it; and without it man is as an instrument without life, giving sound; for God calls him a silly dove, without heart. Love to God must be the moving cause of all our service, or all will be empty and vain; it will be nothing but wind and confusion. Plenty of scriptures I could bring forward to prove it, but if I were to go on in that way, I know not where I should stop.

(To be concluded.)

THE TIMES OF SAINTS IN THE HAND OF LOVE.

(Continued from p. 396.)

THESE remarks will prepare us for considering another time, which is in the hand of God,—*the time of love*. "Thy time," says the Lord, "was the time of love."

But in entering upon this part of our subject, let us briefly distinguish this time from those which we have before alluded to, especially the waiting time, in order to explain what we mean by calling a particular stage of experience a time of *the law*, of *waiting*, or of *love*. This seems necessary, as we have already pointed out that in the time to wait, or waiting time, the soul may have many sweet helps and glimpses of divine love. A particular time, then, may be properly named according to the peculiar state of mind which is prevailing in that time. As we may call any particular time, as to this world, after some ruler in that particular age, and thus may speak of the times of David, of Hezekiah, of Nebuchadnezzar, or of Cyrus, so we may speak of a peculiar period of a Christian man's life by the

state of mind prevalent or ruling in it. By the time of the law, then, we mean a stage of experience in which the legal spirit is prevalent in the man. By the time of waiting, a period in which the legal spirit being greatly broken, so far as legal hopes are concerned; the man is held between hopes and fears in respect to his interest in the gospel. He now despairs of being saved by the works of the law; but then the question with him is, Shall he be saved by the grace of the gospel? That is his anxious inquiry. Did God love him and choose him from eternity? Was his name then written in the Lamb's book of life? Has he a part in the Lord Jesus? Is he born again? Will the Lord Jesus have mercy upon him? He has hopes, but he has also innumerable fears, and these fears are extremely prevalent. He cannot say, My Beloved is mine, and I am his; but he longs to say it. He cannot say, I am saved; but he can say, or at any rate it is true of him, "I wait for thy salvation, O Lord." For brief intervals he has sweet and blessed springings up of hope, and these are attended at the time with a secret persuasion that the Lord will have mercy. But then the vision of life and peace is almost immediately, or at any rate very soon, withdrawn, and then the soul returns into the condition characteristic of the "time to wait,"—a painful and distressing prevalency of doubts and fears and questionings as to its interest in the Lord Jesus. Thus the soul obtains no satisfying rest. It hungers and thirsts, but it is not filled.

But now, in distinction from this time, in the time of love the sweet assurance of interest in Christ, and the comfortable persuasion of acceptance in him, and pardon of sins, are the prevalent things. We do not say that there will never arise any questionings during this time, or that no doubts or fears will ever intrude upon the mind; but this we say, that they are not ordinarily prevalent; but, on the contrary, the peace of God takes now the lead in the soul. Just as, in a time to wait, love at intervals may come in, soon to be swallowed up in the feelings of doubts and fears of a most distressing kind, so, in a time of love, doubts and fears may come in, soon to be swallowed up again in pardoning love.

Having thus pointed out what we mean by a particular time,—the time of a particular state of mind, we will proceed to dwell rather more fully upon "the time of love." In doing this, we cannot do better than refer our readers to the Lord's own description, as given in Ezek. xvi. Here the poor soul before quickened, as we understand it, into the life of God, and brought, through divine teachings, leadings, and discipline, into the place of deep necessity, is sweetly visited by the Lord in a time of manifested love. "Thy time," the time of necessity, "was a time of love." Then the Lord represents himself as spreading his skirt over the poor miserable creature, or, in other words, betrothing the soul unto himself (as in Hosea ii. 19, 20) for ever, in righteousness, judgment, and loving-

kindness, mercies, and faithfulness. Now the soul can truly say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." It is the day of Christ's and the soul's espousals, and the day of the gladness of the poor sinner's heart. Then the soul is taken experimentally into the bonds of the covenant. That covenant of free eternal grace, made from of old in eternity by the Eternal Three, is now made known to and confirmed unto the poor sinner in his own experience; so that he can say with David, "Yet hath he made with *me* an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure."

"And in its boundless grace he feels,
His happiness secure."

Triumphing in the security of this covenant, he can sometimes sweetly sing with the poet,

"More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven."

At this time, too, the Lord brings into the conscience a full, free, and eternal forgiveness of sins; as Ezekiel says: "Then washed I thee with water, yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee." This water, called in Ezek. xxxvi., "clean water," is the precious cleansing blood of Christ, which when, as in a time of love, applied to the conscience by the Holy Spirit, takes away all guilt and filth, and purges that conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Now the man has blessed peace in his conscience with God. All strife is ended, and reconciliation sweetly made. Then Christ clothes the soul with his everlasting righteousness, fulfilling his sweet promise: "I bring near my righteousness." This is noticed in Ezekiel in these words: "I clothed thee also with brodered work." Then the soul can say, "He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness;" and the King's daughter thus has her clothing of wrought gold. In fact, she calls Jesus by his proper name,— "The Lord our Righteousness."

Then the soul is sweetly anointed by the Holy Spirit, and replenished with his graces, and adorned with his gifts. Thus the prophet says, "I anointed thee with oil." "I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck." Then the soul has the love of the Father shed abroad in it, and is satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Almighty. The poor sinner receives the adoption of a child of God unto himself; can cry, Abba, Father; is made a living king and priest unto God, and sweetly flourishes in divine things. As the poet, who knew these things, writes:

" 'Tis his love his people raises
Over self to reign as kings;
And as priests his solemn praises
Each as a thank-offering brings."

But this brief description of the principal characteristics of a time of love must suffice. Those who have enjoyed it well know its blessedness. How they have rejoiced in the Lord day by day! How the means of grace have yielded time after time sweet honey,

milk, and wine! How, to use the language of the prophet, the mountains have dropped down new wine, and the hills flowed with milk, and all the rivers of Judah flowed with waters, so that the poor soul, amazed at God's astonishing love and grace, has cried out, O! "how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!" For corn has made the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids.

But now this time is entirely in the hand of God. Its beginning, its continuation, and its ending, are all with him; settled in his covenant, and dependent upon the work of his Holy Spirit in Christ. All is sovereign. Nothing therefore can be more vain than what some persons say,—that it is all a child of God's own fault that he does not believe and enjoy it. Mind, we never say for a moment that sin and the allowed working of the flesh is not a man's own fault, and to be condemned; but this we say, that the joys of salvation are dispensed to poor sinners freely by God's grace, and according to his own will and working.

There is, then, a set time to thus favour Zion and to sweetly bless her in a time of love. All the manifestations and revelations of God's mercy and grace are in his hands. How long this time of sweet enjoyment of his favour shall last is likewise with him. Thus it is that some of God's children, even in a time of love, have much more abundant revelations of God's truth and favour, and much more powerful communications of his love, than others. Paul could write about the abundance of the revelations with which he was favoured; of being caught up into the third heaven, and taken into the paradise of God, and hearing words which it was not possible for a man to utter. We need hardly say that there is a wonderful difference, as to degree, between the experience of an apostle like Paul and ordinary Christians, and between one of such Christians and another. But the essence of the time of love is the same,—a sweetly assured state of mind that Christ is mine, and I am his.

Then, again, as there is a great difference in degree, so there is as to continuance. Some have walked in this blessed light of God's countenance for one or two years, or perhaps more; some have only had the abidance of this sweet state last for one or two months. In some, too, when the joy of salvation has greatly declined, the effects as to assurance have been prolonged for a considerable time; whereas in others, through one cause or another, not only have the sweet and blessed consolations of the Holy Spirit ceased to be felt, but the assurance of an interest in Christ has been greatly shaken again. We believe that in all these things it is impossible to lay down any fixed rules. We cannot mark out a particular road of experience in which all the saved must come to Zion. God will not be bound by our hard and fast rules. We who cannot bind the unicorn to our crib should beware of laying down our rules for our Maker. Sufficient is it for us to say of this time of love, as of all the other times of saints, they are entirely in the hand of God.

(To be concluded.)

OWEN ON COMMUNION WITH THE SON JESUS CHRIST.

(Concluded from p. 408.)

But what doth she now do? Doth she give over and search no more? Nay, but, says she (ver. 2), "I will arise"; I will not so give over. I must have Christ or die. I will now arise, or, let me arise, and go about this business.

i. She resolves to put herself upon another course, a more vigorous inquest. I will arise, and make use of other means besides those of private prayer, meditation, self-searching, and inquiring into the promises, which she had insisted on before. It carries, first, *Resolution*, and a zealous, violent casting off that frame wherein she had lost her love. I will arise; I will not rest in this frame. I am undone if I do. So sometimes God calls his church to arise, and shake itself out of the dust; abide not in that condition. Secondly, *Diligence*. I will now take another course; I will leave no way unattempted, no means untried, whereby I may possibly recover communion with my Beloved.

This is the condition of a soul that finds not the wonted presence of Christ in its private and more retired inquiries. Dull in prayer, wandering in meditations, rare in thoughts of him. I will not bear this frame. Whatever way God hath appointed, I will in his strength vigorously pursue, until this frame be altered, and I find my Beloved.

ii. Then the way she puts herself upon, is to go about the city. Not to insist upon particulars, nor to strain the parts of the allegory too far, the city here intended is the city, the church; and the passing through the broad and narrow streets is the diligent inquiry that the spouse makes in all the paths and ordinances given unto it. This, then, is the next thing the soul addresses itself unto, in the want of Christ. When it finds him not in any private endeavours, it makes vigorous application to the ordinances of public worship; in prayer, in preaching, in administration of the seals doth it look after Christ. Indeed, the great inquiry the souls of believers make in every ordinance is after Christ. So much as they find of him, so much sweetness and refreshment have they, and no more. Especially when under any desertion, they rise up to this inquiry. They listen to every word, to every prayer, to find if anything of Christ, any light from him, any life, any love, appear to them. O that Christ would at length meet me in this or that sermon, and recover my poor heart to some sight of his love, to some taste of kindness!

The solicitousness of a believer in his inquest after Christ, when he finds not his presence, either for grace or consolation as in former days, is indeed inexpressible. Much of the frame of such a heart is couched in the redoubling of the expression: "I sought him; I sought him;" setting out an inconceivable passion, and suitably industrious desire. Thus, being disappointed at home, the spouse proceeds. But yet see the event of

this also. She sought him, but found him not. It doth sometimes so fall out all will not do; they shall seek him, and not find him; they shall not come nigh him. Let them that enjoy anything of the presence of Christ take heed what they do; if they provoke him to depart, if they lose him, it may cost them many a bitter inquiry before they find him again. When a soul prays and meditates, searches the promises in private, when it with earnestness and diligence attends all ordinances in public, and all to get one glimpse of the face of Jesus Christ, and all in vain, it is a sad condition.

What now follows in this state? "The watchmen found me," &c., (ver. 8.) That these watchmen of the city of God are the watchmen and officers of the church, is confessed; and it is of sad consideration that the Holy Ghost doth sometimes in this book take notice of them on no good account. Plainly (chap. v. 7), they turn persecutors. It was Luther's saying, "*Nunquam periclitatur religio nisi inter reverendissimos.*"* Here they are of a more gentle temper; and seeing the poor disconsolate soul, they seem to take notice of her condition.

It is the duty indeed of faithful watchmen to take notice of poor, troubled, deserted souls; not to keep at a distance, but to be willing to assist. And a truly pressed soul on the account of Christ's absence cannot cover its love, but must be inquiring after him. "Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?" This is my condition. I have had sweet enjoyment of my blessed Jesus. He is now withdrawn from me. Can you help me? Can you guide me to my consolation? What acquaintance have you with him? How did he manifest himself to you, and wherein? All these labourings in his absence sufficiently discover the soul's delight in the presence of Christ. Go one step farther to the discovery that is made of him once again, and it will be more evident. "It was but a little while that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth. I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me. I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem," &c. (ver. 4, 5.)

i. She tells you how she came to him. She found him; by what ways and by what means is not expressed. It often so falls out in our communion with Christ; when private and public means fail, and the soul hath nothing left but waiting silently and walking humbly, Christ appears, that his so doing may be evidently of grace. Let us not at any time give over in this condition. When all ways are past, the summer and harvest

* "Religion is never endangered except amongst the most reverends." We do not quite agree with Dr. Owen in his view of the watchmen in ch. v. 7; because the Lord himself says, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend;" and faithful ministers must not spare the flesh even in the godly. Luther's witty words will apply, we think, not only to the severer sort of reverends, but to those who cry, Peace, peace, and heal the wounds of the daughter of God's people slightly.

are gone without relief, when neither bed nor watchmen can assist; let us wait a little, and we shall see the salvation of God. Christ honours his immediate absolute actings sometimes; though ordinarily he crowns his ordinances. Christ often manifests himself immediately, and out of ordinances, to them that wait for him in them. That he will do so to them that despise them, I know not. Though he will meet men unexpectedly in his way; yet he will not meet them at all out of it. Let us wait as he hath appointed; let him appear as he pleaseth.

ii. How she deals with him when found is next declared. She held him, and would not let him go, &c. They are all expressions of the greatest joy and delight imaginable. The sum is,—having at length come once more to an enjoyment of sweet communion with Christ, the soul lays fast hold on him by faith (to hold fast is an act of faith), refuses to part with him any more in vehemency of love; tries to keep him in ordinances, in the house of its mother, the church of God, and so uses all means for the confirming of the mutual love between Christ and her: all the expressions, all the allusions used, evidencing delight to the utmost capacity of the soul. Should I pursue all the instances and testimonies that are given hereunto in that one book of the Song of Solomon, I must enter upon an exposition of the greatest part of it, which is not my present business. Let the hearts of the saints that are acquainted with these things be allowed to make the close. What is it they long for? they rejoice in? What is it that satisfies them to the utmost, and gives sweet complacency to their spirits in every condition? What is it whose loss they fear, whose absence they cannot bear? Is it not this their Beloved, and he alone?

This also they further manifest by their delight in everything that particularly belongs to Christ, as his in this world. This is an evidence of delight, when for his sake whom we delight in, we also delight in everything that belongs to him. Christ's great interest in this world lies in his people and his ordinances; his household and their provision. Now in both these do the saints exceedingly delight for his sake. Take an instance in both kinds in one man, viz., David. (Ps. xvi. 3.) "In the saints and the excellent, or the noble of the earth, is all my delight;"—"my delight in them." Christ says of his church, that she is Hephzibah;—My delight in her. Here says David of the same Hephzibah, "my delight in them." As Christ delights in his saints, so do they in one another on his account. Here, says David, is all my delight. Whatever contentment he took in any other persons, it was nothing in comparison of the delight he took in them. Hence mention is made of laying down our lives for the brethren, or any common cause wherein the interest of the community of the brethren does lie. For the ordinances, consider the same person. Psalms xlii., lxiii., and lxxxiv. are such plentiful testimonies throughout, as we need no farther inquiry; nor shall I go forth to a new discourse on this particular.

And this is the first mutual consequential act of conjugal affection in this communion between Christ and believers. He delights in them, and they delight in him. He delights in their prosperity, hath pleasure in it; they delight in his honour and glory, and in his presence with them. For his sake they delight in his servants (though by the world contemned) as the most excellent in the world; and in his ordinances, as the wisdom of God, which are foolishness to the world.

To the Editor of the "Gospel Standard."

Dear Sir,—A few weeks ago I had occasion to call upon one of the members of the church meeting in Zoar Chapel, Bradford, where Mr. Vaughan is minister. We had some, to me, edifying conversation. She had in her possession the numbers of the "Gospel Standard" for 1878. They were over and above what she had taken for herself; and she let me have them. I had been much exercised in my mind about my rebellious spirit in regard to the Lord's providential dealings with me, and had been striving and trying to pray for more resignation, through a sense of my need of chastisement, and that all things were appointed for me by a good, wise, and gracious Father. I felt that this was the only resting place for my poor distracted soul, and that only in proportion as I could come at it could I manifest anything like a right and Christian spirit toward some who I believed had done me wrong. I took home the precious treasure,—the "Gospel Standard," and in the October number I read a sermon preached from the text: "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." You cannot conceive how it was adapted to my case. A word in season, how good it is!—like apples of gold in pictures of silver. There has not been a day since I read it, but it has been on my mind, and I trust the Lord has made it a real blessing to my soul. I think I have been enabled to take my cup with something more of resignation.

I feel as if it were presumption to trouble you with reading this; but I wished to tell you how the Lord had used the "G. S." in helping poor unworthy me. I have been in the habit for many years of putting some of my thoughts into rhyme, and I enclose some that the said sermon has given rise to. I cannot hope that my verses are worthy a place in the "Gospel Standard," and unless they were made a blessing to some poor soul, I do not wish them there. Dear Sir, as the editor of the "Gospel Standard," you will need much patience with your correspondents, and I humbly ask that you will forgive my taking up your precious time. Believe me to have, although I have never seen you, a real love for you, and a soul union with you.

Praying that the dear Lord may greatly bless the "Gospel Standard," and your labours in connection therewith, I am,

Yours gratefully,

Lister Hills, Bradford, July 8th, 1880.

B. M.

[We insert the verses of our correspondent, as well as his letter; the verses, because we think there is a savour of grace and truth about them which will commend them to our readers; the letter, as explaining the origin of the poetry. We have only one fault to find with our friend. He seems to almost forget that he is writing to a poor fellow-sinner and a partaker by grace of the same blessings as himself; a member of the same body, and one who will feel thankful to have a place in the last day amongst the least of God's saints. Berridge somewhere finds a little fault with one of his correspondents upon similar grounds, and asks, in his quaint way, whether, when a frog addresses his brother toad, it is necessary for him to approach with quite so much awe and self-abasement. We can assure our friend that we feel ourself a very ordinary mortal, and are glad to be *allowed* to serve the churches.]

THE CHILDREN'S CUP OF TRIALS.

There is a cup, a needful, bitter cup ;
 God's holy, well-beloved Son had one,
 His Father's gift, and he must drink it up ;
 And there's a cup for every true-born son.
 Dread wars with Satan and his subtle crew ;
 Conflicts with unbelief, with self, and sin ;
 Ingredients which the worldling never knew
 Are in that cup—by heavenly love put in.
 And in connection with our mortal life,
 A thousand bitters in the cup we find ;
 Each with some plan or wish of ours at strife,
 And all unpleasant to the carnal mind.
 Yet this same cup is by our Father mix'd ;
 His love and wisdom and eternal will
 The exact amount of every portion fix'd,
 All weigh'd and measured by unerring skill.
 Dear Son of God ! what did *thy* cup contain ?
 How full ! how bitter ! when compared with mine ;
 What has mine held of sorrow, grief, or pain,
 That was not found a thousand-fold in thine ?
 But O ! how far, how far from that sweet goal,
 Which my poor heart is struggling to attain !
 I strive and labour for it, but the whole
 Seems fruitless toil, and all my efforts vain.
 As well attempt to stop the tidal flood,
 Or with my finger some fix'd star to touch ;
 I scarce can count my daily mercies good ;
 How hard to count my sorest trials such !
 Saviour, *I* cannot reach that goal ; but *thou*
 Canst make e'en disappointments thither tend ;
 Thou lead'st me by a way I do not know ;
 And so wilt bring me to my journey's end.

How strange that I, whose just desert is hell,
 To whom each mercy is a gift divine,
 Against the gracious Giver should rebel,
 And at his wise and loving ways repine!

Yet thou wast perfect; nought was found in thee
 Which could require a Father's chastening rod;
 Thy cup was drunk for others; e'en for me,
 To save my soul and bring me home to God.

I stagger when I think what thou hast felt,
 What loads of sin, what agony and pain;
 Causing thy faithful heart like wax to melt;—
 Such was thy cross, and its attendant train.

Thou saw'st thy cup, full to its utmost brink;
 Peter would have thee from the draught to fly;
 "The cup my Father giveth me to drink,
 Shall I not drink it?" was thy sweet reply.

O that thy mind were also found in me!
 To have no choice, should joy or grief be mine;
 My Father's hand in everything to see,
 And take it with a filial love like thine.

I hope, and sometimes feel assured of this,
 His Spirit bearing witness of the grace;
 That mine the portion of his children is,
 That in the covenant I have a place.

O how such rich, such free and sovereign grace,
 To one so vile, so helpless, so unwise,
 Makes my ingratitude appear more base,
 But his abounding mercy magnifies.

Since he vouchsafes his wisdom, love, and power,
 And grace will perfect that which grace begun;
 May I be help'd in every trying hour,
 To take my cup and say, "*Thy will be done.*"

"EVEN TO HOAR HAIRS WILL I CARRY YOU."

Dear Sir,—I have sent you a letter of C. Goulding's. It is a long one. You can insert it in three numbers. It is a good letter, and he was a good man. I first became acquainted with him in the year 1818. He and Mr. Bensley, the printer, were trustees to Providence Chapel, Gray's Inn Lane. I have sent several of his letters to the "Gospel Standard." I think they have all been inserted. This one was left. I have transcribed it for you. You will see when you read it that Mr. Goulding told his friend it took him seven hours to write it. I was longer in transcribing it, for I am advancing in years, being 78 in December, at the latter end. You will find, as you grow older, your faculties get more dull. I had one companion, eight years older than myself. He

died last March. We had been companions for 70 years; and when he was dying I went to see him and asked him how he was. He replied, "Just already packed up to go; waiting to hear the summons; and the Lord told me years back that at evening time it should be light; and so I find it. All calm as a summer's eve." So he went home in full assurance of everlasting glory. He was in his 85th year. May you, when you come into such circumstances, have the like support.

Wishing you every blessing, I remain, Yours to serve,

Covenry, Sept. 20th, 1879.

THOMAS PLAYER.

To Mr. Hazlerigg.

My dear Friend,—Peace be multiplied to you, if the Lord's will. Amen.

Paul could say in his time, and why not we in ours? "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal. vi. 14.) And this must be our glory if we do glory aright; because by the crucifixion of Christ a way was opened for the communication of all those spiritual blessings which God the Father blessed his elect with before ever the world was made. Here also the law was magnified, justice satisfied, the wrath of God appeased, the curse of the law executed, the whole body of sins destroyed, the devil vanquished and spoiled, death and the grave destroyed, and that glorious ransom price paid, which delivers every one of the elect from going down into the pit of hell. The throne of grace was erected in harmony with every attribute and perfection of God; as the psalmist speaks: "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before thy face."

Here in the cross we see how justice is satisfied, and judgment fully executed upon the Surety; so that we are delivered. And a throne of grace is erected on this honourable foundation; and erected so as for both mercy and truth to meet and harmonize together in saving poor fallen ungodly sinners, through Christ. Thus through the perfect obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ, God can be, and certainly is, both just to his threatening, just to his law, and also equally just to his covenant, and his free promise in justifying and saving the ungodly, who are brought by his power to believe in Christ, who is righteousness and the end of the law to all those who are become dead to it in him. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." (Rom. vii. 4.) O! wonderful reconciliation, this! Wonderful, too, the supplies of his grace, and of the Spirit, that are communicated to, and enjoyed by all believers in this way; even through Christ crucified. And so precious is it, that all are declared blessed that do hear, receive, and understand the sound of it. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound;

they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance; in thy Name (as in Christ 'the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin') shall they rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." (See Exod. xxxiv. 6.)

The streams of God's grace and Spirit, the fruit of his own everlasting love, called a river, flowing in this way to make glad the city of God, even the holy place of the tabernacles of the most high, "God forbid," says Paul, "that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." And God grant that our glorying also may be in this; for here we can never glory too much. This, indeed, will be no small part of our everlasting glory in heaven; as we may gather from Rev. v., 9th to the 14th verse, and from Rev. xiv. 1st to 5th verse.

If, then, we have the enjoyment of these things in our heart on a Friday, it is truly a *good* Friday; if not, it is not a good Friday to us; and if we do but enjoy them on a Monday, or any other day, that may be called a *good* day. But I am no great friend to the observance of particular days, the Lord's day excepted. Indeed, we ought to leave those in a form of godliness to the superstitious observance of these things. Such formal observance is their glory, but by no means ours, as it is condemned in God's Word. Hear what Paul says to the Galatians (ch. iv.): "Now, after that you have known God, or rather are known of him, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain."

Leaving these things, which have never at any time under the gospel profited them that have been occupied therein, I proceed to your letter, which I duly received. I thank you for it. One part my mind is turned to, which is the present furnace you are in, through being exercised with many cross providences. As temporal prosperity in the wicked has ever been a great stumbling to the poor of God's saints, so, on the other hand, when God has in this way blessed his saints, it has often been the greatest snare and trap to them. We cannot stand before much prosperity; and therefore God, in much love and mercy, is pleased to give us more adversity. And the more we have of this, the more frequently we are at a throne of grace; the more do we feel after the Lord's promised power and strength; and the more this is felt after, the more we have of it; and the more we have of it, the more stable we are; and the more stable we are, the more comfortably we walk, and the more do we live to God's glory, and the more useful and fruitful we are in our day and generation. The more, too, we live above the world; the more the old man is crucified; and the devil does not gain so many advantages over us; and the more skilful do we become in the word of righteousness. These and many more things being considered,

the day of adversity is profitable, though by no means pleasant, and does certainly work for our good. But for wicked men to be blessed with plenty, by which they might do good, but instead do evil, for such to have all things prospering they put their hands unto, this, when carnally viewed, has been a sore trial to the godly. How particularly was Asaph tried in this way! Hence at the sight of it he speaks thus: "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well-nigh slipped; for I was envious at the foolish when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death (they die like lambs, as is said of many among them); their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness, they have more than heart could wish. Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches." What, then, do we understand he means by his feet being almost gone? What by his steps well nigh slipping? Why, it means that his faith in God's promise, as a God of providence to his saints, was so staggered that it had nearly expired, and the resting of his confidence upon the promise. But God giveth more grace, when his people are tried to the uttermost. He says further: "Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain; I have washed my hands in innocency: for all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning."

Now, seeing the prosperity of the ungodly on the one hand, and having himself sharp trials on the other, although he knew in his heart that he loved God and hated evil, these things, when he thought upon them, filled him with perplexity, and for some time there remained in him hard thoughts of God, as if he dealt unjustly. "When I thought to know these things, it was too painful for me." But after some little time, it should seem that he went and prayed to God to make this crooked place straight before him; and may be in attending the word preached by some of his servants, this crooked place was made straight, so as to be clear to him. "When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me, until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation as in a moment; they are utterly consumed with terrors. As a dream, when one awaketh, so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image."

After God had in the sanctuary shown him the everlasting destruction of the ungodly at the end of their prosperity, then he began to change his voice and his thoughts; and instead of hard thoughts of God, or charging injustice on him, he hated himself for his rebellion and peevishness, and found that the path of tribulation he walked in was the way of the saints of God, consistent with the mind and will of God, and that the end of it would be everlasting glory. Hear him speak: "So foolish

was I, and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless (though I am so sorely tried) I am continually with thee." And why I have not utterly fainted and cast away all my confidence, is because thou hast holden me with thy right hand.

Then we have this good man, with the strongest confidence, prophesying of his eternal glorification, and also of his walking in a right and safe way thither, through the Lord's guidance. "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory." Then, having said this, how we have his love and affection to his God and Saviour set forth: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." Then, at the sight of death and the grave, we have him saying, "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." Read carefully Ps. lxxiii.

You see how this good man was tried and exercised. He was exercised by sore and grievous trials in providence; but he had God for his portion, Christ Jesus for his treasure, and the glorious recompense of reward dwelling richly in his hope; while those that had their portion in this life, and received their consolation here, were to be destroyed in hell with an everlasting destruction. Agreeably to this we read: "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores; and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores." (Lu. xvi.) Now, to see a sound believer in Christ in such a deplorable condition, and one with the devil reigning and ruling in his heart faring so sumptuously every day; this is sufficient to try faith to the uttermost; and no doubt the faith of Lazarus was as much tried as Asaph's was. But, then, the end of these two characters, and the end of God's dealings with them, differed very widely; for it is said, "And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried. And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." Then he begs water to cool his tongue. But, no; Abraham had none for him; but says, "Son, remember, that thou in thy life receivedst thy *good things*, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."

It is therefore better to suffer affliction here with the people of God, which affliction is said to be but for a moment, and to enjoy everlasting comfort, joy, and happiness in heaven. The rich and prosperous wicked after death are tormented by Satan. Surely there are many such in this world, who are in the enjoyment of an abundance of wealth and abundant prosperity; while the curse of God is in it all. They are set in slippery places, and they shall in a little while be cast down and leave all their wealth, pomp, and glory behind them; for God declares it shall not descend after them, nor follow them. But they that do believe in Christ,

and they that do love and fear him, never truly begin to shine forth in their glory till after death. Whereas, the wicked are driven to darkness. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the glory of their Father's kingdom for ever and ever.

(*To be continued.*)

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

“Whilst the long cloud of witnesses Shows the same path to heaven.”

My dear Brother in Christ,—I have received two little tracts, entitled, “The Great Love of God,” and “Fellowship with the Sufferings of Christ,” both of them written by yourself, and thank you for your kind remembrance of unworthy me. The subjects treated of are indeed the grandest and most solemn that the renewed mind can be exercised upon; and needful it is to ascend the mount of contemplation to consider the former, and to be led down into the valley of humiliation to rightly understand the latter. “God only knows the love of God,” in its utmost length, and breadth, and depth, and height; and can fully comprehend it as from everlasting to everlasting. And with respect to the sufferings of the Redeemer, what Christian soul can ever sound the depths of sorrow and of sufferings that his own most blessed and sweet and immaculate soul descended into when, as the Surety of his own dear people, he took the cup presented to him, and put into his hands by the Father, and drank it up, and drained it to the dregs?

“How his eyes astonished are!
 Sure they witness huge despair;
 On his face what sadness dwells!
 Sure he feels a thousand hells.”

O! what an amazing expense of love and blood was the Good Shepherd at, to obtain the eternal redemption of his flock! How he loved the church thus to give himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing!

That word in relation to the subject has been made sweet to my soul: “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” Rich he was in every perfection of Deity, being God over all, blessed for ever. Rich in an unmeasurable fulness of light, life, love, peace, joy, wisdom, and power; and yet in his humiliation, sinking so infinitely low, and emptying himself in such a wonderful and mysterious manner as to become a worm and no man, the very scorn of men, and outcast of the people.

With what astonishment sometimes is my feeble faith led out by the Holy Spirit, to consider and meditate on that flesh in which God was manifested! Here, while it muses on the mystery, it is favoured with an experimental sight of it, as the flesh

of God. Those human eyes are God's eyes; that human tongue is God's tongue; those human hands are God's hands; those human feet are God's feet; that human soul is God's soul; that human blood is the blood of God! And whilst my faith fastens on and mixes with the Incarnate mystery, it eats the flesh of the Son of man, and drinks his most precious blood. And truly, my dear friend, the conception, birth, life, sufferings, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, session, and intercession of the Lord Jesus are the life of my soul; and they are the things by which my soul lives, and shall live for ever. Many years ago did I labour hard to scrape together sundry qualifications and graces in order to beautify my soul, and fit and recommend it to the favourable notice of the Lord Jesus. I thought to take the man a present, a little balm, a little spice, a little honey, and double money in my purse; a little meekness, a little purity, a large amount of diligence and zeal; and thereby to obtain a gracious reception at his hand. For my poor, blind, ignorant, and self-righteous heart shrank back with dread from a *naked venture upon a naked Jesus*. It wanted to go to him on the strength of some inherent qualifications, and clung to them as to its life, not daring and not knowing how to go to him on the strength of the *naked promise*. But when the blessed Spirit sent a ray into my soul from this word: "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out;" and revealed to it the ability and *willingness* of Jesus to save me *just as I was*, as a poor, lost, ruined, guilty, filthy, ill-and-hell-deserving sinner; that sight was attended with a powerful influence on my heart, inducing it to let go the things it held so fast before; and sweetly drew my soul and affection to venture upon him wholly and solely, as the only Saviour of poor sinners, depending on his promise not to cast me out. And blessed, for ever blessed be his Name for his sovereign mercy to unworthy, most unworthy me! He did not cast me out; but received me graciously, and graciously manifested his love to my heart; for he drew near me, and made himself most sensibly present when I was in prayer, and took or drew my spirit almost out of my body, set it home upon his heart like a seal, and held it in his sensible embrace. Then my heart felt the dying love issuing out of his heart, and it spread itself with most ineffable sweetness throughout my heart, till love and grief compounded an unction, which kindled at the time most earnest repentings together. And two things did my soul then distinctly experience; first, the pardon of all my sins; secondly, my soul was raised up above and beyond all thought about itself, to weep with tender compunction over his most tremendous sufferings and woes. Thus, my dear friend, our two hearts met together and kissed each other; and that is not the only time they have done so, blessed be his Name.

One thing more I forgot to mention, which was the distinct sense my soul had of his love at that time; which was this, it

was not the love of man *only*, and it was not the love of God *only*; but it was the love of the *two natures, Divine and human*, inseparably united in his Person; it was the love of the *God Man* that my soul distinctly felt at that time.

Since then, the fasting days and the times of darkness have been many; and now I have no stone to throw at any creature, because I see and feel the plague, the beast, the bankruptcy, the earthliness, sensuality, and devilishness of my own heart. And by extremely painful experience my soul learns that in me, that is, my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing. This has, under the blessing of God, been the means of leading my heart to consider more closely the truth concerning the sanctification of the believer; which blessed mystery you have, I perceive, touched upon (pages 10 and 16 of the tract No. 1), and truly set forth this matter. True it is, there is a law of sin in my members which wars against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. But, then, my soul is given to see, by faith, that I have a perfectly clean flesh in Jesus Christ. His immaculate soul and body were at their conception assumed into the unity of his Divine Person, and never had any subsistence but in the Person of the Son of God. And like as the sap circulates throughout every branch and leaf of the tree, so every faculty of his blessed soul, and member of his spotless body, being immediately united to the Godhead, are supplied with an inexhaustible fulness of all grace and holiness. Therefore since, by virtue of a vital union to his Person, I am one spirit with him; I also find myself to be one flesh with him (see Eph. v. 80), the perfect holiness of his soul and body being the perfect holiness of my soul and body before the throne of God at this time. It was a most surprising revelation to my soul when the Holy Ghost made it known that the very same life which had entered into the dead body of the Son of God when it lay in the tomb, and quickened it, had entered also into my soul and quickened it; and would in a time to come quicken my body also, namely, at the resurrection; for the resurrection life of Christ, being applied by the Spirit to the sleeping dust of his saints, will also quicken them and fill them with the life of glory.

My dear friend, my outward man is much enfeebled and broken, and writing so long an epistle has sorely tried it, if it has not wearied you. You have gone into the heart of things in both your tracts, and the subjects are very solemn, especially the "Fellowship with the Sufferings of Christ." Although there are some things you advance respecting the invitations which my mind cannot at all receive, as they appear to me to contradict the *special* and *sovereign* exercise of grace, yet I felt unwilling, my dear brother, to enter into a debate, when there were such solemn subjects presented as in the main body of your tracts. I do not know whether you will be able to make out my scribble or not. If you have any letter of mine be pleased to destroy it, as the remembrance of what was written by me formerly

to you often occasions me intense shame. And now may grace be with you, and love with faith. Farewell.

Hampton Court, Oct. 28th, 1853.

B. C. WARREN.

My dear Friend and Brother in the Lord,—I feel deeply indebted to you for your great kindness in remembering me in a time of need. Through rich, free, and unmerited love my dear Lord has not forgotten me, but has poured into my sorrowing heart joys the world and mere professors are strangers to. Yet I am glad of the expressions of love and sympathy from kind friends and brethren in the Lord; and I assure you I have had such affection manifested towards me in epistles that it has been as much as I could well bear.

Since it pleased the Lord to take from me the partner of my joys and sorrows, I have had such a baptism of the love of God that I have not enjoyed for years. Yea, I seem to have been allured as in Hos. ii. 14, 15: "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall sing there as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt." The Lord has brought me into the wilderness of widowhood; but 'tis here he meets with and comforts me, speaking powerfully to my heart, not only giving me corn or manna to sustain me, but vineyards,—the pure juice of the grape, the pure love of God in its refreshing streams; also the valley of Achor for a door of hope, or inlet into his free love. Here I am favoured to sing as in the days of my espousals, now a little over 31 years ago. Love reigns. My iniquities are thus subdued, and when vile, base thoughts come, they are at once captivated; the Lord saying, grace must and shall reign. It is my time of love, and his time too. When I have been thinking of my sad and sore loss, then the Lord has brought me some sweet portion referring to the state of the glorified, either from the Word or a hymn; so that I have realized in some small measure what is expressed in the words: "In heaven they neither marry nor are given in marriage;" nature and corruptions are so swallowed up.

How blessed to feel the precious foretastes of heaven, and to have these earnestly so frequently given! Our dear Lord knows how to time our trials, and to prepare such rich cordials to give us in them. It is a month to-day since I committed the departed one to the earth; there to lie as a seed, to rise again. And though sown in weakness, it is to be raised in power; and I may say this is the first day I am or have been tempted to excessive sorrow. My late dear wife and I were such companions, both naturally and spiritually. I may say that when we were together, very few days have passed in the 26 years and five months of our union that we did not have conversations upon the Word of God. She was a lover of God's Word; and O how

she prized it in her last days; or I might say particularly so the last few years. It was a time to her of the latter rain.

A few days before she fell asleep in Jesus she said, "O William, how I should like some one to come into the room as full of the Word of God as a fountain, and let it flow out; and then for me to die." It was not the bare reading of the Word. No! She saw so much of Christ in it, and was brought so to live in him, and see so clearly the difference between the graces of the Spirit in God's people and the grace and Person of Christ. She was looking so much to his finished work as the ground of her acceptance, and was taught so to live upon his Person as "Immanuel."

The Lord gave her this word a short time back: "He shall see of the travail of his soul," &c. She said, "For several days I have not got beyond the word '*He*.'" I asked her a few things upon it; when she replied, "I have been contemplating upon his Godhead, and was then led to the perfection of his Manhood, and his mediatorial work; yea, all his offices and relationships." This was a great help to her.

The Friday before her departure she was very ill; but I did not think her end was near. She said, "William, give my love to the friends who inquire after me; and tell them that since by man came death, I feel death in my body—but by man came also the resurrection of the dead; that they are all looking too much into themselves, and dwelling upon themselves, and not looking to Christ and his resurrection power."

The previous day, after we had had the morning reading, she called our little servant, who had been with us some years, and came very young, and a nephew to her bedside, and blessed them, and told them about their states as sinners, and their need of regeneration and the blood of Jesus; and how solemn it would be to die without knowing those things. She also said, "And what should I do now if Jesus was not my hope, and his blood my plea?"

At night she was taken worse, and said, "William, God has fulfilled his word he gave me before we were married: 'And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age.' God will bless you," &c.

Though these things took place, I could not conceive her end near, her voice and mental powers seeming so good, so firm. I had seen her revive so often with warm days that I hoped she would again. None knows but God and herself how much she suffered from atmospheric influence. On the 23rd of April, that warm day, she was up twelve hours, and said she had not felt so well for three months. On the Lord's day, April 25th, it was very cold, and she said, "I am as if I was upon the Alps with a wet blanket upon me." O! it was so difficult to keep up the circulation. How often did she say, "Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death?"

On Tuesday, the 27th, she was up and perusing different

books for lessons. Though she had not attended the Sabbath school, she took an interest in it, and arranged for its being carried on. Though cut off from going to the chapel so long, she did not give up, but had her class in her own room once a week; also the teachers, up to February the 8th.

We sorely feel her loss, as she was one who lived for others. She had known the Lord 50 years; and that whole time had been one of constant service, and willingness, when in health, to help in all sorts of cases. It is now over four years since her health began to fail. Her complaint was want of circulation. Some thought she shut herself up too much; but it was only by doing so that life was preserved. Her medical adviser told her he had only seen one case just like hers, and that was the case of a lady who had lived in India. In consequence of internal weakness, the skin had more to perform than is usual; and with having so much to do, it was worn out, so that it had no power to shut out cold or heat. Few would understand it; but, alas! how hard we are often in judging others. This my poor dear wife deeply felt, being highly sensitive. But had the friends known all her toils, and the uphill work we had gone through, they would never have had a thought contrary to one of love. But now her spirit is where there is no misjudging one another;—"For ever with the Lord." No sickness, or misunderstanding, or misrepresenting one another *there!*

But I must leave off. I did not think of my pen running on so long; but my heart is open to you. I cannot tell you the pleasure it was to my dear wife that you and I should meet as we did at Brighton. The words you name on the card were all expressed by her when she took the sudden cold on April 15th, and thought she would have died in the night; at which time she said, "William, do not be afraid. If I die, all is well. I have no fear. It is gone." She then quoted the words with some additions: "A Brother born for adversity. My hope is Christ crucified; but my sense makes against it." Twice over she repeated it. The Lord spared her through it. The hymn also she enjoyed very much after repeating:

"The sands of time are sinking;
The dawn of heaven breaks."

Especially the last verse:

"The bride eyes not her garments, &c."

The Saturday before she departed, the medical man came, and she conversed with him for fully half an hour. At 6 o'clock she seemed more sleepy, and the next morning seemed weaker, but would only have one at home with her. She wished the servant to go to chapel. At 10 a.m. she expressed her hope to me:

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and right——"

She was not able to speak clearly to the end of the word; but I did not know she was then so near her end. I went to chapel,

and preached from Psalm xlv.: "And thy thoughts to usward." O what a morning of power! an anointing for what was coming! I returned home, and in less than two hours saw her fall asleep, never to speak again to me in this world. As soon as I saw her take her last breath—for it was such a gentle taking down, she did not so much as sigh—the words came to my sorrowing heart:

"My Jesus hath done all things well."

I should say she knew me when I returned home.

All seems like a dream; yet it is a reality. Pray for me, that I may be helped as I have been. I have had special anointings in the Word, and was helped to preach Lord's day, May 9th.

Pardon my long and badly put together letter, and give my Christian love to Mrs. Hemington and daughter, and believe me to remain,

Yours in sorrow and joy,

7, Clifton Street, Brighton, June 4th, 1880.

W. HARBOUR.

My beloved Brother,—What a strange creature I am!

"How perplexed is the path I must tread!"

I am still walking in darkness, and cannot read my title clear. I cannot feel my standing upon the Rock; and I fear I am only built upon the sand. I have been heaping up wood, hay, and stubble; the fire is consuming it. "The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." I have found out that it is not all gold that glitters, and nothing else will stand the fire.

"Sometimes we seem to gain

Great lengths of ground by day;

But find, alas, when night comes on,

We quite mistook the way."

I am often crying out, "Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me." When I attempt to compare notes with some of the dear saints who are gone to rest, and who were bright and shining lights, O what a worm, what a nothing do I seem! O what a mass of sin and ignorance! How those letters of the dear immortal Rutherford cut me up! How awful if I should be a foolish virgin after all! May, O Lord keep you, my brother, from building upon anything or any one but Christ. May he keep you from heaping up wood, hay, and stubble; for when he puts you into the furnace to try you, he will sit as a Refiner, and will purify you as silver is purified, and try you as gold is tried. Be not carried away with what others think of you, nor yet with any seeming liberty in prayer, nor yet with good frames and feelings; for in the time of trial all will vanish like smoke. Satan will try to puff you up, and make you believe you are something, when you are nothing. It is one of his old traps; and I am not ignorant of his devices. He has made me believe many lies, and I am afraid he will more yet; for he knows what an easy tool I am. Watch him, and watch your own heart; for they are co-operatives. Look out for some sure way-marks, some tokens for good, some Ebenezers, that you may have something to look back upon when the

hottest of the battle comes on. "Beware of counterfeit graces," as the late dear Mr. Philpot used to call them; for Satan can appear white as well as black, when it suits his purpose. He can be religious as well as profane; and then he is not so easily detected.

Jan. 4th.—I have passed another gloomy night. Truly this is one of the darkest clouds I have ever passed under. O what blackness is in my heart! Behold, I am vile! What guile and hypocrisy have been discovered to me! Can there be one grain of godly sincerity, one spark of grace, one atom of godly fear in a heart so full of evil? How I tremble at the thought of being one of those awful characters who, having tasted of the good word of life, yet fall away. O that the dear Lord would appear, that he would chase away my darkness, that he would come over the mountains, that he would satisfy my poor soul that he died for me, that he atoned for my sins. O for the application of that precious, precious blood to my bleeding heart!

"To the dear fountain of thy blood,
Incarnate God, I fly;
There let me wash my spotted soul
From crimes of deepest dye."

I have been trying to grasp shadows, but it leaves me empty, and my soul refuses to be comforted. In reading a little just now, I seemed a little comforted by that portion, "For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;" and then this came with a little hope, "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of God." But this is not deliverance. O that I knew where I might find him! "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil." O that I was sure I possessed the fear of the Lord, the pure heart, that I could always resist and overcome evil! But my heart is akin to Satan. I want that faith which overcometh the world, self, and the wicked one.

Friday, 6th.—"Heaviness in the heart of a man maketh it stoop; but a good word maketh it glad." And a "word in season is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Since writing the above dismal ditty, the King has given the beggar a few crumbs, just to keep her from famishing; and that is much more than I deserve. But he hath not dealt with me according to my iniquities, nor rewarded me according to my sins. What a wonder it is the Lord has spared me so long, and has had such patience with me; that he has not long ago cut me down as a cumberer of the ground; such a fruitless branch, such a barren tree as I am. What continual purging and pruning do I need to keep me alive! and how I wither and droop, without the small still rain, and the cheering reviving rays of the glorious Sun of righteousness.

I hope the Lord is visiting you with refreshing showers, that your soul may be as a well-watered garden. May you take deep root, and not to be plucked up, or blown about by contrary winds. May the storms and rough winds drive you closer to

the blessed Husbandman, and may he keep you night and day, and water you every moment.

I have thought much about you since Christmas. How is Mr. J. now? I should be very sorry if anything occurred to remove either you or James from Bath; because you are both near to me, and also because there are a few precious souls your hearts are knit to; and jewels are not to be found everywhere. Although we see by the "Gospel Standard" that the Lord's twos and threes are in many places throughout our guilty land, and somehow or other the dear souls generally find each other out. Our dear mother used to say, birds of a feather will flock together. Still, I hope you will remain in Bath. Our path, I know, is marked out. May the Lord still go before us, in providence and grace, and instruct and teach us in the way he would have us to go. Hitherto he hath helped us; and may we seek his direction and guidance in all things. "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

How is dear Florence? I hope she is all right again, and indeed that all your olive branches, together with your fruitful vine, are well. Minnie desires me to give her love to all, and especially to that dear little Katie. How I wish I could just come, and take the darling on my knee, and hear her innocent prattle. I expected to have seen dear Alan again, or I should not have let him off so soon, but I suppose the poor boy was too tired. I trust James and you will find Rutherford's letter profitable. You had better each read what I sent to the other, as I may not be able to write them out again. I am sending some to Tom, and am now pretty well tired out; but I could not eat my morsel alone. Now, as we are spared to begin another year, may that kind Providence which has supplied and preserved us to the present time still continue our many mercies; and may we feel deep gratitude for the same. With love to all, believe me, as ever,

Your affectionate Sister,

Trowbridge, Jan. 1871.

SUSAN TABOR.

My dear and esteemed Friends,—Grace, mercy, and peace be with your dear redeemed souls, to comfort your hearts as you pass on through this barren wilderness. After we left you on Monday last at Trowbridge Station, I felt my heart burn with love towards you; and the Lord brought past things to remembrance for 30 years back. So that I felt I must write you a line the first opportunity; and as I have a few minutes on hand, I will try and fulfil my inward promise. But I am become so ignorant, blind, dead, cold, dark, and barren, that I know not what to say to you; for possibly you Trowbridge sinners may be grown wiser and better and stronger than a poor sinner like me, who has lost all his own strength, wisdom, and comeliness, and become such a poor cripple, and so lame and halt, that my soul keeps groaning, sighing, and mourning on in a path which no fowl knoweth. Sometimes, indeed, I am wondering whether I

am in the path at all; for everything at times seems crooked and contrary. And although there is something in me for ever trying to make the crooked things straight, the more my soul labours to do this, the crookeder they grow. Then, when all my strength is gone, and there seems to be none shut up or left, my soul falls down, for there is none to help; and then the door of hope and faith is opened, and my soul has free access to God, and the dear *God-Man* shows his lovely face; and his lovely voice charms my heart, revives my soul, renews my spirit, illuminates my mind, softens my heart, encourages my hope, increases my faith, and confirms my confidence, and enlarges my footsteps under me; so that my soul begins to sing by the way of mercy, love, and blood. Then it is that I can see my signs, feel my way, and believe in my God and Saviour, and say from my heart that salvation is of the Lord, and without a doubt can say that the Lord Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me.

Now, you must know that this is most needful both for preachers and hearers. And how sweet it is to feel this within our souls! This makes our yoke easy and our burden light, Jesus Christ precious, the truth sweet, and salvation sure. Then it is that eternal and personal election is truly loved and delighted in, and the soul can rejoice in God's great salvation. And truly it must be a great salvation to save such a great old sinner as I know and feel myself to be. When, too, my soul is led into God's everlasting love, who loved me when dead in sin, then the blessed Spirit opens up God's everlasting mercy that flows out of his everlasting love in Christ, the Lamb of God, to poor, lost, and ruined sinners. Then the Holy Ghost opens up the eternal redemption of the Son of God to my heart and soul, and shows my faith that the Lord Jesus Christ hath put away my sins by the sacrifice of himself, and washed them all away in his own precious blood, and that the virtue of his blood hath been applied to my guilty conscience again and again; so that my soul can sing of mercy, love, and blood.

There is also another glorious truth that my soul is learning daily; and that is, that all my own righteousnesses are nothing but filthy rags; and the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ seems more suitable than even it was when I first used to come and preach to you. For everything of my own only leaves me more naked and bare, so that the best robe suits my soul well; and this is a garment that fits a poor naked sinner well. The Lord spoke to poor Zion of old, and said, "Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem." But poor Zion was rolling herself in the dust, and the Lord said, "Shake thyself from the dust, O captive daughter of Zion." But poor Zion has lost her strength, so that she cannot shake herself from the dust and filth which she cleaveth unto. But now and then the Lord gives her a good shaking, and raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, and brings the soul into near-

ness with himself, and gives the soul a sweet kiss, and shows it his beauty, and gives it the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, and makes it see and feel that a few more trials, troubles, sorrows, pains, temptations, sinkings, fears, and cares will close the fight below, and put a final end to the conflict and war this side of the grave. And as the Lord Jesus has gained the victory for the poor devil-hunted and sin-tormented sinner, therefore thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift. Amen.

Our united love to yourself, your wife, Miss B., and all the friends.

Yours in the bonds of the gospel,

Godmanchester, Oct. 13th, 1870.

T. GODWIN.

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Outlines of a Funeral Sermon Occasioned by the Death of Mr. J. Jenkins. By W. HUNTINGTON. London: R. Banks, 5, Racquet Court.

Brief Memorial of Alfred Samuel Benson. R. B. Benson, Pulverbach; J. C. Pembrey, Oxford.

A Blessing—What is it? London: W. Wileman, 34, Bouverie Street.

In noticing in this month's magazine the above three publications together, all of which are of recent date, and in tract and pamphlet form, we can sincerely wish the blessing of God to accompany their publication, that they may thereby meet with the circulation they deserve, and be made, according to the nature of their contents, abundantly useful among the different classes of readers to whom they are most likely to prove serviceable.

The "Funeral Sermon," as preached by Mr. Huntington, of blessed memory, and which was occasioned by the death of his personal and most attached friend, Mr. Jenkins, having been out of print since 1811, the present reprint of it will, no doubt, come into the hands of many as new as if it had never been published before. The reprint, moreover, being in beautiful clear bold type, corresponding as much as possible with Bensley's best edition of Mr. Huntington's works, will be a sufficient explanation to those who obtain copies of the sermon why its price exceeds the amount that is generally charged for published sermons in our day. Neither can such admirers of Mr. Huntington as would readily avail themselves of the opportunity of giving, if their means allowed, a guinea for some little relic of his property, conscientiously object to pay a little less than the fortieth part of such sum for an exposition of divine truth which fell from his lips, and which until now they may not have been able to obtain at any price. But as they revere and love his memory, for the spiritual light and understanding which he possessed in the things of God, they will doubtless be forward enough to obtain the sermon for the sake of the spiritual matter which they will expect to find in its pages.

We have no reason to suspect among our readers many, if any, such idolatrous worshippers of Mr. Huntington as one we have heard of, who is still living in our part of the world, and who for years has regarded Mr. H. with such superstitious veneration that he could not only go some time ago all the way down to Lewes to visit his tomb, but he will read his books from beginning to end, and care to read nothing else, and yet withal makes no profession of religion whatever, nor manifests the least evidence of being born again of God. We are constrained to ask what deluding passion can it be that should so marvellously possess the mind of any unregenerate man, as for him to be even capable of being enamoured with the writings of one whose writings are so peculiarly characteristic for cutting up, root and branch, all such delusions, and setting forth divine truth in its most separating and discriminating form? Surely there is enough to be seen in such an instance of creature idolatry to be a warning to ourselves, lest in some insidious way that we are not aware of we exalt at any time in our affections any servant of the Lord above his Master. It will be a fearful thing for such characters as the one we have referred to, should they be left to die in their delusion; they will not only be confounded on the day of Christ's coming to judgment in the presence of God, but before the face of the coal-heaver himself, and all the saints, with all the holy angels.

In the few brief remarks which our space will only admit this month of our making upon the sermon under consideration, we may first mention the passage of Scripture chosen for the occasion of the sermon being preached, and also the heads of subject taken up in handling the same. The text reads: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." (1 Thes. iv. 16.)

The six heads of subject are the following:—

I. The *Lord's descent*. II. The *shout*. III. The *voice of the archangel*. IV. The *trump of God*. V. The *dead in Christ*; and VI. Of their *rising first*.

Simply to say that these particulars are dealt with in a manner which displays the greatness of the author's mind in handling divine truths, would only be to tell our readers what most of them know already. That Mr. Huntington was a thorough master in Israel, that he had a deeper insight than most preachers into the glorious mysteries of the gospel of Christ, and such gracious gifts and abilities from God for rightly dividing the word of truth, as few either before or since his day have possessed, is what we have long since believed to have been his character as a faithful servant of Jesus Christ. We have moreover, for too many years, far too highly valued his writings, and have, we trust, been favoured too frequently, with moments far too sweet and precious to our own soul in reading some of them, to be able to write or speak anything against either the author or his works, in a cantankerous spirit, or merely for the sake of finding

fault. But to say that we agree with the dear man in everything that his many published works contain, or that we admire the spirit in which he sometimes did battle in the field of controversy, and with which he treated some of his antagonists, or that we approve of the way in which he would sometimes give expression to his thoughts, is more than what we dare say we are able to do. His peculiar idea, for instance, of Adam's being a spiritual man before he fell by his disobedience, is a sentiment we have never been able to receive; and the spirit with which he handled poor Britton for writing against him in reference to such sentiment is a spirit we have never been able to admire. In all the great essential doctrines of free and sovereign grace, we agree in heart and soul with all that Mr. Huntington has written in their defence, and which has come under our notice in reading his works; and as it respects his description of the Spirit's work of grace in the souls of believers in Christ, and the different experiences through which they are brought of trouble and deliverance, of bondage and liberty, of spiritual darkness and temptations, and of the manifestations of God, it would be a hard matter to meet with his equal. But often, in giving his opinion of persons and their religion, and how they stood with God, and also of what was the real meaning of certain parts of Scripture, and especially some parts of prophetic truth, it is to be deeply regretted that he should have put out both his opinions, and his explanation, in such an imperious tone, and with so much dogmatic positiveness of being right in them. Besides, we know that in reference to prophecy, time has already shown us that he was altogether wrong in a good many of his statements about it.

Even in this sermon we have before us there are statements to be met with in reference to the accomplishment of prophecy which, to persons altogether unacquainted with church history, would scarcely convey a correct view of how events transpired subsequent to the period to which Mr. H. refers. In speaking of the reign of Constantine, whose policy was to overthrow Paganism, and establish Christianity, Mr. H. says that Paganism was "so crushed and defeated as never to be able to rise or make head again." But how writes Milner in respect of events that transpired after the death of Constantine, and under the reign of Julian? Why, he says, in the year 361, "He ordered the temples to be set open, those that were decayed to be repaired, and new ones to be built where there was a necessity. He fined the persons who had made use of the materials of the temples that had been demolished, and set apart the money this way collected for the erection of new ones. Altars were everywhere set up; and the whole machinery of Paganism was again brought into use."

Again, on page 24, Mr. H. gives it as his opinion that the angels spoken of in Matt. xxiv. 31 are "no other than the apostles," and "not angels by nature," and that the gathering together of the elect from the four winds means the gathering

of elect sinners through the ministry of the apostles and ministers of the gospel, "to live by the faith of Christ's sacrifice." Well, in all love and sincere affection to the memory of so great and good a man, we are bound to say we cannot see with him in such exposition of the passage referred to. We are aware that Dr. Gill says the same thing; but until we have further light to see differently, we must prefer to regard the passage as referring literally to the end of the world, and to the gathering, by the very angels of heaven, the elect from the four quarters of the whole world.

In speaking beautifully, on page 29, of the blessedness of the redeemed in the heavenly state, he closes his remarks with a statement which, we must for honesty's sake confess, conveys a different idea of the condition of the redeemed in glory to what we have hitherto entertained. He says, "No one thing of the present heaven, nor of the present earth; *nothing that has transpired under the sun* will ever enter the mind or the memory of a child of God more." We have hitherto believed, and feel as much disposed to cherish the same belief still, that whilst in heaven there will be an utter obliteration of everything in our remembrance of our days upon earth which would militate against our perfect joy and the glory of God; yet of our salvation from the ruins of the fall, of Christ's atonement which was accomplished "*under the sun*" for us, of the goodness of God in preserving us in providence and grace, of deliverances wrought for us, and his leadings and dealings with us during our pilgrimage here below, will not only be remembered, but will greatly help to swell the song of triumph and salvation unto our God and his Christ for ever and ever.

The passage quoted by Mr. H. for the support of his view, that nothing that has transpired on earth will ever enter the minds of the redeemed, is, "Behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." (Isa. lxx. 17.) But we cannot think the verse means such an absolute and utter non-remembrance of all things here below as what Mr. Huntington's remarks imply. If, as Gill says, "This prophecy began to have its accomplishment in the first times of the gospel, when through the preaching of it there was a new face of things appeared in Judea, and the Gentile world; . . . a new church-state was formed, consisting of persons gathered out of the world, the old national church of the Jews being dissolved, new ordinances appointed, and the old ones abolished; a new way of worship observed, . . . and the new and living way to the Father through Christ made more manifest;" then, how true it is, that with regard to Christians in this dispensation, such, of course, we mean as are led by the Spirit of God into New Testament doctrines and ordinances, that the old things, the types and shadows of the past, never come into their minds as being God's way of worship under the gospel. And supposing that the passage refers, as Gill mentions, to the creating literally of "new heavens and a new earth," as declared by

the apostle (2 Peter iii. 13.), then we should understand the words, "and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind," to mean, in a similar way, in the sense of being brought again into use.

Neither, as Mr. Huntington's remarks read on page 33, can we sufficiently understand his meaning, to be able to run with him. "The righteousness of faith," he says, "gives us our title. Whom God justifies, them God glorifies. The sentence of justification being once passed in the court of conscience by the Holy Ghost, sets us out of the reach of all crimes, all accusations, all charges, and all condemnation for ever." That the sentence of justification in the conscience sets us out of the reach of all crimes being *judicially* charged upon us to our *final* condemnation in the sight of God, is the infinite mercy of God, so clearly revealed in the gospel of his Son. This, no doubt, was what our author meant. Still, we repeat, his remarks, as they read, tend to convey the idea that a sinner once saved by grace, and justified in the court of conscience by the witness of the Spirit, is set for ever after, beyond the possibility of falling again into sin and sense of condemnation. Whereas, we have sad examples in Scripture of some of the best of saints, after being justified of God in their consciences, being left to fall into more flagitious sins than what probably they ever were defiled with, previously to their being called by grace.

But, then, despite such points as these, wherein we are not quite so well able as we could wish to follow the dear man, and which for impartiality and godly sincerity sake, we have mentioned, the sermon notwithstanding, like his other productions, is stamped with what fully makes manifest the great mind, the deep discerning light in the Scriptures of truth, and the deep experience he possessed in the things of God; and though we have no more wish than the gentleman who has compiled the sermon, to hold up either Mr. Huntington, or any other good man of our day, as "an inspired prophet," yet we can with equal sincerity affirm with the respected compiler in his prefatory remarks, that "it need not be necessary to remind the true Israel of God by these pages (*i. e.*, of the sermon) that if the illumination granted to the writer be truth, then all the fables and delusive doctrines promulgated and believed in by learned multitudes must be rejected and forsaken, if such ever wish in truth to be found watching."

The sermon, we may tell our readers, contains 48 pages of matter in large type; and that it sets forth in its pages the pure discriminating truth of God, and faithfully separates the precious from the vile, and contains much instructive and profitable reading for Zion's true-born race, it would be superfluous for us to state. We hope the speedy and vigorous sale of it will, with the blessing of Almighty God attending its publication, be the recompense that shall fall back into the hands of the compiler.

2. We next make a very brief notice of the "Memorials of Alfred Samuel Benson," who died a believer in Jesus at the age

of 19. The reading of this very striking account of the Lord's work in the heart of one so young, and especially the manner in which it is drawn up, made us think of Mary Tims, Richard Dore, Hannah Judd, Sukey Harley, and some more besides, the memorials of whom were written and published by the late Mr. Bernard Gilpin.

Notwithstanding that the memorial of Alfred Benson has already appeared in the pages of a Christian periodical of truth, yet we are very glad to see it as more recently published by itself; as in its present tract form it may be distributed by thousands, and may carry a blessing with it, where religious periodicals seldom find their way.

The published accounts of the Lord's work in the souls of young people are comparatively so very few that it makes any faithful testimony of the kind that is brought out the more valuable, inasmuch as it places in our hands a something fresh of a suitable nature to recommend to young Christians, and also to give away to any young people, with the hope that it may be a means of their being brought to see how possible it is to be, like the subject of the memorial before us, so good in their own eyes as not to need the grace of God to make them better. Like Zaccheus, young, as well as old, must be brought down, if ever they are saved; and there is so much in young aspiring hearts which nothing but the Lord's grace can bring down that it is a mercy when anything which we can induce them to read is used of God to impress their minds of the truth of this.

The "Memorial," emanating from the source it has, at once sets our mind at rest in reference to its having been drawn up with godly integrity and faithfulness. We are satisfied that it is a truthful record, and that everything in the way of exaggeration or colouring has been with scrupulous caution avoided. So that, brief as it is, yet being a genuine account of the Lord's inimitable work of grace in the conversion and rapid ripening for glory of the dear young man whose name it bears, it is with real pleasure that we recommend it to the notice of such of our readers as may not be aware of its publication. Its pages, moreover, being comparatively few, we feel that we shall be doing it more justice by abstaining from the usual practice of inserting extracts. May the Lord himself use it, and direct it where and to whomsoever it shall be his gracious will to speak by it to souls that need spiritual light and teaching.

3. The last little publication of the three, which bears the title of "A Blessing—What is it?" is "An Address to the Scholars at Gower Street Chapel Sunday School;" but which is just as suitable for distribution in other Sunday schools as in the one for which it was chiefly intended. It is no easy matter, as we have found, to speak appropriately to, and in a way to win the attention of Sunday-school scholars. We have tried our best, often, to accomplish this, but have invariably failed, *i.e.*, according to our idea of success; and felt, when we read our friend's

address, "A Blessing—What is it?" much to wish we could speak to our own Sunday-school children as suitably to the claims which, as their minister, they have upon us. When our friend who gave the address told the children at Gower Street that he wanted their eyes and their ears, and that if he got their eyes and their ears, he would hope to get their attention, and that if he got their attention, it was possible that their memories would become stored with some of the things he had to say to them, he certainly had some excellent things in his mind to tell them, and just such things, too, as were proper and suitable to bring before them, and which, according to our judgment, were put out in language and manner equally adapted to children's minds. To tell Sunday-school children what a "blessing" is, and that it "is some good thing from God," and that God's blessings are both temporal and spiritual, and that they are often conveyed through godly parents, teachers, and friends, is what they cannot be too frequently admonished to remember. Children left without right moral instruction may grow up, as no doubt a prodigious number do, with scarcely a right thought in their minds, that the "health and strength of body" they enjoy, "the sight of their eyes," "the hearing of their ears," "the food they eat," "a fire to warm them when cold," and "a comfortable bed to lie down upon when weary," are the undeserved gifts of God their Creator.

Neither can our young people be too frequently admonished to bear in mind what it is they need to fit them for heaven, and that without "spiritual life," and "the fear of the Lord in the heart," and "faith in Jesus Christ," it is impossible for them to be saved, no matter how morally good they may be.

Well, although it is not frequently the case that little books of the nature of this Sunday-school address are said much about in the body of this magazine, yet it is more because the chief object of the magazine has always been to supply the wants of the living family of grace, than from any objection to notice publications of that kind. But inasmuch as most of the churches where the "Gospel Standard" is recognized and received, have Sunday schools connected with them, and considering the "Address," given to the Gower Street children, well worth the while of superintendents, and teachers of other schools, to distribute among their little flocks, we have yielded to the wish we felt after reading it for ourselves, to make known its publication, and to give it in these pages just a word of recommendation. We shall be glad if the word we have said in its behalf should lead to its being read by many more than those who heard it spoken; and still more glad if the Lord should convey, through the reading of it, his best blessings to many young hearts.

NONE turn to God till converted by him; nor receive his Christ till born of him.—*Hardy.*

Obituary.

MARY REYNOLDS.—At Stamford, on May 19th, 1880, Mary Reynolds, widow of the late Mr. James Reynolds, aged 79 years.

Mrs. Reynolds was a member of the church at North Street, Stamford, having been baptized on August 23rd, 1857, by the late Mr. Tiptaft. She was a quiet, humble Christian, an ornament to her profession, conscientious and upright in her life, and of a kind and tender disposition.

Little can be gathered of her early life. As a girl, she was brought up to the Established Church; and whilst living in Chelsea still attended the Church of her childhood. When the Lord began with her, he caused her to be in deep soul trouble about her sins. She used to wish she had never been born, or that she was without a soul, like the dog the baker used to bring to the house. Her mistress talked to her, and was greatly offended because her tender conscience would not allow her to act as the other servants did. She sought after the truth, and attended Mr. Irons' chapel, also Mr. Wells' for a number of years.

We cannot give any full account of the time or manner of her deliverance; but she often spoke of the goodness and mercy of God in bringing her into an experimental knowledge of his truth. She said she had not had that clear deliverance some of the Lord's people are able to speak of; but had been blessed and favoured at times of the Lord; which kept her hoping and waiting on.

Soon after she was married, she came to live at Stamford, and has often spoken of the trouble she had to find the chapel. At last, when she did find some one that knew where it was, persons said to her, "O! don't go there; they drive people mad." One Sunday, when she was near it, she saw a country person, who said, "O yes! I know it. I am going there;" and they both went together. Mr. Tiptaft was preaching. She was much blessed, and felt like Ruth of old, "This people shall be my people," &c.

She went many years to the chapel before making herself known to the friends. During this time the Lord was deepening the work upon her soul, and she had to pass through many exercises and trials, of which she has not left the particulars. She was always afraid of acting presumptuously in spiritual matters.

After baptism was laid upon her mind, she had many exercises and fears respecting it, being much tried about taking the step. But the dear Lord graciously removed her fears, and enabled her to go through the ordinance. One of our deacons says, when she came before the church, it was a time to be remembered. She was enabled to tell of the Lord's dealings with her soul in such a manner, and it was so commended to their consciences, that there was not a dry eye in the church. One of the members, who seemed to have an objection to her being received, was fully satisfied. His objection was quite knocked down, and he said to her, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; why standest thou without?" Mr. Philpot and the members cordially and unanimously received her.

She was a very regular attendant at chapel, and at our monthly church-meetings. She was present at our meeting in May, and seemed in her usual health. She was taken ill on the 12th of May. At first she was dark in her mind; but the dear Lord broke into her soul, and so favoured her that all fear of death was taken away. She said, "Underneath are the everlasting arms;" and exclaimed, "What a blessed promise! How faithful to them who do believe!"

One of our deacons called, and found her very comfortable in her

mind. He asked her if she felt she was going *home*. She said, "When I go, *I shall*." She meant, I shall go *home*. She also said,

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

I do not fear death; I am *reconciled*." Hymn 136 was much on her mind.

At first her illness was not thought serious; but on the Saturday there was a change, and she gradually sank. She was quite conscious to the last. For about twelve hours she was constantly repeating passages of Scripture, and promises. It was quite delightful to be with her. When near her end, she was asked by her son whether she was happy; and she replied, "Yes; you did not think the Lord would leave me in my dying hour. He is faithful; he is faithful." Another time, when asked if she had any pain, she said, "No, not now; it is all pleasure. O how beautiful! Founded upon the rock. 'Underneath are the everlasting arms.'"

Thus quietly passed away another dear sister from our midst. We have lost four members in rather over a year. O how we need to pray the Lord to increase our numbers, adding others to take the places of those he is removing from this vale of tears.

Our dear sister was buried by Mr. Haynes, of St. Ives, to whom she was much attached. A number of the friends were present; and we could feelingly say she was well laid in the grave.

R. M. R.

To the Editor of the "Gospel Standard."

Dear Sir,—I send you an account of Sydney Pawney, who died at Geelong, March 29th, 1880, aged 66.

He was a native of Bromhill, Wiltshire, and was known in Clack, Studley Hill, Chapman, and then in Bath at Providence Chapel, where the truth was preached. He could not hear or feel at home with any other people but those who feared God. Because of that blessed truth which the Lord had taught him, and led him into in sweet experience, he was much alone; for he found very few that he could travel with and talk with; very few who were delivered from the noise of archers, in the places of drawing water. He loved to talk of the righteous acts of the Lord to his spiritual Israel, and to maintain a daily walk and talk with Jesus. It was not the mere letter of truth which he cared for, as he found mere letter Calvinism to be only the talk of the lips, that tendeth to penury.

About twenty-six years ago he left Bath, for this country, and more than twenty years ago we first met in the wilderness. We soon found a union, that never has been broken; and we have often read and prayed together, and wept and sung together. As we were over forty miles apart, we used to visit each other occasionally. He was a man of peace, but not at the expense of truth; and as far as he was led in sweet soul experience, he contended for that faith once delivered to the saints.

But I will come to his last days. He had for the last two years been failing in health. A little more than twelve months ago, he thought his time here would be very short; and indeed I thought so too. But he recovered, and though very trembling, he attended a little to his garden. But he gradually got weaker; then paralysis set in, which deprived him partly of his speech. He was at times incoherent in speaking of things concerning this life; but just touch the key-note of salvation, and his soul was on the wing in a moment, and as straight as a line. I saw him about six weeks before he passed over the river, and his

poor soul was all alive, whilst I spoke to him of the kingdom, and he wept like a child, though he could not speak much to be understood, being paralyzed from head to foot; still there was a nod, a smile, and a tear, which spoke what he felt within. I then left him, as I had occasion to go to Tasmania. While I was there, he passed over the river.

The following I gathered from his daughter, and his sister, who were with him. He was taken for death on March 25, while sitting in his chair. He was lifted into bed, and he never appeared to move, with the exception of his left hand, until he breathed his last on the 29th. He slept a great deal, occasionally awaking, and his lips moving, as if in prayer; but they could only catch a word now and then. His daughter came in when the doctor awoke him, and he knew her, wept, and fell asleep again. At three o'clock, he was awoke again; having what seemed evident to all present, a foretaste of that which his soul was longing to realize. His lips moved fast, his eyes were fixed up, and he was as if trying to free his hand. They threw back the bed-clothes. He pointed up so eagerly, and they caught the word, "Heaven." His wife said, "What do you see, father? Is it the heavenly host?" He said, "Yes, yes." He still kept talking. His wife caught again, "Glory." She said, "Sing in glory." He said, "Yes, yes." Then, after talking for some time, they heard him say, "Beauty." Some one said, "You see the beautiful gates." He replied, "Yes, yes." Although he did not seem to have strength to move his hand before, he kept moving it, and pointing up all the time. He again went off into a sort of sleep; then he awoke again, and sent his love to a dear old soldier, with whom he loved to walk and talk.

On the Sabbath morning he awoke. A friend being there, he seemed to wish to say something; but he was soon asleep again. After breakfast he awoke again; his sister was sitting with him, and he tried to speak. She said to him, "You will soon be home;" to which he assented. She said,

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

"O, yes;" he said again. He tried to talk, in his wakeful moments, and seemed to feel as if he had a long journey to go to get home. His dear wife would say, when wiping his brow, "Father, you will soon be home now." He would whisper, "Yes."

Just before he went into his last sleep, he called his only daughter, his wife, and his sister, when the Word at his request being read to him by a friend, he signified to his wife, "Mother, I give you this blessed Book. Keep to the Word of God as long as you live." In his previous illness he would say, "I thought I should have been home ere now, shouting victory!" His sister asked him if he could sing victory through the blood of the Lamb. "Yes," he said. "And you are happy, and all is peace." "Yes," again. This was only the moving of his lips, and breath, as his speech was gone. He slept twenty-seven hours, and thus passed away from all mortal things, to see him whom his soul was often panting to behold, without a cloud between.

The above is the outline of the experience of one who often sang as the poet:

"Sinners are high in his esteem,
And sinners highly value him."

As the deaths of the righteous have often refreshed my soul, when the account of them has appeared in the "Gospel Standard," and are read by the churches, and by many of the sheep who have known each other, I have gathered up a few fragments of the last moments of one just gone home. May the great Head of the church give you wisdom and discretion, to bring out before the churches, from month to month, those glorious and divine

mysterius contained in the gospel of the kingdom. Thus may the saints leave the multitude of outward will-worshippers and rest awhile, sitting at the Lord's dear feet, and pick up the crumbs, thrown out through your instrumentality, till you, like McKenzie, and dear Philpot, both of whom I personally knew, shall be gathered home to the everlasting kingdom. This is the desire of

Yours in the gospel of a precious Jesus,

112, George Street, Fitzroy, April 23rd, 1880. JAMES DAVIS.

P.S.—Twelve months last December Mrs. Treinills, known in Bath as Miss Hayward, who was a member with him at Providence Chapel, Bath, was laid in the tomb. He was there, and gave out hymn 812:

"The spirits of the just," &c.,

little thinking that he too would so soon follow her through the swellings of Jordan. They often sang together in the church militant, and are now, I trust, together before the throne of God and the Lamb.

ELIZABETH ROGERS.—On Dec. 1st, 1879, aged 67, Elizabeth Rogers, of Swanbourne, Bucks.

My personal acquaintance with Mrs. Rogers being so short, I am unable to give any particulars as to the commencement of a work of grace; but there was good evidence that God had begun that good work which he would perform unto the day of Jesus Christ, and that he had loved her with an everlasting love. This I trust the following particulars will show. I received them from a beloved niece, who writes as follows:—

"I believe my dear aunt, who has been much like a mother to me, was one of God's dear people, though not favoured like some. I have heard her say that when a young person of about 20 years of age, she often felt she had such a wicked hard heart, which made her very unhappy. She knew that she was a helpless sinner, and so prone to wander from the God she desired to love. She attended the Baptist chapel at Swanbourne for upwards of 14 years, but was not a member; keeping back through fear that she was not right. She used to say,

"I long to find a settled rest,

While others go and come;

No more a stranger or a guest,

But like a child at home.'

"My dear aunt was often much exercised as to whether she was one of the Lord's dear children, whose names are in the book of life; and grieved because she could not feel that blessed assurance which others possessed, until about six months before she died. At this time, by the providence of God, Mr. J. Spooner, of Winslow, came to Swanbourne to preach at the chapel. It was either when hearing him the first or second time that she was especially blessed. His text was John xxi. 7. The words were: 'It is the Lord.' She was thus enabled to find rest and pardon of sin, in and through the precious blood of Christ. This was in her 67th year. Thus from the age of 20 until this time she was not blessed with an assurance; but I believe it never left her afterwards.

"She was ill for about two months before she died. She felt from the beginning of this illness that she should not recover; but said, 'I am passing away to be with Jesus.' When feeling so ill she said,

"Plagues and deaths around me fly;

Till he bids I cannot die;

Not a single shaft can hit

Till the God of love sees fit.'

"She said, 'I gladly would depart. I long to be gone;' but repeated again:

"Not a single shaft, &c

She was taken much worse about ten days before she died. When I came into her room, she said, 'You are come, but can do me no good; only Jesus can help me.' She then expressed a wish to see Mr. Spooner. He was sent for, and came; and she was much refreshed and comforted from the conversation and prayer they had together. She was afterwards much comforted from Zech. xiv. 7, from the words: 'At evening-time it shall be light.' She said, 'How often have I wished to find a settled rest, and be like a child at home; and now I feel I can.'

"On Saturday evening a friend came to see her; and when leaving said he would come again on Monday. She looked at him, and said, 'I hope you will only have to look on my lifeless clay. I hope my soul will be with my Saviour.' We asked her several times if she did not feel afraid of death. She said, 'O no; for I am resting on the finished work of Christ.'

"On Sunday evening we were standing around her bed, when she called her husband, and said to him, 'I must leave you now. I am going home.' She was then silent; but in a few minutes she said,

"Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to save my soul from danger,
Interposed his precious blood.'

'What a comfort that at evening time it shall be light.' Several of her little nephews and nieces now called in to see her as they came from chapel. She kissed them, and wished them good-bye. One of them has been delicate for some time. She looked at her, and held her hand, and said, 'You will meet me in heaven, Nellie.' About the middle of the night we took her by the hand. She said,

"Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.'

After this she spoke very little that we could understand.

"About an hour before she died, she called me and another niece to her. We asked her if she felt afraid now she was in the valley of the shadow of death. She said, 'O no!

"Nothing in my hands I bring;
Simply to thy cross I cling.'

"She never spoke again, but gently passed away.

"S. PHILLIPS."

In closing this little account, I should like to say a few words respecting my visit to the late Mrs. Rogers. I had no idea at the time that anything would be written, or I might have taken down a few things. As it is, I have only my memory to assist me. But I cannot forget with what gratitude and affection she received me. She said she wanted to tell me before she died how God had blessed and set her soul at liberty in hearing me. She said, "I have been for so many years such a hard-hearted wretched sinner. I am unworthy of the least of God's mercies." She then spoke of the ordinances of God's house very affectionately, and how she should have loved to have cast in her lot with the people of God. She then requested me to pray for her. In this I felt a deep solemnity, but had sweet liberty at the footstool of mercy on her behalf. She held my hand when leaving, saying we should meet in heaven.

Winslow, Bucks.

JAMES SPOONER.

GOSPEL STANDARD.

NOVEMBER, 1880.

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

THE WISE IN HEART; AND THE PRATING FOOL.

NOTES OF TWO SERMONS PREACHED BY THE LATE MR. S. TURNER,
IN CORN MARKET CHAPEL, SUNDERLAND, NOV. 4TH, 1849.

“The wise in heart will receive commandments; but a prating fool shall fall.”—PROV. X. 8.

I HAVE long esteemed this Book as a very valuable part of the blessed Word of God. I do not know one book in the Bible from which I have had more instruction, especially in a way of reproof; so that I have often been shy of reading it; but have found this to be a truth: “He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.” Our corrupt nature is so proud and so sinful, that reproof does not sit easy with us. However, this Book says, “He that refuseth reproof erreth.” “He that regardeth reproof is prudent.” And “a reproof entereth more into a wise man than a hundred stripes into a fool.” I can set my seal to the truth of this: “Reproofs of instruction are the way of life;” and God will suffer them to rankle in us, till we are brought to confession, the evil is removed, and the heart enabled to acknowledge God’s grace and mercy to us; for nothing but the grace of God will make them effectual.

“The wise in heart will receive commandments.” I hardly know whether it should be read, “The wise in heart do receive commandments;” or whether it is descriptive of the wise in heart, and what will be the effect of wisdom in the heart; but I think it is not material which way we take them.

I. I shall describe *the wise in heart*.

II. Show that wisdom in the heart *will incline and enable the wise to receive commandments*; and

III. Show *what those commandments are*; and describe *the reception of them*.

I. There is natural wisdom, given by the God of providence to men; but this wisdom in heart I take to be spiritual wisdom. I have often made the remark, that I think those who divided the Bible into chapters and verses have not acted judiciously, by profaning this chapter with the observation: “From this chap-

ter to the five and twentieth are sundry observations of moral virtues and their contrary vices ;" for if so, it does away with what is said in the first chapter of this Book, that it is only " a wise man " who will " understand a proverb, and the interpretation ; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings." Therefore, though they may relate to moral virtues, they have much higher things in view.

" The Lord giveth wisdom ;" for it is the truth that all wisdom, whether natural or spiritual, must come from the only wise God. We cannot, unless we deny the God that is above and his overruling providence, account for the fact that one child of a family shall have such extensive powers of mind, while the other parts of the same family shall be comparative dunces, who, with all the efforts that can be made, cannot be brought to the knowledge of even natural things, like the other whom God has endowed with greater understanding. Yet, most of those gifted ones sacrifice to their own net, and burn incense to their own drag, and deny the gifts of the God that is above ; for instead of gratitude to God for their superior wisdom, it is just made food for their own pride.

Though there is a great difference with regard to natural wisdom, yet with respect to the things of God and the things that accompany salvation, the Scripture account is, and facts prove its truth, that universally " vain man would be wise, though man be born a wild ass's colt ;" just as ignorant of, and averse to spiritual things, and as stubborn as that animal is as to natural things. God has given wisdom to some animals ; hence some birds build their nests high up in trees or rocks, out of the reach of man or beast ; but the ostrich " leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust, and forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or the wild beast may break them ; because God hath deprived her of wisdom." This is from the God of providence, whose eye is over every creature, " and his tender mercies are over all his works."

If this is the case, and we must deny the Word of God to say that it is not, and truly facts confirm the Word of God, then spiritual wisdom must be the gift of God and the work of God. He is the only wise God, the fountain of all wisdom ; and if he is pleased to take any of his fallen creatures and to make them wise unto salvation, it is solely and entirely of his grace. He is the Giver of it ; for all wisdom, natural and divine, is from God.

The blessed Spirit by Solomon in these words is speaking of what he afterwards wrote by Paul, who says of Timothy, that he had " known the Scriptures, which were able to make him wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

" The wise in heart will receive commandments." By heart, the spirit or soul is meant, in all its faculties, the will, affections, conscience, memory, &c. It is that spirit which God breathed into man, when he became a living soul. None are wise in heart but those who are taught by the Spirit of God, and in whose heart

that Spirit has implanted his grace, or given them the light of life. It is utterly impossible that we should have known anything of the everlasting covenant of the Eternal Three; anything of the counsels of old, which are faithfulness and truth; anything of the awful fall of man; anything of the eternal purpose of Jehovah, to bring a number of the fallen race of Adam, that no man can number, out of that state of ruin by the fall; we could not possibly have known that that work was to be accomplished by the Son of God; that he was to take the children's flesh and blood; that he should become surety for their innumerable but just debts; that he should have all their sins imputed to him, and that they should be condemned in his body on the tree; that his honourable and glorious work should be imputed to them as their righteousness, and that God, solely for this, would freely forgive, bless, and save, the many thousands that he, of his own good will and pleasure, was pleased to adopt into his family;—not one syllable of these glorious things could possibly have entered into the heart of man to conceive. He might have been made wise in the things of time; but of all or any of these heavenly things, it is impossible that a fallen creature could have had the least conception.

The wise in heart are such as are instructed by the Spirit of God, for though he has inspired holy men of old to leave upon record the work of God, to show the plan of salvation, which was in his mind from eternity, with the means that he has provided that his everlasting purpose might not be frustrated, but that he might do all his pleasure in the salvation of his people; yet, such is man in a state of nature, that though he may be able to understand these things naturally, and by sitting under gospel preaching, he may attain a knowledge of them in theory, yet he can form no spiritual apprehension, or practical knowledge of them. The dear Redeemer says, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." One is wisdom in the head; the other wisdom in the heart. The knowledge of the doctrines of grace will not suffice for the experience of the grace of the doctrines. Though the Scriptures reveal those precious things, yet the Holy Spirit alone can make any man like a wild ass's colt wise unto salvation.

It may appear a contradiction, that a wise man is a fool. He is a fool who is wise in his own conceit; and the wiser a man really is, the more foolish will he appear to himself. Asaph, who appears to have been deeply instructed in the things of God, compares himself to a beast: "So foolish was I and ignorant, I was a beast before thee." It is so in measure in natural things with the naturally wise; they see difficulties which an ignorant man cannot see; and if they succeed in mastering those difficulties, they thank their own wisdom for it. But the spirit of a truly wise man will be humble. This wisdom of heart will make him so; it is the gracious gift and work of God.

The most general way in which it pleases God to begin that

work, is either by some trial or affliction of mind or body; or by the preaching of the gospel in a heart-searching way, showing what we are,—sinners; what we are exposed to,—the wrath of God, the punishment of our sins. Whatever outward means it pleases the Lord to use, he strikes a fear of his great Name into the heart, which begins to incline the person to pay attention to God's threatenings, and their effects; to consider that he is a rational creature, formed for obedience to God, accountable to him; but that he has been disobedient all his life; that death is certain, but the time of death to him is uncertain; for he sees that God, as it pleases him, takes away some in infancy, some in youth, some in the full strength of manhood, and some he preserves to old age. These are what I may term practical lessons; yet so blind are we by nature, that we lose sight of them. They have a little effect for a time; then we act as if we were to live for ever, as the poet says:

“All men think all men mortal but themselves.”

As long as that blind state continues, a person will not have the least inclination to know of a way of salvation from it. Young people, if they are struck with the thought of death, by seeing that of a relation, taking it for granted that they shall live many years, put away the reflection, not expecting that this may be their case, and that they may be hurled out of the world, as a stone out of a sling.

When it pleases God to put his fear in the heart, this is a free gift of his Spirit, who, at his first entrance, finds the person dead in sin, totally blind as to his state, insensible of his danger, helpless to any relief, a ruined lost sinner. And were it not for the grace of God, every soul would live and die in that dead, blind, helpless, ruined state; but Christ, having ascended up on high, and received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious, sends forth the Spirit into the heart, to teach the man wisdom. And the teaching of the Spirit is a real operation in the heart, rendered effectual by his power. When God puts his fear in the heart, it is often accompanied in the heart with a great deal of legality and unbelief. These arise from the opposition of our sinful nature; therefore the Spirit has all this to overcome. The effect of his teaching is a reverence of God, a trembling at his Word. It will cause a man to stand in awe of his Word; therefore that Word must be of an alarming nature; because when God speaks kindly to a person, though it produces humility, if it is accompanied with kindness, it does not cause him to tremble; but if it points out our state as sinners, shows us the exceeding sinfulness of sin, God's threatening against sin, brings forward the Scripture examples of God's judgments upon the world on account of sin, anything of this nature, if there is spiritual life—and there must be spiritual life where the blessed Spirit has taken possession of the soul—this will cause a man to feel, which is meant by the heart of flesh, which stands in awe of God's Word. It is vain to profess to have the fear of God, without an awe

of God's Word. This is expressed by Moses, that man of God, who had a love to the people of Israel, because he knew they were God's people. Says he, "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!"

Here is the beginning of wisdom, the fear of the Lord; by that fear men depart from evil. "A wise man feareth and departeth from evil." This departing from evil is the turn of the heart, produced by the Holy Spirit, accompanied with an awe of his Word; and, says God, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my Word." This is the beginning of heavenly wisdom. All the wisdom of the world is directed to the things of the world, the profits, the honours, the pleasures of the world. The flesh desires one or other of these. The whole care of it is to attain these. To this all the wisdom of the world is employed; and everything practicable they adopt to attain this. Now the blessed reverse of this is, when the Lord renews the sinner's heart, he will find by the Word of God, and by the work of the Spirit, that nothing in the world will save his soul. Nothing will heal the wound God has made. All the pleasures of sin will not bear comparison with the damnation of hell, or the salvation of God. Sin has now become a burden to him. He begins to become loathsome, like a diseased leper. The more the depravity of his nature and the exceeding sinfulness of sin are made known to him, by the teaching of the Spirit, the more loathsome he appears in his own sight, and, as he fears, in the sight of others; for he imagines that others see him as he sees himself. Without that change, all profession of religion comes short. We must have a holy principle implanted in the heart to make sin hateful; and from the moment of that implantation, the soul departs from evil. But he cannot get evil to depart from him; and this is his constant grief. God by this means gives him a sense of the need of his being saved out of the state of sin, and out of that state which he knows will be his portion, living and dying as a sinner. Now he begins to inquire if there is any way of deliverance, suitable to such a character as he feels he is. This will bring him to be on the look-out for such a way of salvation; and the good Lord has provided a way, that the desire of such a soul may be satisfied.

The Lord has in all ages raised up for his people prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Ever since the fall of man he has kept up a succession of those whom he has taught, qualified, and sent, to preach his gospel. He knows where his sheep are. They are perfectly known to Him who searches the heart; therefore, he either removes those sheep to a place where they shall hear the joyful sound, or he will send a minister of his to where his sheep are, who shall be instrumental, in the Lord's hand, of raising up a few poor sinners, who shall hear and know the Good Shepherd's voice, and favour his righteous cause; and the minister's experience will teach him to speak a

word in season to the distressed sinner's conscience. As soon as the good Lord brings a sheep of his to sit under the sound of a full, free, and everlasting salvation for the chief of sinners, through the Lord Jesus Christ as mediator, he will open the man's ears and make him attentive to the joyful sound. God may for a time leave him to the blindness of his mind, to convince him how ignorant he is of the things that accompany salvation; how utterly destitute of them he is, to increase in him a sense of his need of them, that he may cry more earnestly to the Lord to be graciously pleased to favour him with those things, and to make the blessing more valuable to him. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." Those fools are not idiots, born destitute of common sense; they are contrasted with the wise in heart; therefore they are those destitute of spiritual wisdom, destitute of the grace of God. These harden each other; but, "though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished." To go hand in hand is to be in agreement. "Can two walk together except they be agreed"?

A man under the first working of this fear finds in his soul an attachment to the people of God; for they speak of saving truths. He approves of their conversation; God impresses upon his heart the safety of those people; they are to him the excellent of the earth. Instead of finding their conversation irksome or uninteresting, it becomes his delight; and his cry to the Lord is, O that I was as those blessed people! Talk of places of vain amusement, the poor creature cannot enter them; but to hear of anything of a spiritual nature, anything regarding God, or godliness, or of his future welfare, his ears are ever open; for we must be eternally in heaven or hell; there is no medium; and it is a melancholy proof that we are by nature entirely destitute of spiritual wisdom, that this is the least of our concern. We are wrapped up in our present condition, although if in health we cannot be sure that it may last ten minutes. The person in whom God has put his fear, he will, by an impulse of his Spirit, draw his attention to the conversation of God's people. He feels it is useful to him; he will highly prize the company of those who are spiritually minded; and he will esteem them the very excellent of the earth. If it was not so he could not walk with them in fellowship. You cannot suppose that this walking together is walking arm-in-arm; it is a state of friendship, and they must be agreed so to do. The person who speaks and he who hears must be agreed; or what the one says will be shut out by the other. When this heart-wisdom begins to operate, it causes this agreement, though there may be many a reproof, which will cause many reflections, that the hearer has not, nor ever shall have, the blessed things spoken of. But that work which God has begun he will carry on; and though the minister may, in his preaching, cut the poor creature to the heart, and bring upon him far greater misery than he had before, yet his heart will go out to that man; for

where God makes the heart honest, a man will come to the light, he does not want to be flattered. The devil has raised up plenty of preachers who know nothing of these things; but this man has been deceived long enough; he has been befooled long enough. God shows him that he has; and as he dreads nothing more than deception, the good seed which is sown falls into an honest and good heart.

“He that walketh with wise men will be wise.” God will bless the preaching to open out the plan of God’s salvation, in all its fulness, freeness, and suitability; that it is God’s work to produce it, and the Spirit’s work to apply it to the hearts of his people; therefore they are led to search the Scriptures, which are able to make them wise to salvation.

In the highest sense, Christ crucified is the wisdom of God; therefore I doubt not it is he who is called Wisdom in this book. “Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting, get understanding.” The blessed Spirit teaches wisdom; so that the man whom he takes in hand, he will not let sit down contented until he has brought him to this blessed assurance: “My Beloved is mine, and I am his.” Christ is formed in his heart the hope of glory, purging his conscience from dead works, speaking pardon and peace to his soul, with the love of God shed abroad in his heart. Now, says the man, I am satisfied. Now I am truly happy. Now I am at home. Now I may safely say, He hath loved me, and given himself for me; and Christ dwells in me, and I in him by his Spirit which he hath given me.

Christ crucified takes in all his characters, offices, and his honourable and glorious work, as the Son of God, the Surety for his people, the propitiation for their sins, the Mediator between God and man, the Lord our Righteousness, the way of access to, and the way of acceptance by, the Father. All these are in Christ; and in him and all that belongs to him, is the brightest and sweetest display of the wisdom of God. “Get wisdom; and with all thy getting get understanding;” which the apostle words thus: “God hath not given us the spirit of fear;” we have plenty of that, but it does not come from God, but from the devil and our depraved hearts;—“but he has given us the spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” That leads the poor sinner out of himself, out of the world, from his own family, and from all carnal acquaintance. It does not take him out of the world, or cause him to dislike his father, mother, or brother, but it is a spiritual affection alone that lays hold of the people of God, the Word of God, the worship of God, and of his blessed Majesty himself. “Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear,” &c. The ear is brought to attend to those things that we hear; the mind, heart, or affections are inclined to them; the consequence will be to bring us upon our knees before God. I use the Scripture expression; for prayer is not kneeling, or bending the knee, though that position is desir-

able in coming before God; but it is a bowing of the heart to God. When the enlightened understanding sees the things that accompany salvation, when there is life in the soul to feel the need of, and a hungering in the soul after them, the effect will be a looking up to the Almighty, to whom salvation belongs, that he would be pleased to favour us with them.

“He that walketh with wise men shall be wise.” God will bless the union. It can hardly be accounted for, but there is such an attachment to the minister and true professors, though we may err in judgment as to those who are such. I have taken a whole congregation to be holy, happy souls, and the minister thoroughly holy; and I thought, This shall be my people, and their God my God; I will not quit this place. Of course in this I went to extremes and made mistakes; nevertheless in the main this feeling was from God, and was made good in my experience.

I think I have with simplicity and plainness of speech stated what it is to be made wise in heart; and if it please God, in the evening I will treat of those commandments, and show that the wise in heart receive them. May God bless the few hints to his glory and your comfort. Amen.

RENOVATION.

(Concluded from p. 441.)

But to proceed. Another member of the new man is *faith*. Now, man, by nature, is destitute of this; for God says, “He will enlarge” or persuade “Japheth.” This shows that man cannot believe of himself. Again. God says, “They are children in whom is no faith.” And our Lord says, “Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep.” Paul says that in the days of his ignorance what he did was in unbelief. Now, man may be so far reformed, and be made what is called a religious man, and assent and consent to the truth, yet never have the faith that is the gift of God. Man may be brought from being an atheist to acknowledge the being of a God, and yet be no better, and have no more faith, than the devil; for *he* believes in this, and trembles at it too; and that is more than many professors do. A man may believe in election, final perseverance of the saints, and the eternal salvation of the elect, and yet have no more faith than the devil. The faith of the new man is called the faith of God’s elect. It is peculiar to them; for however professors may see into the truths of God, they rest only in the judgment; whereas the faith of the new man is called believing with the heart.

The first view that faith discovers of God, is his holiness. Our Lord says, “Except ye believe that I AM, ye shall die in your sins.” Moses tells us that the Lord is “glorious in holiness.” God ordered that Aaron should wear a breastplate, inscribed with “Holiness to the Lord.” Hence Job cries out, “Because of his highness, I could not endure;” that is, the holiness of God filled

him with such fear, that he was afraid he must sink for ever. Again, in the vision which Isaiah saw, the seraphim cried, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God;" and in the view of this the prophet cried out, "Woe is me! for I am undone . . . for I have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Paul says that the law is holy; and when the commandment came, or, in other words, when he saw the holiness of God in it, he died to all hope of saving himself. Daniel says that at the sight of this holiness, all his comeliness turned into corruption, and he retained no strength. Ezekiel says the same; and the beloved John, in the isle of Patmos, says that at the sight of it, he fell at his feet as dead.

But going further into the Word, we see that this faith brings distant things near, and finds the holiness of God stand in the way of salvation. Then to working the man naturally goes, to make himself holy; but he finds if the leopard can change his spots, then can he mend his heart; for what God says is a truth: "Though you wash yourself with nitre, and take you never so much soap, yet your iniquity is marked before me." Now, what does the faith of natural men know about these things? It reads of the holiness of God, and assents to it; but by a few works and observances and amendment of life, the man expects to be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. But by the faith of the new man the sinner feels these things in his conscience, and they are made manifest in his heart; not in a dry speculative way of naked knowledge, but in a feeling way.

Again. Faith sees the righteousness of God; that he will be just to his law; for says Moses, "Just and right is he." Faith sees that God will be right. Although he damn the world, faith will acquit him. Now what says the faith of natural men to this? They will consent to it in a general way; but ask them if God is and would be righteous if he were to sweep away the world to destruction; and they would answer, No; it would not be right to make man, and then damn him. But says the faith of the new man, Let God do what he will with his own.

Again. Faith finds that God is so just that he cannot pardon sin or sinners without complete satisfaction; for though a man could shed tears of blood, and lie in sackcloth and ashes, and weep day and night, afflict his body, and give many gifts; yet the justice of God is so great and glorious that nothing of this sort will satisfy it. Now what is the faith of men on this point? If a man tries his best, and labours to walk uprightly, and is found abounding in good gifts and works, then he thinks the mercy of God will accept him; but this is holding the truth in unrighteousness; and faith which is of the operation of God knows and finds that it is so. God, with awe be it spoken, cannot exalt one attribute at the expense of another. Faith must find and bring in a complete righteousness as holy as God, and as broad as the law, before ever mercy can flow sweetly in so as to save the soul; and this is only to be found in Christ Jesus. This, too, is not merely naming him, or looking to him in a speculative way;

but true faith brings him into the heart, and puts him on. Paul says, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus;" and this must be done before justice will be satisfied; and faith knows this of a truth.

Again. Faith sees that God is the fountain of truth, in opposition to all the false gods and errors that did, and do, and will abound in the world to the end of time. Faith finds that God is true to his word, and to his threatenings, and what he hath said shall stand fast for ever and ever. Hence the sinner finds that when God lays judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, the truth of God, as it appears in the Word, sweeps away the refuges of lies, and he comes to the light of truth, that he may be tried by it. He cries out, as David did, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me; and lead me in the way everlasting." We read that "every one that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest." He is made honest before God. The faith of the new man hates deception, or the deeds of darkness. He comes before God in his true colours, and sees God in his own light.

But what does the faith of the natural man know of these things? You may teach them to him, and he may acknowledge them; but what will that do for him? Why, he will cover his sin, and he will not come openly to the light, nor will he ask God to search him that he may know the worst of himself. He will make many excuses for his sin; but if he falls in with a man of truth whom God has made faithful, he will condemn him for being of a bad spirit, or complain of his narrow-mindedness and bigotry. He wants smooth things, and says, "Prophecy peace." He chooses deceit. So God says, "A deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" God says that he feedeth on ashes; and if he knows no more of the truth than what I have hinted at, he shall find the truth of God when he lifts up his eyes in hell, where his faith will have given up the ghost, it having died with his body.

But the faith of the new man shall not thus die. It has brought the man to acknowledge and fall under the truth, and to cleave to the rod that smote him. He has thus accepted the punishment of his sin, followed after the men of truth, and truth has been his desire, and to be found walking therein; and this faith shall not miss the prize, but shall bring the soul into the enjoyment of truth in this life, and then to trust in the God of truth in the shadow of death, and at length to find the full fruition of faith in the blessed enjoyment of open vision, when he shall bless and adore God to all eternity.

But, again. Another member of the new man is *hope*. Now, says Paul, "Experience worketh hope." But what do natural men know of this? or what do they possess of it? Why, nothing. Their hope is called the hope of the hypocrite, which shall perish. And, again, their hope is as the spider's web; and we know of

what substance that is. But, say you, "Is that the case of all men?" Hear God's Word. Men are declared to be without hope, and without God in the world. But, say you again, Something they must hope in. Yes, they do. They hope in the light they have naturally got, which they think is able to find out the way to God, and to do that which is pleasing in his sight. Many hope that, not being so bad as some, and being better than others, this will save them. Again, some hope that being christened and confirmed, and by regular attendance at church, and the Lord's supper, they will get to heaven; and rest on that. Again, some leave the Church, for they think they see more purity in dissenters, and therefore join them. They may become deacons, leaders at the prayer-meetings, and occasionally speak a word of exhortation to the people; and thus they may conclude they are safe. Again, some leave the Independents, and join the Baptists, and have light to see that they ought to be immersed. Thus, they conclude that they take up the cross, and follow Christ, and hope in that. Others go through some or all of these changes, and have a gift for speaking; and poor blind people like themselves, whose hope rests on the good opinion of these men, persuade them that they are called to preach. Then, through this hope of their having been called to preach, which rests only upon the judgment of these men, who perhaps have left church or chapel, and joined their party, and are deemed men of great light and judgment, such men are persuaded to become preachers; and these folks profess to be fed under them, and some one or other becomes converted to their faith; and then these preachers have a hope that this or that man will be their crown of rejoicing. But what says God to all this? "The hope of unjust men perisheth." All such men will have at God's hand is to lie down in sorrow. They will find that their hope was in flesh and blood; and that shall never enter into the kingdom of heaven. O! do not think I am too close or sharp; for, remember that God requires truth in the inward parts. You will see that I am not so narrow-minded after all; for I really wish that what I am going to say was not true; but I believe that there are hundreds of churches of different sects whose members have no better hope than what I have described, though many may go farther.

Now, what is the hope of the new man? It is called a "good hope through grace." What does it spring from? Does it spring from a man's own works? O no. Does it spring from what the man may be thought of by men? O no. Does it spring from the mere head knowledge of the doctrines of the Trinity, election, justification, final perseverance of the saints, and of their eternal glorified state? O no. What then? Why it springs from the mercy of God toward the man through Christ Jesus. It is called "an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast;" and it enters into that within the veil, even the Person of the blessed Son of God. It finds no anchorage in anything below the sun. It must have a divine bottom, as all other things will never hold

the soul. When God makes our sins manifest to us, and writes bitter things against us, in vain is salvation looked for from the hills, or from the multitude of our confidences. None can stand before God when he burns up the world, and appears as a swift witness against all evil workers, but those who are begotten again to a lively hope. It lives upon a living Saviour, and will hold on till it has got the substance itself. It can face death, and rise above the world, and enters into the holy of holies. God will never disown it; for he says that they shall never be ashamed that wait for him, and hope in him; and God will be true to his word, you may depend upon it.

But, again. I will mention one thing more, and then conclude; and that is, *joy*. Now, what do natural men possess of this grace? Why, nothing. But, say you, Cannot you give it them? I answer, according to God's Word, No. But, say you, I have seen folks that are called religious people joyful. So you may; and so have I; but God says, "As the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of fools." And again, "The joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment." Look well to what their joys arise from, and you will see. But, say you, Their joy has arisen from hearing a sermon, and after it was over they have talked about it. Now, says our Lord, "He that receiveth the seed in the stony ground, anon with joy receives it; but he has no root, and soon withereth away." Some are pleased with old wives' fables and anecdotes, and while these last they are all joy. Or when the service is over they are all joy, telling of this story or the other. Again. Some are all joy when the particular doctrines they hold are brought forth and enforced. Again. Some get a feast of joy when the institutions of God's house which they think correct are insisted on. Again. Some, when they are admitted as members into a godly church and people; and even some when their names are cast out as evil, though they really deserve it for the errors that they hold, and the evils of their ways, and godly, not wicked, men reject them.

Much more might be said; but I have just dropped you a few hints. You can follow them up. Now, all this is as far from the joy of the new man as light is from darkness. Then, say you, what is that joy? Why, hear God's Word. "The joy of the Lord is your strength;" or, the joy of the new man springs from that. Now, this joy springs from God being reconciled towards us. You may take the man to hear the best of men; give him the Bible and other good books to read; but if the Lord has not given him joy by the answer of his mouth, he will go home comfortless, and tell you that they are no comforters to him. You may describe to him his path, the workings of his mind, the work of grace upon his heart, and God's good pleasure concerning him; but it will be like singing songs to a heavy heart. It is not in the power of all the men in the world put together to break his heart; no, not if they had Solomon's wisdom and Samson's strength. All the men in the world, too, even if they

had Paul's grace, and John's lovely spirit, could not give him joy. It can come only from the presence of God felt in his soul. For we read that in God's presence is fulness of joy; and our Lord says that he is appointed to give them "the oil of joy for mourning." Thus, you see, it can only come from him. Not all that men can say about this man, whether they approve or condemn, can give him joy. Not all the blessed truths of God's Word can raise him up until God speaks. Now, when God visits him, and appears gracious to him in his dear Son; when faith lays hold of his blessed blood and obedience, and brings it to his heart, cleansing his conscience from its filth and guilt; then hope springs up, and lays hold of his faithfulness and love, feels his divine power, and the heart melts under it, and every affection goes after its lovely Object, and proclaims him the Chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely; while truth girds up the loins of his mind, and he runs at a certainty. Everlasting joy crowns his head, and God delights in his own work, and declares it. "The King is held in the galleries," and he rejoices over the bride with joy; while the poor sinner rejoices in God with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Thus you see that the new man is all of God from beginning to end. Man naturally is destitute of all this. All means of themselves fail to give it; and all men together cannot give one of these graces, or bring one forth into act and exercise. When they are given to a man, it is all of grace from first to last. God will look to and be pleased with nothing but the work of his own hands. Men have none of these graces in them. They are not born with them. Not all the supposed light which men have can bring them forth. Our Lord says, "Take heed that the light that is in you be not darkness;" for if it is, "how great is that darkness!" God's Word declares that Satan hath blinded the eyes; nor can anything short of the power of God produce this new man or any member of it, as you will see by the Scripture proofs I have brought forth. Many more the Word of God abounds with; but I was afraid of being too tedious. If you think much less might have been said on the subject, remember that I am not a scholar or a divine, but God took me as I was in my folly and my sin, and brought down my heart with hard labour. I fell down, and there was none to help. Then he blessedly raised me up by the death of his Son, that my faith and hope might be in God; and having found God true to his Word in all things, I would desire ever to write truth, and contend for it. If I have written lies, God will punish me for it. If I contend for error, or for a party spirit, or to set up my own opinion and judgment, for the purpose of being thought singular, then will God lay his rod upon me, and allow men to laugh at my calamity, and say, "Ah, so would we have it." But if, on the other hand, I have written the truth, and contended for the truth; if the truth of God has been my sole aim, end, and design, that it may run and be glorified in the salva-

tion of men, and the edification of God's people, then will God appear, and for my shame I shall have double. Then shall all my enemies that hate me for the truth's sake be confounded. When God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes, then shall it be known what spirit I was of, and what did influence me. Then shall every evil work or worker be discovered, and put to everlasting shame. While the men that fear the Lord, and in whose eyes a false professor or preacher has been contemned, shall enter into the joy of their Lord, and go no more out for ever.

May the good Lord grant that this may be the happy lot of you and me, and of all that read this. Forgive my being so long with this letter, and all mistakes, as it is the *power* which I look to and feel after; and may you do the same.—I remain,
Yours in the best bonds,

Dated Dec. 18th, 1841,

FRANK COVELL.

From the Cape of Good Hope.

P.S.—As I have not been able in this letter to say anything about progressive sanctification, if the opportunity offer, and the good Spirit assist, I will send you my thoughts upon it at some future time.

PROPHETIC HINTS.

IV.

My dear Friend,—I endeavoured, so far as was in my power, in my last letter to guard your mind against any discouragement which might arise from finding that even good men have disagreed in their views upon certain portions of the prophetic writings. I was afraid of your becoming improperly indifferent to an important part of the divine testimony through the wrong feeling prevailing over you, that, because some things were to our finite capacities at present obscure, and some things therefore differently understood by different minds, therefore nothing was certain. This would indeed be a dispiriting as well as rash and wrong conclusion. The children of this world are, as Christ says, in their generation wiser than the children of light. They do not cast away all the conclusions of scientific men, or altogether neglect their writings, because much is obscure in the world of nature, because scientific men differ, and because the science, as it is called, of one generation most materially differs from the science of another. Certain things are considered to be thoroughly proved, and in respect to these things all are agreed. These are the stand-points of science. Now, with regard to prophecy why should God's people act differently? There is, and must be, to such minds as ours, much that will be at present obscure. There will certainly be, if men have any independence of mind, some diversities of opinion. The conclusions, too, of those who have gone before us may, through further light having been afforded us, be modified, or in some cases overthrown. But, then, is the book of prophecy itself for these rea-

sons to be cast on one side and neglected? Are the stand-points of prophetic interpretation to be disregarded? Is that which is fixed and certain to be despised? No! Certainly a great indignity is put upon the Word of God when we forget how much has been already manifestly fulfilled. Our wisdom is to stand by what is thus certain, and then in the fear of God ponder over his blessed wonders; feeling persuaded that all the rest will assuredly be fulfilled in its season.

But I must not enlarge; and will now endeavour to give you some more hints; not attempting to domineer over your faith, but to suggest such things to your consideration as shall help you in a prayerful search into the mind of God as revealed in the sure word of prophecy.

In attempting to properly understand any part of the Word of God, or any particular book in the Bible, it seems most important to try and see what is the grand scope and design of that particular book. Such a plain rule as this applies with the greatest force to a book like that of the Revelation. Let me, then, just suggest to your mind what plainly appears to be the scope of that book.

Briefly, it is a history of the church of God, or the kingdom of Christ, from the earliest days of Christianity to the end of time. Of course, such a narrative contains the history of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the King of that kingdom, and as in connexion with it. As, then, in other histories of particular kingdoms we have a description given us of their rise and progress, of their internal condition at various times, and of the administration of their home affairs, as well as of the oppositions they meet with from without, and overcome, of battles, defeats, and victories; so it is here in this history of the kingdom of Christ, as set up on this earth. I may observe, too, that in the history of a particular country the affairs of other countries are sometimes more fully or more briefly noticed, just so far as they have more or less bearing upon the affairs of the country whose history is being unfolded. Thus it is in the history of the church of God. The Bible was not written to give us mere historical information; it deals in higher and sublimer matters. It does not therefore *necessarily* tell us anything about even the greatest nations or most astonishing events. No! it only introduces other nations and kingdoms, and treats of events as they have to do with the particular matter in hand—the history of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus. Though the carnal mind scorns such an idea, and natural men ignore it, assuredly this is true, that in God's view of things they are only of importance as they bear upon his eternal purpose in Christ. All things work together to one definite end,—the setting Christ and the church of God, as united to him, on high.

These thoughts will, I think, give you a general idea of the contents of the book of Revelation, and of what you may expect to find in it. Remember, you are reading God's Word. To read

and consult that blessed Word, in order to obtain mere literary, scientific, or historical information from it, would be most unseemly. God's oracles are not merely for the head, but for the heart and conscience. They are given for wise, holy, and practical ends. "If any man," says Christ, "will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." That some men stumble at, and some pervert, the testimonies of God, is no marvellous thing. They bring to their study of that word nothing but unsanctified intellects and unhumbed hearts; and if free grace prevents not, are as sure to corrupt the Word of God as that Word is true.

But to resume. May this thought abide with you in studying the book of Revelation,—that you are reading a divinely inspired history of the church of God upon earth; a history in which the internal affairs and administrations of that kingdom of Christ, as well as its outward relationships, are treated of, and in which the secret springs of events in connection with the cause of God are often laid bare. Prophecy is pre-written history; and this prophecy is the pre-written history of the church of God from the days of Christ.

Having made these remarks upon the general character, I will now try to bring before your mind some parts of this book of Revelation, in order that you may see what a blessed and instructive portion of God's Word it is, and how it is really written in harmony with the views already hinted at.

In the first place, then, I must call your attention to the three first chapters. In these we have what we have called the internal state and home administration of Christ's kingdom, the church, set before us. This is a very suitable preface or introduction to all that follows. It is also designed, I believe, for the support and comfort of God's saints. Before the many terrible scenes of after-ages are described, the people of God are shown what still abides true,—that Christ is in the midst of his people. He remains King in Zion, and walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks, and orders all things for the real advantage of his church and people.

Well, then, in the first three, or opening chapters of this divine and prophetic history we have our attention called to the following things:—

1. We have the Lord Jesus Christ himself, the King of Zion, set before us in his divine and spiritual glory and beauty.
2. We have the church or kingdom of Christ set before us, as represented by the seven churches of Asia.
3. We have the King set before us in his relationship to his kingdom, and, therefore, as walking in the midst of the churches, to carry on their internal government.

He, then, who would be a student of this book to real profit, should begin where the Lord begins. He should meditate upon and pray over these opening chapters. A blessed revelation to his own soul of the King in his beauty, as set forth in the first chapter, and a due consideration of Christ in his relation to the

churches, and of those churches themselves, as they are upon earth, will be no bad preparation for a profitable examination of the rest of this history.

I will pause, then, for a moment in order to suggest two or three things to your mind in reference to these three chapters. In the first place, you will, no doubt, perceive that it is principally the spiritual and divine glory of the Lord Jesus which is set forth in the vision with which John was favoured in Patmos. It appears to me that we have particularly represented to John for the edification and comfort of the church in all ages those attributes of Christ which, as King of Zion, he exercises in the midst of the churches as purging, purifying, advancing as to its true interests, and bringing to its designed perfection his own church or kingdom. Therefore, when he comes and addresses a particular church, he refers to himself as thus seen in vision by John, but selects such parts of that vision as will be suitable to the particular condition of the church addressed. In other words, he calls the attention of a particular church to one or more of those glorious attributes and perfections with which he is endowed as the Christ of God, such perfections having a particular reference to the state of that church. For example, when he addresses the church of Smyrna, he speaks of himself as "The First and the Last, which was dead, and is alive;" but when he addresses the far more corrupt church of Pergamos, he refers to himself as "He which hath the sharp sword with two edges." Christ is endowed, as the Christ and King of Zion, with every attribute and perfection suitable to the purification and edification of the church of God; or, in other words, to the carrying forward his purposes in his proper kingdom.

Now let us turn to the churches. We of course understand in the first place that there were those seven churches of Asia, and that each particular church was in that exact condition represented in the words of Christ. But we may clearly look farther, and see that these seven churches were selected as representative ones, so that in addressing them, other churches then upon earth in similar conditions were really at the same time addressed. Indeed, this seems clear from the words connected with each epistle: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

But we must even look beyond the days of the apostle John, and not only consider these epistles as addressed to saints in his day, but as written for all time. It seems quite proper to look upon these seven churches themselves in a prophetic point of view, and to consider them as characterizing the states of particular churches and people of God in after-ages; and not only so, but as also typical of even successive states of the church of Christ generally in the successive periods of time. Thus it does not seem a vain question if we inquire to which of these representative church states we may consider the condition of the church generally in our own days conformable. I suspect the

answer will not be very far to seek. At any rate, I think most discerning persons will select either Sardis or Laodicea. Few would venture to take instead Smyrna and Philadelphia.

Now, when you consider that these seven churches represent the church and churches of God as upon earth, a question may possibly arise in your mind as to the reason for using as emblems of such churches golden candlesticks. The same emblem is used of the Jewish church in Zechariah, with this remarkable addition: "All of gold." The same is to be understood here, though not expressed. These candlesticks, too, were doubtless all of gold. But how is this a correct emblem of churches upon earth? Even the best are made up of poor, frail, sinful men and women; of persons full of infirmities. Besides, in the churches as upon earth, tares are mixed with the wheat; foolish virgins with wise ones. But, then, we must always remember that what is true of an individual believer is true of a real church of Christ, as well as of the church at large. Individual Christians, all true churches, and the church at large, are seen in the Lord Jesus, and beheld as complete in him. Only the gold is taken account of; the dross is not considered, but laid aside, in the estimate. Of course, so far as disciplining, purging, and purifying go, it is regarded; but so far as God's estimate of the church as seen in Christ is concerned, it is not taken into the account. Thus even Laodicea, as long as it remains a church of God, is spoken of as a golden candlestick, as well as Smyrna or Philadelphia.

This is a very sweet and encouraging view of things, and is well calculated to produce in gracious minds an aiming after and prayerful pressing to the mark of that perfection in its full enjoyment which is already counted to belong to the saints individually, and the churches generally, as seen in Christ Jesus. If a church is seen as all of gold in Christ, the belief of this will animate the members who realize their position to desire that what is offensive to Christ may be purged out, and truth and grace and godliness much more abound.

One hint more, and I must conclude. No doubt the angels addressed were the ministers of these particular churches. But as the churches may be considered representatively and prophetically, so may the angels. They may be viewed as representing the ministers of various ages. It were well, then, for ministers not only to examine into what may be the present church state, or condition of the particular churches they serve, and of the church generally, but to pray to the Lord that they may receive, as the angels and messengers of the churches, the suitable messages. How vain and evil would it have been for Laodicea's angel, disliking his own message, as not pleasing his hearers, to have pilfered and repeated the message of the angel of Philadelphia. The messengers of the churches should receive the particular kind of message they give forth from the Lord's mouth, or by the Lord's Spirit. The stars should, and will if in Christ's hand, shine with a suitable light, not borrowed from

men, but direct from him. False watchmen are compared to dumb dogs. They utter forth no suitable notes of warning. The thief may steal into Sardis, but there is no warning. But Christ is still in the midst of the golden candlesticks. He still holds the true stars in his right hand. May his ministers thus shine in harmony with his perfections. May they preach the *suitable* truths of God. Christ gives to each a message. When he gives it, it will be in harmony with the states of his people, good or bad. O to be found faithful in our day and generation! not flattering men, or seeking to be mere flesh-pleasers, but serving the Lord, and thus instrumentally carrying on his internal work of discipline, government, and edification in the churches.

I must add no more. Believe me, yours in sincerity,
 "A BABE WHO WOULD BE WISE."

"CAST DOWN, BUT NOT DESTROYED."

Written in a copy of Luther on the Galatians, belonging to one William Roofs, dated Nov. 17th, 1774.

Now to the praise of God my King,
 Be all my powers employed;
 While of this precious truth I sing,—
 "Cast down, but not destroyed."

Oft the united powers of hell
 My soul have sore annoyed;
 And yet I live this truth to tell,—
 "Cast down, but not destroyed."

This world and my deceitful heart
 Have oft my steps decoyed;
 Yet in these words I have a part,—
 "Cast down, but not destroyed."

When persecutors' cruel tongues
 Against me are employed,
 Yet then I prove these words so strong,—
 "Cast down, but not destroyed."

Thus far o'er life's tempestuous seas
 I've safely been convoyed;
 For this has been made good to me,—
 "Cast down, but not destroyed."

In all the paths which I have passed,
 What mercies I've enjoyed!
 And this shall be my song at last,—
 "Cast down, but not destroyed."

I shall at last in heaven appear,
 And there my God adore;
 Destroyed shall be my sin and fear,
 And I cast down no more.

THE TRIED, WAITING SOUL.

“All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.”
—JOB XIV. 14.

This remarkable statement, which eminently shows forth the patience of Job, was spoken in the midst of a deep and most heavy affliction, when he had no immediate prospect of relief.

Before this Job had got to the spot, and a bitter spot it is, in which the afflicted long for death, but it cometh not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures. (ch. iii. 21.) This is the one desire of a soul in these deep waters, as many of God's dear saints have found, and can therefore testify.

Much grace shines forth in this resolution of Job; for nature speaks on this wise: “Curse God, and die.” Know the worst! Come to the end at once! And, no doubt, those poor creatures who have no more than nature to support them in trial and temptation fall an easy prey to Satan, who was a murderer from the beginning, by listening to and obeying his vile suggestions to put an end to their life, and know the worst. But where the Lord has bestowed grace, the fear of the Lord will preserve the soul from that “snare of death.”

“Ye have heard of the patience of Job,” is the record of an inspired apostle. In uttering, then, these words: “All the days,” &c., Job showed forth that blessed gift of patience with which the God of grace had so abundantly blessed him. Consider the weight of his trouble. He had lost all his substance; and in those days that was often regarded as an omen of evil, a calamity which none but wicked characters were visited with. This his three friends were not slow to remind him of. “Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man; neither will he help the evil-doers.” (ch. viii. 10.) But poor Job, according to them, must be an evil-doer, or God would help him in the day of his calamity, and in the time of his sore trouble. Such is their reasoning; and notwithstanding that he maintained his integrity before them, and had an express testimony from God himself as to his character (ch. i.), he might secretly fear that surely such must really be the case, so baffling and confounding were his present circumstances as compared with the past; for Job knew that the hand of the Lord had wrought these things which had befallen him. (ch. xii. 9.)

Then, again, his children had been suddenly cut off by a violent death; and Job, being a godly man, would be much tried by such a dispensation. It is possible that the Lord so ordered it that his three friends spoke much the language of Job's own fears; for Bildad asks: “If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression.” (ch. viii. 4.) Substance could be again restored to Job; but he knew there could be no restoration or recovery of a soul which has perished in its iniquity. This to him would be a fearful consideration, and no doubt was a heavy element in his sore trial.

The pain of his body was great, and of a nature much calculated to irritate and work impatience in the mind; for Satan had smitten him with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. Pain of body comes very close, and Satan knew this; yet see how divine grace triumphs over this in his submissive resolution: "All the days of my appointed time" on earth "will I wait." There is only another instance of superior piety to this in Scripture record; and that is where Jesus said, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."

Job's wife, too, was against him. She could not endure to see his sorrow and the deplorable state and condition into which he was brought. Her patience was very quickly exhausted. So, instead of being a true help-meet for him, she added to his sorrow, and became a snare unto him with her carnal advice. She contended with him instead of speaking words to encourage him in patiently waiting God's time of deliverance.

Job knew that this trouble would not shorten his days, for he speaks of them as not dependent upon health or any outward circumstance. They were *appointed*, *i. e.*, numbered by God, and apportioned unto him by Him who gave him being. This great truth Job was most firmly persuaded of; hence he asks, "Is there not an appointed time for man upon earth?" He took all lawful means to prolong his days, and avoided everything that would shorten them. This the fear of the Lord ever teaches; yet it in no way encroaches on the aforesaid truth.

Now, herein lies his grace, in the words of his resolution; for it is as if he said,—I have certain days to live on this earth. I was living through them in much comfort, and in the enjoyment of acknowledged blessings from God. I walked in his fear, and found wisdom's ways to be pleasantness, and her paths peace. They passed quickly away. My then apprehension of them was that they were swifter than a weaver's shuttle. But now the reverse is the case, *to my feelings*. An hour, yea, a minute of time in this heavy affliction appears to me a very long time; a day seems a long time; so that I wish for the evening, and then when it has arrived, I am full of tossings until the breaking of the day. Before this trouble, there were thoughts in my mind of not being able to carry forward all my plans before death would be upon me, so quickly did time seem to fly away; but now all my plans are upset, my way is hid; and I have yet to live, it may be, many days, in which mine eye shall no more see good. O how long and heavy does time hang upon me! I am weary of my life; but yet all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. It is the God of my life who appointed my former days of prosperity, who now shows me that he has also appointed my present days of adversity and affliction. This glorious Being cannot do wrong to any of his creatures, much less to sinful dust and ashes. It is a mercy I am out of hell. Although my wicked nature would choose strangling, and death

rather than life, I shall yet by his grace endure on, suffer on, wait on. My change will come, for my bones are not iron, neither are my sinews brass.

Job would wait in humble acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God.

O what a mine of practical divinity he opened in these words: "Shall a man receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall he not receive evil?" that is, what appears to our finite minds as such; for, strictly speaking, God cannot give evil, but it is his glory and his prerogative alone to bring good to his covenant people out of what is regarded by them as the evils of life. See, for instance, how he made evil things a channel through which he communicated his sanctifying grace to the soul of the poor beggar Lazarus, by weaning him from the vanities of this life. He received in this life, according to the words of Jesus, "evil things;"—evil to flesh and blood, which cannot enter into the kingdom of God; but grace taught Lazarus what it also taught Job,—to submit to the wise and holy sovereignty of God in the appointment of his lot; and in due time both were brought out into a large room of praise and thanksgiving to God.

Observe that there was yet to appear on the earth a man who was to yield an holy submission to the will of God;—viz., the God-Man Mediator, Friend, Redeemer, and Saviour of poor, lost, and hell-deserving sinners. His was to be a perfect submission, a sinless submission, to all the sorrows, trials, and temptations of life. This Eternal Son of God and Saviour of elect sinners, was to leave Job, patient though he was, far behind. Hear some of his language of submission, and see if he did not far surpass the patriarch Job: "But thou art holy, thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in thee (doubtless including Job); they trusted in thee, and thou didst deliver them."

Jesus learned obedience by the things that he suffered. O what a mercy it is that he teaches his elect also to obey from the heart that form of doctrine into which they are cast, as into a mould, by the things they suffer in this time-state! They are conformed to his image, who waited all through his eventful thirty-three years of life on earth, in humble dependence on the will of his Eternal Father. He submitted himself to him that in every matter and afflictive dispensation judged righteously.

What a sweet grace of the blessed Spirit is this,—to wait in humble acknowledgment of God's sovereignty over us, and the right he hath in us as the creatures of his hand, and especially to feel our hearts at times visited with the tokens of his love, in some comfortable assurance that we are the objects of his covenant mercy, the subjects of his discipline, and that we are in the footsteps of the flock.

2. Job waited in expectation of a change. Dear Medley speaks of this:

"Ere long he'll change this gloomy scene."

Life to a child of God is only that which consists in the felt

presence of his God in his soul. All else is regarded by him as living death. Truly, then, how seldom may a saint of God be said to live! He is generally far oftener in a state of darkness than of light and spirituality of mind. His complaint often is: "O when wilt thou come unto me?" Triumphant times are seldom the experience of many of God's dear redeemed and quickened family.

"My portion's here a crumb at best."

But when their change comes, it will introduce their happy souls into a glorious state of life, light, and deliverance from sin and suffering; from sorrow to everlasting joy; from pain to bliss and blessedness unalloyed; from felt distance to nearness unto God; from darkness of mind to the light of his face, shining through the glorified Son of his love; from contraction to full freedom of mind and heart in the eternal enjoyment of the things of God; from imperfect saints to the spirits of just men made perfect; and from the world lying in the wicked one, full of temptations suitable to a depraved nature, to a world of spirits and elect angels, loving, adoring, serving, worshipping, and praising the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Well, then, might the poet sing,

"Happy the company that's gone
From cross to crown; from thrall to throne."

Then no more cross, but a crown of life, that fadeth not away. What a happy change! Afflicted Job believed it was worth waiting for.

But how was Job to come into possession of this blessedness by reason of his change? Even in the same way as every other vessel of mercy; and that is by free grace, through the righteousness of his Redeemer; for he knew that his Redeemer lived, to redeem and save him from guilt, sin, and the grave; and that in a glorified body he should see God for himself, as having a personal interest in his love and blood, and not for another.

3. Before Job's change came he had a great deliverance vouchsafed him by God.

This God, who has so greatly magnified his mercy in not sparing his only-begotten Son, but delivering him up to the stroke of divine justice for all his elect, has also with him freely given them all things. This includes temporal blessings, as well as spiritual, and deliverances from temporal trouble as well as from spiritual.

Poor Job, like many a saint since, thought in his heart that the only outgate he could have or expect would be by the hand of death. His eye was upon it as the only one means of his deliverance out of all his trouble and affliction, his weighty grief, and a body of sin and death. True it is, that is the time of the saint's grand and final deliverance from the things he now groans under. But behold, God's way is more abundantly good than Job's utmost conceptions of it. He must yet see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living. He must be spared to recover

strength before he goes hence, and is no more seen. He must join with Hannah in testifying that the Lord bringeth down and raiseth up again, before he goes to sing the song of sovereign grace in the realms of glory. And he must know God on earth in the experience and enjoyment of all these mercies and blessings.

So the Lord turned the captivity of Job, delivered him out of his trouble, eased him of his sore pain and affliction, and bestowed upon him twice as much earthly substance as he formerly had. This is often his way upon the earth. He brings affliction upon the loins of his dear people, and they reel and stagger like a drunken man. He keeps them for a time sore in heart and heavy in spirit. They then conclude that only death can afford them a deliverance, and they seek grace to wait and to suffer without murmuring under his mighty hand till that time comes.

There is generally a large crop of fretting and secret repining at the outset; for Job's resolution is not wrought in the heart until they have long waded in the trouble. But when it is wrought, it is acceptable in the sight of God. It is the effect of his own grace; and he frequently crowns the tried waiting soul with a blessing in this life similar to that of Job.

“Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.”

Liverpool, April, 1877.

G. A.

“IS THERE NOT A CAUSE?”

THESE words were spoken by David when he left his flock in Bethlehem, and went up and fought against Goliath. Indeed there *was* a cause; for “the Lord had need of him.” He intended that youthful shepherd to be the deliverer of his people Israel. Mark one thing,—David did not go up in his *own* name. No: hear what he said to Goliath: “Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the Name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.” It was in that Name he prevailed. A stone from his sling sank into the champion's forehead, and he fell dead upon the ground.

So we see the Lord had a purpose in sending David into the battle-field with provisions for his brethren. Has not the Lord, too, a purpose in calling us into the battle-field of affliction, if I may be allowed the expression? Is there not a cause, and a just cause too, why he should lay the rod upon us? Indeed,

“The Lord for nothing would not chide;
We highly should esteem
The cross that's sent to purge our pride,
And make us more like him.”

How often the furnace is needed to burn up some of the dross that has almost hidden the spark of grace in our hearts. Perhaps some of us are obliged to confess that we have, like the

church at Ephesus, left our first love. (Rev. ii. 4.) Are we not often saying, "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness?" (Job xxix. 2, 3.) Have we not departed in heart and affections greatly from the Lord, and gone after other lovers? Was there not a time when the house of God, or place of worship, was our delight? How we longed for the Sabbath morning to come, that we might hear what the Lord would say to us through his servants! Have we not sometimes felt the Lord's sweet presence, which has enabled us to take our harps down from the willows, and sing with the poet:

"Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise;
He justly claims a song from thee;
His loving kindness, O how free."

At such times, has he not been more to us than everything beneath the sun? Have we not thus, constrained by love, cheerfully taken up our cross and followed the Lord through the ordinance of baptism, and to his table; and felt that the agonies he endured on the cross were to put away our sins? Then could we not feelingly say:

"Through fire and flood, if Jesus lead,
I'll follow where he goes."

But, alas! alas! how is it now? Are not our minds again sadly entangled with the things of time and sense? Is there not a needs-be for the Lord to come and turn out the idols which have crept into our hearts? Even when in the sanctuary, do we not find our minds are wandering, like the fool's eye, to the end of the earth, planning this, that, and the other thing? And O! what coldness and indifference there seem in the things of God! If we ask ourselves the question, whether, when able, we always fill our seats in God's earthly courts, as often as the doors are opened, must we not confess we do not? Have we not sometimes said, "I feel too tired to go;" or, "It looks like rain;" or, "I expect some friend to call; and I should like to be at home?" What would the martyrs have said to such excuses as these? They met together in sheds, caves, and different places, at the peril of their lives. How little of that kind of religion is to be found in these days! I believe many neglect the ordinances of God's house for fear of the frowns of those around them. What! ashamed to follow in the footsteps of the Lord of life and glory, because of frail man, whose breath is in his nostrils? God says, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels." (Mark viii. 38.)

May the Lord enable us to look right on, and not to turn to the right hand or the left; but to say, "Choose thou the path for me."
"Choose thou the way, but still lead on."

Can we wonder at the church of God being in such a low place, when the means that God himself has appointed are lightly esteemed? Do we not often seem going hand in hand with the men of the world? O that we could live more separate from them! For O! what death we find association with them brings into our souls! Yea, we are compelled to say, with the prophet Isaiah (xxiv. 16), "My leanness! my leanness! Woe unto me! The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously," &c. O may the Lord enable us who are his people to unitedly pray for an outpouring of his Holy Spirit upon us. He has promised to hear the petitions of his children. Yea, he delights to hear and answer them when they ask in real sincerity for those things that shall be for their soul's good and his honour and glory.

What is the reason we bear so little fruit? Is it not greatly because the throne of grace is not oftener resorted to, and God's precious Word searched with more earnestness? He has said, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." And God's *shalls* and *wills*, as the poet says, are "Firm as the everlasting hills."

Do we not from our hearts feel there is a cause why we are so often afflicted and tried? And can we not at times bless the Lord for the means he uses to wean us from the world, and to make us sick of sin, and everything but himself, however mortifying to flesh and blood? Does not our inmost soul say, "Make me right, Lord, whatever it may cost me; and don't let me be a fruitless branch. And if losses, crosses, trials, temptations, and afflictions will be profitable to my soul, and are needful to make me bear fruit to thy honour and glory, thy will be done. Only remember that I am dust and ashes, and give me strength to bear up under them. Do thou be my All, and I crave no more; for, having Jesus, I have an exhaustless store."

Do we not at times long for the time to come when we shall lay down this clayey tabernacle, and be free from this body of sin and death, which plagues us from day to day? What hidden evils seem daily rising and trying to triumph over the little spark of grace. This makes us cry out,

"Can ever God dwell here?"

But even this will work for our good. It will be the means of showing us what we are in and of ourselves, and will make us realize our dependence upon divine aid; feeling that if left one moment, our sinful hearts would lead us astray. And it will further make us long for the time of dissolution; knowing that then we shall be captivated no more, but be taken to the haven of peace and rest, where we shall dwell for ever with Him who is "the Chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely."

"There we shall tune our harps afresh,
And sing for evermore."

For there will be no more the Canaanite in that land of peace, that house of the Lord.

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

“Whilst the long cloud of witnesses Shows the same path to heaven.”

My very dear esteemed Friend,—I hope I am not a burden to you, dear brother. I think you have enough burdens without my adding to them. I do hope you will tell me if I take too much upon me. You have been much on my mind, particularly last Tuesday; and if you can spare a moment I should like to know how it fared with you, and also what times are going over your head. We were disappointed not to be with you in the flesh. I trust there was a meeting and uniting with you in spirit; and several times through the day I retired to try and entreat the Lord to think upon you. That word dropped in a little sweetly: “They without us should not be made perfect.” I thought our dear friends will get on without us to-day, but not by-and-bye; for if so, then would the assembly be imperfect; for I must still hope my precious soul will be gathered with the Lord’s people when I have done gathering with them here below. I was glad also to hear you were remembered at the prayer-meeting here in the same hour. Shall we see anything published? I have thought it would prove perhaps interesting if some little account of the centenary services was published, together with a little of the history of both places of worship, yours and ours, and of the goodness of God so long continued to each. I suppose there are very few chapels in the land of so long standing where the truth is still preached. “How is the gold become dim!”

I feel too poor, or perhaps not poor enough, to write. If I could, I might tell you I get more vile and poor every day I live. Then I wonder where and how it will end. Indeed and indeed, of all I shall die most deeply indebted to God; and may I not

“Glory in the thought,
That I shall owe him most.”

And is not God honoured thereby? What think you?

You may have heard what is left on record of Alexander. One of his favourites being in straitened circumstances, makes his case known to his friend, the emperor, who gave him leave to draw on his treasurer to what amount he chose. In his sovereign’s name, he goes and demands £10,000; which the secretary refuses, till he had seen the king, who at once commands him to pay it, saying, “I am delighted with my friend. He does me great honour by asking such a sum; thereby he shows what ideas he has of my royal munificence.” Though I have no need to quote the words of the King of kings to my beloved brother, “Open thy mouth wide,” yet I have need enough of the exhortation myself; for though of all the most needy, yet I often feel of all the most prayerless. Still, blessed be God, I trust I know at times the difference. It is as though my poor soul was all prayer. As David hath it, “But I prayer” (Psalm cix. 4. margin); or as poor dear Ruth Bryan says, “My heart would keep on talking to God,” after being five hours on her knees.

Since writing (in bed) the dear children of God have been gathered here for worship. Mr. Chappell preached, and baptized a young man from Swindon, a thing quite unusual here as not taking place on the Sabbath. This evening is the prayer-meeting, and to-morrow Mr. Warburton will (D.V.) be with us. Four days in succession the doors opened. The walls were not, we hope, built to no purpose. To-morrow you will be at Grittleton. Had it not been so, dear mother and sister would most likely have been with you. As for myself, I am often shut out. May the Lord be with you, my dear friend, and bless your message. I trust I picked up a crumb in that chapel many years ago from the lips of your predecessor. I am often now deprived of meeting with those I love. I was much disappointed the day you were at Dauntsey. Why could you take the pains to come out of your way and toil up the hill to come and preach to such a black wretch in his sick chamber? Was it because of the love of your heart towards such a one, of all the most worthless, yet one whom you kindly call your "poor afflicted brother"? It has sent the water into my eyes thinking of another who went out of his way, and toiled, worn and wearied with his journey, to preach from an unworthy pulpit to a poor black adulteress. But though her skin may have been blacker, and her outward life may have been darker than mine, yet her inward part was not, I think, half so dark. A word of good John Newton's has often moved me to tears. The dear good man says, "But here let me be silent (he is speaking of himself); but let me not be silent from the praise of that grace that could atone, that blood that could expiate, such sins as mine." I know not whose choice it was that the inscription on Hart's stone should contain the dear man's own words:—

"O bring no price; God's grace is free
To Paul, to Magdalene, to me;"

but I have thought a more suitable one could not well have been chosen. And it has been sweet to my poor sin-stained soul to remember such great sinners were pardoned, though I can give place to none as "the chief of sinners." Paul *may* have been so in his day; but that was before my time. Though I have been trying to tell the Lord for 20 years what a sinner I am, yet I seem farther from the end of my tale than ever. And is this all? No; indeed it is not. When I have told him what a black and ugly wretch I am, and what a sad pitiable plight I am in, then how sweet to tell him of his mercy, and how he loves to extend it, and that he is just such a "great Saviour" as I need.

I have passed another milestone on my wearisome journey. "Forty years didst thou sustain them;" and forty save one has the God of Israel sustained the poor worm who writes in the wilderness. Forty years long was he grieved with them; and thirty-nine years have I been sinning against the God who gave me breath, and who is the kind giver of all my mercies. He has been a good God to me, my dear friend, all my life long. He

has borne with me, and borne me up, and brought me on till now; and here I am, "a debtor to mercy alone." Mercy began; mercy is carrying on; and mercy, I trust, will close the scene.

But I will burden you no more. Do, dear friend, try and bear with my poor medley. My mind is so enfeebled, I seem to have no power to think, and you have a sample of my confusion before you. My very kind love and sympathy to your dear afflicted partner; also yourself. The Lord himself be with you, and bless you.

I am, my dear Mr. Hemington,

Your most unworthy friend,

Clack, Aug. 2nd and 3rd, 1880.

E. MORSE.

P.S.—Pray for a poor worm. Pray for poor Zion. Pray for poor guilty England.

My dear Sister Eliza,—We have been thinking it was your turn to write; but my wife says you sent two sermons last, for which I thank you. Fresh sermons are of some value, as our folks often say to me, You have read that before. They are eager, too, when the "Gospel Standard" arrives, to read it. Thus those sermons given in it are read before the Sabbath; so that when the Sabbath comes we are at a loss to know what to read that will be suitable and most productive of spiritual instruction and edification.

How are you getting on in spirituals and temporals? I suppose we are four thousand miles apart, and shall never see each other in the flesh again; but it is a great mercy to be brought to know, or be acquainted with the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. The first branch of this knowledge has to us been very painful, because we had sinned against him, and had brought ourselves into everlasting condemnation. His manifested displeasure against all manner of sin burnt up all our fleshly hopes and fleshly refuges; and we were obliged to stand naked before him, with nothing but our crimes left us, and our mouth stopped, and hell opened to receive us at our coming. The Spirit of grace then moved us to cry out for mercy and salvation, though we could not see, and did not know of any way by which it could honourably and justly be extended to us. Yet there was a *hidden* way, known to the Most High, whereby he could honourably and justly rescue, pluck, deliver, and eternally save a most righteously law-condemned wretch, and adopt an enemy into the family of God, and truly reconcile a natural opposer, and make him a real friend of God in his law and gospel; and all through the atoning blood and justifying righteousness of his dear Son. This we had possibly heard of; but could not see into or believe in. But when the rescue was accomplished, the salvation tasted, was not mercy sweet, and salvation great, and all God's judgments right? You know it was. As Jesus is revealed in his glory as a Saviour, and in his adorable offices, so he is God's way; his just way, his honourable way, his merciful way, his gracious way, adorable, strong,

safe, delightful, and everlasting way. Here, with raptures in our souls, and eyes drowned in tears, we look up and see a pacified, merciful, gracious, sin-forgiving God, smiling, well pleased, and delighting to show mercy unto sinners. It wins our hearts, and we become what Abraham is called, the friend of God. And all the after-dealings of God with our souls are designed to make us more acquainted with Jesus Christ, whom JEHOVAH hath sent, in which knowledge eternal life consists.

When I look back for nearly fifty years, and see in a measure my falls, my errors, my proud spirit, my great sins, my backslidings, the heavy chastisements, the dungeons, the darkness, the deaths, the difficulties, the struggles, the cries, the boasting at times of Satan my unbound enemy, with other things hid in the darkness, I discover that truth which dear William Gadsby names in one of his hymns:

“That by such things, though strange to tell,
The Lord will teach us Jesus well.”

I remember Mr. Mortimer saying at Swindon, in the pulpit, that a minister, whom he used when young to hear, once remarked, “A young believer’s experience, when first setting out in the heavenly race, was three parts self and one quarter Christ; after being longer in trials and troubles, it was half self and half Christ; when he had been in the way longer, and through more furnace work, it became three-quarters Christ and one-quarter self; and before death Christ became All in all.”

It appears true in my case. When indwelling sin had prevailed against me, and I became afraid of God, and expected his judgments to strike me, though I was afraid to pray, I fell down upon my knees; and I heard the voice of God in my conscience, saying, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die;” and in an instant I saw by faith Jesus as interposing himself between the Father and me; and the Father’s voice was heard in my heart, saying to me, “That *Jesus* had that to plead which would avail.” Then I cried out to Jesus, “Lord, undertake for *me*.” I cast my guilty case into his hand, and rose up free from my burden and trouble. But O the weight of solemnity! I was afraid to breathe to disturb it.

So the Lord instructed me that Jesus was an advocate and intercessor; and I have thought of what the apostle Paul says, “I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” I believe that at that time, through the Spirit’s enabling, I committed my soul to him for salvation; and have good reason to believe and expect he will take me to heaven when I die, though so many things appear to stand in the way. He is a faithful Saviour; and having begun to save me from my destructions, his honour is engaged in it. What I have related happened in the year 1837, I think, and now in the year 1879, he is *more* to me than ever. I can say at times, “My heart is fixed, O God; my heart is fixed.” Christ shines in his substitution, as the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

His all-sufficient sacrifice is the food of my faith and hope. I receive sometimes sweet glimpses of the riches of his atoning blood and justifying righteousness, which yield me health, strength, food, foundation, peace, comfort, establishment, and triumph; thanks be to the Lord.

Give our Christian love to dear Edward and Mr. B., and all inquiring friends. With our united love,

Your affectionate Brother,

Strongsville, Ohio, U.S., Dec. 28th, 1879.

HENRY MILLS.

My dear Friend,—You will be very pleased to hear that my dear father has not felt a return of the pain since three o'clock on Thursday morning, and though extremely weak, yet we now quite hope it may be in the purpose of God to spare my father more severe suffering, and again restore him to health. The medical man says there is full and satisfactory evidence that his opinion respecting the cause of the acute pain is quite correct. It is a source of indescribable thankfulness for our dear parent to be free from pain, and we can all testify that hitherto the Lord hath dealt tenderly and mercifully with us, and that he hath laid no more upon us than he hath enabled us to bear; having fulfilled that promise to us, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

There is a day, which at the longest cannot be very far distant, to which I look forward with fear and trembling,—the Lord coming down into his garden, and gathering my dear father by death as one of his lilies unto himself; and I feel there is a needs-be to lay up many prayers against this trying hour. Sometimes, when thus engaged, it pleases the Lord to draw near and stay my mind upon himself, filling me with a sense of his pardoning love shed abroad in my heart, and enabling me to rest upon such passages as these: "I will be a father to the fatherless," &c. And I doubt not in that hour of trial we shall find the Lord our Strength, our Refuge, and our Helper. Hitherto we have proved him a faithful God; and when I meditate upon all his goodness, more especially in having brought me to a saving experimental knowledge of my union and interest in the Saviour,

"I'm lost in wonder, melt with grief,
And faint beneath the bliss."

It is such a peculiar favour to feel that, though in myself "dwelleth no good thing," every thought and action being mixed with sin; yet being clothed in the justifying righteousness of the Saviour, the Father looks upon me as all fair, without spot or wrinkle. He shows me that he hath set his love upon me, and that nothing can remove it from me, because it is invariable and unchangeable; and though I may change he changeth not. Being thus assured of my interest in him, I can look forward to the time when, if my dear father is removed first, I shall join him in that incorruptible and undefiled inheritance that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who have come out of

great tribulation, with their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

My dear father has been kept very quiet throughout his severe sufferings; and when free from pain, has seemed as though he could not sufficiently bless and praise the Lord for his great goodness and loving-kindness towards him. And when his strength will admit, he converses very pleasantly for a few moments; but he is so greatly enfeebled that he cannot talk much at a time. He is able to take considerably more nourishment to-day, for which we feel very grateful. My dear parents and sisters unite with me in kind remembrance to Mrs. —, your daughter, and yourself, with all inquiring friends. I am, Yours sincerely,

Dec. 18th, 1851.

J. C.

To the Editor of the "Gospel Standard."

Dear Sir,—It is with heartfelt pleasure I take up my pen to write a few lines to you, in order to acknowledge the mercy, power, and wisdom of God manifested through you as a means to me, a vile, guilty, rebellious, wretched sinner. Truly I have felt of late that portion of divine truth: "The rebellious dwell in a dry land." But last night I was reading the letter by Mr. Barnes in this month's "Gospel Standard." This, in the hands of God, was so blessed to my soul that it was made the means of subduing my stubborn and rebellious will, and bringing me with meekness and contrition to the throne of grace once more. Prayer, which, through my sin, had been a burden and a task, for sin had made a sensible distance between God and my soul, was now through the Holy Spirit's renewing, the food of my soul, and a felt and blessed privilege. Well might the apostle, with such admiration, exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments; and his ways past finding out." For I perceive that your throwing Mr. Barnes's letter into the drawer, and then being led to bring it before the churches, was among the "all things" that work together for good, &c. And among the all things, it has been the means of removing from my mind a great prejudice against the "Gospel Standard." This was wrought in the following manner: Mr. Barnes, in the commencement of his letter, refers to the first article in the "Gospel Standard" for November, 1879, as being so blessed to his own soul. This led me to read it again; for which I have great cause to bless and praise Almighty God, as well as for inclining his heart to write that letter. Although I do not know Mr. Barnes personally, I do believe it has caused a union of soul that will never be dissolved. Amen. As I said, it was the means of removing the prejudice, sinful prejudice, which I had so long felt against that work, the "Gospel Standard." After the death of that servant of the Lord, Mr. Philpot, it seemed to me the power and unction of that book died with him. I do not mean the power and unction rested with him; that I know is alone of God. Power belongeth alone unto the

Lord. But to me there was not that life or blessing attended the perusal of the magazine as formerly. There was, I confess, with very few exceptions, a rejection of its contents. But O! with what different feelings did I read its pages last night! O! how differently things appear when the Holy and ever blessed God the Spirit shines into the soul with light and life! *Light* to see that he is still carrying on his gracious work in our souls, and thus proving again and again that he that hath begun a good work is carrying it on, and we hope will carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ; *life* to feel the power and sweetness of this great and precious promise. Our understanding being enlightened, we see light in God's light; because the darkness has passed from our minds, and the true light now shineth in our hearts.

This was the case, I hope, in reading the article upon "Man's Inability, how Learnt, and the Results." Also the sermon upon "The Yoke in Youth, a Blessing in After-Years." My soul could follow the writers, who were thus blessedly led to trace out the work of God the Holy Ghost in a sinner's heart from its first beginnings, and in its progression; which was very confirming to me. They also sweetly showed that true religion is an every-day religion. I say *sweetly*, because I know it is so. And though it is not all sweet, yet, blessed be God, in and by the Lord Jesus Christ it is not all bitter. I do invariably prove that the day of adversity is set over against the day of prosperity. I do not know who the writers were, but I do know I love them for the blessed truths they advanced; and I can and do receive them into my heart and affections. And it comes to my mind at this time, whilst I am writing, that this love is a blessed mark of a renewed heart; for the Lord said himself when upon earth, "He that receiveth you receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me."

Now, dear Editor, you refuse to notice anonymous letters. Were it not that we cannot reject the power which attends spiritual communications, might we not on the same grounds refuse nameless pieces inserted in the "Gospel Standard?" I say this in love, because I wish to know the names of those whose writings have been blessed to my soul. I know no spiritually hungering and thirsting souls could reject such testimonies; but do not you, dear sir, think that it would be right to add the signatures, that we might know the names of those servants of God who are sent, whether by preaching or writing, to cast up the way and take the stumbling-blocks out of the path of God's people, to strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees, to say unto the weak, Be strong; to those of a fearful heart, Fear not; behold, your God will come, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you.

O how necessary it is that every writer who is taught of the Lord, but especially God's sent servants, should do as the two writers mentioned above have done, in relating how they came by the knowledge of those divine truths they have so plainly and

feelingly laid before their readers, so that they who run may read. They speak of them as men who have tasted, handled, and felt the divine realities which they speak of; God testifying of the truths they advance by making those truths spirit and life to our souls.

You are unknown to me in the flesh. Doubtless, had I not in the providence of God many, that is, more than 80, years ago, been removed from my dear native land, for I firmly believe there is no country under the sun so highly favoured with gospel privileges, nor with so many of God's dear people in it, as England, I should have been personally acquainted with you. As it is, from what I have read of your writings, I believe I may say with the apostle, "Unknown, yet well known." I and my wife still stand members of that portion of the church of God meeting in Gower Street Chapel, London, of which dear Mr. F. Marshall, a beloved friend and minister of the gospel, is senior deacon. I mention him because of the kind and very precious letters I have from time to time received from him, which God in much mercy has been pleased to bless to my soul. For this God be thanked first, and then dear Mr. Marshall, as the instrument. We joined the church when the friends worshipped in Eden Street, Hampstead Road; a place never to be forgotten by me; for there I received many reproofs and rebukes from God's mouth by his servants, Messrs. Warburton, Kershaw, Godwin, Philpot, McKenzie, and others who are now in glory. Also I have received great encouragement. O with what intense longings have I in those days gone up to the house of God; praying with heart-felt cries, that the Lord would bless his servant in speaking and my soul in hearing! Often have I come away fearing that God by them, as his mouth, had sealed my condemnation; but O! mercy of mercies, at other times I have, like Hannah, come from the house of God with my countenance no more sad. That is, for a time; for I have ever found this true, that as it is said of the Lord of life and glory, after he had endured the temptations of the enemy, the devil departed from him for a season. Mark that, for a season; so it has been with me. How true is that which John Bunyan says:

"The Christian man is seldom long at ease,
When one trouble's o'er, another doth him seize."

O how many times have I feared I should be made manifest to be a reprobate, and be cast out from the presence of God, and be despised and abhorred of his dear people! But then the Lord hath appeared again, and delivered me from all my fears in his own good time; so that amidst all I feel constrained to say, in the language of David, "By this I know thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me."

If you should see Mr. Hemington, give my kind Christian love to him. I do not think he remembers me. I was in his company when I was in England in the year 1871 on a visit, and heard him preach many times very acceptably; once from 2 Cor.

ii. 14, 15, 16; also from Isa. lxvi. 2. "But to this man will I look," &c.; as well as at other times. O how did my thirsty soul drink down the word of life as it flowed from that living fountain within. I had then been away more than twenty years. There is no such preaching in this country; at least, I have not met with any. "Tekel" may be written on all the preaching I have heard in this country. Professors there are in plenty. They are indeed numerous; but I do not meet with any who can give a satisfactory reason of the hope that is in them. They go to what they call church, and seem quite contented. They are not in trouble like other (spiritual) men.

Now, dear sir, if you think this poor scrawl worth your perusal, read it; and then it is in your hands to do as you please with it. I feel glad to see the "Gospel Standard" on a sound and solid basis; and desire that you may be blessed with grace, wisdom, and spiritual understanding, and also with strength, both of body and mind, to carry on the good work you have been enabled to undertake.

Passaic, New Jersey, U.S., June 20th, 1880.

A. ABBOTT.

My dear Friend,—I have not forgotten the promise I made, that I would drop you a line; but very many times have I thought of you since I saw you. I should have before now made the attempt to write; but I also promised I would send you my photograph, and as I have not yet attended to that, owing to many circumstances, I must defer it until another opportunity.

I desire you may be very much favoured with the Lord's sweet and sacred presence in your own soul, whispering at times the sweet assurance you are his eternally-loved child. Which I believe you are; but when Jesus speaks, his blessed word goes over and beyond all besides. It removes bonds, bars, loads, crooks, crosses, as to all their gall and bitters; and gives light in darkness, quietude in trouble, strength in weakness, and courage in faintings. And you have many times felt it has turned the battle to the gate, and brought sweet peace, quietness, and a calm into your poor troubled heart; and you have been ready to exclaim—I, a poor weak worm, a sinful man, shall surely go to heaven after all. We can, my brother, then sweetly sing with Berridge:

"The world now drops its charms;
My idols all depart;
Soon as I reach my Saviour's arms
I give him all my heart.
A soft and tender sigh,
Now heaves my hallow'd breast;
I long to lay me down and die,
And find eternal rest."

Cannot we then sweetly comply with the Lord's own command, "My son, give me thine heart?" and feel strangely moved to blush with shame and love, to give such a heart, with all its fears, failings, and woes, into his divine keeping? We learn a

most sweet secret here too. He does not rebuke us for so doing; fulfilling his own word: "I will no more be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee." Now our sins are past bearing by us. At most we can know but in part the load, the curse, the eternal pain, due to sin and sinners. Our troubles have been many, deep, sore, and gloomy. Our afflictions have been painful. Our temptations black and base; vile beyond words to utter. Yet all this, and much more, is all made amends for, and put away, washed clean, and every gainsayer silenced, when love divine through Jesus' blood reaches our hearts.

How sweet, suitable, and blessed his glorious righteousness is, when God imputes it, and faith puts it on! Sweet then to lie low, and look upon him we have pierced, and to witness pardon through blood sealed home, overtopping our many sins, follies, and faults. I know in this way, and this alone, the dear Lord is exalted, and we are here no longer self-esteemed saints; we are no dressed-up merit-mongers; no pharisaic pride lifting its vile head is here; no Stand by thyself, I am more holy than thou. I am sure we can love our brother most then, and own ourselves the least; and esteem the household of faith; and hear aright, speak as we ought, and have our eyes in our head—viz., the Lord Jesus Christ. Though we do not always live at this sweet feast, yet we know it by tasting; and if fasting times are many, being divinely ordered, they will give an eager appetite for the paschal Lamb, even though with bitter herbs.

I am proving daily that I am in the wilderness. Many trials, daily crosses, and of late severe losses. I have a most trying old man; one that loves smooth things, and snarls at the curb. And I feel a daily urgent need for a "*mighty to save*;" powerful to keep and guide; and a patient to bear, LORD JESUS. I am sure, if *He* was not all-sufficient, powerful, and kind, I should play truant; and that very old good prayer just suits my case, "Lord, hold thou me up; and I shall be safe."

Now, my brother, pardon my poor scrawl. I would send you a better if I could. If you love me as I feel to love you, do send me a letter in return. My very kind Christian love to your dear spouse, and daughter, and son. Poor dear fellow, how is he? How many times I have thought of him, and you all. My kind love to your brother deacons, and all who may inquire. The dear Lord bless, lead, guide, anoint, and favour you still; preserve you, body, soul, and spirit; and crown you with his lovingkindness and tender mercy.

Yours very affectionately in the bonds of gospel love,

Baldham Mills, Seend, Melksham, Dec. 20th, 1875. N. MARSH.
To Mr. Marshall, Brighton.

Now that which is spirit and that which is not spirit, that which hath a new spiritual being and that which hath none, whatever appearance of agreement may be in them, do yet differ essentially from one another.—*Owen*.

INQUIRY AND ANSWER.

Sir,—If I am not intruding on your time and patience, will you have the kindness to give us a few words on the spiritual and experimental meaning of Ps. xxxii. 6? By so doing you will extremely oblige. I am, Sir, your humble Servant,
J. C.

REPLY.

When you ask us to give you a few words upon the spiritual and experimental meaning of Ps. xxxii. 6, we conclude that by these expressions you mean the *real* meaning of the words as they flowed, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, from the pen of David; with an unfolding of them in agreement with the experiences of the godly. The spiritual and experimental meaning of portions of Scripture is not a meaning fastened upon them by human fancy; but *the proper sense* of them, as conveying the mind and meaning of the Holy Spirit. We will endeavour, then, to comply with your wishes, and give you what we judge to be the real and proper sense of the words; and also try to show their bearing upon a child of God's experience.

We suppose your principal difficulty arises from two expressions: "A time when thou mayest be found;" and "Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him."

In the first place, then, let us consider that these words in *ver.* 6 are to be taken in connection with the other parts of the psalm. There is often a danger of much false interpretation, arising from isolating certain verses or sentences from their proper connections, and considering them as if they stood alone. On the other hand, the context, or connection, often throws a clear light upon particular expressions. Now, the psalmist gives us, in verses 3 and 4, his own painful and sorrowful experience. How he was shut up in soul; how God's hand was heavy upon him day and night; how he kept silence; and certainly during all this season of great trial he could find no near or comfortable access to the Lord. Does not such an unfolding of his own experience at once suggest what he means in the words under consideration? Well, then, in this light let us a little more fully look into them.

But let us remove, with the Lord's help, one or two stumbling-blocks. We should always remember that one word of God cannot really contradict another. We, with our finite capacities, may not always be able to reconcile them; but they must always be in perfect agreement.

The words of Ps. xxxii. 6, then, cannot have, as they perhaps may have appeared to you to have, a sort of repelling meaning, as it respects a poor convinced and seeking sinner; as though the words "shall not" were equivalent to "must not; shall not be allowed." They rather are answerable to "cannot"; at least, so we judge. So that the meaning would be,—“Shall

not be able to come nigh unto him." There is not anything in the Word of God to forbid any poor sinner, who is brought to a willing mind to come to God by Christ, thus coming unto the Lord. The fiery sword of divine justice is indeed drawn against a sinner who attempts to approach presumptuously in a legal way, or one of creature works. But the cherubim sheath that sword to the sinner who comes to God by Christ.

Well, then, there is nothing of such a forbidding nature in the words of our text; nothing to say to such a one—You shall not come unto God. Much less can there be anything in the words, properly understood, to repel a man who *feels* the drawings of the Lord upon his heart, leading him to approach to God. Such drawings plainly say that God will be found of such a one. This is indeed the very time when he may be found. "Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord." (Hos. vi. 3.) "Seek ye the Lord whilst he may be found; call ye upon him whilst he is near." (Isa. lv. 6.) He is near to the man whom, as a convinced sinner, he is drawing to his mercy-seat.

We write these things as we confess to having a little at times shrank back from applying the pronoun *him* to the Lord himself, and having rather referred it to the pardoned sinner; because we thought that the words in the former sense seemed to repel, or be an obstacle in the way of a coming sinner. Well, then, how may we understand them in harmony with the Word of God generally, and the experiences of the godly? We should consider them to refer to these positive facts—that there are certain seasons in soul experience when the godly cannot come near unto God in soul feeling, or find any free or comfortable access into his presence. Again; there are other seasons when the godly draw near and do find a much more comfortable and sometimes most sweet and free and holily familiar access. And here we cannot but observe, by the way, how different the truly godly—*i. e.*, those who are quickened, taught, and led by God, are to mere professors. These last can do things without the Lord. They have not the times of the godly pass over them. Their time is always ready. But the godly and their times are in the hand of God.

"And while a dark night Drags heavily through,
They cannot strike light By all they can do."

Well, then, in experience the godly find that there are certain seasons in soul experience when they cannot come nigh unto God, or find the coveted communion. There are, for instance, the cloudy and dark days of the law. Or, according to the text, seasons when legal terrors and fears of wrath are out against the soul. Then there are seasons of temptation; an "hour and power of darkness." Then there are times when God hides himself from his people; and, as the poet writes,

"Seems to quite forsake us."

Such times David passed through, as he plainly shows, not only

in this but various other psalms. After his woeful fall, no doubt, he had a sad and painful experience of such a condition. Job was exercised in a similar manner. Read the 23rd chapter of that wonderful and blessed book, and particularly verses 3, 8, and 9; and you can easily see how that good man had to

“Mourn an absent God.”

Jeremiah and others of the godly were afflicted in a like manner, as you can see from the book of the Lamentations. “Yea, when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer.” Heman cries out with a like sorrowful complaint, “I am shut up, and I cannot come forth.”

Thus, then, we see that the words we are considering, in the view we are taking of them, answer to the recorded experiences of God's choicest saints. We have felt the same at various times; and once the words of this verse, in a time of such floods of temptation, felt carnality of mind, and various fears, fell upon our heart in the very sense we have given to them; unfolding our experience, and throwing a light upon our path. But if there are times of great waters, when floods of temptation, sin, guilt, wretchedness, are out upon and well-nigh overwhelm the soul, in which sad and distressing seasons there is no near, comfortable, soul-refreshing access to the Lord, there are also times of quite a different nature,—times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; times when the poor soul has something more than the letter of the Word to support and comfort him. The Lord draws nigh again with soul-reviving power. Then the soul begins again to go out and forth to the Lord. The Lord draws, and the soul begins to move out after him. “Draw me; we will run after thee.” These are times when he may really be found; found in an experimental way by the same poor soul who could not at one time come nigh unto him. So it was with David, as he represents his case in this psalm. For a season his bones waxed old through his roaring all the day long; God's hand was heavy upon him; but there was no free access in confession or prayer. At length the blessed Spirit, faithful to his own work, came in with reviving power. Then all was different, as we read, in ver. 5: “I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord.” So it was with Job, when there was with him an Interpreter, one amongst a thousand. Then he could say, “Behold, I am vile.” “I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” So it was with Jeremiah. (Lam. iii. 55-57.)

Thus we see how the words of the psalmist, in the sense we have given to them, are borne out by his own experience and that of others of the godly, as represented in the Word of God. Thus things are still worked out in the experiences of the godly. One writes:

“My soul through many changes goes.”

So it is with us. So it will be in various ages with God's people. They are all made to feel their dependence upon the Holy Spirit

of God. They not only read, but realize, that without Christ they can do nothing. Times of temptation and desertion, of felt weakness and utter inability even to draw nigh unto God, prepare for sweet drawings of his grace, and fresh manifestations of his love. And all these changes and varied times, and manifold experiences, separate them effectually and essentially from mere professors; and they become "a people that dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned amongst the nations."

"EVEN TO HOAR HAIRS WILL I CARRY YOU."

(Continued from p. 455.)

AGAIN. David, the man after God's own heart, saw the flourishing state of the wicked for a while, and also saw their end. "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found;" namely, among the righteous. Then he sets the believer in Christ against him: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

Now, God's people, who are called trees of righteousness, the right-hand planting of God, are seldom found planted in this soil of worldly prosperity. Paul says, "Ye see your calling, brethren; how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." And when God's people have been very prosperous, we often see their prosperity becoming a snare and a trap for their souls.

The first I shall notice is Hezekiah. It is said of him that the Lord was with him, and that he prospered whither he went forth. Then, in 2 Chron. xxxii. 25, we have his heart lifted up with pride, and God's leaving him to know all that was in his heart. Prosperity naturally tends to this. The wonderful prosperity in Israel which we read of in Deut. xxxii. led on to this. Thus we read, "But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked." "Thou art waxed fat; thou art grown thick; thou art covered with fatness. Then he forsook God that made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation." When Israel got into this place, then they went to idolatry, and so sacrificed unto devils, and not God.

Solomon, also, who had so much wealth, and so much temporal glory, found this was a snare to his soul. His affections were led by the devil to take in heathenish wives; and then these drew his heart away to idolatry; and not this only, but he built temples for devils in the very sight of the temple of the living God. This brought upon him and upon his house a severe rod, and because of this God rent ten tribes from him and his house, and left him only two to reign over.

A tree of righteousness never grows better than when God the Father is pruning it and purging it by afflictions, by the temptations of Satan, by adverse dispensations in providence, when these things are accompanied by a supply of the Spirit. These

are they that are planted in the house of the Lord, and flourish in the courts of our God. The corruption of their nature is subdued, and grace sweetly both reigns and rules. Believers thus purged do best show forth the Lord's praise, and live the most to God's glory. The greatest favourites of heaven have been the sorest tried in providence; and it is the general lot of the saints.

While we find, on the one hand, that there are not many rich called, we also find, on the other, that God hath chosen the poor of this world, and he makes them rich in faith; so the prayer of faith must bring in every supply, both for body and soul. God says in his Word, "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the Name of the Lord." This shows us that we are to have no refuge but God, and no helpers but him. Now, Elijah, who was such an eminent favourite of heaven; who had such power from God upon him, and who was so favoured as not to die, but to be changed in a moment, and carried by angels, both body and soul, to heaven, without ever dying, was so kept under cross dispensations of providence that he was fed miraculously by the ravens. "Go," says God, "and hide thyself by the brook Cherith that is before Jordan; and it shall be that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. So he went, and did according to the word of the Lord, and the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook." When this source of supply was ended, then God said unto him, "Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon. Behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." And though God did not tell him where she lived, nor how he was to know her, yet he set off in faith; and just as he got to the city, this very woman was without the gate of the city, gathering sticks to dress her last morsel; after which she concluded she and her son should surely be starved to death. But no; the righteous shall never be finally forgotten. "Bread," says God, "shall be given thee; thy waters shall be sure." And God's blessing by his servant so attended this last morsel, that it is said that "the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sent rain upon the earth;" and they all lived a full year upon this. God's promise shall never be broken. He has said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added."

God's testimony of Job is that he was a perfect and upright man. The Lord also says of Job that he was one that feared God, and hated evil. For some time wonderful prosperity attended him. But after a little while, in order that self-righteousness might be destroyed, and also all confidence in the flesh rooted out of his tabernacle, and that he might be brought to a fuller knowledge of Christ, God blasted the whole of his prosperity by letting the devil loose upon him; and under the Lord's permission his great troubles began. One messenger

comes and tells him that the oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding beside them, and that the Sabeans had fallen upon them, and taken them away; yea, that they had slain all the servants but one for a messenger. The next messenger declares that the fire of God had fallen from heaven, and burnt up the sheep, and the shepherds also. The next brings tidings that the Chaldeans had made out three bands, and carried away all the camels, and slain all the servants but himself. The last brings the heaviest tidings of all,—that his ten children were killed by a wind from the wilderness blowing the house down upon them. In addition to all this, the Lord permitted the devil to smite him with grievous sores from head to feet; and then we have him upon the dunghill. And when the devil was permitted thus to afflict him, all his friends and acquaintances either stood aloof, or became miserable comforters. His wife also tempted him to curse God; yet, through God's power, he stood, and withstood. His faith in God never did finally fail. "I know," says he, "that I shall be justified; and when I am tried, I shall come forth as gold." He knew that the root of the matter, the Spirit of God, the love of God, were in him. "I know," he says, "that my Redeemer liveth." "My witness is in heaven; my record is on high." And at the very worst time he could say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Here is golden faith, tried in the fire. All that he spoke in unbelief fell to the ground, and never came to pass; but what he spoke in faith, that stood fast, every word of it. And when his dross and tin were purged, then God brought him forth again; and in providential blessings and in spiritual things he flourished beyond what he had ever done before. For "God blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." Thus you have Job for an example of patience and suffering; and you have seen the end of the Lord with him. God "for-saketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever." They shall be had in everlasting remembrance.

The apostle Paul himself, upon whom was such great grace, what great things did he suffer for Christ's sake! And if we suffer with him, we shall also, by-and-bye, reign with him. It is not only given unto us to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake. The Lord is also "a present help" in time of trouble. When Daniel was cast into the den of lions, Christ was there, and shut the lions' mouths. When the three children were cast into the fiery furnace, Christ was with them, as the king himself was obliged to confess: "And he answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. (Dan. iii.) It was the Son of God in reality and in truth. He fulfilled his promise, "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour."

When Paul was almost pulled to pieces by the mob at Jerusalem, the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou hast borne testimony of me at Jerusalem, thou must bear witness of me also at Rome." When he was on his passage to Rome, and such a storm overtook him that all hope they should be saved was taken away, then the Lord stood by Paul, saying, "Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar; and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." When he met with such opposition at Corinth, then spoke the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee; and no man shall set on thee to do thee harm, for I have much people in this city." And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

These things make it plain that the Lord is near them that feel after him, a God at hand to them that call upon him. His eyes are over them. "His eyes are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry."

It was so in old time, and is so in the present time; for his hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear. For he is the unchangeable *JEHOVAH*; the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. He says, "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." God's children are chosen in the furnace of affliction. The Hebrews to whom Paul wrote, what did they not suffer? "Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly whilst ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith."

A knowledge of ourselves, of our interest in Christ, and of the saints' riches in him, ought to bear us up under every adverse dispensation. These Hebrews had such a sense of it that when they were robbed of all their property, they stood still, looked on, and rejoiced. O that we may ever stand according to Paul's measure when he says, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and how to abound. I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me."

(To be concluded.)

THE whole world shall stand no longer than till Christ hath fulfilled his promises made to his church and cause.—*J. Hill.*

Obituary.

ALICE DICKINSON.—On Feb. 5th, 1880, aged 57, Alice Dickinson, a member of the church at Bolton.

As is the case with many of the Lord's people, it would be difficult to say when her mind first became exercised about eternal things. It is evident from the following account that God had begun the good work of grace in her soul, after hearing some one preach from the words of Jeremiah: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended; and we are not saved." She felt that she was a poor lost sinner, and the Lord, who leads his people by a way they knew not, led her some time after this to a place where he makes his flock to rest at noon. She heard some one, we know not who it was, preach at the Particular Baptist Chapel, Bolton, who graphically described her condition as a poor, polluted sinner; which caused her to say on her way home to her husband, that the preacher was nearly as bad as she felt herself to be. What an agreement there is in many things in the hearts of the Lord's people! As face answers to face in water, so does the heart of man to man.

From that time she was a regular attendant at the above place; and the Lord was pleased to bless her soul upon one occasion from these words: "The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion," &c.

Eventually she was led to see into the ordinance of believers' baptism, and to cast in her lot with the Lord's despised few. She was baptized on the first Lord's day in September, 1858, by Mr. Richard Mercer, of Blackburn.

Mrs. Dickinson had received some internal injuries from a slip when getting into a cart many years ago. This was the furnace by which the grace of God was made to shine in her. Although not of such a nature as to prevent her attending to her household duties, it was secretly weakening her strength, and unfastening the pins of her earthly tabernacle. During the latter part of her life, it also prevented her attending the means of grace. She was not a talking Christian, but one who walked with God. Although not favoured in the same degree as some of the Lord's people are, to speak of great manifestations of the love of God, the glory of Christ in redemption's work, and the sealing of the Spirit of promise to the day of redemption, her only hope was in Christ, the sacrifice for sin, who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot unto God. His precious blood she hoped had been shed for her, and that she should stand before a holy God in the spotless obedience—the imputed righteousness—of Christ.

I remember her saying some time ago, after service one Lord's day evening, the good wine had been kept till last. The subject was, "Thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof." The preacher remarked that as dust is blown into and lies in the valleys, so when God shows a poor sinner his mercy, how humbled he is that God should favour such dust and ashes as he feels himself to be. When, too, the sinner has once tasted God's pardoning love and mercy, this old wine, he desires not new, but says the old is better. God's eternal love, sovereign grace, and rich mercy, manifested to the heart, just suits poor needy sinners who have nothing of their own but sin, and are in themselves all uncleanness.

Our sister was not confined to her bed long. She was up on Monday, and died the following Thursday. This was felt to be a very heavy stroke by her husband and family. By none that knew her was it anticipated that her end was so near. The words, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee," were a support to her soul.

Feeling her great need of Christ, the Helper of the helpless, she said, "All that I can say now is, Lord, help me." Thus her faith was clinging to Christ in passing through the valley of death, to that land where the inhabitants no more say, I am sick; for the people that dwell therein are forgiven their iniquity.

Bolton, March 16th, 1880.

GEO. NEWMAN.

SAMUEL WEEKS.—On Jan. 25th, 1879, aged 61, Samuel Weeks, of Withyham, Sussex.

I cannot minutely relate the means the Lord used in opening the eyes of the departed to see his state, but have heard him relate the condition he lived in, in childhood and as a young man. He was no common sinner. He lived in great acts of outward immorality. We have heard him with tears say that he then drank in sin as the thirsty ox drinketh in the water, and rolled it as a sweet morsel under his tongue. His mother was a good woman; but he was beyond all control. Before he was obliged really to separate from his ungodly companions, and give up his unholy practices, he began to be in a very uneasy state, till at length the law of God was brought home in such power that he was obliged to come out of the world. This caused no small amount of ridicule from his companions, thinking it strange that he could not run to the same excess of riot. Our friend became so distressed on account of his sins, and had such an apprehension of his ruined and undone condition, that he really thought the devil would come and fetch him, body and soul. In this distress, if I remember rightly, he went on for some time, till one day when in the barn thrashing, being in such trouble, he crept over to the head of the barn in some straw, and there lay and wept over his state. While there the Lord appeared for him, and sealed home his pardoning love and mercy, putting away his sins which had so distressed him. Then he wept to the praise of the mercy he had found.

I am not quite certain, but I think, up to this time, our friend had not heard a gospel sermon. For a number of years his mother had tried, but without avail, to get him to chapel. When she saw him the first time he came to chapel, she broke out into a flood of tears, blessing the Lord for having heard her cries, and turned his heart towards himself. At this time he was led to hear (as he used to say) that dear man of God, Mr. Weller, who so traced out his path, that he had a most blessed time, and became a constant hearer of his.

He married; his first wife died, leaving him a young family. She was buried at Hawkhurst. He had a good hope of her, and this made the separation the heavier. Having no one to attend to the family, we have heard him say how harassed he was, fearing they would come to harm, as he had to leave them to earn a maintenance for them; but they were wonderfully preserved. After some time he became acquainted with, and married his present wife, who is now left to mourn his loss.

In the providence of God he removed to Crowborough, and sat under the ministry of the late Mr. Russell, of Providence chapel, Rotherfield, which I believe was much blessed to him; especially on one occasion, to which he referred on his dying bed. He was labouring under a heavy temptation concerning the Roman Catholics, how he should stand, and whether he should be found faithful.

After Mr. Russell's death, the deceased began to attend our chapel, and sat for the most part under my ministry until his death.

Word being sent me by his son of his illness, I visited him several times during the fortnight he was laid aside. On my first visit, as I entered the room in which he was lying, he said, "I am glad to see you." I replied, "Well, Weeks, may the Lord bless you." His answer

I shall never forget, it being spoken with such feeling. He said, "He has blessed me years ago, and now." Here I must refer to the state of his mind before the commencement of his affliction. While he was about his work, the Lord, in a most signal manner, blessed his soul. His wife told me that she never remembered anything equal to it in her experience before. He would for days weep while sitting at the fire-side, get up, walk about the room wringing his hands, blessing and praising the Lord for saving such a wretch as he was and had been. He would sit crying over the Bible, and sometimes the "Gospel Standard" and hymn book. In a word, the blessed state of mind he was in, his wife said she could not fully describe to me. After this, he was obliged to take to his bed with illness, from which he never recovered.

He had a difficulty in speaking. I could see he was drawing near his end. I said, "Let me talk;" and asked him if he felt satisfied in his mind. He nodded his head four times in succession, in a marked and decisive manner. I said, "Is the Rock underneath? and do you feel your feet there?" He again nodded in the same unmistakable manner several times. Trying to speak, he said, "The Lord is good." "He is good," I remarked. "David, Nahum, and many others were brought to see and say that before you." He then finished the passage, "'A stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.' What a sinner I am! But Christ is very precious. I cannot speak well enough of his Name." He then said, "Mr. Littleton, I have for years felt a love to you. I have not gone down to that chapel for nothing." His wife, who was at his bedside with his daughter and son-in-law from Croydon, turned and wept. He seemed exhausted, and nearly choked from what appeared to me to be blood proceeding from his mouth and throat. He was suffering likewise from bronchitis, and his sufferings were great. But the Lord so broke in upon his soul at times that he seemed to be almost suffering-proof. It was painful, yet pleasant, to be with him. The use of one side was nearly gone. He tried to raise his right hand. I said, "Never mind; give me the other; that will do." But he persisted in giving me his right hand, saying, "We will have it right." I shook hands with him. He said, "I die in peace with you. Pray for me when it is well with you." I told him that one of our deacons in his prayer last night at the meeting was led much to pray for him. He looked up, and said, "Was he? Tell him to pray again;" and he began to weep, and wished me to give his love to him, saying, "O how I love that man!" He named others of our members, desiring his love to them, and said, "May the Lord bless them and you, for I have come up the hill from that place when no one was near, and swung my arm round, and shouted out, blessing and praising the Lord for what I have heard there."

I called again to see him, the day after. I asked him how he felt in his mind. He replied, "Sometimes my evidences are gone, and the enemy comes in suggesting this, that, and the other; but we are subject to these things while in the body, and all God's people know more or less of this path. But, then, I am not in despair, not without some hope; and the Lord breaks in again, so that I am overcome with his goodness, and matters are all straightened up again."

To his daughter-in-law from Burnt Oak, he said, "I have no word from my Master yet about death. My mind is calm; but that will perhaps come just at the last; it does sometimes." When suffering much, he said to her, "What a mercy I am not tormented in soul as I might be!" She gave him a little arrowroot. He held it up, and with much feeling said,

“‘Not more than others I deserve ;
But God has given me more.’

I have this while many are starving. May God grant that it may refresh the poor body. He is a good God. Many times he has appeared to me and on my behalf. He has never been too late, bless his holy Name. O his faithfulness to a poor polluted sinner! I must speak it to his praise. He promised me years ago, ‘I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;’ and he has been as good as his word. My child, when I have been overwhelmed with trouble, he has appeared, made all straight, and I have gone on again like a giant refreshed with new wine. The Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run into it and are safe. Some people talk of doing great things; but you cannot in your own strength; for there is a threefold enemy to encounter, and our foes are too strong for us. The Lord must be all in all, the Alpha and Omega. We need his blood to wash, his righteousness to cover, his Spirit to quicken.”

On visiting him two days before he died, he said, “I deserve all I suffer; and what are my sufferings compared to his?” To his daughter he said,

“Think on what thy Saviour bore,
In the gloomy garden,”

and on the cross. I should not mind if his chariot would come.” She said, “Would you not?” He said, “No, if he comes and smiles me away, I would fly into his blessed arms; but I do want his smile. I have nothing here to stay for. My poor harassed tempted soul would be glad to be on Cauaan’s happy shore, there to praise him.

“‘Where I shall sing the song of grace,
And see my glorious Hiding-place.’”

He dwelt much on the word *shall*. “I *shall*. I *shall*. I have the witness within my breast; for he has appeared many times; and where he begins he perfects.”

When he could not speak, he would lie praying. We could catch such words as these: “O sweet Lamb of God! O blessed Saviour! Come into my heart. O blessed Spirit, come. Lord, do take me.” Sometimes he was praying with that earnestness we shall never forget. His children from different parts arriving, he would sit up, and stretching out his arms as well as he could, would pray for them; and then give them advice separately. When any of them returned to their families, he would say, “The Lord go with you, and be with you wherever you are, and bless you, dear children.”

The Monday before he died he said, “I have lost the presence of my Jesus. O where shall I hide if he leaves me? O where shall I flee for refuge? O what shall I do?” It was distressing to see his anguish. His daughter said, “He will come again, father.” He continued to lament, saying, “The Lord is holy, pure, and just; and can by no means clear the guilty. O his holiness, his purity! If he does not appear, I must be driven away.” He took my hand, and said, “Do pray for poor old Jonah here.” He put his hand on his breast, and cried out, “O thou whom my soul loves, until the day break, and shadows flee away, turn, my Beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bethel.”

At another time, he said, “I have loved God’s people more than all on earth; but that’s no merit. Away with all merit.

“‘Vain is all our best devotion,
If on false foundations built;
True religion’s more than notion;
Something must be known and felt.’”

Every cloud was again cleared away, and he exclaimed,

“His love in times past forbids me to think
 He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink;
 Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review
 Confirms his good pleasure to help me quite through.”

“Yes,” he said, “it does, it does;” and drew the bed clothes over his head, and wept. He then looked up, and began to talk of God's loving-kindness to such a rebel. “Bless his holy Name,” he said; “he snatched me as a brand from the burning, when I never thought of him, a Sabbath-breaker, a swearer, and living in all manner of vanity and foolishness. He took me, and shook me all to pieces, as it were; and then, when he saw fit, he showed me he had loved me with an everlasting love. O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness!”

Two things were unusually clear in his experience;—self-abasement, and exaltation of Christ. The day before he died, he talked more than ever of the Lord's goodness and his dealings with him. His wife and friends advising him not to exert himself so much, he said, “I must speak while I have breath; I can't help it.” He called his wife, and told her he should go now. He had received a token. That night, the last on earth, was a fearful one of suffering. On his daughter-in-law saying she hoped he would get better, he said, “Do you?” On her saying, “Yes,” he replied, with a sigh, “O dear! May the Lord's will be done, not mine. Into his hands I commit my spirit.” On her leaving him, he said, “Come again before I go; for I have got my orders.”

Speaking of the love of God shed abroad in the heart, he said, “The Lord is a sovereign. He gives when he sees fit, and withholds when he pleases; and we must submit to his righteous will; for he is a God.” He frequently wept, and mourned over his worldliness, and barrenness of soul, and grieved over the little he had lived to the glory of God. Not long after, telling his wife he knew he should go now, for he had received a token from the Lord, his consciousness appeared to leave him, and he went into a sleep. And on Saturday, the day he died, when I called again to see him, he was in this state; and died in the evening without awaking. A few days before his death, he asked for Gadsby's hymn-book. After reading over one or two hymns, he said, “That will do. This is the one.” (468:)

“Death is no more a frightful foe,
 Since I with Christ shall reign;
 With joy I leave this world of woe;
 For me to die is gain.”

Chapel House, Withyham.

E. LITTLETON.

As every divine truth has a peculiar majesty and reverence belonging to it, which debars from the spiritual knowledge of it (as it is in Christ) the ignorant and unstable, that is, those who are not taught of God, or become subject to the truth; so those points which dwell in more intimate recesses, and approach nearer its immense fountain, the “Father of lights,” darting brighter rays by their excess of light, present a confounding darkness to the minds of the greatest men, and are as darkness to the eyes breaking forth amidst so great light. For what we call darkness in divine subjects, is nothing else than their celestial glory and splendour striking on the weak ball of our eyes, the rays of which we are not able, in this life, which is, “but a vapour,” and which shineth but for a little, to bear. Hence God himself, who is “light, and in whom there is no darkness at all, who dwelleth in light inaccessible;” and “who clotheth Himself with light as with a garment,” in respect of us, is said to have made darkness his pavilion.—*Dr. Owen.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

DECEMBER, 1880.

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

THE GREATNESS OF GOD'S POWER.

A SERMON BY MR. BRADFORD, OF EASTBOURNE.

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."—EPH. III. 20, 21.

THERE was a time when the Ephesians did not need, in a feeling way and manner, what they did when the apostle Paul wrote to them. There was a time when they could unite with others in worshipping Diana; when they were going on, Gallio-like, "caring for none of these things;" when they were seeking death in the error of their way, living "without hope, and without God in the world;" when they were very well pleased with themselves and their religion. But God was pleased to send his light and truth to Ephesus by his servants, and to bless their testimony to the quickening of some into divine life. So the apostle could say, "You hath he quickened."

It may be said to several here this morning, There was a time when you cared not for the things of God; when you were very well satisfied with your natural condition. So it may be said, "And such were some of you; but ye are washed." This cannot be said of all in the chapel, neither can it be said of all in a profession. We are obliged to come home;—this cannot be said truthfully of all who style themselves Strict Baptists. I am sure there would be a separation, if the Lord were to come down, and single those who are really his from those who are thought to be so; there would be some left behind of the Particular Baptists. And if we go into other denominations, surely there would be many more; for I believe the Lord has many of his dear people among the Particular Baptists. The Ephesian church was a church of Strict Baptists; for the apostle said, writing to them, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." You may have this confirmed, if you look at the 19th of Acts. There you will find this church was a baptized church.

In our text Paul ascribes all the glory of his and their salvation to the Lord God of heaven and earth. So he says, in the 20th verse, "Unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly." What a mercy, then, for the Lord's children, that they

have to do with a God of power. If we had to do with one that could not help us in a time of need, what should we do? But the children of God have to do with One who can and will help them in a time of need. Mark what I say,—in a time of need! They are not always in that state, for there are times when carelessness and unconcern creep over them, and it is not then a feeling time of need. If we have come here careless,—if the throne of grace has been neglected; if we have not come into the house of prayer hanging on the Lord, desiring his presence, and looking to him for a blessing; I shall not be surprised if we go away empty. For the way in which the Lord works is to empty his people; and they are constrained to take their case to him; for he says, “For all these things will I be inquired of.” I would appeal to your consciences. How have matters been going on between the Lord and your souls during the week that is past? And how are they this morning? Because, if we have been living this week in some inwardly allowed sin, for we may live in sin that is not seen by others, we may have a very dark, wretched, trying day; and we may, if a spirit of repentance is withheld, experience a time of deadness, darkness, and hardness. But if, during the week past, your minds have been very exercised, and you have been tried this morning about your states and conditions; or if you want the Lord to speak to your souls; or if you are wishing to know if you are born again; you very likely will take some blessing away with you. I know, we must not limit the Holy One of Israel; but he usually shows his dear children it is an evil and bitter thing to sin, and then deep repentance fills their souls.

Here we all have to come in guilty. But O! would we not live differently? I believe every child of God present would die more to the world and himself, would flee more to Christ as his refuge, would seek his dear face, and search the Scriptures more. Our sins seem to eclipse the light. I am sure mine make me feel ready to halt day by day. I seem to get worse and worse; my heart harder, my nature blacker. Therefore a precious Christ, in all that he is to his people, as a fountain that is opened for sin and uncleanness, is what my naked, needy, lost, and ruined soul wants. How is it with you? Perhaps you seem as though you got worse and worse, or your evidences seem to get less clear, or the path appears to get more and more narrow. How are you travelling? We are sure the 297th hymn, which we sang just now, is truthful. However small the faith of God's elect, it must be tried so as by fire; yet herein lies our mercy, though weak, trembling, helpless, poor, earth-bound, and sinful creatures, though but dust and ashes, yet God is able and willing to bring out his children from prison. He is able and willing to loose those that are bound. He is able and willing to soften the hard heart.

Sometimes the devil tempts the people of God to think they are given over to an impenitent mind; and really sometimes a

man may come into such a state of perplexity and distance from the Lord that he inwardly believes a living child never came where he is. Yet the Lord will make a way of escape for him; and when he comes out he will sing, not with the self-righteous Pharisee, "I fast twice in the week;" but with David of old, with Jude, and with the apostle in our text.

David says, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give glory." Jude says, "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling . . . be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen." Paul was an elect vessel of mercy. He was taught to renounce himself, to flee to Christ, to feed by faith upon him, and to know much of the love of God shed abroad in his heart; therefore, out of the abundance of his heart, he preached and wrote, as in our text.

He is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think" in two senses;—in a way of providence, and in a way of grace. Now, in the way of providence, we find the servants of God in all ages, at least some of them, have had to find and feel their dependence on the Lord for temporal supplies, for the good things of this life. Elijah was brought into a very great strait, and was sent to the brook, and after a time that which was provided dried up. How trying it is for the Lord's children, when God has been pleased to bless them somewhere, when they think they have seen his hand going before them, and then everything goes dead against them! "I really thought the Lord placed me here," may one say; "and I thought he was feeding and clothing me, and prospering the work of my hands. Now all is altered, the cloud increases, faith and hope decrease. And not only so; but I am shut up; I am bound in spirit; I do not seem like the rest of the Lord's people." Is this where you are? Now, if the Lord has placed you in some state, if you saw his hand putting you in the position where you are, and now the stream seems to be drying up, this is for the trial of your faith. He who has supplied your needs thus far, still will do it. For the apostle says, "My God shall supply all your needs." But it is very trying to faith. How the Lord is pleased to exercise some of his people in temporal matters. Some of them labour and toil hard for the bread that perisheth; and after all their toil they find themselves in difficulties still. Still behind, after they have tried and done their best. Whereas, we see some, not so careful, yet prospered and blessed in providence. They get on with apparent ease. Then we see some, in and of the world, whose eyes stand out with fatness. Here see the sovereignty of God. He is pleased to prosper some in this world; but how sad it is when people have their portion in this life. There are not a few who have their portion here, and live to fill up the measure of their iniquities, not to obtain salvation.

Some of the Lord's people are blessed in providence. The lines are fallen unto them in pleasant places, while there are others who are in continual straits. Perhaps they have tried,

and got a little together, and just got straight; when something takes place, and behind they get again. This is very trying. They say, "Now what shall I do?" Why, there is the throne of grace before you. You have the ear of God open; his arm can reach your case; his power deliver you. What a mercy! Though you have gone to him many times with your temporal cares, and have been helped, yet now the cloud looks darker; but you have to do with One who is able and willing to do exceeding abundantly above all you can ask or think. He is sure to bring deliverance about in some way, perhaps in a very unexpected one. You may expect the Lord in one way, and he may come in another. Then perhaps the devil will suggest that deliverance would have come all the same, even if you had not prayed for it. Thus he tries the people of God in their minds. Sometimes they have been pressed with something or other, have taken it to the Lord, and have been surprised at his wonderful goodness. They have felt at the time that their help came from above. But how soon the devil seeks to rob them!

Not only in a way of providence does God deliver his people, and do for them exceeding abundantly above all they can ask or think, but he delivers, helps, and blesses his dear children in the way of grace. I know, some may say, this is what we like spoken of always. We do not like the providence of God, and the outward trials of his people alluded to. Very likely not, if you are not tried providentially; if everything seems to come tumbling into your lap. But it may be that, by-and-bye, the wind will change. Instead of having the south wind in a way of providence, the north wind, with its bitter blast of adversity, may blow on you. Then I am sure you will tell a different tale. I think Huntington says that those who are never tried in providence only see one side of God; while those providentially tried see both sides. Now, it is sometimes ordered in this way;—those who are most tried outwardly have the most inward consolation, or are kept the most alive, and find the most access at the throne of grace. I am sure this will sometimes be the case; whereas, those upon whom providence smiles very much do not know how soon riches may take to themselves wings, and fly away. And not only so; but they miss very much that is given to those tried in providence. So if there is a child of God here this morning in any outward trouble, not knowing which way to turn, as Hart says, "The remedy's before thee; pray."

Job said, "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." So, when he hath tried you, dear heir of heaven, *you* will also come forth.

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly" in a way of grace. Has he not already done exceeding abundantly in a way of grace in the choice of a people for himself? Has not the Son of God done exceeding abundantly in leaving the realms of bliss and blessedness, and coming down here to be born a man? Think what he did by his life, death, and resurrection. Think

what he is doing in heaven as the ever-living Intercessor. Surely, surely, these are loud calls for gratitude; but we prove day by day, that we have ungrateful, adamant hearts, that only One can soften.

Then, "unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly" in the quickening of your children. You that are God-fearing parents, I daresay, sometimes feel that your children lie very near your heart. You see them growing up into life, but giving no proof of being born again. They are going on in the error of their ways. They very likely grieve you, and make you sigh. You often say in your mind, What will become of them? Alas! alas! my children, my children! Let me tell you, if your children are laid much on your mind, and the Lord helps you in a special way to pray for their salvation, wrestling again and again with him on their behalf; these are sweet indications that they are vessels of mercy. Or if all should not prove to be so, one or more, I doubt not, will. Some may say, it is natural feeling. It is natural, of course, for parents to feel for their children; but natural feeling and spiritual feeling, natural affection and spiritual affection, are different things. Parents cannot call upon the Lord in faith, and beg of him to implant his fear in their children, and wrestle with him perseveringly on their behalf, without having a spirit of prayer given them. Some of the Lord's people have felt a spirit of prayer, and not seen distinctly that it was given them till it was fulfilled. What a God have we to do with!

"Unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly."

"Beyond thy utmost wants,
His love and power can bless;
To praying souls, he always grants
More than they can express."

The Lord's children, most of them at any rate, will have something to try them from time to time—something in their families, in themselves, in their husbands or wives, in their business, or from the people of God. Some things, too, they have more directly from God himself; for "the Lord trieth the righteous." And his people will be sure to have their appointed lot; and every trial is weighed out by him who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. If the Lord is weighing our sorrows and trials in the balance, *we* shall have strength equal to our day. "He hath his way in the whirlwind and the storm." The Lord's people have to do with One who makes a way for them in the wilderness.

Most of the children of God come into some particular trial about their souls. Sometimes the trial is lengthened out for weeks or months. Sometimes they are tempted to blaspheme God, or to say something disrespectful of Christ, or to fear they have committed the unpardonable sin. I believe numbers have been tried thus. I have. I thought I had already done the deed that must ruin me for ever. But God is able to deliver his people from the most dreadful temptations. Some have vile

wicked thoughts suggested to their minds, and labour under them for weeks, being more tempted on their knees than at other times.

Again. The devil labours most with some when they are within the house of God, worrying them there. Some are tried and tempted in one way, some in another; but God "is able to do exceeding abundantly" in the way of bringing out his tempted children.

Again. He is "able to do exceeding abundantly" in the way of supporting those who are apparently deserted. I daresay you know the difference between walking in the light of God's countenance, and walking in darkness. There was a time with some of you, when you were enabled to walk in the smiles of God's countenance; when the dew lay upon your branch; when the word of grace brought you sweet relief; when everything that was dear to God to you was also dear. And if one thing was more dear than another, it was Christ. He was not as a way-faring man, or a stranger to you then. You felt he had already deigned to erect his gracious throne within you; sin was subdued; and you were enabled to hold communion with the Lord. But, after a time, he withdrew himself, and how to find him you did not know. The season of blessing may have been years ago, and may be, your helps since then have only been at intervals, and very small. But does this show the blessing was not real? Not at all. That your helps are but few, small, and far between, does not show that you are not the Lord's children; and that you are kept waiting on is, to my mind, in your favour.

"Unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly" toward supporting his people when deserted and dead in their feelings; and when his dear face is behind the cloud, so that they cannot see him. When the ordinances only "tease or tire," he is still able to deliver. His love, grace, mercy, and power are still the same.

So "unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly" with regard to softening the hard heart. After deliverance has been wrought for some time, perhaps dreadful hardness sets in. Spring time is over and past, and summer time too. Your soul may have felt ripe for glory. You may have said, Lord, take me over the water unto Immanuel's land. But winter has succeeded to summer in your feelings, and such dreadful hardness has been felt. If you went to God's house, the heavens, instead of being opened with fresh blessings, seemed to be closed against you; the seed seemed to drop as on a rock. Some remain here for a season; but "God is able to do exceeding abundantly" in a way of helping his people when in such a place.

When, too, at length they come to die, "he is able to do exceeding abundantly" in a way of supporting the mind, warming the heart, and ripening the soul. You may depend upon it, although many of the Lord's people die young, they all come to their graves in a full age, spiritually. They come there fully

ripe, after the rain of heaven has distilled into their souls. Thus the Lord brings his dear people to himself after ripening them.

He is able, also, to quicken them into spiritual life before they are born, as he appears to have done John the Baptist. Some he calls by grace after they are grown up, draws them to himself, and sooner or later ripens them. Some appear to be ripened for months, and we wonder what the Lord is about to do with them, since they are so soft, so teachable, and so humble; but after this the Lord may withdraw; and when they leave the world, it may not be with those sweet feelings they had; but still they have had the latter rain. And all those who are thus blessed, will desire to give God all the glory.

TO OUR FRIENDS AND READERS.

Dear Friends,—When first the Lord manifested his love to our souls, and many times since upon fresh manifestations, we said to him, “Do with me what thou wilt. Here am I. Lord, use me to thy glory.” We were thus self-dedicated to his service. We wanted him to use us, and we desired to glorify him with our bodies and spirits as his. The love of Christ constrained us. He takes us at our word. He makes us willing, and accepts that willingness. But his way is often mysterious and strange. His path is in the deep waters. We may be called upon to glorify him, not only in a way of active service and doing his will, but in a way of passive endurance and patient suffering.

Still, in our right minds, we would not retract, or call back our prayers to be made useful to his church and people, and to glorify his Name in our day and generation. Well, then, in answering such prayers and desires he may call us forth at one time into active service, and we may have, in a way of speaking or writing, to publicly contend for the truth as we have been taught it by his Holy Spirit. But at another we may be called upon to illustrate the power of that truth by enduring his ever-blessed will in the furnace of affliction. Bunyan, in his “Grace Abounding,” says, “And when I had travelled through these three chief points of the Word of God about the space of five years or more, I was caught in my present practice, and cast into prison, where I have lain above as long again to confirm the truth, by way of suffering, as I was before in testifying of it, according to the Scriptures, in a way of preaching.”

We are no better than our fathers. Still there are twelve hours in which men who fear God may be called upon to work for him, and in which by his grace work may be done; then the night of trial may follow, in which men cannot work, but may by his grace be enabled patiently to suffer. By his divine power, a man may be enabled for a season to occupy, with some profit to God's people, a place of greater prominence; and then by the same divine power he may be enabled to retire from it with a

calmly-contented mind, and descend uncomplainingly into the valley of humiliation.

It is not for such as we are to direct the Lord how he shall use us in his service, or answer our prayers. It is not fitting that things should be according to our fleshly mind; and the will of the new creature will be found in harmony with that of God. The voice of grace is always, "Thy will be done."

We have lately given in this magazine a few thoughts upon David's words: "My times are in thy hand;" showing, we hope, from Scripture, as it has been verified in our own experience, that the times of saints are in the hand of love. We had purposed to complete our remarks this year, adding some other times with which the saints of God are for the most part familiar. But the Lord appears to have called upon us to conclude those papers, at any rate for the present, in a different way,—by affording an illustration in our own present experience. We have now for many years written for this magazine. During the last three we have edited the periodical as responsible editor. We are now through illness quite unequal to the work of writing. The grasshopper has indeed become a burden. That which was a pleasure has become a pain. We find it therefore imperatively necessary for a season to lay aside the responsibility and labour connected with editing the "Gospel Standard." We hope we have not been unduly influenced by any wish to improperly spare ourself either trouble or anxiety. We would not shrink from either labour or suffering in the cause of Christ and our service to the churches. No! It is from necessity that we act as we are doing. At the present time we feel *physically* quite unfitted for the labour and anxiety which conducting the magazine would bring upon us. Could we serve the churches as we have done, we should no doubt feel it wrong to lay the work aside. But we cannot. The post of editor was imposed upon us at first by others without our seeking, and we felt that if we had any gifts qualifying us for the office we had no right to refuse. Gifts we then felt and still feel are bestowed upon a man as a sort of public, and not as private property. (1 Cor. iii. 21, 22.) The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. (1 Cor. xii. 7.) Not, then, to use gifts for the good of the church is a kind of fraud upon God's people, and a hiding of the talent in the earth. There is one who can bear witness that for some years we declined the post of an editor when offered to us, feeling perfectly satisfied with a less prominent position, and the liberty we had to communicate our writings from time to time to the churches. We long shrank from the post of editor, feeling our insufficiency for it. At length, the late manager of the periodical having determined, for reasons he then assigned, laid aside the office, and the friends at a General Meeting having, in accordance with his suggestion, conferred the post of editor upon us, we felt a necessity of compliance laid upon us. We had also, we believe, some divine intimations agreeing with these leadings of providence, and as it were com-

elling us to assume the office. In obedience to these leadings, we have for three years edited this magazine. But now, the hand of the Lord being laid upon us in bodily affliction, we feel that again we have only to submit.

Our work may be done. At any rate, the unmistakable voice of the dispensation is, as far as we can judge, that we must have rest, and for a time give up our labours in connection with the "Gospel Standard." We placed the matter before the Committee of the Societies at our late meeting, and requested them to relieve us for a time from the burden, by appointing some one else to conduct the magazine for the next six months, that is, until the general meeting in April, 1881.

In harmony with our own wish and suggestion, our friend Mr. Hemington was requested to assume that responsibility. What the Lord's final purpose may be it is not for us to say. Life and death, health and sickness, are in his hands. He can restore us to health again, and lead us to resume our former work after a period of rest, or he may design this not to be a temporary but a permanent cessation of our labours in connection with the magazine. In either case, we would say, "Thy will be done."

In conclusion, we do ask the spiritual readers of this periodical to remember us in their prayers. Perhaps a part, at any rate, of what we suffer has been brought upon us by our labours and anxieties as the editor. Those anxieties have necessarily been increased by the position the editor holds in connection with the "Gospel Standard" Aid and Poor Relief Societies; as, in addition to the desire to make the periodical useful to the churches, the interests of those Societies have to be consulted. A falling off in the circulation tends, of course, to injure the Lord's poor. The editor, in fact, has to labour not only for the Lord's glory and the spiritual good of the churches, but to earn, by making the magazine as worthy of acceptance as he is able, an income for the Societies in aid of the Lord's poor ministers, their widows, and his afflicted people. Of course, we dare not boast of our services. The most we can venture to hope is that they have been in some degree useful to the Lord's people, and that love to the Lord's Name and desire for his glory have pre-vaillingly influenced us in our work. If we were to say that no pride, vain-glory, by-ends, and selfishness have ever worked in our hearts, we should only prove to discerning persons our ignorance of those hearts, and indeed deny the truth. We only hope that these evil principles have not borne the sway; but that grace has in some degree been the ruling principle. If, in conducting this magazine, or writing for it, we have at any time improperly offended or injured any one, we would ask his forgiveness. If there has been any deviation from the pure truth of God, any compromise of principle, any communication of a wrong or injurious influence, we would pray the Lord to show us these evils, and would as before him deeply deplore them. As Paul writes, we may not be conscious of any such things; but we are poor

judges, and too often partial ones, in our own cases; and He who alone judges us rightly is the Lord. (Prov. xxi. 21; 1 Cor. iv. 4.) Our aim, we hope, has constantly been to combine, with an uncompromising maintenance of scriptural truth, tenderness, kindness, and courtesy towards our fellow men, especially the brethren. The man who conducts a magazine like this, or holds any position of prominence in the churches, is in a position of very great peril and anxiety. He may exercise a beneficial or pernicious influence over the minds of numbers. He may greatly benefit or seriously injure the church of God. One deep consolation to us in our affliction would be the comfortable assurance that by our writings for many years, and editorial labours for the last three, we had really profited the church and people of God, to the glory of the Lord Jesus.

Brethren and friends, for a season, at any rate, we must say to you, Farewell. Kindly accept with these few words of explanation the hearty good wishes of your editor. Also kindly listen to his earnest exhortation and request that you will support, encourage, and assist our friend Mr. Hemington in his present, even if temporary, arduous undertaking. Yours in love, the Editor,

G. HAZLERIGG.

THE BABE OF BETHLEHEM.

“The shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.”—LU. II. 15, 16.

To Bethlehem I by faith repair,
A lovely sight to see;
A holy Babe reposes there
From imperfection free.

Though born of woman, not a stain
Pollutes the holy Child;
His body and his soul remain
All pure and undefiled.

Amazing truth! that feeble One
Is Zion's mighty King;
The Eternal Father's only Son,
Whose praises angels sing.

All power he has in heaven and earth,
Though feebly there he lies,
The virgin's Son of lowly birth,
And utters human cries.

The God who made the earth and sky
Dwells in that infant form;
His arm upholds the world on high,
And rules the raging storm.

C. SPIRE.

“EVEN TO HOAR HAIRS WILL I CARRY YOU.”

(Concluded from p. 519.)

I HAVE seen the Lord's hand with me hitherto. I have lived with the same person ever since I came to London, and have an established business; and have seen God's hand as I never could have expected. O! the 37th Psalm has been the joy and comfort of my heart many times. I wish you would read it over. Well, hear a little of it; and may Christ the Master of assemblies fasten it in your heart as a nail in a sure place. “Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him.” Again. “A little that a righteous man hath (yes, and a little that a righteous woman hath) is better than the riches of many wicked. The Lord knoweth the days of the upright; and their inheritance shall be for ever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time; and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; he is their strength in the time of trouble. And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them; he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him.” What can be more encouraging to us than this? What can more stir us up to cast all our cares, troubles, and concerns into the Lord's hands; who so faithfully declares we shall be guided in a right way to a city of habitation.

The 12th chapter of Luke, with the 37th Psalm, never fail to afford me much peace in adverse providences, when they are resorted to in such circumstances. He tells us to “fear not.” He says that not a sparrow is forgotten before God,—that even the very hairs of our heads are all numbered; and then he exhorts us to fear not, because we are of more value than many sparrows. Afterwards he gives us a parable of a rich man, whose stores so abounded that he was obliged to build new barns; and he reckoned upon so many years' enjoyment of the same. But while he was busied about these temporal things, death came, and the devil stole away his soul, and he died a fool, as all will who are only heaping up treasure for themselves in this world, and are not rich towards God. Then the Lord directs his discourse to his disciples, and speaks so as to draw their confidence to a fixed trust in God's promise for every needful supply. He tells us to consider the ravens, which neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and yet God, as in Ps. cxlvii., feedeth them, even the young ravens when

they cry. If this is the case, how much better are his children than the fowls? He intimates that if the fowls are fed, his people certainly will be, because he has loved them so as to give his only-begotten Son to redeem and save them; and as he has done this, he will certainly not let the body starve for want.

Then he tells us that there is a stature or certain measure, both in providence and grace, to which all shall attain. This is God's work, and perfect, so that nothing can be added to it, and nothing can be taken from it. He says, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?" And then he makes this application: "If ye, then, be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?" Then he turns our attention to things in nature,—to the lilies and grass of the field, which have their clothing from him; and tells us that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Then he makes application again, in order to silence our murmurings and unbelieving hearts: "If God so clothe the grass of the field, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more shall he clothe you, O ye of little faith?" He tells us also that our Father knoweth we have need of these things.

After taking so much pains to silence our unbelief, then he tells us the one thing needful to be done: "But rather seek ye the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Godliness with contentment is great gain; and to be convinced that all our times are in God's hands, and that whatever day of adversity he is pleased to cause to fall to our share, and whatever day of prosperity, they are according to his measure, and that we cannot add one cubit to our stature, is a great happiness, and certainly a great truth. And when we are brought to believe all this, then we are not easily moved. Resignation to the will of God takes place, and we ascribe every dispensation we pass under to him who has sent it. I believe that in some way or other, though we cannot see how, they shall be for our good and his glory, seeing that he says that no good thing will he withhold from those that walk uprightly. I am sure of the truth of this,—that God hath determined the times before appointed; and the bounds of our habitation are fixed. That is, I am sure, that God did from everlasting determine the times we should live in each place in this world, how long and in what way at one place, and how long and in what way at another; for whatever takes place was fixed by an unalterable decree from everlasting.

And as he did determine the times before appointed in his purpose, so he does more; he fixes the bounds of our habitation. I am a living witness myself that the bounds of our habitation are fixed of God, and nothing comes to pass without his special particular interference. Now when our way is not made clear before us, we ought to go with it to God, and pray to him for counsel, wisdom, and direction. When we do this, we have his promise: "Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying,

This is the way; walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, or when ye turn to the left." We are not to understand that our bodily ears are to hear any voice. No! but the ears of our souls shall hear a voice; or, if you please, our minds shall be so powerfully persuaded that we shall come to such a certainty as to move or turn to the right or left, according to the impression and conviction we feel that our way is of God.

About two years ago, a very great offer was made me in the country to go and live at Penrith, Cumberland; and I found in me something wishing to embrace the offer; but at the same time I found something also in my heart stand against it as an iron pillar and as a brazen wall. I went and asked counsel and wisdom of God; and he sent power to my heart so as to confirm me in abiding in London. He sent me this text, that text, and the other text, to confirm me in so abiding. So that I had a whole cloud of witnesses not to move; and, under one sermon from Mr. Huntington, God was pleased to meet with my thoughts, and tell me plainly to stay in this place. Therefore I conferred not with flesh and blood, but declined the offer. I trust, too, he has opened a more effectual door. And about nine months ago, one of the gentlemen has made me one of his successors.

So the Word of God tells us: "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." And that we may not be at any loss to know where our treasure is, he leaves us this sure rule of judgment: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." If the things of this life have got our heart, then they are the treasure; but if Christ is uppermost, and he has got our hearts, then doubtless he is our treasure. And if he is our treasure, then the kingdom of God is in our heart. If, too, he is our treasure, and the kingdom is set up in our heart, then all temporal things shall be added. This is the Word of God, which must and shall stand fast for evermore. Food and raiment we are to have. We are not told the quality or quantity; this we must leave to our heavenly Father. He not only knows what we have need of, but also what is best for us. And, depend upon it, we shall have it; and having food and raiment, we ought to be content, and to bless God for ever for his kingdom set up in our hearts. We are exhorted to be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit now the promises. And we have an account of the character of the way in which they walked: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple. And he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them to living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

We see, then, the blessedness that the saints enjoy in heaven.

They go through much tribulation; and if so, then *we* must expect it. For the joy that was set before Christ, he endured the cross, and despised the shame; and he is the Captain of our salvation. Therefore, as common soldiers, we ought to keep eyeing the glorious recompense of reward, which will be sure to encourage us in taking up our cross daily to follow Christ. Mind, "tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us." God is called the God of patience; and he is said to strengthen us with all might according to his glorious power unto all patience and long suffering. And he says, our shoes shall be iron and brass; and that as our days so shall our strength be.

Be diligent at a throne of grace. As God is witness, I have you in remembrance in my prayers. I shall be glad to see him in providence take you away from where you are, so that you may sit under the sound of the gospel. I have been in the same place; and remember what God says,—he will be a little sanctuary in all places whither he has driven us. He will be a sanctuary in all places whither we go; and if so, we have no need to fear. God Almighty grant you may be diligent in prayer, in watching the hand of his providence.

To Mrs. Rachel Musgrave.

CHRISTOPHER GOULDING.

From my study, 23, Cheapside, London,
Good Friday, April 8th, 1803.

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

"Whilst the long cloud of witnesses Shows the same path to heaven."

Dear Mr. Knight,—Many thanks for the kind sympathising words you spoke to me on Wednesday evening. They seemed to be just what I wanted; and I would thank if I could the dear Lord for putting it into your heart; but I cannot thank and praise his holy Name as I should like to do. Ah! dear friend, when I feel the love of Jesus shed abroad in my heart, then it is I feel willing to leave all, and follow him. Is it not so with you? I believe it is.

I have for a long time wished you to know what a union I feel towards you and others that meet in the room at St. John's; and now the time has come that I must tell you. What an unspeakable mercy it is, dear friend, to have a little sweet hope that we are in the way going up to Jerusalem, feeling that Jesus has gone before; though we are often afraid and amazed. How this outweighs all our trials, afflictions, and everything. There is no natural joy worthy to be compared with it. We can then see that trials work for our spiritual good, and say with the poet:

"Above their highest mirth
Our saddest hours we prize."

Doubtless you can say you would not have been without some

of your trials for ever so much; knowing how they have worked together for good. How sweet it is to sit under the Lord's own sent servants, and hear them trace out our experiences, word for word; and for the word of life to be applied to our conscience with power and savour. The sincere milk of the word, this molts and crumbles us into the dust in humility at the feet of the Wonderful Counsellor, the Prince of peace.

I have felt many times how I should like to tell out my heart's feelings to Mr. Ashdown; but have feared to presume. I never knew a servant of the Lord so led into my path as he is sometimes. Can you help feeling a union to them when such is the case with you? I cannot; and you know the Word of God says, "He that loveth Him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him." One text I heard Mr. Ashdown from reads something like this: "There is a path that wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." I have felt sometimes that I am just the character; and the words have been like bread cast upon the water, found after many days. Blessed times these! They far exceed all earthly joys. O for more of those times of calmness, and the peace which passeth all understanding.

May Jesus lift up the light of his countenance upon you, may your last days be your best, and may you

"His lovingkindness sing in death."

This is the desire of a very little one, if anything at all.

West-end Farm, St. John's, July 3rd, 1873.

THOMAS TULLY.

To Mr. and Mrs. Plowman, the tinman at this time sendeth greeting.

Knowing that you have been poorly, I am coming to know what you have gained by this trading; for we are called to do business in many waters. And all of them are needful to purge us from self, from love of sin and of the world, to make us follow after him who is our life and the length of our days, and at whose right hand are treasures for evermore. How vain the world appears when sickness lays hold of our bodies! How much we find it has our hearts! for we are so fearful of being taken away from it. And how little religion we appear to have when death, either real or imaginary, seems to come close. These things make us know the worth of real, vital godliness.

Well; have you had more of the evil nature of your heart discovering itself to you? With its fretting, peevish, finding fault, and with some rebellion rising up, some hard thoughts of God, and of his goodness, love, and mercy toward you? For while you have been wanting to get out of debt, it seemed as if the Lord was determined to keep you in it, and hard work you have found within while the evil of your heart has been finding fault with the Lord. O! you had no idea you had such bad hearts. You thought you could manage them better. Now you find, unless the Lord manage them, they will deceive you, or run you,

you know not where. This will keep you from trusting in them. And when God says in his Word, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," you will say, That is *my* heart. Therefore you can see a need for going into this furnace to prove you; and you prove that without God you can do nothing. But the Lord's promise is that all that favour his righteous cause,—that come over to the standard, and bow obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, shall live for evermore, and shall be crowned at last, and reign with him.

Surely you can say that your desire is that he will save your souls, that you may praise him for it to all eternity. But your strength is not all gone yet. You are still too highminded; for you are not yet brought to the place of stopping of mouths. The blacksmiths will be always trying to forge something out of old nature; but it will never do anything but make a hiss; therefore you will be obliged to give it up. Then you will be tempted to think it is of no use to wait any longer; question whether God's Word is true or not; whether what his servants say is not spoken out of their own hearts, and if religion is not a lie altogether. Then you will seem ready to go back; call yourselves fools for all that you have brought upon yourselves. But even then you will find a soft word from him will cause your hearts to dissolve before him, while you will take the lowest place, and hide your heads with shame and confusion at all the hard speeches and thoughts you have had, and wonder at his love which passeth knowledge.

So you see I have come beforehand to anoint you to the burial of the old man, and to proclaim that when this dies—and it will die hard—that the new man will revive, feel his feet, and gain strength.

As I intend sending Tom and Bill a letter, you must send or read them one to another.

Yours truly,

Croydon, Jan. 26th, 1848.

F. COVELL.

My dear Sister in the Lord,—Your very savoury letter I have received, and the sweetness of it, the love I bear toward you, and the discovery of the dear Lord's mercy vouchsafed to you, in the hour of temptation, as well as deliverance out of it; I say, these things, working together, produced in me such feelings of brokenness of heart, joy, peace, and gratitude, together with such inexpressible feelings of union of soul to you, that my eyes ran over.

But thou dost puzzle me at the outset; for thou sayest, "For kindness shown to me, a poor unworthy sinner, may the Lord reward you fourfold." Here I feel to say, as Jesus represents his people doing in the judgment, "When saw we thee an hungered, &c., and did this unto thee?" I do trust that such is the union I feel toward you that I can be nothing else than kindly disposed; and I desire to do acts of kindness if I know how.

You, my dear sister, said to me on the same Tuesday evening mentioned in yours, "You think we do not pray for you;" and

no words ever assured me more of the contrary than did those. I can but bless my God for such a friend. And now let me ask my sister a question: Does not Satan abuse your mind with such suggestions as these,—that I or others think but little of you, &c.? Now, if he does, let me assure you that nothing can be more false. I say for myself that I know not a soul in Devizes so commended to my heart and conscience as yourself. Consequently, none lies closer to my heart than you. This has been of years' standing; and every opening of your exercises, whether by word or by letter, increases it many-fold. Let this that the Lord has now done for you be noted down. How faithful to his Word is he! None seeks his face in vain.

But it is possible that temptations will follow this sweet interposition of his hand, and Satan will again try to rend your poor soul from the dear God of salvation; but he shall not prevail.

It makes me look back at the years that have gone over me. O! the sad hours and days of conflict I have known! Ah! I know the way well you have expressed in yours; and how suitable in such states we find the lamentations, and sayings of his church in olden times. They fit in with our very case.

Again. What blessed effects surely follow when Jesus smiles and speaks! How we want to honour, praise, and glorify him more! The effects are holy. Yes! fruits of holiness are found in us; and I do believe that we cannot possess a greater evidence of a manifestation or deliverance being from God than is thus given.

May the dear Lord bless us, a few poor needy ones at Salem, and cause his power to be felt in sinners' hearts; and for this may he still give us power to pray. Brother Vaughan unites with me in every word, as well as in love to you.

T. DANGERFIELD.

60, New Town Road, Birmingham, Jan. 9th, 1863.

My Christian Friends, Mr. and Mrs. Grimes,—You have been on my mind through the night season, being at this time unwell, through what is called influenza—a complaint I do not remember ever having had before.

The cough prevents me taking rest at night, so that I may say with Job, "Wearisome nights are appointed to me." But it is my Lord and Saviour's appointment; and I do hope and pray that he will give me patience and submission to his will in all things, although it is most distressing and weakening to the earthly house.

I think it was in 1791 or 1792 I was first called to preach in Butchery Green or Lane in your town; and my labour was not in vain in the Lord, for the Lord was pleased to give testimony to the word of his grace, and although infirmity prevents me speaking in his blessed Name, my voice being so feeble, and breath so short that, although not confined to my bed, I have not strength to engage in family prayer; yet my hope is stead-

fast, and the enemy cannot raise a doubt of my interest in the blessed atonement and righteousness of my God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I wish to name it to his honour and glory alone, that I have been enabled to hold fast and contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, even the truths he by his Spirit applied and sealed home with divine power on my heart above fifty years ago. But, when I look back all the way my God hath led me, how many have I seen, who, as the apostle saith, did, to all appearance, run well, but have either turned back into the world, or turned aside into various errors. Yet the Lord of his infinite mercy hath preserved us to this day. O what an infinite debtor is he that now writes to the free, sovereign, unmerited mercy and love of the Eternal JEHOVAH! How faithful his promises, how great his love to his redeemed, no tongue can express or pen write. Many a sweet foretaste hath he given us; and ere long one sweet promise will be fulfilled, namely, "Where *I am*, there shall also my servants be." Mark, my friend, Jesus says, "*there shall*." O! bless his Name, he is able to fulfil all he hath promised.

And in his last prayer we have his absolute will of promise: "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, *be with me* where I am, that they may behold my glory." And John tells us the effect it will produce; for he says by the Holy Ghost, "Beloved, we know not what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

O! that blessed day is only a little way off; a few trials and afflictions, and we shall reach our heavenly Father's home, to depart no more.

And now, my dear friends, pray for me, that in all that remains to endure the Lord may give his paralyzed afflicted servant grace to glorify him in the furnace during the remaining days allotted for him. And that when the hour of dissolution arrives, he may say, with John, "Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly." That the grace of our most glorious Christ, the love of our kind Father, and the richest consolations of the divine Comforter may be your portion, is and shall be the prayer of

Your brother,

Guildford, Feb. 28th, 1840.

THOMAS OXENHAM.

Dear Friends,—I address this to all three; and hope it will find you still under the protecting hand of God.

I have heard the eye of the Lord has been over you; and I am sure if he keeps you as the apple of his eye, it is most tender keeping. We are very apt to forget this heavenly power and tender care, and put our escapes to human prudence, and many such like things, that the Lord says are but little worth. We read of some who had eyes within, as well as without. These could see many things that those who have not these eyes can-

not discern. These spiritual eyes within are wary, and are enabled to discern the distant approach of danger, and call in time for help. He that fears not is already fallen, because the Lord says, "Happy is the man that feareth always;" for by this sweet grace of the Spirit he departs from evil, and finds a sweet and overflowing fountain to refresh his tempted and often distracted soul.

What need there is to put on the whole armour of God, that we maybe able to withstand the wiles of the devil; and *above all* to take the shield of faith, wherewith we may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and make good use of the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. We find Abram had the promise of this shield before he started far. "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." I think we should not have heard of his so freely giving up his only-begotten son, if his faith had not had so good a shield. So I believe you and I must have the same if we come off more than conquerors. May the Lord stand by you all, so that you may at length finish your course as your parents did.

Sutton Coldfield.

From your affectionate friend,

JAMES BOURNE.

My very dear Friend,—I can truly sympathize with you in the great loss you have sustained in the removal of that dear man of God, Mr. Tuckwell. I did not think when we parted last June that it would be our last meeting upon earth. On his account there is much cause for thankfulness that it hath pleased his heavenly Father to put a termination to his bodily sufferings, which were very great; and above all to put an end to sin, which was his daily sore and plague; although he had been favoured beyond many with clear manifestations of redeeming love through a Saviour's blood and righteousness. I have often thought and said, when either of those good men at Allington die, how very much the survivor will miss his companion.

It is no small favour to walk as you have been favoured to walk together in the things of God without a jar for 38 years. Indeed, you cannot at present say how much you will feel his loss. And the little church, too, what a gap is made there! and, as you say, you don't know how it is to be filled up.

But, my dear friend, may we remember that our glorious Head ever lives, and is at no loss (as we are) for instruments to carry on his own cause upon earth. Churches, as well as individuals, are brought sometimes into straits, that they may cease from man, and trust and look only to the Lord, who performeth "all things (for them) "after the counsel of his own will." *Christ is the foundation upon which the building is to rest; and he himself will provide all the material necessary for the building itself.* Therefore, may you and the dear saints with you be much engaged with the Lord in prayer, seeing he has said, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

It may truly be said of our dear departed friend, that he has

fought a good fight, and kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness that fadeth not away. O that we may be followers of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. "A little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry." The Lord in mercy save us from that sleeping and slumbering spirit so universally abounding in the present day. May our loins be girded about, and our lights burning; and we ourselves as men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, we may open to him immediately.

I have lost another choice member from the Stamford church, whose obituary I am about sending to Mr. Philpot; his name is Wm. Robinson, some of whose very excellent letters have appeared in the "Gospel Standard," November, 1861, and October, 1864. The Lord is evidently gathering his wheat into his garner. O that the few remaining days of our transitory life may be devoted to him who has done such great things for us. His glory and his people's happiness are inseparably connected together; so that whatever promotes the one advances the other. There is no such service as God's service. It is "perfect freedom." O that we may be favoured with such visitations from time to time as may draw us nearer and nearer to his footstool. The foot of the cross is the happiest place; or, as dear Hart represents it in that incomparable hymn, entitled "The Wish;" that soul who has once beheld a little of the glory of Christ, as set forth in the gospel, and experienced, even for a short season, the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, will never for long together lose the sight and some remembrance thereof. This it is that makes a man to know and understand the difference between the form and the power of godliness. If I remember right, almost the last words of the late Mr. Gadsby to his attendant were, "O John, what is all religion without power?"

Had not the distance been so great from here to Allington, I should have liked to have paid the last tribute of love to dear Mr. Tuckwell, by attending the funeral. You may safely commit "his body to the earth, ashes to ashes, and dust to dust, in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection at the last day."

May the Lord bless our dear friend, Mr. Philpot, in speaking upon the solemn occasion, and may it be a time of much profit to the living.

Please give my very kind love to dear Mrs. Parry, and to any who love me for the truth's sake, and believe me, my dear friend and brother in the Lord,

Yours very sincerely,

ROBT. KNILL.

P.S.—Mrs. Knill desires her love and sympathy. And please remember me very kindly to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph, and also to your very kind attentive daughter, Miss Ann. Shall be glad to hear from you whenever you are able to write.

Oakham, Sept. 11th, 1867.

REST FOR THE WEARY.

“I am poor and sorrowful; let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high.”—PSA. LXIX. 29.

O! BLESSED Saviour! Thou who dost control
 The thoughts and passions of mine inmost soul;
 To thee I come; thou, thou alone canst bless,
 And still the troubled heart with tenderness.
 By long experience, truly I have proved
Thyself my real Friend, my best-Beloved.
 Thine heart hath also been with sorrow torn,
 Thou understandest, for thyself hast borne
 The woes of others. Meekly thou didst bear
 Reproach, and shame, and sin, and grief, and care.
 Thou art the pattern. I would imitate
 Thy blest example. Lord, do thou create
 In me thy Spirit. Graciously receive
 Me to thyself, and let me ever live
 To thee, for thee alone. O free my breast
 From vain desires, and be thyself its guest.
 I would be weaned from these things of earth,
 To show my treasure is of heavenly birth.
 O! thou great Reader of my secret heart,
 Make me henceforth from idols to depart.
 Though flesh may from the painful process shrink,
 The cup thou givest let thy servant drink,
 Yea, even so; and let the anguished groan
 Express those words of thine, “*Thy will be done.*”
 The bitter cup is sweet, if thou art there;
 The stormy sky become serene and fair;
 The clouds of time disperse, as morning dew,
 And glorious visions open to my view
 Of that bright land, where shadows flee away,
 Where night is lost in everlasting day.
 There flowing tears are wiped. The anxious breast
 Which heaved with sighs is sweetly hushed to rest.
 All fears are ended, life's tumultuous sea
 Forgotten in one long eternity
 Of praises in that house of mansions fair.
 These short-lived trials are but to prepare
 For that sweet rest, where all the blood-bought band
 Triumphant round the throne of glory stand.
 Imagination fain would climb the height,
 And view the glory; but a mind finite
 Can never reach it. We can only know
 There is a rest from toil, and care, and woe.
 There is a land whose glories are divine,
 A land where Christians in perfection shine.
 That glorious land the feeblest saint shall win,
 And to his Lord's own joy shall enter in.

O dearest Father, let this prospect be
 Enough to quiet e'en rebellious me.
 Make me submissive to thy gracious will;
 Teach me that glorious lesson to *be still*;
 Then, though the cup may still be mixed with gall,
 Without a murmur I will drink it all.

Oct. 18th, 1879.

E. B.

“CHRIST IS ALL.”

My dear Brother in the best of all heads, even in Christ Jesus, who was dead, but is alive for evermore.

I have had you keep coming to my mind for some days, at different times; and something seemed to say, You must write to your old friend. But you must take the matter of what I write just as it may flow into my mind.

I hope yourself, dear consort, and the children are well. My dear family, I am thankful to say, are well. I have had a severe cold, but am, I think, somewhat improving.

Well, my brother, I have been in the four quarters of the world. I have been in all kinds of sin and iniquity. I have been in what men call pleasure and happiness, of all kinds. I have been in and under a fiery, burning, commanding, threatening law. And I can from my soul say I have found nothing but death and destruction stamped upon all. I have been in the fire of sin, till I was only like a black brand, fit for hell; but being a branch of the ever-blessed Lord's, he pulled me out of the fire. I have been in the waters of cold death, but Jesus drew me out, to be nourished by the King's daughter, as heir for an eternal throne. That which is born of the flesh can feed upon nothing higher than itself. That which is born of the Spirit cannot and will not feed upon anything except that which is spiritual. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature,” and therefore spiritually minded. He minds the things of the Spirit, as that blessed Spirit takes of the things of Christ, and brings them into the soul. And as the blessed Spirit brings them in, so the soul finds life and peace in receiving and minding them.

My brother, when the carnal mind prevails with and over me, I find myself tied up in the bands of death. But when the spiritual mind is expanded and enlarged, and I have in my measure the mind which was in Christ, then I find I am one whom the Lord favours, and have life and peace. I find my way in which I have to walk, neither all night nor all day. Sometime I am in the light, and walk for a time in the light of God's countenance. When there, I can leave everything with my unchanging God. I am content. I can say, “Blessed be the Name of the Lord.” And “It is well.” And here

“My happy soul would stay . . .
 And sit and sing herself away
 To everlasting bliss.”

My brother, what pen can describe what it is to be in Christ? What tongue can speak it out? It is eternal life to know him; and it is eternal life to be in him. Sometimes I do know this to the joy of my soul. But I want to live in him more. Sometimes sin, self, world, devil, and all things seem to be against me. I get off my watch-tower; drop down into self; lay by my arms, cease to resist the devil, and he comes in like a flood, and would destroy everything. If the dear Lord were not my Keeper, he surely would. A few evenings back, as I was undressing for bed, the devil said to me, Curse God. And it came to me so strong that I clenched my mouth and teeth together for fear I should. This temptation made me tremble from head to foot.

Now, what a blessing to be in Christ! What a blessed Head to us he sometimes reveals himself to be! In him we must for ever remain. God put us there before time began; and that to be one with him for ever. Thus, being in him, we have all things in him; and out of his fulness, we are daily receiving; and so we daily shall be till he fills us in glory, with himself. All our real pleasure, happiness, and joy, comes from our being in Christ. All forgiveness, all perfection that we have, is in Christ. Our victory over death, hell, devil, world, and self is in Christ. Our only hope of enduring to the end, and of glory hereafter, is in Christ.

Christ and his people are the substance of the Bible. When we can live and move in him in all things, and him in all things employ, by the faith of the gospel, how happy we then feel. But when he hides himself, and we cannot see him, hear him, or feel him, what poor helpless worms we are then! We must know what we are in self. This we shall all our life be learning, and never perfectly know it. But the more we do know of it, the more we shall bless God for an all-sufficient Saviour who has settled all for us with his Father, and by whom we receive all God has to impart to us in our homeward journey.

“O could we love and praise him more,
And all his wondrous grace explore!”

“Not all things else are half so dear
As his delightful presence here;
What must it be in heaven?”

’Tis heaven on earth to hear him say,
Poor sinner, cast thy fears away;
Thy sins are all forgiven.”

And this forgiveness is in Christ, “In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” My brother, here is the great blessedness; that what we have in our covenant Head, is high beyond the reach of all created beings. The devil can, if permitted, tempt, disturb, rob, cast us down. He can, when allowed, break our bones, sink us deep in the mire, fill us with fear and unbelief. But there is a bar: “Touch not his life.” And blessed be the dear Lord, I know he cannot take away that eternal life which is the gift of God, which we have in Christ Jesus our Lord. He came down from heaven to open up a way

to bring up our souls there ; and when he had finished the work he came to do, he entered in by his own blood ; and there he ever lives to bring the " many sons to glory."

What a blessing, my brother and sister, to be among the sons and daughters of Zion ! They shall be brought unto the King. Not even their unbelief can prevent it. " He abideth faithful." Not their many fears ; for the perfect love of God will cast out all fear. Sometimes we get a word ; " Fear not, little flock ; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The little lambs, and the babes sucking at the breast of consolation, are as safe as the old sheep. How many little ones there are in the Good Shepherd's fold ! But, being in the fold, and belonging to the Good Shepherd, he will never lose one of them. They are the purchase of his blood. They cost him his precious life. " He gave his life a ransom for many." And to the *many* this is revealed, though to some more clearly than to others. The ransom of the Lord must return ; God has spoken it. They shall return, and come to Zion. It is a mercy to be coming ones. Such the dear Lord takes in, and will in no wise cast them out. In these sweet words our blessed Lord meets the little ones who are on their way home, but can't believe they are. Well, he says, " Though they cast out themselves, I will not cast them out ; but I will cast out unbelief, and bring them nigh, and they shall know me for themselves, that I am their Saviour."

I have no doubt you have some little ones among the flock ; but they are safe ones. And the more they know of their greatness as sinners, and their littleness as saints, the more will they be going to the greatest saint that ever walked upon this earth, the King of saints himself ; to be perfected in and by his perfection, which he puts upon all his children. All are alike in this garment. There is an eternal completeness in this blessed robe. It is the best in the house. In a family, the children are differently robed ; but in Christ's house, the robe is the same for all. And none but those who have this wedding garment on will sit down at the supper of the Lamb. How many fearing ones there are, who are afraid that they have not this clothing upon them ! And yet their prayer again and again is, that they may be found in him. Such, no doubt, are in him ; for no one out of him ever truly wants to be found in him. But those who are in him, and yet do not know it, do want to be found in him alone. They have got to go into the purging fire and water ; and under this purging they will bring forth more fruit. Then, as fruit more abounds and abides, their knowledge of union as branches with the Vine will increase ; and so they will arrive at the knowledge of their salvation, through the forgiveness of sins.

Well, my friends, the fighting day, the working day, the suffering day, the day of affliction, of desertion, of imprisonment ; all, all, will soon have passed away for ever. Then will remain the eternal day, without a sun-setting. Yes ; we are

hastening home; and though the devil sometimes casts us down, still we are kept within the eternal arms, and by them are we raised again. I have had many falls, many wounds, fearing all was lost; yet been helped up again by the Lord. My face is this day towards the Zion above; for all my treasure is there. Is it not also thus with you two poor pilgrims?

I shall be pleased, if the Lord's will, to come amongst you again soon. I have found the Lord among you, and with poor unworthy me. My kind love to your dear minister. My love to your brothers in office with you. Also to any of the dear children and babes. You will kindly in love pass by all mistakes in this letter. May the blessing of the Lord be with you and yours, and the church in Christ Jesus. I remain,

Yours in the Gospel of our Lord,

86, Havelock Street, Canterbury, June 16th, 1880. J. ROWDEN.

NEEDED HELP.

"When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." (Ps. xxvii. 10.)

My dear Friend,—Your very kind and sympathizing letter has opened my heart to endeavour to gratify you by sending a short account of the Lord's dealings with me of late. When, at the beginning of my dear mother's illness, the physician said it was merely a question of hours, I felt almost for a time overwhelmed. I took a short walk; and as I went along the road, this cry burst from my soul: "I shall soon be without a mother;" when these words dropped into my heart, so sweetly, so gently:

"A Father's hand will never cause
His child a needless tear."

I felt I had a Father up in heaven. I feel so still. I have felt it with much freshness again this morning.

I watched over my dear mother's declining health with much anxiety. Sometimes we were buoyed up with hope that she might rally; but relapse after relapse always occurred; and after every period of revival left her weaker, and the vital powers more exhausted. I believe it was a mercy from the Lord that we were allowed to cherish some hope, or the intense continual watching would have been overpowering. She breathed her last in my arms. Then I felt very calm. The intensity of the grief was afterwards. Everything I cast my eyes upon spoke of her we had lost. Everything seemed thus to strike a fresh dagger into the heart. I write as I felt; but God did not desert me. The day she died two lines of one of her own sweet hymns, those she had committed to memory, and constantly repeated with such emphasis by her in her illness:

"He comes to set my spirit free;
And as my day my strength shall be;"

dropped into my heart, and it seemed to me as if my much-loved mother cast down a sort of parting look of love from heaven upon

us. This may be called fancy; but who can tell how spirits of the just in glory can, what shall I say? sympathize with the spirits of the just in misery?

“Touched with a sympathy within,
He feels our feeble frame.”

The first night after our bereavement was indeed a sad one. Little sleep, and assaults from Satan; but these words again stilled the tempest:

“But Jesus came to my relief;
And Satan sees, with shame and grief,
That I have an Almighty Friend.”

Thus the Lord has again and again most graciously supported; and when my heart has been sinking, I have still found him very near.

On Monday, the 2nd of November, we bore my dear mother's mortal remains to their earthly resting-place in the vault of the chapel at Nosely. She had wished at first to be buried in the cemetery; but in this she yielded to my brother's longings, and I think rightly; but in other things she was rigid. Mr. Davys, not their own minister, must conduct the funeral service. Eight of our members carried her to her resting-place. We sang her favourite hymn at the entrance of the vault (173); and on her monument is to be the simple inscription: “A sinner saved by grace.” She was intensely anxious to testify of the Lord in death as well as in life; and hoped that her burial at Nosely might testify to my brother, and those there, more than if her first desire had been carried out of lying in the cemetery. My brother was deeply affected. Who can tell but that her death may be to him more fruitful than her life; and her perhaps hasty utterance fulfilled: “Lord, I am willing to give my body for his soul?” As we went from here to Nosely, following her remains, my mind began to think that if such and such courses had been followed, we might still have had her with us. But O how vain! And the Lord checked this, and turned my thoughts from creature to Creator, with these words:

“Anon the Father's set time came.”

As we entered and drove down the well-known avenue leading to the home of our childhood, my poor sister seemed much overcome. The memories of days of happiness spent at Nosely would come in; but the Lord sweetly stayed my spirit, from these words, and I could not feel then to weep with bitter tears:

“Why do we tremble to convey
Their bodies to the tomb?
There the dear flesh of Jesus lay,
And left a long perfume.”

I could not realize any more my mother as dead. The words constantly coming to my lips were: “My mother is not dead; she is alive.”

Thus God supported me. Thus he still supports. Yesterday was a very trying day, the first of my ministering since my dear mother's death; but the Lord supported me through it. He was

a strength to the poor; a strength to the needy in his distress. I feel now that much at least of my hope as to this life is buried with my mother in her grave; but then my mother I believe is in glory; and now I stand where David did: "I shall go to her, but she shall not return to me." And his words still my heart, and keep from murmuring: "Because Thou didst it."

Love to Mrs. Parry and all friends; and believe me,

Yours affectionately in Jesus,

Mr. Parry, Allington.

G. HAZLERIGG.

70, Regent Street, Leicester, Nov. 9th, 1868.

[We insert the foregoing by particular request. This must be our apology for thus publishing a letter to a friend, in which we unfold the exercises and sorrows of our heart, with the consolations afforded, under a great affliction. This description, too, of the feelings of one in trouble may touch the hearts of some who have had, or are experiencing similar sorrows, and help to comfort them.]

LIVING EPISTLES.

My dear Pastor,—I first began to feel anxious about my soul when I was between fifteen and sixteen years of age. My parents at that time did not attend any place of worship; but my dear mother liked her children to go. I went to the Independent chapel. The first text I heard preached from was taken from Jer. xv. 16: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by thy Name, O Lord God of hosts." I could not remember anything the minister said about the text; but I felt desires in my soul that night, which were quite new to me, and I went home wishing I might become a Christian. I was very ignorant; all the idea I had about religion being that if I was good, I should go to heaven; and if I was wicked, I should go to hell. This was what I had been taught when a child. I knew nothing about sin or my need of a Saviour.

I now began to read the Bible in secret, and to pray; using those forms of prayer that best expressed my own feelings. But I soon found myself obliged to cry to the Lord in my own language, begging him to teach me, and especially that I might be born again, and made a new creature in Christ Jesus. I thought everything the preacher said must be right, and he often used to tell us that salvation was all of God's free grace, and at the same time he made it all depend upon whether we would repent, believe, and accept Christ. Here was my difficulty. The more I tried to believe, the more difficult I found it to be. The more I tried to repent, the harder my heart became. Once I remember being so troubled on account of the hardness of my heart that I became quite ill. My parents sent for the doctor; but he could not find that I had any bodily ailment; only thought that I must have something on my mind. I tried to walk circumspectly; and though I was kept from outward sins in a great measure, yet the

sins of my heart were great. Many, many times was I overcome by one secret besetting sin known only to the Lord. I strove in my own strength. I went on sinning and repenting; and often was obliged to throw myself at the footstool of mercy, and beg the Lord to subdue all my sins; especially this one thing. Sometimes I hoped the work was done; but it would rise again with fresh power. I was at times a little encouraged by that hymn, or rather a verse in that hymn, of Watts, beginning:

“Stand up, my soul, shake off thy fears.”

The verse I allude to was this:

“What though thy inward lusts rebel,
 'Tis but a struggling gasp for life;
 The weapons of victorious grace
 Shall slay thy sins, and end the strife.”

I prayed to the Lord that it might be so with me.

I went on much in the same way for twenty years; trying, as I have often thought since, to make myself a Christian; until I became so miserable in my mind that I did not know what to do. I could not take pleasure in anything, or scarcely eat my food. Neither could I bear to speak to any one, but went about secretly bemoaning my sad condition. Again and again did I beg of the Lord that he would not suffer me to deceive myself or be deceived; but there were times when I was afraid to pray; I thought it was presumption. I tried to repent of my sins; but my heart was so hard, I could not. Neither could I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I was at this time living in Surrey. One day I met a friend whom I had not seen for a long time. She inquired how I was I only answered, “I'm lost; I'm lost.” She was much concerned at my answer, and tried to comfort me; telling me that Christ died to save sinners; and saying, “Only believe,” &c. She also wished me to write to the minister in London under whose ministry I had sat for so many years. But I was afraid of getting any false comfort; and I felt that that God against whom I had sinned could alone heal the wound.

One day I opened the Bible, and my eyes rested on the words in Ecclesiastes, “A living dog is better than a dead lion.” A ray of hope darted through my soul; but it was soon gone. At another time, these words gave me momentary relief: “Surely he hath borne our griefs.” I used sometimes also to get a little hope from those words: “Christ died for the ungodly;” but I soon sank again into a darkness that might be felt.

I went on in this way from the middle of June until October. One evening I had been to see a friend who seemed in some measure to understand my feelings, but I left her fearing there was nothing before me but eternal death and misery. But as I walked along, all at once the following words came with great power into my mind: “He that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.” I did not hear them with my outward ears; but they were spoken into my very soul. O! what a change I felt! Hope sprang up; despair left me, and many sweet words of Scripture

came into my mind one after another, until I was as full of joy and peace as I was before of misery. I felt that my sins were forgiven. I spent most of that night in blessing and praising the Lord for his goodness and mercy to one so vile. The Bible seemed a new book; and, in fact, all things seemed new.

I went on in a very happy state for some time. We had many trials in the family; and at this time experienced many privations, all of which I had been a stranger to in the early part of my life; but the Lord was good. He supported me through all, and enabled me to put my trust in him. There was not any place of worship near except the church. I went there for a short time, and received the sacrament, I think about three times. But, through the Lord's goodness, I was brought in contact with some of his dear children; and finding they went to a little chapel at a distance, I left the church and attended with them until my parents left the neighbourhood. The chapel was supplied by ministers of truth; and I often found it good to be there.

The subject of baptism was often on my mind. At this time I was led to search the Scriptures on the matter, and felt persuaded that it was a divine ordinance, to be attended to by none but believers. I was in London for one year, and then went to Leicester, where I remained for a little more than ten years. Soon after I went there I heard Mr. — from the words: "Although my house be not so with God, yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure," &c. This was a time to be remembered. I felt it indeed a good time for my soul, and that I had an interest in that everlasting covenant.

Soon after this, I began to feel less life and power in divine things, and fell into a very backsliding state in heart; though I still attended the means. I often neglected reading my Bible, and prayer also became a task. I was often very miserable, though no one knew anything about it. The evils of my heart began to rise up, and sins I thought dead began to assume fresh power over me. I could not tell any one what I felt. I longed to be delivered from such a state, but at times did not think it possible that ever the Lord would again bring me out. Once Mr. — preached from that text in Jeremiah: "Alas! for that day is great; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." A hope rose in my mind; and I earnestly desired that it might be so with me. I did not care what I endured, so that the Lord would be pleased to appear for me, and make it manifest that I was one for whom Christ died.

In March, 1875, I received a hasty summons to go home to my parents, as my mother was dying, and I was required to live at home again. This was a great trial to me; for though I was glad to see my dear parents once more, and felt it right to go and attend upon them in their old age, at the same time I thought it was a mark against me, and that the Lord was so angry with me on account of sins, that he was taking me from the means of grace, and away from all intercourse with his

people, only to make me manifest as a reprobate. I felt much darkness of soul, which increased day by day, and I believed there was nothing before me but eternal death. I read the Bible, and every part condemned me. Every good book and the writings of the Lord's sent servants condemned me also. Passages of Scripture kept coming to my mind, such as 2 Peter ii. 3: "Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not," and other verses in the same chapter; also Heb. iv. 5, 6, and x. 26-29. I also was led to look back on my past life; and the law of God in its spirituality was brought home to my conscience in such a way as I had never felt. And one secret indulged sin, known only to the Lord, was laid with such weight on my soul, that I believed it alone would sink me to hell. I thought of Esau, who for "one morsel of meat sold his birthright," &c.

But I can never tell or write one-half of what I felt and endured in my soul at this time. I performed my duties like a machine, my limbs moving and acting while my mind was wholly absorbed in thinking of my lost and undone state. When I lay down at night, I had most awful views of death and eternity. I thought my guilty soul had begun already to feel the torments of hell. O! I thought, what an awful deathbed mine will be! I could hardly keep from shrieking out when I thought of drawing my last breath, and sinking into hell for ever and ever with devils and lost souls. I had the whole plan of salvation by grace brought before my mind's eye. O how lovely did the Saviour appear! How plainly I saw the safety of God's children, &c.! And how dreadful was the thought, that when I came to die, or at least in hell, I should look up and curse that blessed Redeemer! (Rev. xvi. 9, 11.) I thought I was one of that number spoken of in Rev. xiv. 10, 11. I began to reject my food, and to show my distress in my countenance, so that my poor mother began to question me. I could no longer disguise my feelings; but the kind words and attempted consolation of friends were of no avail. The Lord, against whom I had sinned, could alone do me any good. Again and again did I try to pray, but I could not; the remembrance of my sin coming so powerfully, and the enemy telling me there was no sacrifice for the sin of presumption, and that that was my sin, and therefore it was of no use for me to pray. I used to throw myself on my bed, and mourn over my wretched condition. O! how black did I appear in every particular! The sin of my nature I saw would condemn me; and then all my thoughts, words, and actions were such as would never stand the scrutiny of God's holy law. I went about the fields and lanes, crying, "Such a sinner, and no Saviour! O that I had the Saviour for my friend!"

Sometimes I was enabled to confess my sins to the Lord. I said, "It is true, Lord, I am guilty, very guilty." Now I remembered once hearing Mr. Hazlerigg from those words: "The heart is deceitful above all things," &c. He dwelt much upon

what it was to feel *guilty* before God. I did not know what he meant, *i.e.*, feelingly; but now I did. At times I did beg that if it could be possible for mercy to be allowed me, through the dear Saviour's blood, that he would look upon me. I feared mine was the sin never to be forgiven. I often looked back to the time, in 1860, when I had felt my sins forgiven, and I remembered what joy and peace had flowed into my soul at that time; and I could not understand how I could be eternally lost if that was really the work of God on my soul. Then the scriptures before mentioned in Hebrews would come into my mind with such force that I believed what the enemy suggested,—that my former experience must have been a delusion. Still, at times I was obliged at least to try to pray and confess my sins to the Lord, the enemy telling me that every prayer I offered was only adding sin to sin, and that I should have the hotter place in hell.

But I could not live without prayer. I felt lost now, and expected to be banished from the presence of the Lord for ever; but I thought if I must perish, I would perish crying for mercy through the blood of Christ. I knew nothing would ever make me happy if Christ were not mine. I think I may truly say I never soundly slept; for when I was exhausted, I used to fall into a slumbering state with my mind all the while at work. I thought that if there were no worse hell than what I was feeling, it would be bad indeed. O the tortures of a guilty conscience throughout a never-ending eternity! Banishment from the presence of God for ever, and the body suffering the utmost pangs in the lake of fire and brimstone.

These were some of my anticipations. And so I went on from May until nearly the end of July, when at times a momentary gleam of hope would spring up in my soul. One night, as I lay down, the Psa. xlii. 1, also Psa. lxxiii. 1, kept going over in my mind. Also lines of Hart's hymn:

“'Tis to hear the Holy Spirit
Prompting us to secret prayer.”

Also the words,

“Sin's filth and guilt,
Perceived and felt,
Make known God's great salvation.”

One day, going across a field, these words came with some power: “Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”

Notwithstanding these helps, my trouble returned again; and one day, having a very bad throat, I thought that then my time was near; and these words kept coming: “Whose judgment now for a long time lingereth not,” &c. When I attempted to pray, these words terrified me: “Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.” But again and again I was obliged to cry for mercy, though it appeared far from me.

One morning I awoke with these words spoken most gently into

my mind: "The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." (Ex. xiv. 14.) Also, "I will work, and none shall let it." (Isa. xliii. 13.) I marvelled to know where they came from. I passed the day more or less in my usual misery. Still, now and then the first of the two passages came, and caused such a stillness in my soul which I wondered at. I feared it was a "treacherous calm."

I continued to have a little hope at times, and more of a spirit of prayer, often crying and confessing to the Lord as I walked along. One day, as I was walking across the room, the word "free" dropped into my soul with such power and sweetness, better felt than expressed; followed by these words: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (John viii. 36.) I was obliged to be alone, and my whole soul was melted and broken down before the Lord in wonder and amazement. I was filled with joy and peace. I loved to be alone to commune with my blessed Saviour. I could not sleep, but was forced to get up in the night to pray and praise.

The next day, being the Sabbath, I had a good day. My joy and peace kept increasing; and on the Monday, Aug. 2nd, 1875, I awoke very early in the morning with these words:

"Redeemed, with Jesu's blood redeemed;
His beauties called to trace."

Also: "Unto you that believe, he is precious." (1 Pet. ii. 7.) This was the crowning day. I felt the Lord was mine, and that for ever. I could not possibly say or write what I felt; but those who have been alike favoured can tell. The dear Lord poured in his precious consolation, and the blessed Spirit sealed home a feeling sense of his pardoning love and mercy. As I walked along the fields and lanes, these words went over in my mind numbers of times:

"A happy, pardoned child thou art,
And heaven is at thy door."

"The day of thine espousals." "Espoused as a chaste virgin to Christ." "Joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." I felt these things were true in my case. O how I grieved that I had sinned against so kind and good a God! I now knew what Mr. Hart meant when he said:

"A sinner may repent and sing,
Rejoice and be ashamed."

This verse of Mr. Hart's was with me for days together:

"O my Jesus, thou art mine,
With all thy grace and power;
I am now, and shall be thine,
When time shall be no more."

How I prayed to the Lord to keep me by his grace, and not to leave me to myself, lest I should be tempted and left to fall into sin. One day the Lord gave me these words, when I was begging him to preserve me in a right and consistent walk, and to save me especially from secret sins: "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under

grace." How I wish I could praise him more! I often have to mourn my coldness, deadness, and prayerlessness. My heart is hard unless he softens it, and my faith weak and failing, except when he enables me to believe. I am never truly happy except when he is present. "His presence makes my heaven." The Lord has made me to feel how much pride there is in my heart, of which I always believed myself very free. He showed me how much self-righteousness and formality there was in all my former profession; indeed, I was made to loathe it.

I was now living away from any place of truth where I could attend, and I often felt a desire, if the Lord's will, that I might be favoured to unite with the people of God, and attend to his ordinances. I had to pass through a season of great trial, which ended in the loss of both my dear aged parents, and this made the way open for me to return to L. The subject of baptism was again laid with weight upon my mind; and though I put it from me, fearing I should go too quickly, it would again and again be so on my mind that I could not get away from it. One Sunday morning, I had felt a great desire that the word preached might be made profitable to me; and I was led to ask the Lord that I might not hear in vain. Our minister took for his text the words: "Take care of him;" and in that sermon I received a deep impression that my experience was that of a child of God, and that the right step for me to take was to go before his people, and declare what he had done for my soul, and to follow him in the ordinance of believers' baptism.

But now new trials began. My fears arose lest after all I was deceiving myself, and lest I should die in the water, and so be made manifest as a reprobate. I was in much darkness of soul for some time, and could not tell any one my exercises; but one evening Mr. ——— preached from the words: "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy Name." The exercises of my mind were so entered into that I could no longer refrain, and I was constrained to come forward, relying alone on the Lord to help me.

I felt under a cloud when I came before the church, and could not say out all I could have wished. On the morning of my baptism, too, I awoke feeling much tried, the enemy telling me I should die in the water. But I was helped by these words:

"Our comforts may vary, our frames may decline;
We cannot miscarry; our aid is divine."

And once before the Lord gave me these words: "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain;" and I had a hope that the Lord would bring me through; which he did, and I again proved that "though we believe not, yet he abideth faithful." Yours truly,

June 9th, 1880.

M. D.

IN Christ God meets the sinner and takes the burden from off him.—*Hardy*.

SHORT PAPERS.

SWEET PEACE.—A MEDITATION.

“I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep; for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.”

How sweet it is to have God's peace reigning within, when surrounded with foes and fears on every hand! This is the triumph of grace. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. It is no uncommon thing for men to be at ease in Zion, settled on their lees, and sunk into a state of carnal security; but it is a rarer sight, a far less common experience, for a man to be, as the hymn says,

“Calm amidst tumultuous motion.”

To have, in the midst of troubling things, the bird singing sweetly in our own bosoms, as one expresses it, this is good.

The psalmist David, as the psalm itself shows, was surrounded with adversaries and many troubles. It was not his present easy or prosperous circumstances that gave him rest. O no! Many, as in the former psalm, there were who rose up against him; many who thought to triumph over him, and said, There is no help for him in his God. Then it was that he resolved, as in the words of this verse, to lie down and sleep. He knew that really he was as safe in the midst of dangers as at any other time; as well off in the midst of adversities as when in the most prosperous circumstances. He was not the sport of circumstances or of creatures. He dwelt in a sure abode. His hope was God. Troubles! what could they do to him? Foes! how could they hurt him? Troubles and foes only drove him into his place of refuge, his abode of rest. Wants brought in supplies. He looked to God. Moreover, the God he trusted in had been a tried God to him. He had already trusted in him in times of adversity, and found him O so faithful to his word. When Absalom rose up against him, as in Ps. iii., when he fled for his life, when dangers surrounded him, he laid him down and slept, for the Lord sustained him. O happy man who, when in such a condition, could repose in a covenant God! He had no soft pillow for his head; but he had God's sweet love for the resting-place of his soul.

When, too, in his earlier, and perhaps in some senses better, days, he was hunted by Saul, and fled from place to place in the wilderness, he had, though cut off from his instituted worship, put his trust in God, and therefore could say, “Beneath the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.” God remained the same. He knows no change. In fresh troubles the psalmist was still enabled to trust in God, and therefore could say, “I will both lay me down, and sleep; for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.”

How blessedly Mr. Hart adopts the same language in one of his hymns! He begins—and indeed this is the true foundation for such indescribable confidence and peace—a peace which, though felt within, passeth all understanding:—

“JEHOVAH is my righteousness.”

Yes; here it is. I have, he could say, a divine, an everlasting righteousness. My righteousness is up in heaven. No circumstances in which I am placed,—no changes, no joys nor sorrows, can affect that righteousness. It is, it must be, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. This is the foundation of my peace. This spreads over my soul an unspeakable calm. Therefore,

“I'll lay me down, and sweetly sleep;
For I have peace with God;
And when I wake he doth me keep,
Through faith in Jesu's blood.”

Well can the writer remember when these words were made spirit and life and sweetness to him in a time of bitter grief and anguish of a temporal nature. Those who have known what it is to watch over one dearly and deeply loved in a sickness unto death, can sympathize with the feelings of the writer, when he says that he almost dreaded even to go to sleep lest he should be roused out of his slumber, and summoned to see the last moments of one so dear. But nature becoming overpowered,—so it was with the writer—he laid him down, and slept; and awaked with Mr. Hart's lines pervading his spirit in the calm, peaceful sweetness of them:

“I'll lay me down, and sweetly sleep,
For I have peace with God.”

This is to realize in some degree the words in Isa. xxvi. 8: “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee.” Happy seasons! A living lively peace in the soul in the midst of circumstances of a disturbing and distressing nature.

The writer trusts, too, that he has enjoyed something of this sweet feeling, this inexpressible calm, in the morning of the day on which he pens these lines; and therefore, for the benefit of others, has written down his thoughts, and tried to express his feelings in suitable words, which, if they are made to breathe the same sweet peace into the hearts of any of his readers, will make them sharers in the writer's joy. We love not to eat our morsel alone. We would that the fatherless, the poor, the needy, the tried, and troubled of God's people, should share it with us. We write, then, down our thoughts; we try to put into words the calm of our own feelings, that, as Paul writes, we may partake of the gospel peace of God with you. In other words, that you may share the gospel blessing we enjoy with us. Hereby, too, is the glory of God promoted; his revealed glory. When this peace reigns within, we are in our right minds. We give him the glory due unto his Name. We trust him, in accordance with his Word; and by the power of his Spirit, as a God of providence and a God of grace, we go to him as “Our Father, which art in heaven.” We feel a sweet persuasion that

“He who for birds and beasts will carve,
Can never let his children starve.”

We say,

“E'en let the unknown to-morrow,
 Bring with it what it may;
 It can bring with it nothing
 But God will bear us through;
 Who gives the lilies clothing,
 Will clothe his children too.”

Here is the death of covetousness and over-anxieties about the things of this life. Why should I care? Why should I be so burdened? I cannot make one hair white or black. It were in vain for me to rise up early, and late take rest. I could not by all this soul and body travail alter the divine decrees of a Father's love. Nay, I would not alter them if I could. He gives me now a better part than undue carefulness. He makes me rest in a Father's eternal love and care for me; and “so he giveth” me, as “his beloved, sleep.”

Here is the death of fears; for why should I fear? Now that I can enter into my closet, and shut the doors about me, and pray to my Father which is in secret; why should I fear? Whom have I any cause to be afraid of? Those led by God will not, those led not by God cannot hurt me. No weapon formed against me shall prosper. It shall be broken to pieces against the shield of omnipotent love. No good thing will God withhold from me. I fear not, then, that I shall want. No evil shall betake me. I rise, then, above foes and circumstances. I triumph even over thoughts of death and the grave. Yea, sometimes,

“Long to lay me down and die,
 And find eternal rest.”

Here, too, is the death of all bitterness and wrath, and ill-feelings against my fellow-men. I can forgive as forgiven. I can wish well to men's persons, though not to their sins. I can desire and endeavour to pray for them. I have no wish to pray against them, or call down fire from heaven upon their heads. O no! I could wish them so well that, were it God's will, I could earnestly desire for the bitterest, most implacable foe I have, that Jesus would bless such an one by turning him from what is wrong. I cannot of course pray to God to prosper others in sin, and thus seal them to destruction. O no! I cannot, dare not, so pray for myself. I seek to do to another as I would be done by. I pray for myself, I trust, that God would graciously show me where I am wrong, and turn me from it; would give me godly sorrow for all sin and evil, and repentance for it; and would seal a sweet forgiveness of every sin upon my waiting spirit. So would I pray for others. I would not exclude one child of God from my prayers, nor one fellow-creature, so far as is possible, from my pity. I would pity men's persons and their miseries, at the same time as I ought to condemn their sins, as well as my own. I would do good unto all men, especially unto the household of faith.

Thus, then, I trust the peace which God has given to my heart is true and good. It is grounded on his truth, and in

harmony with his love. It divests my mind of burdening cares; it raises me above the world; it triumphs over death and the grave; it gives me a godly victory over foes and fears; not the victory of anger, malice, and revenge, but the holy victory of reigning grace within, which enables me to say, "I will both lay me down in peace and sleep; for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety."

Obituary.

MARY ANN ALDWORTH.—Died at Wantage, Berks, Dec. 19th, 1879, aged 65, Mary Ann Aldworth.

Mrs. Aldworth was for many years a consistent member of the church meeting at Grove Chapel. She was brought out from the Church of England, and was without doubt one of those of whom Hart writes:—

"Broken hearts and humble walkers,
These are dear in Jesu's eyes."

She evidenced in her life and conversation, both in health and sickness, that she was a possessor of the fear of God; though herself often fearing she should be deceived or deceive others.

She was favoured at times to feel the preciousness of the Saviour. She could then exclaim,

"Compared with Christ, in all besides
No comeliness I see;
The one thing needful, dearest Lord,
Is to be one with thee."

A short time before her death she desired her love to be conveyed to the friends, and that they should be told that she was not afraid to die. She could sing, "Glory, honour, praise, and power, be unto the Lamb for ever." The Lord kindly answered her request that she might not become a trouble in her last days. She was only compelled to keep her bed a little more than a fortnight. Asthma and other complaints "loosened the pins of her tabernacle"; and thus she fell asleep.

A. B.

WINIFRED FUNNELL.—On April 26th, 1880, aged 61, Winifred Funnell, a member of the Particular Baptist Church, Zoar, Dicker, Sussex. She was baptized Oct. 11th, 1842.

Mrs. Funnell was a very weakly, afflicted woman, and suffered for many years from an affection in the throat, which prevented her swallowing her food, and thus producing great weakness of the frame. She was a very deeply exercised woman, knowing and feeling much the depth of the fall, and the evils of her own heart, and was most keenly tried about her real state before God. She also knew much of the power of the enemy of souls. Under the power and guilt of indwelling sin within, the accusations of the enemy, the unbelief of her own heart, and doubts and fears arising in her own mind, through a felt unworthiness in herself before the Lord, she was often caused to sink very low in her mind, and to write very hard and bitter things against herself. At times she thus sank very, very low respecting her real state before the Lord. But she was also very much favoured at times in her soul, and was a most consistent woman in her outward walk; an affectionate wife, a loving mother, a humble walker, and a praying member of the church of God. She was very diligent in the use of the means, and very regular in her attendance in the house of God, often being

there when she was more fit to be in bed, had she consulted her weak frame. She loved to be under the preached word, and was a dear lover of prayer-meetings and the Lord's dear people.

In January, 1874, she was taken ill; and attended by a doctor. At this time she was brought very low; and for some weeks could only just get up and down stairs.

On April 14th following, she was taken much worse, and thought her end was very near. She was much tried and cast down in her mind, and burst out into tears, and cried:

"But can I bear the piercing thought,
What if my name should be left out
When thou for them shalt call?"

Then these words flowed sweetly into her mind, and greatly supported and comforted her: "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong; fear not. Behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you." (Isa. xxxv. 3, 4.)

The next day she was very much cast down again, and tried in her mind as to her real state before God. On April 19th these words came with much comfort to her:

"I love the Lord with mind and heart,
His people and his ways."

Also: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." Again she was much cast down and tried, and burst out into tears, exclaiming, "O! what shall I do? My time is so near to the end. O! if I should be lost after all! I cannot rest upon anything that I have had. I want the Lord to come again; and that is all I want." The Lord mercifully came, to her comfort of mind; and she broke out again:

"I'll tell the Father in that day,
And thou shalt witness what we say,
We're clean, great God; we're clean."

Darkness and trial of mind again followed. She said, "I want the Lord to come. Nobody knows what a wretch I have been. O Lord, do have mercy upon me! Perhaps he will come. I do want his presence." She then put her hands together, and said, "They shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy. O! he never would have showed me these things if he had meant to destroy me.

"I soon shall reach the harbour
To which I speed my way."

She lost the sweetness again, and said, "I am so unfeeling again this morning; and these words keep coming:

"A porter at the heavenly gates,
To let the pilgrims in."

I could give my husband and children all up, if I was quite sure it would be all right with me."

One morning she said to her husband, "I cannot get what I want. Do you think I shall get right at last?" He said, "Yes, I do believe you will." She replied, "I hope I shall.

"But faith, though the smallest, will surely be tried."

O! I cannot stand many more such turns as these." She burst into tears, and said, "I want the Lord to come." Her husband read a portion of the Word, and bowed the knee in prayer. When he rose from his knees, she said,

"And passing through a thousand woes,
They get securely home."

On April 30th, after reading and prayer, she seemed in deep distress,

and felt much of the power of the enemy upon her mind. After a time she said, "I have been looking at two hymns:

"'Lord, we lie before thy feet' (704);

"'Jesus, while he dwelt below'" (802).

She seemed much comforted again, and said, "If I was only a deceived one I cannot think so many of the friends would come to see me. I think they would not feel a love to me if I was wrong."

On May 1st, a friend called, and asked how she was. With tears in her eyes, she said, "I will be with thee in six troubles; and in the seventh there shall no evil touch thee." "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

On May 2nd, in the morning, it was most distressing to see her. She mourned and cried, "The Lord does not answer me; and my time is very short. O! what shall I do?" After a little time, she said,

"Should I grieve for what I feel,

If I did not love the Lord?"

From this time she began to amend, and was restored to her usual health again; though still suffering from a weak body and the affection of the throat. She was taken ill with what proved to be her last affliction on March 13th, 1880. She was again brought very low in body and mind, and feared the floods of death would quite overwhelm her. When in great distress about her state, and fearing she might be deceived, those words came to her again: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee," &c.; and seemed greatly to comfort her mind. But she was soon again in tears and distress of soul, saying, "I fear I shall be deceived when death comes; and O! I want to be right." She spoke of the power with which the 623rd hymn came to her:

"Whom the Lord JEHOVAH loves,

He in various ways reproves;

'Tis his settled wise decree

That his sons chastised shall be.

"Them to wean from self and sin,

Try the grace he works within,

Strip them of each idol god,

Make them prize the Saviour's blood."

She continued in about this state for three weeks, suffering much distress, darkness, and often anguish of spirit, with at times a little light and comfort in her soul. Many portions of the Word and parts of hymns gave her a little comfort. The enemy lying hard at her all the time, sending in his arrows and trying to tear away every comfort.

On April 7th, when her husband came into her room, he found her in a flood of tears. She said, "I have been reading the 167th hymn. O! I wish I knew Christ really had suffered for *me*; that I was one for whom he laid down his life."

The next day she was taken much worse, and sank in deep distress of soul; so that she felt overwhelmed with grief. But at length she said, "If the Lord had meant to destroy me, he would not have showed me these things. O! give my love to our children. I hope the Lord will convince them of their state before him, that they may find mercy with him." She revived again a little in her spirit, and said,

"'Whom once he loves he never leaves,
But loves them to the end.'

"'Then let us all unite and sing
The praises of free grace;
Those souls who long to see him now,
Shall surely see his face.'

He will come with a recompense, and save you." Thus her hopes revived, and the Lord broke in upon her mind, and she felt the 467th hymn very precious, and much blessed to her soul:

"Why should we shrink at Jordan's flood,
Or dread the unknown way?
See, yonder rolls a stream of blood,
That bears the curse away."

She also spoke of the 329th hymn being a great comfort to her mind, and support to her:

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," &c.

I visited our dear friend, and found her very low in mind, and in a very tried state; but still, when we got into a little conversation, we found it sweet, and there was somewhat of the Lord's presence and blessing with us. Our dear friend brightened up a little, and we read the Word, and spoke a few words in prayer; and I trust we both felt it good to be there. When I left, she said, "I am afraid Mr. Vine thinks too much of me, and that he is deceived in me. But I do love the dear people at Zoar. I am so glad that we are got back to Zoar. I do think the Lord answered my prayer in that. Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy Name."

On April 19th, she became much worse with inflammation in her throat. She cried out, "O Lord! what shall I do?" She took her husband's hand, and said, "We have lived together for many years. It may only be a very few hours more." Her throat was almost stopped, and she cried out, "Dear Lord, do come. I want to know that thou hast redeemed my soul.

"And could he have taught me to trust in his Name,

And thus far have brought me to put me to shame?"

Give my kind love to all the children. Perhaps I shall never see them any more. O! this is hard work indeed."

On April 20th, she was still weaker in body, and begging for the presence of the Lord to her soul; saying, "O! I do hope the dear Lord will land me safe through the River of Jordan. O that his everlasting arms may be underneath me to bear me up." Then she said:

"Fear not; I am with thee; O be not dismayed;

I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;

I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,

Upheld by thy righteous omnipotent hand.'

My hands are not nailed.

"Did Christ my Lord suffer, and shall I repine?"

She also said to her husband, "Your dear mother is gone to heaven. .

"Once they were mourning here below.'

I lie here like clay in the hand of the potter. If the Lord is pleased to bless the means, he is able to raise me up again; but if not, I hope to be resigned to his will.

"The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design

Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.'

I have no righteousness of my own. I have been brought off from everything of self; and I need the arms of a precious Christ underneath me to hold me up. O! sanctify to me my deepest distress. O! I do want the dear Lord to come and take me to himself. 'Some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship; and so it came to pass, that they all got safe to land.' The Lord will avenge his own elect." She said to her husband, "I hope the Lord will bless you. It will be hard work. I want him to come with power. I hope the Lord will come again before he stops my breath. I want his presence in my soul. I should have sunk before now if the Lord had not helped me through."

Her husband gave her a little milk with a teaspoon. She said, "O how nice! Christ had vinegar. Christ had vinegar."

"When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of deaths, and hell's Destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's side.
Songs of praises I will ever give to thee."

I hope I shall soon be landed.

"Then shall I bathe my weary soul
In seas of heavenly rest;
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast."

On April 23rd, she said, "Give my kind love to Mr. Vine and all the friends."

"Yes, I to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given;
More happy, but not more secure,
Are the glorified spirits in heaven."

I visited her again this day. When I went up to her bedside, she took my hand, and said, "I shall get home safe now. Yes, I shall. I am almost sure I shall. Yes, I am almost sure I shall. The Lord won't leave me now; will he? He has been with me all along until now; and he won't cast me off now, will he? No; I do believe I shall get safe home. Yes, I do believe I shall; I shall." She also said, "I am willing to suffer anything the Lord may put upon me, if he give me strength to bear it. I don't mind what I suffer if the Lord will sanctify it. I do hope all my children may be brought to the Lord. I don't mind what I suffer if the Lord should sanctify it to them. I can leave all my children in the Lord's hand; and my husband too. I am going to heaven; and the Lord can bring my husband without me. He will be sure to come; I know he will." She then took my hand and said, "And you will be sure to be there." I said, "I hope I shall reach safe at last." "O yes," she replied; "if I get safe, and I do believe I shall. I am almost sure I shall. If I get safe, I am sure my husband will; and I am sure you will. O! I am sure we shall get safe."

I read and spoke in prayer, and then took my last farewell in this world of our dear praying friend. She gave me her dying blessing, imploring the divine blessing upon the ministry, and the church and people at the Dicker; and we gave our last affectionate token of love to each other by a shake of the hand, feeling we should never meet again in this world. When I had left, she said to her husband, "I am glad Mr. Vine has been. I wanted to see him once more."

During the night she was much in prayer, saying, "Dear Lord, do come." Her husband asked if she was happy in her mind. She said, "Yes, yes; but it is hard work. I hope the Lord will give strength and grace to go through."

On the 26th, in the morning, her sufferings were very great, with extreme weakness of the body. She was nearly starved, as she could not swallow. Her body was in a dying state; but she was in a most sweet frame of mind, with a felt assurance of her soul landing safe. She told her medical man that she should get safe home. "O yes," she said; "I am almost certain I shall land safe. Yes, I am certain I shall get safe now." Her husband was sitting by her side, and her eyes shone bright; and she waved both her hands, and said, "I can almost see the angels. Do, Lord, give me grace and patience to wait. The Lord will come presently. Now, my dear husband, don't cry, for I shall be better off. I hope the dear Lord will sanctify this affliction. I shall soon be landed."

I shall praise him. Praise the great Redeemer's Name." She took her husband and two daughters by the hand, and gave each a parting kiss; and said, "Good-bye."

"Yes, I shall soon be seated
With Jesus on his throne;
My foes be all defeated,
And sacred peace made known."

Dear Lord, do come, and take me to thyself."

After this there were a few more gentle sighs, and her happy spirit entered where she longed to be. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

Many friends witnessed the solemn scene of her body being well laid in the grave. A few remarks were made from Rev. xxii. 5 at the funeral.

This was the end of a very fearful, tried, and deeply exercised child of God. How many of God's dear people have had to wait till the end of their pilgrimage for the fear of death to be entirely taken away, and for a full assurance of their interest in the Lord Jesus Christ! But our sister did realize it at the last. In her case an affectionate wife, a most loving mother, a tender Christian, a humble member of the church of God, and a peacemaker in the church, has left the church militant for the church triumphant, to go no more out, but to be present with the Lord. It is our loss, but her gain.

Chiddingly, Hawkhurst.

WILLIAM VINE.

"REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD."

EPH. 1. 7.

A SMILE of thine, thou dearest Lord,
Is better far to me,
Than aught which creatures can afford,
Or regal dignity!
Gems which adorn the brows of kings,
I covet not below;
Nor would, for sublunary things,
Thy smile or love forego.
Alas! this wretched heart of mine,
Which should be thine alone,
Seems like a much-neglected vine,
Fruitless and over-grown.
Such as it is, with fault on fault,
Lord, I present to thee;
O let thy grace, like heavenly salt,
From putrefaction free.
Thy blood, thine all-atoning blood,
Alone can cleanse from sin;
With this, th' Almighty voice of God
Shall yet pronounce me clean!
Jesus, thy blood must interpose,
Must rescue me from hell;
With God's own panoply from foes,
Life's issue must be well.

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