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THE
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ERRATA.—Through the carelessness of one of the compositors engaged in the printer's office, one line on page 346 was misplaced. The last line on the page should have been at the top. This occurred just before going to press and after the No. had passed out of our hands. Also on page 418 "After the death of *Moses*" should read, "After the death of Joseph."

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JANUARY, 1889.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

EDITOR'S NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS.

ANOTHER year has passed away. Eighteen hundred and eighty-eight is for ever gone. It is one hundred and eleven years since time was recorded by the figure seven three times repeated. Who can tell the numbers that have been mown down by the scythe of death and entered upon a never-ending eternity since that time, and whose bodies have returned to the dust from which they were taken. But where, O where are the great majority of their souls? "Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" (Job xiv. 10.) The numbers that have passed away during this period of one hundred and eleven years is beyond our powers of calculation, and we question if there is in existence an arithmetician who would attempt to define the numbers of those who have during that long season passed from this earth, where they once lived, moved, and acted, as the present generation do, into a never-ending eternity.

In order to record the year that is now passed it was necessary to use the figure eight three times in succession, and it will be one hundred and eleven years before the figure nine will be needed, to be three times repeated. Immense and almost innumerable as are the present inhabitants of this terrestrial globe, they will before that period arrives be nearly all of them swept by the hand of death from off this earth; and if we may judge of their future state by the way in which both professors and profane of the present day live, move, and act, may we not safely conclude that hell with her gaping mouth will have swallowed up most of them, and, as in all generations past, only a remnant will have been saved by the sovereign, invincible, discriminating grace of God. This declaration may be solemn, but it is, according to the Word of God, no less true.

Death pays no respect to persons. With all the skill and attention that could be procured for the two late German Emperors, they have both been removed during the past year by the irresistible hand of death. God's hand, whether sent in judgment or mercy, is not to be resisted. We are poor judges in many things of what is for our national good. During the past summer, with such a long continuance of rain, many regarded it as a judgment from heaven; but in some of the large towns, especially in the North, where water had long been very scarce and a famine seemed

almost inevitable, the incessant rains proved to be a great providential mercy. In the same dispensation God may have a purpose of mercy to some and a purpose of judgment or correction to others; as we read: "By watering he wearieth the thick cloud; he scattereth his bright cloud; and it is turned round about by his counsels; that they may do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth. He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy." (Job xxxvii. 11-13.)

After a long season of rain we were favoured with a continuation of fine and splendid weather, until the whole of the harvest was gathered in, upon the whole, in fairly good condition; which proved also an excellent time for preparing the land and putting in the seed. This was indeed most acceptable to the nation generally, and we trust many viewed this interposition of God with thankfulness; for such kindness calls for songs of gratitude from the sons of men, and especially from the sons and daughters of God.

Trials and afflictions of various kinds may have come upon us during the past year, and some of them may have been of a sore and grievous nature. Death may have taken away a beloved husband, wife, child, or near and dear friend. Losses in business and cross providences may have come upon many of the Lord's dear children; but these things will not continue for ever; the end must come,—the end of trials, the end of the world, and the end of time. This Paul, in the midst of trials and changes, endeavoured to impress upon the people of God, saying, "The time is short; it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away." (1 Cor. vii. 29-31.)

Seeing, then, that all these things are temporal and fleeting, we will not at this time dwell upon them, but pass on to a subject of far greater, yea, of infinite importance as regards our state and standing before God, and upon what our hope beyond the grave is founded.

Whatever position we may occupy in the church of Christ whether as ministers or hearers, the great requisite in all our movements and actions is sincerity and uprightness. In ministers of God there should be nothing feigned, nothing hypocritical, nothing deceptive about our ministrations and conduct; for as the Word of God and the grace which we preach is pure, holy, and incorruptible; so also should be our motives and object in preaching it. The Lord will not own that which is feigned; he searcheth it out and exposes it as he did the wife of Jeroboam when she went to the prophet Ahijah and feigned herself to be another woman; for even before she could utter a word God had revealed to the prophet her hypocrisy, and the man of God said to her,

“Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another?” (1 Kings xiv. 6.) In hearers of the Word of God and professed followers of the Lord Jesus Christ sincerity and uprightness of heart should be their aim.

The desire of the true followers of the Lamb is that their own souls may prosper, that the souls of their brethren may prosper, and that the word of the Lord from the lips of his own servants may prosper, that sinners, through the instrumentality of preaching, may hear and believe on the name of the only-begotten Son of God. If the heart be not sincere, the mind upright and spiritual, and if God's glory is not sought either by minister or hearers, there is nothing that is lovely and pure in the sight of the Lord, and nothing that is truly commendable, lovely, and pure in the eyes of God's truly humbled, broken-hearted people, who cry, from their inmost souls, as David did, “Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.”

Where the grace of God dwells, whether in ministers or hearers, there certainly will be a good deal of heart-searching and soul-examination; for such are assured they cannot hide themselves, their motives, nor ways from Him whose eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth, beholding the evil and the good. They are inwardly convinced of the truth of the Scripture, “Thou God seest me;” and when their minds are solemnized with holy awe at the infinite knowledge and omnipresence of God, they say from the depths of their soul, “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. 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 say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.” (Ps. cxxxix. 7-12.)

If sincerity and uprightness before God are such essential requisites in ministers and the followers of the Lamb, they are equally needful and essential in an Editor, especially in one who, though he never sought for it, holds the position we now do. In sending forth another Annual Address to our spiritual readers, our prayer is that God may give uprightness and integrity of heart, that we may write *that* and *that only* which will bear strict Scriptural investigation and prove for the good of immortal souls, as well as for the honour and glory of his great name. The Scripture declares, “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (Rom. xiv. 23); and as God will not own anything but what springs from his own Spirit and power, nor seal home upon the hearts of his own people that which is counterfeit or hypocritical, may he enable us to write, and you, beloved brethren, to read what we write as in the presence of that great God who is essentially holy, and of whom his dear Son declared, “God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” (Jno. iv. 24.)

There are two great subjects before our mind which are of the utmost importance, the knowledge of which is necessary to salvation, eternal life, and eternal happiness. We say *two* subjects are before our mind, yet they are inseparable from each other;—we mean the *Incarnate and written Word of God*. To receive and understand these things aright we need the life of God in our hearts and the Spirit of faith in exercise in our souls; for “without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” (Heb. xi. 6.)

By the *Incarnate Word* we mean the Person, the glorious Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, God’s only-begotten Son,—begotten before all worlds, begotten of the Father by eternal generation, who has said, “If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.” (Jno. viii. 24.) Simply, beautifully, and clearly has John, in the first chapter of his gospel, spoken of the Deity, Eternity, and Sonship of the Lord Jesus: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.” (Jno. i. 1, 2.) Beloved friends, how essential it is that we should have a spiritual and gracious knowledge of his Person. This is the foundation of all real religion. If we possess this, we possess the kernel of all true godliness, and however much unbelief, sin, Satan, and professing men of corrupt minds may dispute this foundation of our faith, the Holy Spirit will give us power to hold fast that which we have received. The knowledge of this in our poor souls is of more value to us than all the riches, splendour, and honours of this world; for, said Christ, “This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (Jno. xvii. 3.) Faith and knowledge go together; but all men have not faith, at least they have not this special faith to know the Lord Jesus Christ as God Eternal; consequently, there being a difference between them, the children of God cannot walk nor talk with any pleasure, comfort, or profit with those who are ignorant and deny the Foundation and Fountain of faith. This secret realized in our souls and maintained and nourished there by the power of the Holy Ghost separates us not only from the ungodly world, but from almost all professors; for although they mention Christ as a Saviour they reduce him to the level of a creature, and so fulfil the Scripture: “Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself.” (Ps. l. 21.)

But the Eternal Word, the Son of God, became incarnate, and took upon him flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone. How beautifully John distinguishes between his Deity and humanity: “The Word was *made* flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” (Jno. i. 14.) This Incarnate Word John tasted, handled, and felt, and of this he wrote; which things are handed down to be kept by a living faith in the souls of those

who have tasted of the grace, love, and preciousness of the Lord Jesus; and if we have eaten his flesh and drunk his blood we shall endeavour to hold these things as being essential to our eternal salvation.

Our souls having been quickened and spiritual life implanted in them, we have evidence that the incarnation, obedience, bloodshedding, and death of the Lord Jesus Christ was all wrought for us. What could he do more than to suffer the wrath of God, satisfy justice, magnify the law and make it honourable, shed his own heart's blood, and lay down his blessed and precious life for the salvation of our souls? Does not the knowledge and hope of this lay us under deep and incessant obligations to live not after the flesh but after the Spirit, to honour him in our bodies, souls, and spirits, which are his, to fear his holy and ever-adorable name, to love him, serve him, and worship him as the Lord our God; for such he is to us, if he has communicated to our souls one grain of grace, one spark of spiritual life, if he has drawn us after him with holy desire, and endeared himself at times to us as the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely? If we know Christ aright we shall know his love, and love above all other graces in the soul has a spiritual and constraining influence, which directs the heart, mind, and affections to the Object from whence it came. We cannot know the love of Christ without knowing his Person, and we cannot know Christ aright without knowing his love; and O, sweet thought, if we know his Person and know his love, then may we, with the greatest safety, conclude that he hath redeemed us unto God with his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God and the Father. For love and grace like this we may well say of the Lord Jesus, "To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

This religion in the soul, this knowledge, this faith, this hope in God's Incarnate Son must and will of necessity cut us off from all erroneous doctrines, all erroneous preachers, and all erroneous professors. If we have a secret and choice religion in our souls, we shall want a choice and spiritual people to walk and talk with. Our best companions will be those whose conversation savours of the life, power, and Spirit of Christ, and whose outward walk and separation from the world, its maxims and customs testify that they have been with Jesus and learned of him who is meek and lowly in heart, and that they have found and desire again and again to find in him rest to their souls. Such persons are seldom to be found; they are not to be met with by dozens in every street, in every alley, nor in every house. Seldom indeed are such to be found in kings' palaces, in the mansions of the rich, or amongst the noble and wise men of the earth; for "ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and

things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence." (1 Cor. i. 26-29.)

Those who are favoured to know the intrinsic worth and blessedness of the religion we have just named, are favoured and honoured of God, and they are called his children; for they are his sons and his daughters; and though not of the earth, they are kings and queens in the earth,—they are princes and princesses, and are truly the great and noble; for they are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.

The knowledge of Christ, faith in him, and everything that is gracious and good will be tried as by fire. Temptations, sinkings of soul, and fear of deception will rush in as a flood; but they never can destroy the spark of life and the living principle of faith, however small it may be; therefore, when the enemy comes in like a flood, may the Lord give us power to come boldly to the throne of grace to make our cases known, that we may obtain fresh mercy, and grace to help us in time of need.

There is also the *written Word of God*, the inspired Oracle, in which we have a revelation of God and his Son Jesus Christ. The written Word is a revelation of what God has done and of what he will do; but the Incarnate Word existed before the written Word was given. The written Word was not given to the sons of men until long after the fall of man; but the Incarnate Word created heaven and earth and all things that are therein before one word of the Scriptures was written: "By the Word of the Lord (that is the Incarnate Word) were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." (Ps. xxxiii. 6.) The written Word declares when and how God made all things: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. i. 1); and years afterwards the Holy Ghost inspired Moses to write and give an accurate account of the works of God in creation; and under the same Spirit David was inspired to write the book of Psalms, and in one Psalm, namely the 104th, he names almost all the wonderful works of God in creation, from the highest archangel to the little birds and the small fishes of the sea.

In the works of creation we see God's eternal power and God-head; but what comfort would this bring to our guilty souls, what foundation could we find in these things, seeing they are all to be burned up, what way of escape from the wrath to come could ever have reached us, if God had not revealed to us in the Scriptures his purposes of grace and mercy to fallen sinners? It is in his written Word that we read his mind, his will, his purposes of grace, and his plan of salvation. In his Word it is shown in a thousand instances what his grace has accomplished in bringing sinners to the knowledge of his name, convincing them of sin, bringing them down in prayer and supplication to his feet, and in revealing mercy, salvation, and forgiveness of sins to their souls; and here, as in a glass, we see that he is unchange-

able in his ways and acts of grace to all who are drawn to him through his beloved Son. What he was to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, what he was to Moses, David, and the prophets, what he was to the apostles and primitive converts, many of whom were the very murderers of Christ, in bringing them to seek his kingdom, know his Person, call upon his name, and in giving them repentance and remission of sins; such, beloved brethren, is he to us to this very day, and to all who are quickened and called by his Spirit; as the apostle says: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." As then in the strength of his Spirit we are enabled to believe the written Word and feel our souls drawn after the Lord, we are inspired with hope that the same heaven, happiness, and eternal glory which the spirits of just men made perfect now inherit we shall also enter into; for he is faithful that promised, who also will do it.

It is against the inspiration of the Scriptures that hardened professors and ministers of the present day set their faces like a flint. Some deny one part of the Word of God and some another; but they will never be able to alter, much less to overthrow what God has caused to be written for our learning; for Christ has said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matt. xxiv. 35.) Therefore, having, through grace and faith, received and believed the Word of God as his revealed mind and will, we are to measure everything, both ministerially and experimentally, by this unerring standard.

First. By this unerring standard we are to measure and weigh the preaching of those who profess to be ministers of Christ. You are not bound to receive all who stand up in the Lord's name, because they have on a white tie and a parsonic dress. It is not the outward appearance, nor even the words that men may preach, that commends them to the heart and consciences of God's tried and Spirit-taught people; nor are you to be carried away with men who may clearly and fluently preach the doctrines of grace; but to wait and watch whether power accompanies the word they speak, and whether the Spirit brings it home in demonstration and power to the heart; for there may be much preaching without power, much doctrine without savour, enticing words without life, grace contended for and yet no grace felt, either in the pulpit or in the pew. But when the Holy Ghost takes of the things of Christ, reveals them and applies them to the heart of a real servant of God, and he speaks of the things which he has tasted, handled, and felt, which things are from time to time revived in his own soul and brought home to him with freshness and sweetness, and as these things fall from his lips into your poor trembling souls, melting your hearts, humbling your spirits, raising up confidence and creating faith and courage, then have you assurance that such men are called to preach the word of the Lord.

True, you may not always feel, even from the lips of a God-sent servant, the power and grace of which we have been speaking.

Carelessness, prayerlessness, indifference, worldly-mindedness, love of the world, temptations, and besetting sins will bring a child of God into a state of death and darkness, for which the Lord holds back the face of his throne, withdraws his presence, and withhold the drops of dew and the small rain of his strength. Barrenness, which inevitably follows these things, and the lack of dew and moisture that should accompany the word to your souls, is not to be laid upon the minister or the ministry; the cause is in yourself. Such have need to fall down before God and cry, with Jeremiah of old, "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord." (Lam. iii. 40.) In such cases as we have named reproof and rebuke, admonition and caution, the sword to wound and the rod to correct, the rending of the caul of the heart and the chastisement which is sure to follow,—these things are more needful in the ministry of the word than preaching consolation and peace.

It is indeed desirable when going to hear the preached word to first ask the Lord to be with his servant, to bless the word as it may fall from his lips, to grant a crumb of mercy, a stream of living water, to let fall a word of comfort for one's present needs and conformation of what has been realized in the past; for God has said: "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." (Isa. lxvi. 2.) Many hear the word of God preached who neither pray for the minister nor their own souls, and by their light and trifling spirit it is manifest to God's Spirit-taught, exercised people, that they have never had any real trouble nor real comfort, no real sorrow and no real joy, no condemnation by the law nor justification through the gospel, no real casting down through sin and guilt, nor any real lifting up through grace, peace, and pardon; and unless God should be pleased to awaken them to a sense of their danger and implant in their souls his Spirit and grace, they will live and die in impenitence and darkness, hardened under the very gospel by which others have been convinced of sin, brought to know the Lord Jesus Christ, and experienced in their souls the joy of salvation; for "blessed is the people that know the joyful sound."

The ministry of the word divides, or should divide, between the living and the dead, between those who are whole and those who are wounded and need the good Physician, between the dead in sin and the living in Jerusalem, between the world and the church; for all who are not of the church, and truly and vitally united to Christ, be they who or what they may, they are of the world.

This, then, is the position of a servant of God when he stands up in the Lord's name to proclaim and preach his separating word, and truly solemn is it for those who sit in the pew to listen to the undeviating, unbending word of God when they hear the solemn distinction made between the righteous and the wicked, the sheep and the goats, those who are in the way to heaven and

those who are in the way to hell, between those who will at the coming of the great Judge stand at his right hand and that vast multitude who will stand at his left hand,—the former to hear the invitation, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world,” and the latter to hear the final sentence, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”

Secondly. Our own experience is to be measured by this unerring standard,—*the Word of God*. Has it ever been brought home with convincing power to our souls? Have we received it, as the Thessalonians did, “not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe?” (1 Thess. ii. 13.) Have we, by a living faith, received with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save our souls? If so, “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.” (Jas. i. 18.) Have we, in the love and power of it, received this incorruptible seed into our hearts? If so, then, notwithstanding all the changes, exercises, and temptations that we are passing through, we must, as Peter says, have been “born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” (1. Pet. i. 23.)

Has the Word of the Lord been made a light to our path and a lamp to our feet? Have we rejoiced in it as one that findeth great spoil? Have we hid his word in our heart that we should not sin against him? In our times of trial and temptation, darkness, and soul-desertion, can we look back and say, “This is my comfort in my affliction, for thy word hath quickened me?” Can we say with Jeremiah, even when we are in trial and affliction, “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart?” (Jer. xv. 16.) Have we, whilst reading or hearing the word, experienced what Cornelius and his kinsmen felt when Peter preached the gospel to them? For we read: “The Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word.” Has Christ at any time, with sweetness and power, dropped a Scripture into our guilty consciences, saying, “Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you?” If so, our souls will be bound to the Word, and we shall be enabled to keep it and hold it fast; it will be our life, our treasure, and the foundation of our faith and hope; and we shall continue in the word of Christ, and prove ourselves to be his disciples; for by these things he binds our souls to himself, and by his Spirit teaches us the way wherein we should walk; and thus the Scripture is fulfilled: “Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Prov. xxii. 6.)

Trials you may have; sorrows of some kind you must have. Of what nature, weight, and duration they shall be God has not said; but he has declared that in the world we shall have tribulation; but this, at the longest, can only endure for a short time; for saith the apostle: “Our light affliction, which is but for a

moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. iv. 17); and the "word of the Lord endureth for ever." Thus the Word abides and ever will abide in the souls of those who have realized it, and have eaten and drunk it, and proved the truth of the Saviour's words: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. iii. 4.)

What is it that has separated us from the mere formal professors of the day? What is it that has made the great distinction between the living and the dead? Is it not the Spirit and power of the Word brought into our never-dying souls? Has not this separated us from the ungodliness, and the ways, maxims, and customs of the world, whether professing or profane? Has it not in the past and does it not in the present have a controlling influence over our lives, our actions, our thoughts, in the midst of our families, amongst our friends, in conversation, in business, in the market-place, and in every position that a child of God may occupy whilst in this vale of tears? If not, where is the evidence that we are born again? Where is the difference between ourselves and the world? What right have we to take the Saviour's name upon our lips? What reason have we to believe that we have passed from death unto life and are in the way to heaven? What proof have we that the Saviour died for us? What prospect of lifting up our heads in eternal joy? What reason have we to believe that Christ has redeemed us,—that we have any interest in his death, resurrection, and intercession at God's right hand? What reason indeed have we to suppose that our names are enrolled in the Lamb's book of life? If we know not any of these things we may justly conclude we bear nothing but the marks of a reprobate.

A body of sin and death we have to carry, and sins of every kind work within us; the lustings of the flesh are incessant and the evils of the heart innumerable; so that the child of God, who is well acquainted with the evils that dwell within, hardly dare express to the Lord's people what he feels himself to be the subject of; for he often thinks, were he to do so, they would think him some uncommon, graceless wretch, destitute of the true marks of a saint and bearing all the marks of a reprobate; so that frequently when amongst the children of God he has to say with one of old, "I was dumb with silence." (Ps. xxxix. 2.) This is for the trial of faith. These are things which the Spirit of God gradually unfolds to show us what is in our corrupt nature and what we have inherited through the fall; and thus the Word of God is fulfilled in us: "When he (the Comforter) is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." (Jno. xvi. 8.)

But these things alter not the fact of our having realized the Word of God in our souls in the love and light and power of it, nor are we contented that these dreadful things work in us and that this dismal scene is before our eyes. There is a principle

in our hearts which would not have it so. We would be spiritually-minded, we would repent, we would mourn over sin, we would love Christ, we would feel our consciences clean, we would live without sinning against him, we would be assured that we are real saints, we would live always in the enjoyment of our election and under the gracious persuasion that our names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life; but we have to experience our sinfulness, the desperate and abominable evils of our nature, and that they work in us to bring us into the heart-felt experience of Paul in the seventh chapter of Romans where he says, "The good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do;"—"To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." In this way we become more and more matured in knowledge of what a saint is or should be, and more and more matured in the knowledge of ourselves; so that in our own eyes we become the chief of sinners.

Thus, beloved friends, this compound experience is after all not the experience of a reprobate, not the experience of a hypocrite, not the experience of a deceived character, not the experience of the thorny-ground and way-side hearers; but the compound experience of a living soul, of a child of God, of the living in Jerusalem, and of those who will at last be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

That we may during the present year be constrained, through grace, to think less of the things of time and sense and be made and kept more alive to the importance of knowing God aright and being found in Christ, whether he shall come in the first watch, at the cock-crowing, or in the morning, is the prayer of

Yours affectionately,
THE EDITOR.

PRIDE swells the haughty mind of man with indignation against the truths of Jehovah; that salvation is wholly of grace, free favour, and unmerited love. The unconditional election of God the Father by Jesus Christ is contrary to the proud, vain thoughts of man; therefore man is against this, for it leaves him nothing whereof to glory in himself that he has done or can do to fulfil terms and conditions to gain an interest in salvation or procure a title to glory.—*Mason*.

WHAT was the cause of the Pharisee in the temple thanking God that he was no extortioner, nor unjust, nor even as the poor publican? I answer, he did not know his own heart; and it is a fiery law which discovers sin under the quickening operations of the Holy Ghost, which had he known he would, with Paul, have said, "I am the chief of sinners."—*Rusk*.

WE daily and hourly feel the workings of mighty sins, raging lusts, powerful temptations, and besetting evils, against the least and feeblest of which we have no strength; but as the eye of faith views our blessed Lord at the right hand of the Father, we are led by the power of his grace to look unto him, haug upon him, and seek help out of him.—*J. C. Philpot*.

THE HIDINGS OF GOD'S FACE.

BY RUSK.

“Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.”
—ISA. XLV. 15.

GOD made man upright; for he was made in the image of God, created in righteousness and true holiness; but it does not appear that he stood long in this state; for “man being in honour abideth not; he is like the beasts that perish.” (Ps. xlix. 12.) Nevertheless while he thus stood he enjoyed sweet communion with his God, and could converse with him more freely than any of us can converse with each other; as you will find recorded in the book of Genesis. What delightful work this must have been; but the scene is now altered. Adam ate the forbidden fruit; and then lost the image of God and was changed into Satan’s image. Then, instead of wisdom, which he had in a wonderful way to know, although asleep, that Eve was taken out of himself and also to give names to every living thing suitable to their nature, —I say instead of being thus wise, ignorance takes its place, and he tries to hide himself from the presence of God behind one of the trees in the garden. Slavish fear took hold of him, and he knew that he was naked;—not what we generally mean by the word naked, for so he was before. Hence you read that “the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.” But now, having lost this adorning of the soul, which was the Holy Ghost, shame takes its place, and to work they both go, sewing fig-leaves together to make themselves aprons, and thus to cover themselves with a covering, but not of God’s Spirit, which was adding sin to sin; and here began all dead works which are so offensive in the sight of God.

But let it be observed that although the fall of Adam affects every individual that ever came or shall come into this world, he being their federal head and representative; yet God, according to his eternal purpose, had a chosen people in his dearly-beloved Son from everlasting, and their standing, so as never finally to perish, but to be restored again to God’s image, was secured to them in Christ Jesus. Hence the promise to Adam, “The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head.”

Sin caused God first of all to hide his face. Hence we read that “the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.” Adam did evil in eating of the tree of which God commanded him not to eat. Hence the prophet Isaiah tells us that sin separates between us and our God, and that our iniquities cause him to hide his face from us.

Now what I want to show is this:

I. How sin is removed from God’s elect, so as to cause them to enjoy his presence and approbation again.

II. How we are to know when we have the smiles of God, and what are the blessed effects of his face being toward us.

III. Show that however highly-favoured any of God’s family

may be by him thus visiting their souls, yet if they live any time in this world and are not taken directly home to their Father's kingdom, they shall find it a truth that God hides his face from them; for our text says: "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour."

Lastly. I will endeavour to show that he is the God of every true Israelite, and their Saviour, although he thus hides his face.

I. I am to show how sin is removed from God's elect, so as to cause them to enjoy the presence and approbation of God again. If you read Gen. iii. 24 you will find there recorded the dreadful consequence of sin, and that strict justice keeps the sinner at a distance from all communion and fellowship with the Almighty: "So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." We will, therefore, endeavour to point out the way in which every obstacle is removed both for us and in us, so that God can smile upon us again; and all this in a way of strict justice.

There were six things which stood in the way of our enjoying communion with God, which I shall briefly mention. The first, as I have said, was sin, and sin separates. This is an infinite evil, because it is committed against an infinite Being. In the book of Job you read that our iniquities are infinite; and when Eli reproved his sons for their wickedness, he said, "If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him?" (1 Sam. ii. 25.) We all know that a crime is magnified or diminished according to the greatness of the person; it is not viewed as so great an offence to offend a beggar as to offend a king. Hence you read in Job, "Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked? and to princes, Ye are ungodly? How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor?" (Job xxxiv. 18, 19.) Second. Death stood also in the way, for by sin came death: "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die;" not a temporal death, for Adam still lived, but it was a death spiritual which seized every faculty of his soul, and he was alienated from the life of God and under the power of Satan, exposed to death temporal and death eternal; for "the soul that sinneth it shall die." Third. A broken law stood in the way, as we read: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. iii. 10.)

Thus sin, death, and a broken law stood right in the way of God displaying his love and mercy to his elect, because, fourthly, it must be done in a way of strict justice, and justice stood also in the way. God will never show love and mercy to any but in a way consistent with his nature, so that all his perfections shall agree and harmonize together. Hence, as I told you, this flaming sword turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life, and

God declares that this sword shall come down upon Idumea, the people of his curse, to judgment, and, as before observed, we are all exposed to the curse and the sword of justice. Fifth. Truth stood in the way: "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Numb. xxiii. 19.) Heaven and earth shall pass away, but his word shall not pass away. Lastly. God's honour and glory stood in the way. He loved his elect with an everlasting love; but will never display this love but upon honourable terms and for his own glory, so that there shall be no clashing in the perfections of God.

We all know, even amongst men, that if one were to arise and show great kindness, and be very liberal and free to the poor, yet if this same man were deeply in debt to others, we should say it becomes him to be just before he is generous; and this would mar all the rest and infringe upon his honour and glory. Jesus Christ, God's co-equal Son, entered into covenant with his heavenly Father to become incarnate, and to remove, for our sakes, every difficulty out of the way; and therefore these six things, which must for ever have kept us at an infinite distance, are now removed by his life, death, resurrection, and glorious ascension.

i. *Sin* is effectually removed by the Son of God: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree." (1 Pet. ii. 24.) This was not universal or indiscriminately for all the children of men; and therefore you may see how well the Holy Ghost guards it against the Arminians by saying, "*our* sins." Again: "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." (Isa. liii. 10.) God the Father is very often set before us by the enemy of our souls as full of anger and wrath, but it is not so; for he is as full of love to his children as the Son. Hence Christ said, "The Father himself loveth you;" but how hard do we find it to believe this! Daniel tells us of the finishing stroke which the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished in the eternal destruction of this great enemy,—*Sin*: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins." (Dan. ix. 24.) Stronger language could not possibly be used; for we all know that to finish anything is to leave nothing undone, and to make an end is to complete; and this was all done for us by the Son of God, whom the prophet calls the Messiah, who he says shall be cut off, but not for himself.

Then again, Christ destroyed Satan,—the whole cause of sin; for he first sinned; as we read: "The devil sinneth from the beginning;" and then, by tempting our first parents, he drew us all away from God: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Rom. v. 12); but Jesus Christ fully conquered and destroyed him. Hence you read that "through death (through the sufferings and death of God the Son) he destroyed him who

had the power of death." Yes, Jesus Christ has, in our nature, glory be to his Name, full power, being the First and the Last, the Almighty, and he has destroyed the devil and all his works, —not by annihilating him; no, he would jump for joy at this; but by destroying him with everlasting destruction. Hence you read that all the ungodly, with him, shall suffer, only he will be supreme in misery: "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." I have often thought how very mortifying it must be to these proud spirits to be so completely conquered by the Son of God in our nature; and that we, who once were slaves to the devil and sin, taken captive by them, should, ere long, judge them; as it is written: "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (1 Cor. vi. 3.)

ii. Jesus Christ has destroyed *death*; he removed this out of the way also as well as sin. Death is sin's wages: "The wages of sin is death." Say some, "Death is a very trifling thing. We must all die, and some die very easy." It may be so in your view, but this arises from insensibility, Satan having blinded your eyes; but it is not so to a sensible sinner whom God has quickened and made to believe his Word; for to him it is a very weighty thing. "The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit (the pit of corruption which he now feels), nor that his bread (Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life) should fail" (Isa. li. 14); that is, lest he should come short and fail after all his profession of the grace of God. His great fear is lest he is not one for whom Christ died, and lest he has been deceived by the devil with a fictitious experience; for if this were his case he well knows that he would have no part in the first resurrection, and consequently the second death would have power over him.

It may be asked, What is death? *Temporal* death is a separation between soul and body: "The body without the spirit is dead." "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27); and no man living can possibly alter this, so as to keep death back one moment after the appointed time: "Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling?" (Job vii. 1.) Yes; and therefore Job says again, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." To this also Solomon agrees when he declares that "no man hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death; and there is no discharge in that war." (Ecclos. viii. 8.) Then again, through Adam's fall we are all *spiritually* dead, and it was this spiritual death which was the cause of temporal death and its awful consequences. Hence God told Adam, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely (spiritually) die," which took place directly he had eaten. All men by nature are in this sleep of death. Death is a separation from God, in which state all men are by nature, "alienated from the life of God," and far from him by wicked works, taken

captive by Satan at his will, under the just sentence of the curse of the law which ministers death and condemnation, in a state of unbelief, and exposed to the second death, which is an eternal and everlasting separation from the living and true God. If Jesus Christ had not undertaken our cause we should have been exposed to death in all its branches, which now we are not. With all men we are exposed to temporal death, but its dreadful consequences are quite removed, which is death's sting, and they are removed by Christ; as Paul says: "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. xv. 56, 57.) So that now temporal death is a new-covenant blessing: "All things are yours, whether life or death." It is also called a sleep: "Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." (1 Thess. iv. 14.)

Again. Spiritual death is destroyed by the Saviour, who came into the world that his sheep might have life. The Shepherd being smitten the sheep were scattered. Thus his death was the cause of their life. He died the Just for the unjust to bring us to God. This was the Corn of wheat that died and brought forth much fruit. There is now to all God's elect no separation from him; for we who were once far off are now made nigh by the blood of Christ, he having destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and led captivity captive, having redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Christ is the Author and Finisher of our faith, and he delivers us from unbelief, so that we are blessed and holy, having part in the first resurrection, and on such the second death can have no power, God having blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in him. Therefore "blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." Christ conquered death, agreeable to the prophecy by Hosea: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." (Hos. xiii. 14.)

iii. A broken law stood in the way, but Jesus Christ magnified the law and made it honourable; he fulfilled all righteousness, not for himself, but for us. His whole life was one act of obedience. He declared that not one jot or tittle of the law should pass till all was fulfilled, and said of himself, "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil;" and at last he told his heavenly Father that he had finished the work which he gave him to do, and said to his disciples, "I have kept my Father's commandment, and abide in his love;" and all his blessed obedience, both active and passive, is placed to our account; so that God the Father views us in him as though we never had sinned in thought, word, or deed. The law is holy, and we are called "the holy people" in Christ; the law is just, and we are just by a living faith in Christ: "The just shall live by faith;" the law is good, and we are good by having the good treasure of grace in our

hearts which comes from his fulness. It is a sweet truth that Christ is our Law-Fulfiller, and the end of it for righteousness to everyone that believeth.

iv. *Justice* stood in the way; for God is not merciful at the expense of justice, but Christ satisfied justice; he became Surety and discharged our infinite debts; and now God can be just, and yet the Justifier of those that believe in Jesus; so that in and through Jesus Christ, God is "faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

v. *Truth*. When *Truth* says, "The soul that sinneth it shall die," and that "God will by no means clear the guilty," with numberless other texts, how is *Truth* to be cleared if God is merciful? Mercy is not to be manifested at *Truth's* expense; and, therefore, the Lord Jesus comes forth as Surety, and in him "mercy and truth met together, righteousness and peace kissed each other;" and in this way all the attributes and perfections of Jehovah harmonize.

Lastly. *God's honour and glory*. Had the Lord Jesus failed in the work, where would the honour and glory of God have been? Devils would have rejoiced, hell would have triumphed and heaven trembled; for vast numbers were saved upon the footing of what the Lord Jesus Christ was to do before he came into our lower world. But this was impossible, because the Son of God, the second Person in the glorious Trinity, was Jehovah the Son, and therefore almighty to conquer every foe; and in all this great work he sought his Father's honour and glory in the eternal salvation of his elect who were sinners of the deepest dye, and he also obtained it by his conquering sin, death, a broken law, satisfying justice, and clearing *Truth*. Thus in the life, death, resurrection, and glorious ascension of the Lord Jesus, every perfection of Jehovah is in the sweetest harmony, for he completed the whole work; as he said: "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do;" after which, when on the cross, he said, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost; and when he ascended into glory, having purged our sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and declared himself an Overcomer. Hence he says, "I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Rev. iii. 21.)

Having thus shown that Jehovah-Jesus has removed out of the way every obstacle for us, I will now show that every obstacle is removed out of the way also that is in us; and this I believe is the joint work of all the Three Divine Persons in the Trinity. Where are we all when God takes us first in hand? Why, dead in trespasses and sins, cast out in the open field (of this world), destitute of God and of all that is good; and the first thing the Lord does is to quicken us; for spiritual death stands in the way. "God is not the (covenant) God of the dead, but of the living." "And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live."

(Ezek. xvi. 6.) This quickening is spoken of as the work of all the Three Persons in the Godhead; as follows: "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will" (Jno. v. 21); and we read: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." (Jno. vi. 63.) But this good work is, in a peculiar way, the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person in the Trinity, co-equal with the Father and the Son; therefore we will show how he is pleased to remove every obstacle out of the way that is in us; and let it be observed that there is perfect harmony in all the glorious works of God. This is a blessed work that has been carried on in the hearts of all God's family from Adam the first down to the end of time.

This work of quickening is beautifully set forth in Ezek. xxxvii where the prophet is carried out into a valley of dry bones, and the Lord said, "Son of man, can these bones live?" and then he is told to prophesy unto them, and there was a noise, then a shaking, and afterwards they came together, and the sinews and the flesh came, and the skin covered them; but there was no breath in them. After this he prophesied to the four winds, and the breath came into them, which is afterwards explained to be the Holy Spirit. A question may here, with propriety, be asked, and that is coming nearer home, and it is what every honest heart that is seeking after God wishes to know, namely, "Have I got this life?" This indeed is a very important question; for what is all pretension to religion short of it? Christ tells us it is only a name to live: "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." (Rev. iii. 1.)

If we have this life we shall *lay sin to heart*,—the sin of our past and present life; and, in a particular manner, will the body of sin and death which we carry about, be a sore trouble to us. There was a time when sin never troubled us; but now it is a sore trouble, and we mourn on account of the cravings and lustings of the flesh, and that our corrupt nature loves what God hates, and that we often secretly slip into these things. David had life; as he says: "Thy word hath quickened me," and he complains of his sin, saying, "I was born in sin, and shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." In another place he says, "My sore ran in the night, and ceased not." (Ps. lxxvii. 2.) Paul had life: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20); and he tells us of his being the chief of sinners, and says, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 23, 24.) Both these good men *laysin to heart*; it was their grief and burden; and therefore Paul says, "The good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." O the sore struggle there is felt in such a soul as this! His besetting sins are interwoven with his nature; but these things being felt and mourned over is a clear proof to God's family that such a one has life, and in time it will be a clear proof to the poor soul itself.

Solomon says, "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart." (Eccles. vii. 2.) The house of mourning is Christ's house,—his church: "Christ as a Son over his own house; whose house are we." (Heb. iii. 6.) It is such as these who, as the prophet Ezekiel says, mourn for their iniquities; and blessed are such mourners in Zion; for they shall be comforted. The other house belongs to the devil. Hence he says, "I will return to my house," &c.; and such are for feasting, as the rich man who fared sumptuously, and the fool in the gospel, who said to his soul, "Eat, drink, and be merry;" but mourning is the end of all such men when it is too late; for the rich man begged water in hell, and as for the fool, that very night his soul was required of him. To this the same penman agrees when he says, "And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof!" (Prov. v. 11, 12.) Thus the living lay sin to heart. Notice what God by the prophet Malachi says, "If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the Lord of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings; yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart." (Mal. ii. 2.)

But how can laying sin to heart begiving glory unto God's name? What is his name? Why, the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, abundant in goodness and truth, pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin. As I have said both David and Paul lay sin to heart, and both gave glory to the name of the Lord. David says, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give glory" (Ps. cxv. 1), and Paul said, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Gal. vi. 14.) Was ever sin thy plague, thy burden?—Your past and present life, the sins of your nature and the wickedness in your family, the world, &c.? The Word says, "Set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that are done in the land." If this is your case, you have life.

If we have the life of God in our souls we shall know what it is to feel at times *godly sorrow and true repentance*. Legal repentance differs much from evangelical. Legal repentance loves sin and hates God, for it views him as a sin-avenging God, and is only sorry for sin on account of its dreadful consequences and what it has exposed such unto; but evangelical repentance hates sin and loves God, and such loathe, hate, and abhor themselves; as you may see in Ephraim and Job. This is repentance unto life, this is godly sorrow; but the other is desperate sorrow. God's people experience both of these at times; as you may see in Job; for he speaks of his speech being desperate (Job vi. 26); but he was not left there, for he had life; and, therefore, after all this he repented and abhorred himself in dust and ashes.

(To be continued.)

A FEW THOUGHTS ON THE ORIGIN AND BASIS OF GENUINE FAITH.

BY THE LATE W. HUNTINGTON.

FAITH is a persuasion in the mind of the truth of God, whether it respects his Word or works. "God shall *persuade* Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem." (Gen. ix. 27.) It is a fruit of God's Spirit.

1. The faith of God's elect stands in the manifestations of God's holiness, truth, and justice, attended with divine light and the power of God's anger. Such a one "is convinced of all, he is judged of all; and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth." (1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25.) This is the man that God debases and humbles, who is wounded, made sore, and inwardly smarts for sin, and who trembles at God's Word; to such God looks, and with such will he dwell.

2. Such a soul knows and feels himself in the hand of God, and that he is at God's disposal, and at the disposal of no other; and what God intends to do with him, whether to save him or destroy him, whether to make a public example of him or show mercy on him, he knows not; but, as there is a powerful and perpetual cry in his heart for mercy and now and then a word of encouragement applied to him, there is a *peradventure* and some expectation; and the sinner is as sensible of the power that holds him and that bears him up, as he is of the terrible majesty that makes him tremble. His faith, from first to last, stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. (1 Cor. ii. 5.)

3. When the Spirit of God produces hope, and energy in prayer increases, and many Scriptures descriptive of our case are presented to view, and some short intervals of godly sorrow are felt, the darts of Satan lose their force, and the reflections of divine anger often subside, till future deliverance through Christ appears no less at times than certain. "Fear not," says God, "I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." On this powerful arm faith rests. "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" God's arm and faith in the report go together.

4. When pardon takes place, faith receives the atonement of Christ and stands in it. "By the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." (Zech. ix. 11.) And nothing is more sure than this gaol delivery: "Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 43.) God purifies the heart by faith; and such hold the mystery of faith, which faith stands in a pure conscience. (1 Tim. iii. 9.)

5. Faith stands in the blessing of God: "As many as are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." And God's blessing on mount Zion is life for evermore; and he that believeth is passed from death unto life; yea, "he that believeth hath everlasting life."

6. Faith stands in the righteousness of Christ imputed; and to us it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. (Rom. iv. 24.) Yea, this righteousness is to all and upon all them that believe; and the sinner is assured of this. "Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

7. The faith of God's elect stands in the witness of the Holy Ghost witnessing our adoption: "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," and, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." (1 Jno. v. 10.)

8. The faith of a saint stands and triumphs in the everlasting love of God; for faith works by love; and to this agrees the beloved disciple: "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." (1 Jno. iv. 16.)

9. Faith stands in the joy of the Spirit of God and in the peace that Christ made by the blood of his cross. God fills us with joy and peace in believing.

10. Faith stands in Christ Jesus revealed in and manifested to the soul. "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him." The above commandments are his Word, as he explains it: "If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (Jno. xiv. 23.) Thus faith stands in the love of God made known, and in Jesus Christ manifested to the soul. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." (Eph. iii. 17.)

11. Faith stands in the filial fear of God; which fear is peculiar to God's children, and which hath the goodness of God for its object; and it emboldens the believer to fly to God, and to expect his protection in every time of trouble: "In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence; and his children shall have a place of refuge." (Prov. xiv. 26.) These are the footsteps of genuine faith, and the footsteps of the flock; for "we walk by faith and not by sight;" and by the power of God is the believer kept through faith unto salvation. These divine bases on which faith stands are more firm than the everlasting hills.

But what is that poor phantom which passes so current for faith in our days? Just nothing, and worse than nothing; for it is a powerful delusion of the devil, which a just God gives the enemies of his truth up to. "God shall send them strong delusions, that they may believe a lie and be damned." (2 Thess. ii. 11.)

This faith in a lie is nothing less than rash presumption; it presumes upon God and lays a claim upon him, without one Scriptural warrant to venture on. And, in the general, the father of lies begets this faith in the minds of poor sinners under the alarming ministry of graceless men, who are ministers of the letter or of the bare Word of God, without having either the Spirit or his grace in them. The sentence of death and of con-

demnation which is in the preacher, is communicated to such a hearer: "The letter killeth."

The sinner being by nature a child of wrath, and naturally in bondage to the fear of death, and the curse of God being habitually in the tabernacle of the wicked, these are all stirred up, and natural conscience is terrified, while the devil spreads dismal glooms and horrors on the mind, with which he bewilders and distracts the poor wretch. These pass for convictions, and are just such as Ahab had when Elijah met him, and as Saul had when he fell on the ground before the devil in Samuel's mantle; for with these convictions there is no spirit of life to quicken the soul; no true light shining into the heart to discover the desperate deceitfulness of it; no spirit of supplication to set the sinner to crying day and night unto God; no hunger and thirst after righteousness, after the Bread of life, or after the living God. A sinner under such convictions may be known by the following remarks:

First. He feeds upon the vanities of this world in the midst of all his infernal terrors, and hates the light and truth under all his horrors. "They have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds; they assemble themselves for corn and wine, and they rebel against me. Though I have bound and strengthened their arms, yet do they imagine mischief against me. They return, but not to the Most High; they are like a deceitful bow." (Hos. vii. 14-16.)

Second. It may easily be seen that, as there is no Spirit of supplication or crying to God, neither is there any thirst after him; they return, but not to the Most High; as Saul did; he returned, but it was to one of the witches that he had formerly expelled, not to God; and so Judas, he returned, but it was to the priests to whom he confessed his sin; but not to God, nor yet to the Master whom he had betrayed.

Third. Such souls may be known by their pride; for they are never filled with that self-loathing which a soul feels that is quickened by the Spirit of God; there is the leaven of legal pride working in them under all their convictions, and they set themselves up as men of wonderful experience, though they are without hope, and without that experience that worketh hope. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay" (Rom. iii. 27); for it is never excluded by legal terrors.

Fourth. Such a sinner holds fast free-will and self-righteousness under all his convictions. I once knew a preacher who often fell into these legal convictions, till he was like a wild bull in a net; but every time he came out he preached free-will, self-righteousness, and universal redemption, and was looked upon as a man wonderfully taught of God; but it was by the god of this world. I once preached for him at Sheffield in Yorkshire, and disputed with him afterwards till midnight, and began with him the next morning and continued at it till noon, and stopped his mouth

but could not strip him of his spider's web. The last time that I inquired about him I was informed that he had left off preaching for some time, and was confined, and mad; which was what I had long expected. "They hold fast deceit; they refuse to return." (Jer. viii. 5.)

Fifth. Nor do souls under such convictions as these cleave to the children of God, nor to ministers of the Spirit, but to them of the letter; as the prodigal son did under his legal terrors; he joined himself to a citizen of that country; not of the heavenly country, but of this; not to a citizen of mount Zion, but to a citizen of Jerusalem that now is, and is in bondage with all her children; and he tried hard to fill his belly with husks, and would have done it if the Spirit of life had not entered into him; but as soon as he was quickened he felt a mighty famine; then he left his husks and cried for bread. "This my son was dead;" and while dead he cleaved to the swine. "But he is alive again;" and this life gave him his appetite, his cry, and his motion towards God; and the food that fed his soul was Christ crucified, imputed righteousness, the everlasting love of God, and pardon and peace by faith in the blood of the Lamb; all of which are meant by the fatted calf, the best robe, the ring, and the shoes; and every soul that feeds not upon these is as sure to perish as he is born. Now let us see the conversion of this modern professor.

He attends the minister of the letter under whom he got his wound; and, by-and-bye, the same insensibility, presumption, false confidence, blind zeal, and deceitful hopes which possess the preacher are communicated and applied by the devil to this convicted sinner, and out he comes into liberty, as he calls it. This is his conviction, and this is called a seal to such a man's ministry. Like priest, like people; he hears the word, and anon with joy receives it; yet hath he no root in himself.

Now he compares himself not with the Word of God, nor with the experience of the children of God, nor with the ministers of the Spirit, but with those to whom Satan sends him, those of his own caste. "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." (2 Cor. x. 12.) Then they are fools.

2. He now makes his conversion known to the preacher; and others in the same delusion give their judgment of the work and conclude it to be a real work of grace; and the poor deluded mortal believes it and is established in it; and thus his faith stands in the wisdom of man, but not in the power of God.

3. He often finds his passions moved by oratory; for he is very fond of an orator, and he drops a few tears; this is called a watering time with him, and it passes for godly sorrow. At other times his fancy is tickled, and he laughs and rejoices; this passes for the joy of the Lord; but God gives it another name. "The joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment." (Job xx. 5.) "As the

THE EXPERIENCE AND DEATH OF EDITH HARDING,
OF MELKSHAM, WILTS.

My mother dated her first religious impressions from a dream which she had when only four years of age, in which she thought she saw the Lord Jesus; but it was not until she had grown up to womanhood that she was powerfully convinced of her state as a sinner before a just and holy God.

The means by which the Lord was pleased to bring about this change was one of her sisters being called by grace, which worked very powerfully upon my mother's mind; for she thought her sister would be saved and she would surely be lost. Her trouble was so great that it was visible in her countenance, and once, when walking in the street, a person stopped her and asked the cause of her distress. She replied that it was because she believed one of her sisters would be saved, but that there was no hope for her. The person looked at her very earnestly and asked if she did not believe that the same God who had saved her sister could also save her. She answered, "I know he is able; but how can I know that he is willing to save me?"

How long she remained in this distress I cannot say; but about three weeks before her deliverance she was powerfully arrested with these words: "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." (Rom. xii. 19.) Also the following: "Pay me that thou owest." She replied, "Lord, I cannot pay; for I have nothing to pay with." These words were attended with such power and the terrors of God's holy law took such hold upon her that she said she could compare it to nothing but a fire kindled in her conscience; and this feeling never left her until the Lord was pleased to deliver her soul. Her distress of mind was so great that she lost all concern for her poor body and went three days and three nights without either eating or drinking; but as she was preparing the dinner for her children the Lord was pleased to break into her soul and opened the eyes of her understanding. She sat down in a chair, and, to use her own words, she and her precious Christ embraced each other. The love of Christ so filled her soul that she felt she loved him with all her powers, both of body, soul, and spirit.

A season of great joy succeeded this love-visit, and she thought none were so loved and brought into such sweet favour as she was, while her soul was filled with wonder that God should have looked upon and blessed such a poor ignorant, foolish creature as she felt herself to be; but the Lord was pleased to show her that it was the foolish, base, and despised among men that he made his choice and in whom he would glorify his holy name. Hymn 191 described the feelings of her soul at this time. The doctrine of election was sweetly unfolded to her view, and she saw it to be a Bible-truth.

The ordinance of Believers' Baptism was also opened up to her, and she saw it to be the right way into the church; and feel-

ing that the Lord had done such great things for her, she desired to make a public profession of her faith in the Lord Jesus and made known her wish to the friends at the chapel. She thought she had a very great experience to relate to the church, and became much lifted up in her feelings; so that she looked forward with pleasure to being visited by one of the deacons, which was then the custom of the church; but no deacon came to see her. However, she thought she need not mind how many people she had to stand up before at the church-meeting, as the Lord had done such great things for her soul; but before the time came she had a dream in which she thought she was at the meeting with a sack around her shoulders; and so it proved to be; for when she was called upon to relate the dealings of God with her soul she was so shut up and confused that one of the members seemed to doubt whether there was anything real in her, remarking that time would prove what would be the end of her profession.

But although she was so dark in her mind when she went before the church, the Lord was pleased most sweetly to bless her at her baptism. Hymn 655 expressed the inward feelings of her soul at this time. After her baptism she had a sore conflict with Satan, when these words were much impressed upon her mind: "They shall hear the noise of archers." Not knowing what they could mean, she asked her husband if they were in the Word of God; for she had never read them. As she was about to go to the house of God on the following Sabbath, the following words were applied to her soul: "I will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her" (Zech. ii. 5), and when she entered the chapel one of the members was about to engage in prayer, and almost the first words he uttered were the portion above-named, upon which fear took hold upon her, and she was afraid there was some trouble to follow; and so it proved, for Satan raised a dreadful storm against her to overcome her, but the Lord enabled her to withstand him, and, by precious faith, to overcome. After this he stirred up my father, and caused him to fly in a passion without the least provocation; and so that at times she had to run out of his presence.

Before the birth of myself my dear mother laboured under a dreadful temptation, Satan presenting to her mind that the child about to be born would be a child of the devil. The temptation was laid with such weight upon her mind that she could not get away from it, and when I was born she could not feel a mother's love to her own offspring. Under this temptation she was completely bowed down with sorrow; but the Lord's time came to break the snare. One day, as she was walking up the yard, these words came with almighty power into her soul: "Satan is a liar, and the father of it." The power that attended these words completely broke the snare, and not a doubt remained on her mind concerning the salvation of the soul of her child. After this she was much favoured with the presence of the Lord and held sweet communion with him.

She was blessed with a sweet assurance that she would have the pleasure of witnessing her husband brought to the knowledge of the truth, which caused her greatly to rejoice. Some time after this my father was laid aside with a very serious illness and there appeared but little hope of his recovery. My mother went to inquire of the Lord concerning him, and had these words applied to her: "He shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord." It was in this affliction that the Lord was pleased to convince my father of his state as a sinner and bring him to know the Lord Jesus as his Saviour. He lived some years after this, but was never fully restored to health again, which was a trial to my mother; but many mercies were mixed with this cup of sorrow. At one time she was sorely tried in a way of providence, and most of her children were ill with fever; but the Lord so prospered the work of her own hands that she was enabled to almost support them all with her earnings.

From a dream which she had about this time she seemed to be impressed that her pathway in life for some time to come would be a very trying one, which proved to be the case during the following ten years, at the end of which time the words were made very precious to her: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." The salvation of the souls of her children was laid with great weight upon her mind, and she put up many prayers to the Lord that he would have mercy upon them. One time in particular she felt much nearness to the Lord in pleading for them, and was enabled to wrestle hard with God in prayer, feeling that she could take no denial, when these words were applied with much power to her soul: "They shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the watercourses," which led her to hope that as her children grew up, their souls would be watered with the dew of heaven. This proved to be the case, for two of us were called by grace in our early years; but one was not long for this world, for the Lord was pleased to take her away in the morning of her days. Soon after this my father was removed by death, after which my mother's health began to fail, and she only survived her husband and child a few short years.

She gradually became more weaned from things below, and seeing her clothing hanging in the room she said she had no desire to put it on again. About a year before she died she seemed to have a presentiment that her time upon earth would not be long, and repeated the hymn commencing,

"Death is no more a frightful foe," &c.

Upon one occasion I found her overwhelmed with a sense of the Lord's goodness to her, and she told me he had sweetly made it known to her that he would soon fetch her home to dwell with him for ever. She told me not to expect that she would be in raptures of joy during her last moments; but said the Lord had assured her that it would be well with her. I asked her if she had any doubts in her mind. She replied, "My dear child, I feel

as sure of going to heaven as though I were already there." After this Satan tried hard to shake the foundation of her faith, and I perceived by her countenance that she was much troubled in mind. I asked her if Satan was distressing her. She replied, "That busy foe tells me he will have me after all." I went into the next room and begged of the Lord not to permit Satan to harass her in her weak state of body, and while I was praying the Lord was pleased to answer; for I had no sooner entered her room than her countenance brightened up, and she said,

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are."

She seemed to lament not being able to praise the Lord enough while in this time state, to which I replied that she would soon be able to praise him for all through which she had passed. She answered, "It will take eternity to praise him." Speaking of the sufferings of the body being great, I reminded her of what the Lord went through with no earthly friend to succour him; to which she replied, with much earnestness, "Christ had his God-head to sustain him."

Although reduced to a mere shadow, with her dying breath she contended for the importance of vital godliness. A person coming in who had not a clear understanding of the way of salvation, she strengthened herself, and with all her powers endeavoured to show her the way more clearly. The Church clergyman calling to see her she spoke very faithfully to him also. One of her children being yet of tender age was rather a tie to her, but the Lord was pleased to remove this from her, and enable her to leave her child in his hands. I was greatly troubled at the thought of parting with her, as she was a companion to me in the things of God. Seeing me so distressed she called me to her, and said she had been praying to the Lord for me, and that she was assured he had heard her prayer on my behalf. I was the only person present at her departure, and instead of being overwhelmed with grief I was enabled to thank the Lord for his goodness in taking my dear mother home, to dwell with him for ever in glory. She departed this life on November 17th, 1862.

THE raising of the body free from corruption and mortality, admitting it to the presence of God, putting upon it and the soul never-fading glory, a crown of righteousness, and palms of victory; and then bringing them to drink of those rivers of pleasure which are at God's right hand for evermore, these are some of the exceeding great promises which are to be completed at the Lord's coming to judgment.—*Romaine.*

THE gilded toys of time that so attract the view, the empty shadows of sense that so bewitch the heart; yea, life itself with all comforts,—what are all compared to one moment's enjoyment of the lovingkindness of the Lord!—*Mason.*

A DEBTOR TO DIVINE CLEMENCY.

My dear Friend,—Agreeable to your request I have enclosed Mr. W's letter with thanks. I feel a strong persuasion in my mind that this will find you on the mending hand, having found freedom of spirit on your behalf.

Whenever I feel my heart enlarged and my stammering tongue unloosed I conclude, from inward sensations, that the ever-blessed Advocate hath undertaken the cause, that the feeble sacrifice of the poor petitioner has come up with acceptance upon the golden altar, and that the great High Priest of our profession hath, in infinite condescension, perfumed and purified the imperfect offering with the much incense of his own grand oblation. I had an earnest of this yesterday evening while remembering you and others at the footstool of the King of kings; and when I arose from my knees these words, with a gentle vibration, followed me down from my chamber: "Go in peace; I have accepted thee." When this still small voice reaches the heart of the poor beggar, faith takes her station, with hope, upon the watch-tower, expecting an answer to prayer; and when the answer comes, they invite up the affections to pour out the heart in grateful acknowledgments to the Giver of every good and perfect gift: "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God." (Ps. l. 23.) To order the conversation aright is, among other things, by prayer and supplication in every time of trouble to let our request be made known unto God. This is to have our conversation in heaven, where our blessed All in all is now before the throne, even Jesus, who ever liveth to maintain the cause of the afflicted and the right of the poor in spirit. The pardoned, justified sinner shall, under the sweet constraints of his dying love, give thanks unto his blessed name, and, by faith now and in fruition ere long, the upright shall dwell in his presence.

I do feel grateful to the Father of all mercies for putting my dear friend into the furnace at this time, and my earnest hope is that you will, ere long, gather the peaceable fruits that will afterwards follow, and that you will find abundant cause to bless the Almighty for this visitation. O how much better is it for God to say to the souls of his chosen, "I will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes, &c." than for him to say in anger, "Ephraim is joined unto idols; let him alone." How much better is it to be visited with fatherly correction than to be settled on the lees or left at ease in Zion! We are apt to pass wrong judgment upon the dispensations of the Most High; but this ariseth from the native ignorance and unbelief that still remains in us. It was this made Asaph so rebellious in his mind when he concluded that he had cleansed his heart in vain; for he said, "All the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning." But when he went into the sanctuary he learned a better lesson; and though he was pre-

vented from preaching this perverse doctrine publicly, lest he should offend against the generation of God's children, yet the Holy Ghost caused him to write it, that we might have a glass to see our own hearts in. In all these things we are instructed, and also learn that lovingkindness and the rod are coupled together in the dealings of God with his children, and "blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law; that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity." (Ps. xciv. 12, 13.)

Therefore let not my beloved friend murmur against this afflictive dispensation, nor faint, on the other side, under the Lord's mighty hand; for "he will turn again, he will have compassion according to the multitude of his tender mercies." Thou wilt, I hope, leave the sick chamber with a tender heart and a contrite spirit; and when thou afterward shalt visit that room the remembrance of the present visitation will often draw forth thy soul in gratitude to God for his mercy and faithfulness to thee in his dear Son. Thou wilt bless him with thy whole soul for every stroke laid upon thee, and say, with the man after God's own heart, "Thy gentleness hath made me great," that is, the greatest sinner in thine own eyes and the greatest debtor to divine clemency in thy own estimation among the sons of men. I have learned a little of this lesson in the school of experience, and therefore can the more freely speak of it to my fellow-sufferer. May the good Physician condescend to apply his precious balm to thy heart and anoint thine eyes with his eye-salve. You will then with gratitude acknowledge that he hath done all things well, and plainly see that he is leading thee forth out of every snare by the right way that leads to the city of habitation.

I am but poorly to-day, therefore cannot enlarge. Accept this small mite as a token of the unfeigned affection I bear to my dear friend, his helpmeet, his family, and the shopmen who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth.

Yesterday I saw my poor sister M. She is in ill-health and in possession of but few of the comforts of this life; but she shares richly in the blessed earnestness of the future inheritance. Her conversation kindled a sacred glow in my heart while expressing her desires to depart and be with Christ which is far better.

My little family and brother W. join with me in love to all under your roof. Mercy, peace, and truth be with thee. Amen.

Feb. 23rd, 1821.

J. KEET.

JOY UNSPEAKABLE.

My dear Friend,—I feel it on my mind to write a line, but hope I shall not be a trouble to you.

We were glad to hear that you reached home in safety. The Lord takes care of his people and preserves them in their going out and coming in. But, dear friend, how forgetful I am of his

many mercies which he gives me from day to day. I feel to have such a hard, vile, and deceitful heart, and sometimes I think, Can ever God dwell in such a heart as mine, or am I deceived after all? Sometimes I fear I am, and my cry is, "Lord, let me not be deceived in these things. O that thou wouldst show me a token for good!" If I am not altogether deceived the Lord has been precious to my soul; and I am sure when he manifests himself to us, it is then we can say that he is the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely. I have at times said, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

Since I commenced writing this letter a little hope has sprung up that the Lord will come again over the mountains of my sin and guilt. I once felt the following lines to be very sweet:

"Did Jesus once upon me shine?
Then Jesus is for ever mine."

The last line seems too much for a poor thing like me to say, but nothing less than to know that he is mine will satisfy my soul. When I feel to be in the dark and am cast down, then I think, Will the Lord be favourable no more? Will he cast off for ever? And sometimes when I feel these things I cannot pray as I would, but can only sigh, and oftentimes cannot even do that. Then I think, Do the Lord's people ever feel like this? Can it be thus with those who know and love his name, or am I deceived? Sometimes I fear that, after all, my religion will come to nothing and it will be made manifest that I have been deceived. It is often suggested to my mind that I am not right, and I feel burdened on account of it; so that I can use the words of Hezekiah and say, "O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me."

There are many things to make me feel oppressed, but, dear friend, I feel a little thankful that I am not left without a desire; for I know it is a mercy to be kept seeking the Lord, and it is also a mercy that he has made me to feel my need of him, and that without his salvation I cannot escape eternal death. O what love and condescension that Christ should look upon poor sinners and that he should suffer, bleed, and die for them. When we are enabled to believe, by precious faith, that he died for us, this gives joy unspeakable and full of glory. I am sure there is nothing to be compared to this, for everything else sinks into nothing.

You will think this is an up and down scribble, but I write as I feel. I am a poor changeable thing. Your poetry describes my feelings well. May the Lord be with you in every trial and bless you, and when you preach his word may he bless it, as he has done many times, to the encouragement of his dear people and to the convincing of poor sinners who are yet dead in sin.

Mrs. S. left here on Friday. We should have liked her to have stayed longer. I feel a union to her; for she has the same sort of feelings as I have. I love the company of the Lord's people

on earth, and long to feel more love to the Lord and to them. I know I may give my father's and sister's love to you, though they do not know I am writing. Please remember me in your prayers. I hope I have not wearied you.

Yours affectionately,

June 25th, 1866.

SALOME TOMBS.

A GLIMPSE OF THE HOLY CITY.

Dear Friend,—After a long delay I now try to write a few lines in reply to your very kind letter, in the reading of which my poor soul was refreshed. I am travelling towards the end of my journey, and am still in the path of tribulation, not knowing what a day may bring forth; for the Lord is often reminding me how frail I am: "In the morning we are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth." (Ps. xc. 5, 6.) O what a great thing it will be to be found ready when the Son of man shall come. If it is the Lord's will I want him to grant me a special visit from himself and take me home. I cannot live contented without some glimpses of his face here, but I want to see him as he is. It is a mercy to have some knowledge of the way, if it is a path of tribulation; for thousands have never yet set one step in it. But although our path has been rough, yet what is it compared to His who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself! I want to be kept humble at his feet, and know that he is my God and Father. We are more ready to murmur than to be thankful. We see God, as a Sovereign, put forth his hand, and we cannot stay it. He sometimes takes away our earthly comforts to give us more enjoyment of spiritual things, yet on looking back we have to confess that he has done all things well.

I fear you will think me a very strange man for not having answered your letter before, but my head has been so bad that I have not been able to write, and could not read but very little. I have only been able to preach a few times of late, and I think my little work is nearly done. I want to enjoy more of the presence of the Lord. He has hitherto spared the poor worm, while he has taken others of his children and of his servants. My dear old friend, Mr. Doe, is gone to his eternal rest. I almost envy him; but I feel it will not be long before I go hence to be no more seen here below. It is blessed to now and then get a glimpse of the holy city; for it produces a longing to see Jesus as he is. A glimpse now and then is very sweet, but if this is so precious, what will it be to be with him and be for ever like him. It seems too much for such a poor thing as I feel myself to be; but if a sip now and then is so sweet, what must the fulness be? Nothing less than realizing this will do for me. I thought that I should have gone home before now, and my friends thought so too, but God's thoughts and ways are very different to ours. The time was not come. I could not go to the house of God for several

Sabbaths, and now can only preach once in the day. My son took my place, and the friends got on very well with him. I hope he will be of more use to the people of God than ever his father has been. I am glad to tell you that the Lord is pleased to bless our meeting together from time to time. It is sweet to feel the Lord's presence when we meet together for prayer. There is nothing to be compared to it. It is like a little heaven below; but what must it be to leave the body of sin and death behind, and see Jesus as he is. You speak in your letter of temptations, but there will be none when we get to heaven. Our friends who are gone before knew what temptation was. I feel that my time here below is short; but he that hath helped me hitherto will, I trust, continue to help me unto the end.

I should much like to see my friends at B. once more, but if I never see them again on earth I hope to see them in heaven. I am drawing near the end of my journey, and it is with difficulty I can get to the house of God, and I think each time will be the last. Although you have many temptations to endure, if this were not the case what evidence would you have of being a child of God? I have had a good many, but the Lord has given me grace to endure. I am often thinking about you, although I cannot come to see you. What poor changeable creatures we are, but it is a mercy that his lovingkindness changes not. I find by yours that you have been in the furnace again. Job said, "When he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold." What a mercy the Lord will not leave us to sink, but that he will bring us up again to praise his precious Name. It is very trying when although favoured to sit under the means we cannot feel the power of the Spirit, or realize the love of God; but O what a change there is when the Lord comes skipping over the hills; and we can then say that it is good to wait upon the Lord. I sincerely desire that you may feel and enjoy much of the dew resting upon your branch, though it is but seldom thus with me. I was favoured with a precious view of Jesus one night last week, but I have not strength or ability to tell it out. The language of Solomon came so sweetly to my mind, where he says, "What is thy Beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women?" What a contrast between the whore of Babylon and the Lord's spouse. What sweet language is that of Jesus to his redeemed, where he says, "My Father himself loveth you." O what will it all avail at the last if he is not our Beloved! Sometimes we can say we love the Lord because he hath regarded our poor breathings. The Lord has been exceedingly good to me of late. I have been brought very near Jordan, but have not passed over yet: "The Lord is good, a Stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him." (Nahum i. 7.) Give my very kind love to all the friends, especially to your father and mother.

I am, Yours in Best Bonds,

July 9th, 1872.

H. POCOCK.

ETERNAL PUNISHMENT AND SEDUCING TEACHERS.

BY THE EDITOR.

THE Lord, shortly before entering upon his sufferings, cautioned his apostles and the church of God down to the end of time against men who should presume to take upon them his great name, saying, "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matt. xxiv. 24); and the apostle Paul, when about to suffer martyrdom for the truth of Christ, wrote to his son Timothy, saying, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." (1 Tim. iv. 1, 2.) We are living in these latter times, when men, as regards their religious views, wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

The apostle Peter, when he was about to put off the earthly house of his tabernacle, testified that he and his fellow apostles had not followed cunningly devised fables; and when referring to past and future days he spoke under the Spirit of inspiration, saying, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." (2 Pet. ii. 1.)

Every kind of error that Satan can devise and palm upon preachers who are ignorant of real godliness is now being sown broadcast, some by one religious sect and some by another. It would almost appear as if there were a race being run by many of the leading men amongst the so-called religious teachers of the present day to try which can outdo the other in violating the Scriptures, misinterpreting them, condemning them, denying their inspiration, and even going so far as to question whether the Redeemer ever spoke the words which the Evangelists have recorded, who were witnesses of his Person and who heard the solemn and separating sentences which fell from his blessed lips.

One of the most prominent doctrines which worldly religious teachers are promulgating is the *denial of the eternal punishment of the wicked*. This doctrine, which a few years ago was believed in by most of the religious denominations, is now being repudiated by the great bulk of professors. Learned men rise up with their sophistry and plausible speech to endeavour to interpret the Scriptures according to their corrupted reason, and they find multitudes upon multitudes who eagerly receive and swallow down, to their own destruction, their pernicious and God-dishonouring sentiments.

Amongst the various denominations who hold and preach the most flesh-gratifying errors is the Church of England. At the Church Congress held at Manchester, Oct. 5th, 1888, Archdeacon Farrar said that *the old doctrine of eternal punishment, in all its*

naked horror and with all its false accretions, was practically dead. He said it had been softened down in every possible direction; it was scarcely alluded to in any sermon; theologians on all sides seemed anxious to disown or modify those particular ways of presenting the doctrine, or even in the face of countless volumes of theology and homiletics to maintain that these never were the prevalent views in the Christian Church. For fully one thousand five hundred years those had undoubtedly been the prevalent opinions among Christians, but they had never been the real doctrine of the Christian Church.

Moreover he said the late Dr. Pusey differed from him as to the views of the Rabbis and the fathers and other matters, but he found with the deepest thankfulness that on every question which he deemed to be vital Dr. Pusey was absolutely at one with him. He had argued and Dr. Pusey had admitted that it was no part of the Catholic faith to believe, first, that the torments of hell were physical; or secondly, that the vast majority of mankind were doomed to them; or thirdly, that we must assume them to be the lot of all who died and made no sign; or fourthly, that every form of retribution beyond the grave was necessarily endless. Both he and Dr. Pusey argued in favour of two proposals,—first, that God might reach any souls whose case to us seemed to be hopeless, and secondly, that there might be a terminable punishment in Hades in the intermediate state beyond the grave. He said if they looked through the New Testament they would not find one word which demanded a belief in the final fixation of each man's destiny at the moment of death, or taught anything resembling a hopeless futurity of torment and rebellion awaiting the great mass of mankind. For himself he ventured to express the hope that the destiny of this world would not end in final dualism. To him the one text, "God is love," was sufficient to disprove the doctrine of endless torment, which alone he had repudiated.*

All this is horrid blasphemy against God and his Word, which tells us that the wicked shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, and that the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever. The apostle Jude, who wrote with such vehemency of spirit upon these matters, speaking of the angels which kept not their first estate, says, "they are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day;" and that the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, who so solemnly and suddenly were cut off through their wickedness, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. But these gentlemen who assume the name of reverend and who get their livelihoods by deceiving souls, in their fight for notoriety and their

* These undisguised statements are not confined to Archdeacon Farrar; but they are sentiments held by a great many men, both in and outside the pale of the Church of England. They are forerunners to pave the way for an open declaration in the belief of purgatory. Such men ought to be at once expelled from the National Church and go over to the Church of Rome, to which body in spirit they belong. Some time ago we reviewed a little work by Mr. Hemington, wherein he writes most Scripturally on the meaning of the words "everlasting," and "eternal punishment." We again strongly recommend the distribution of this little work.

blasphemous assumptions, are each determined, if possible, to stand upon the highest pedestal, and so exhibit themselves and their doctrine to the public gaze. John says, "They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." (1 Jno. iv. 5.)

At this same Church Congress one very reverend gentleman, named Sir Geo. W. Cox, of York, who was unable to be present, sent a paper which was read to the meeting, in which he said that respecting death, judgment, heaven, and hell, and endless punishment beyond the grave, we have now escaped from this evil dream, having learnt that the darkness, misery, and despair which it spread about us were caused by our forefathers and by ourselves. The yoke of those deadly falsehoods had been broken, and we could rejoice in our deliverance.

He said that *these doctrines which were mentioned in the Epistles of Jude and Peter were obtained from a book called the Book of Enoch.** Also that the discourses of the Redeemer in Matt. xxiv. and xxv. were obtained from the same source, namely, the Book of Enoch; and consequently these discourses which the apostles heard and received into their souls from the lips of the dear Redeemer were never uttered as they are given to us, and probably were never uttered at all. He further said that such questions as these must be settled according to the evidence at our command, and not by appeals to the authority of the book in which they are found, such appeals or claims involving a tyranny which has become intolerable, and which must be fought against until it be utterly put down.

In Matt. xxv. the Lord, just previous to his sufferings, preached to his disciples the doctrine of everlasting life and happiness to the righteous, whom he calls his sheep, and of everlasting punishment and misery to the wicked, whom he calls goats. But this Rev. Sir G. W. Cox questioned whether the Lord ever uttered the words at all, and we should not be surprised to hear of these men and others of a similar class going so far as to assert that such a Person as the Lord Jesus Christ never was born into this world, that he never went to the end of the law for righteousness for his people, that he never suffered in the garden of Gethsemane, that he never died on the cross for the sins of his elect; and that the New Testament, from beginning to end, is nothing but a myth or a fable.

It is true such doctrines and teaching cannot be held by the Lord's own people, who are exhorted to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints,—that is, the word of faith in all its branches and all its bearings; but we write these things as a word of warning to the simple and unwary. The Word

* The Mohammedans say Enoch was the third and the greatest of the prophets that flourished in the antediluvian world, and that he was commissioned to preach to the progeny of Cain; but as they rejected his doctrine, he waged war with them, and made them servants and slaves of true believers, and ordered the faithful in future to treat all such as infidels. So he is said to be the originator of religious wars, and the first prophet who inculcated the duty of persecuting infidels or unbelievers.

of God is as plain upon the doctrine of eternal punishment to the wicked as it is upon the eternal happiness of the righteous.

One gentleman, in writing an Article upon this statement and doctrine at the Church Congress, was so exhilarated in spirit and so jubilant over the progress of this doctrine of devils, that he said the introduction of the subject of *eternal punishment* would in twenty years time be very rare, not only in the Established Church, but in half of the Nonconformist sects as well. We may with safety conclude that as the world becomes more civilized and wise in natural things, they wax worse and worse in all that should concern them respecting death, judgment, and eternity.

The quotations we have given are from men in the National Establishment, or the Church of England,—men who have sworn to uphold the thirty-nine Articles. Against such men as these and the doctrines which they are advancing and which appear so general amongst these so-called divines, we raise a solemn protest, and pronounce them blasphemous to the last degree; and we venture to say that the Church, with such men, and *leading* men within her pale, is a national disgrace, and the sooner this National Church is separated from the State the better and more creditable to the community at large.

Obituary.

JOHN CRUMP.—On March 14th, 1888, aged 69, John Crump, senior deacon of the church at Maidstone.

He was deeply convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment when quite a youth, and would say to his father, mother, and the family, "We shall all be lost and sink to hell, unless God has mercy on us;" for he felt they were all living in sin, according to the course of this world, and caring nothing about God and his truth. The Holy Spirit so opened his eyes to see and his heart to feel the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the sinfulness of his own heart and life that he sank very low in soul-trouble; but did not continue very long in this distress. At this time he had never heard the truth preached, and did not know any of God's people; but he used to cry and groan for mercy day and night. One day when in the fields, to use his own words, he was brought to utter despair, fell down before the Lord, and said, "Here I am, Lord; do with me as thou wilt. If thou send me to *hell*, thou art just." But that day the Lord turned his captivity; mercy and love flowed into his heart, and he was delivered from his sin and sorrow. He went home to his friends, and said, "I shall not go to hell; the Lord has had mercy on me and pardoned my sins. *I know he has.* But you will be sure to go there, unless the Lord has mercy on you as he has had on me."

I have stated the above manifestation of the Lord's mercy and love to him as nearly as I could in his own words, having heard him relate it several times with tears of gratitude. I have no

writings of his, excepting a few letters in which he mentions several things respecting his own experience. It appears from them that he never heard the truth or found the Lord's people until he became acquainted with the person who was afterwards his wife, who proved a suitable helpmeet both in nature and grace. In her mother's house he first saw the "Gospel Standard," where he found his state and exercises traced out. Speaking of it he says, "It was made a great blessing to my soul, especially the writings of Philpot, J. Rusk, and G. T. Congreve, and the sermons published in it, &c."

He was married on Oct. 12th, 1844. The following Lord's day, Mr. Clifford came to preach in a cottage near to his home and he and his wife both went to hear him. The text was, "The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock, and let the God of my salvation be exalted." This sermon was blessed to the comfort of his soul, and through it the Lord carried conviction to the heart of his wife. She afterwards obtained mercy, as may be seen by referring to her obituary, in the "Gospel Standard," Feb. No., 1887. From that time their house was open to the Lord's people and ministers.

Shortly after, there was a vacancy for an attendant in the Barming Heath Lunatic Asylum, and he applied for the place. He went before the doctor, who said he was too short and not strong enough for it. This became a great exercise of mind to him, as he much wanted to leave the men and others he was connected with in his employment. When in prayer to the Lord about the matter, one day, while at his work, he felt a sweet nearness and assurance that the Lord would make the way plain and he should have the place. He went home in the evening and told his wife; but she said, "You are neither big enough nor strong enough." He answered, "The Lord has assured me I shall have it;" and in a few days the magistrate sent for him and gave him the situation, which he filled for about 32 years. There he experienced many trials and deliverances.

About four years after he was married, his wife had a severe fit of illness; but the Lord granted him a wrestling spirit of prayer, that he could not give her up nor rest until the Lord gave him these words, "She shall not die, but live." This filled his heart with peace and rest; for he had faith to believe she would be raised up.

After 2 or 3 years the preaching was discontinued in the cottage before-named; but having found a few of the Lord's children, he and his wife cleaved to them, and they took a room in King Street, Maidstone, and opened it for preaching. Here Mr. Russell of Rotherfield preached, Mr. Clifford, William Birch of Staplehurst, and others; but he himself, having liberty to leave his situation only one Lord's day in a month, was much kept away from hearing the word, and it was a heavy trial for his faith.

Again his wife was taken very ill with bronchitis and pleurisy, and had a long illness; and as he was so much from home, it

tried him greatly. His sleep departed from him, and he found no rest, Satan tempting him that it was of no use to pray. His wife's affliction and the place he was in all seemed against him; and with a deep sense of his sins and wretchedness before God, he sank low indeed under temptation, unbelief, and trouble. But one night in this distress, when he was at home, he went into the front bedroom and knelt down by a chair, feeling that he could not leave off prayer if the Lord did not appear. After some little time the Lord spoke these words with power to his soul: "*Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.*" He said, "Lord, thou knowest what I will;" and sweet peace and assurance flowed in. He went and told his wife she would get well; for the Lord had told him so.

After her recovery, when she was able to get out to chapel again, Mr. Birch came to preach, and both she and her husband had such a day of mercy and goodness under the preaching that their hearts were knit to him and his ministry, and they all rejoiced together. The love of God being now shed abroad in their hearts, wisdom's ways became to them ways of pleasantness and all her paths peace; and they soon arranged to go to Staplehurst, where Mr. Birch baptized them both on one day. This was a memorable day to them, a day of joy and peace.

In the year 1864 the Lord's afflicting hand was again laid on his wife, and that for some months. She was also in great soul trouble, and he was deeply exercised about her. She had never been brought into liberty; and in her affliction the terrors of the law, sin, and guilt lay heavy on her soul. While in prayer for her in his bedroom at the Asylum, the Lord spoke these words to him with power: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God;" and he said, "I felt persuaded the Lord would appear." At this time the doctor at the Asylum allowed him to go home every morning to see his wife; and shortly after this answer to his prayer, he found her rejoicing and praising the Lord. She said, "The Lord is come, and has forgiven me all my sins. He has said, 'Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath saved thee. Go in peace.'" Now they rejoiced and praised the Lord together for his goodness and mercy. How sweet is the manifested mercy of God to a poor, seeking soul.

My friend had many marked answers to prayer and was also blessed with much tenderness in the fear of God. He walked much under a sense of his sinnership, and would say in conversation, "I am such a sinner; and it often seems presumption for me to hope in his mercy. I seem so dead and prayerless; it is only when I get in real trouble I can pray much."

After serving in the Asylum for 30 years he felt very anxious to leave, but feared to put his hand to it. He sought the Lord for deliverance, and these words came with sweetness, "Naphtali is a hind let loose." He was brought to a quiet rest in the Lord, and was led to wait and watch his hand. After a little more than 32 years' service, the magistrate superannuated him, releasing him with full pay for life, having proved him a faithful

servant. This was a merciful interposition of providence; and he and his wife saw the Lord's hand in thus giving him favour in the eyes of those he had to do with.

After this his wife's eyesight failed from cataract, and her weak state of health soon caused him trouble. Her loss in July, 1886, was a heavy trial to him, for they were closely united, both naturally and spiritually. He was mercifully supported, though Satan was permitted to try him much at times with evil suggestions.

He and his wife both took great interest in the cause at Maidstone; in fact, they had the main part of the management of it, and were looked up to with esteem by all the friends. When the church was formed there in April, 1878, he was chosen to fill the office of senior deacon.

Some ten months before his death, he had a note on a Lord's day morning, to say the minister expected that day was ill and could not come. He said, "This so cast me down, and I felt so rebellious and full of murmuring that I could not pray or take any part in the morning service." But in the afternoon he engaged in prayer and was quite broken down. These lines of Medley's came with power into his soul:

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

and the whole hymn (1105) was blessed to him.

I was engaged to supply on Lord's day, March 11th, and the Tuesday following. I went to his house on the Saturday previous, and found him in a comfortable frame of mind, though not quite in his usual state of health. He told me the 303rd hymn had been much on his mind during the week, and said, "I never saw or felt such sweetness in it before." He spent most of the time speaking of his past experience of the Lord's mercy, and said how many times the Lord had delivered him from his fears. On Sunday morning he was still in the same sweet frame, and was quite softened through the day under a sense of the Lord's goodness. My text was Eph. i. 17, 18; and the subject was very applicable to him. In the afternoon he gave out hymn 1082, and was again broken down. The 4th verse reads:

"When love in one delightful stream
Through every bosom flows,
When union sweet and dear esteem,
In every action glows!"

After we returned home, he spoke of many things in his past life; how the Lord met with him when quite a youth, what trouble and distress he was in the day the Lord put away his sin, what joy and peace he then enjoyed, and what goodness and mercy had followed him all through his life. He spoke with tears of joy and comfort.

On Monday morning he was still peaceful and calm. Many

times during the day did tears run down his face while speaking of the Lord's past mercies. On Tuesday morning he awoke about 2 o'clock, and hymn 1005 was very sweet to him:

"Come, let us join our cheerful songs,"

In the evening service he gave out that hymn first, and seemed filled with contrition. Our friends, Mr. and Mrs. W., sent for us to take tea with them that afternoon, which he seemed pleased to do. After dinner he became very unwell, and said he should not be able to go. Afterwards he became better, and we went. While there, as he was speaking to our friends of his not being well, Mr. W. remarked "We do not know how soon the end will come with us." He said, "No, but if we are interested in the Lord's mercy, there is nothing to wish to live for." Much of the conversation was on the shortness of time, which he seemed feelingly to enter into.

In the evening we went to the chapel, and though not very well, he was still in the same softened frame. The last hymn he gave out was the 833rd, and the second verse seemed much to express his feelings:

"Mercy may justly claim
A sinner's thankful voice;
And judgment joining in the theme,
We tremble and rejoice."

My text was Ps. lxxiii. 8: "My soul followeth hard after thee; thy right hand upholdeth me." All the service seemed suitable to him, but little did we think he was so near his end. That night again he sat up until late, talking of his past experience and the Lord's manifested mercy, and seemed better in body.

The next morning he said he had not had a very good night, and complained of pains in his chest; but he was still comfortable in mind. He took breakfast with me, after which I left, little thinking I should see him no more.

About the middle of the day he was taken with pains in his chest and bowels, and went to lie down on his bed. He quietly passed away about 7 o'clock in the evening. Truly his end was peace.

E. ASHDOWN.

JOHN HARTLEY.—On Sept. 9th, 1888, aged 64, John Hartley, for many years deacon of the church at Bradford, Yorkshire, and for about twenty years minister of the gospel.

He preached with his feet and hands as well as with his tongue; for with his feet he preached consistency of walk, and with his hands he administered to the necessity of saints. A doctor in West Hartlepool once said of the late William Hall, who was a preacher of the gospel, "If ever a man lived for heaven it was William Hall," and I can say the same of our late friend, John Hartley. He was not a hearer of the word only, but a doer. He read, heard, and preached the word, and practised what he believed and preached. In his preaching he taught his hearers to live

and walk the gospel they professed. He used to say, "I am no preacher, but a mere filler up of a gap;" but I can testify that the gap which he filled up was one that many preachers never fill up. He preached to the conscience, and if members of churches were walking disorderly and neglecting the means of grace he would reprove them sharply and point them to the preceptive part of God's Word, and tell them that their conduct proved they were disobedient children. Some of his hearers did not like this sort of preaching and called it legal.

No one could bring a charge against his moral character, for his feet were shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. He was like a cedar planted in the house of the Lord, and was much beloved and very useful in the church to which he belonged. He believed and preached that a man's faith without works is dead, which is what God's Word plainly declares. He had no doubt seen some of the effects of a dead faith in the churches where he had been called to preach. The apostle James says, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" A friend who used to live in Bradford once said, "I should have had to starve while I was in B. but for one man's kindness, whose name is John Hartley. He supplied me and my family with every needful thing for some time before I left B." John's heart was ever open to the poor and his hands supplied their needs. I could relate other acts of kindness which he showed in helping the needy out of his hard earnings. I believe he has now received the end of his faith, even the salvation of his soul, and that he is now in heaven.

In his last affliction I asked him if he could die resting on the truths he had believed and preached. He said, "I can. I believe salvation is by grace, without the works of the law, and I also believe I am a subject of that grace which will soon land me in heaven, where I shall be for ever with the Lord. God has done great things for me, and he shall never hear the last of it." He spoke like a man who, by faith and desire, was looking forward to entering an upper and a better world; for his faith was in lively exercise and he was ready to depart. He said, "I have no fear of death, but am waiting to hear the Lord say, 'Come up hither.'" I remarked, "The Lord may spare you a little longer that you may tell his people what he has done for you in this affliction." He replied, "I think not; but I am in his hands, and I cannot be in a better place. He is my Refuge and my Rest." He made all arrangements for his funeral. I left him in a sweet and comfortable frame of mind, resting on the obedience and blood of Christ, which was the last time I saw him. I buried him, by his own request, in Scholemoor cemetery, in the presence of a large number of friends from the neighbouring churches, in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection beyond the grave. I had long known him, and can testify that he was a good and gracious man, and a practical preacher of the gospel.

DAVID SMITH.

SARAH KING.—On Sept. 28, 1888, aged 65, Sarah King, a member of the church at Smallfields.

I know but little of how she was brought to feel her lost and ruined state by nature. She was baptized by the late Mr. Hatton, and continued a consistent member at Smallfields to the day of her death.

She had been in a weak, low state of health for a long time, and at length was compelled to keep her bed. She had no particular disease, but died from weakness and prostration. I went to see her and found her in a calm frame of mind, resting solely on the finished work of Christ. I asked her how she felt in her mind. She said, "All is well. Christ is All and in all to my poor soul. Goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and the precious blood of Jesus hath taken away the sting of death. It is by grace I am saved, through faith, and that is God's gift. I can do nothing. Creature-merit would be of no use to me now. Satan sorely tries me at times, and tells me there is something in true religion that I have never experienced." She was very dark at times in her mind, and then again rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. One day her son asked her how she felt. She replied, "In union with the Lamb." At another time he said, "Mother, how is it with you now?" when she quoted the lines of a hymn:

"Tho' painful at present, 'twill cease before long,
And then O how pleasant the Conqueror's song!"

At another time, it being remarked that she seemed more comfortable, she replied, "Yes, a little more so; but I want the Lord to come and shine into my poor dark soul." She begged of the Lord to come, saying, "Blessed Jesus, do come." She then said to her son, "I want the Lord to come now. O, am I deceived, after having professed his name all these years?" After a little time she said,

"His love in time^rpast forbids me to think,
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink."

At another time she said, "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure." As she drew near her end she said, "Weary of earth, myself, and sin,

Dear Jesus, set me free," &c.

She quietly passed away, without a struggle or a groan.

Her husband has lost an affectionate wife and her children a loving, praying mother. At her own request I buried her in the burying-ground at Smallfields chapel, in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection unto eternal life. J. WHATFORD.

MARY PEDLEY.—On Oct. 19th, 1888, aged 101, Mary Pedley, a member at Salem Chapel, Chatteris.

She was favoured with a good constitution, and never had much pain or illness; for although she was confined to her bed three years, she often said, "The Lord is very good to me. I have no pain."

She was the youngest of a family of seventeen, and had sixteen brothers. She herself had fourteen children, some of whom are still living; and there are nearly one hundred and fifty descendants. She was arrested about sixty-nine years ago by a word from the Lord, and made to see herself a lost, ruined, and helpless sinner; and this conviction never left her till the day of her death. She was led by the Blessed Spirit to behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, and was made a steadfast believer in the electing love of God and in the finished work, righteousness, and blood of Christ; also in the work of the Holy Spirit, who alone can create poor helpless sinners anew in Christ Jesus.

When first convinced of her state as a sinner she lived in a lonely cottage two miles from chapel; but such was her earnest desire to hear the word preached that distance and weather hindered her not. Once she stood still in the deep snow, not knowing whether to proceed, when the words came to her: "This is the way; walk ye in it," and on she walked to chapel. That evening she had a special blessing. At this time she could not read; but many passages of Scripture came to her mind and she would ask the minister where they were and what they meant. She would often say, "I could not read a letter when I was called by grace; but the Lord has taught me, and now I can read a chapter;" and her conversation proved that she did not read in vain. She was greatly favoured with communion with God, and constantly walked half a mile to chapel until she was nearly ninety-eight. With her it was not mere chapel-going that satisfied her soul, but the visits and blessing of her God, and this sustained her through many great and sore family troubles.

She was at times sweetly led into the green pastures and enabled to lie down beside the still waters of everlasting love. Many precious promises were engraven on her heart. One she often quoted, which was the following: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." She often sang the hymn commencing,

"Guide me O thou great Jehovah."

Also:

"Yes, I shall soon be landed;"

And:

"On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand."

When I visited her I never found her discontented or complaining. She often said, "The Lord will provide;" and she found him a covenant-keeping and promise-performing God.

Latterly her faculties greatly failed her; but when she spoke it was generally in prayer or praise. A little while before she breathed her last she said, "Blessed Jesus!" Whenever I visited her I always felt to be in the presence of a godly person, and never so felt my own littleness as a Christian when in the presence of anyone as I did with her.

R. MATELL.

BETHANY.

WHEN evening's cool refreshing breeze
 Waved the fair boughs of cedar trees,
 And when the gentle dew had wet
 The tow'ring brow of Olivet;

Then Jesus with his chosen few
 Trod the worn path that well he knew;
 Awhile from worldly cares to flee,
 And find sweet rest in Bethany.

There Mary, in her much-loved place,
 Would gaze upon her Master's face,
 And drink in every word that fell
 From the dear lips she loved so well.

Oft would she raise a tearful eye
 And meet a glance of sympathy;
 She did not to the Lord disclose
 The weary tale of all her woes.

Her gentle heart desired no more
 Than this,—to listen and adore.
 Brethren, O would that we could be
 Like those who dwelt at Bethany.

No more they sojourn pilgrims here,
 But are with him they loved so dear;
 And ne'er shall Mary's trusting heart
 Be from her Saviour torn apart.

But she, with all her sins forgiven,
 Sits at her Master's feet in heaven;
 No trouble rests on Martha's brow,
 No earthly care can taint her now.

And Lazarus, no more to die,
 Now joins his voice with those on high.
 Brethren, O would that we could be
 Like those who dwelt at Bethany!

SAY you, "I am in darkness, and sometimes I am afraid I shall die in darkness." Aye, so am I too; the Lord knows I am. I do not know that death ever appears to me more terrific than when I feel a fear that I shall die in darkness; I do not want such a death as that. But I can tell you what the Lord has brought me to know a little of and to feel a little satisfaction in, and that is, that if God should see good that I should die in darkness, I am but level with the Lord Jesus Christ. He was in darkness, and cried out in darkness, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Why, bless you, poor souls, we have solemn company when we have such company as this, have we not? Even in our dark moments, when we are able, in some measure, to feel that we are in such company, we trace a little of "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ," that he put himself so low as to be a pillow in death to his poor people, if they were dark there, that they might find rest in him eventually, and be led to glorify him.—*W. Gadsby.*

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THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

FEBRUARY, 1889.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

THE NEW BIRTH.

A SERMON PREACHED AT ZOAR CHAPEL, LONDON, BY THE LATE MR. KERSHAW, ON LORD'S DAY EVENING, MAY 6TH, 1855.

"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—JNO. i. 13.

WE had these words under consideration this morning, and promised, as it should please the Lord to assist, first, to take notice of the threefold negative in reference to being born again; that it is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, secondly, the positive declaration concerning the new birth,—it is solemnly declared to be "of God;" and in the third place, we promised to point out some of the Scriptural marks and evidences of a poor sinner being born of God.

It is not our design to take up much time in recapitulating what has already been said. Suffice it to say that religion does not run in the blood from the parent to the child. This we showed from sundry parts of the Scriptures, and proved to a demonstration from observation and experience. In the second place, we have shown that being born again is not of the will of the flesh; because poor, corrupt, and depraved nature, which is what we are to understand by the flesh, stands directly opposed to regeneration in its commencement; and that flesh is said to lust against the Spirit, to fight and war against the grace of God in the heart all the way through; so that it is not of the will of the flesh that we are born of God, but it is contrary to it. In the third place, it is said that it is not of the will of man. Man's corrupt, depraved will ever was, is now, and ever will be in opposition to God's work of grace in the soul of a poor sinner; so that man, neither in reference to his blood, nor his flesh, nor his will, has anything to do with the work of regeneration, as regards the effecting of it. As our text declares, we are "born of God." We have dwelt upon the positive declaration, showing that it is God's work to create a poor sinner anew in Christ Jesus, to quicken the sinner dead in trespasses and sins, to call him by his efficacious and all-conquering grace, to open the heart, to open the blind eyes, and to unstop the deaf ear. Whatever metaphor is used, it implies that the work is exclusively effected by God. Though the Lord does and will honour instrumentality, that instrumentality is nothing without the power and gracious influence of the Holy

Spirit. Paul plants and Apollos waters, but there is no increase in the conversion of sinners, no lofty looks brought down, no haughty heart abased, but as the power of God is made manifest in the Word; no soul is truly humbled and brought into the liberty of the sons of God, but as the power of the Lord is displayed, not by creature might, but by the power of the great Creator of the heavens, the mighty God of Jacob.

We now come to the last part of the subject, namely, the evidence you and I have that we are or are not born of God. This is a very solemn subject. O that the preacher may be under the guidance and direction of the unerring Spirit of God in entering upon it! The Lord grant you the hearing ear and the understanding heart, and a spirit of serious examination. Let there be great searchings of heart among us, that we may see how matters stand between God and our precious, never-dying souls. We may have a form of godliness, a name to live, and make a great show in the flesh, and yet not be born of God. And what will it avail us in the dying hour, in the swellings of Jordan, if we are destitute of a good hope through grace of interest in the finished work of the Redeemer? If we are born and taught of God, we have Christ formed in our hearts by the Holy Spirit of God, the hope of immortal glory, which hope to the heaven-born soul is an anchor sure and steadfast.

But to the subject in hand,—the evidences of being born again, adduced from the Word of God. Now what is the evidence of a child being born into the world and that it is a living child? As sure as the child is born and is alive, so sure the child will cry. The still-born child never cries. So it is in a spiritual point of view. As soon as God's work of grace in regeneration takes place in the soul of the poor sinner, that poor sinner, like a new-born child, will begin to cry and pray; for crying or prayer is the very breath of the soul that is born of the Spirit of God; and no one of Adam's fallen race ever could or ever can cry and pray to God spiritually, until the Lord has commenced the work of regeneration and of grace in his soul. He may indeed pray, but not spiritually. Devils prayed, and the Lord answered and granted their request that they might go into the herd of swine. A natural man may pray, and it is right he should, for those natural favours and mercies which he feels he stands in need of, and he should be thankful to his great Creator and Benefactor for them. It was Nebuchadnezzar's great sin that he did not acknowledge God, in whose hand his breath was. There neither is nor can be spiritual prayer without regenerating grace.

Now we must have proof from God's own Word for every statement that we bring forward; and in reference to this subject we shall refer to Saul of Tarsus. Before he was born of God and called by God's grace, he was a Pharisee of the Pharisees, one that made long prayers and used "vain repetitions," and loved to be heard for their much speaking. No doubt he was a very fine prayer-maker, and much admired for his talent and ability; but

he never spiritually cried to God till God regenerated his soul. When Jesus met him in the way to Damascus and took possession of his soul, and said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks," then the word of the Lord that is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, entered into his very heart and soul. Jesus pulled down the strong man armed that had been keeping his palace in safety, and set up his own kingdom in his soul. "Lord," said Saul, "What wilt thou have me to do? I am in thy hand, like clay in the hand of the potter,"—an evidence that grace had taken possession of his soul. As we observed in the morning, he was made willing in the day of the Lord's power. The Lord directed him where to go, and said it should be told him what he should do and suffer for his name's sake. And the Lord appeared to Ananias, and bade him go to this Saul of Tarsus. Ananias was alarmed, and raised objections. "Ah, Lord," he said, "We know what evil he has done to the saints in Jerusalem; and he is come with authority to persecute us and put us into prison. Do not send me into the paw of this Benjamite, who is coming like a wolf against thy people." But the Lord settled all his scruples by informing him that after all Saul's persecution, he was a vessel of mercy, and he said, "Behold, he prayeth." He was truly converted. He was like the new-born babe or the sucking lamb; so that when Ananias understood his character and knew that he was a vessel of mercy, he felt soul-union to him, entered into his house, called him brother, and spoke to him the words of eternal life.

We have something here, my friends, to test ourselves by. Are we living without heartfelt prayer to God? If so, there is no evidence that we are born of God. We may read and pray, as thousands have done to-day, drawing near to God with our lips, but having our hearts far from him. Prayers may be repeated in words, but yet not felt in the soul of the poor sinner. The preparation of the heart for real spiritual prayer is from the Lord alone. As sure as a sinner is born of God, God convinces him of sin, and lays death, the judgment-day, and eternal realities with a solemn weight upon his mind. Many before God have been made, like the Philippian jailor, to tremble in their souls, and to answer to the character of whom the Lord has said, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word." The poor sinner trembles not only in body, but in soul, and cries out with the publican, "God be merciful to me, a sinner;" and that will be his prayer all through the wilderness and on a dying bed. The poor publican was born of God when he was bowed down with sin and guilt, and dared not lift so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, while he exclaimed with his whole heart and soul, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." Ah! my friends, if we are born of God and feel ourselves sinking with a guilty conscience, with the burden of our sins,—sins more in number than the hairs of our head and

too heavy for us to bear, we shall cry to the Lord, and our prayer will be, "Lord, save me, or I perish."

I do not think that the prayer of those that are born of God is very long; it is more in broken accents and heartfelt breathings and longings: "Lord, help me. O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me." David was born of God when he felt himself sinking in the mire, clay, and the horrible pit. He cried unto the Lord, and the Lord heard him, and raised him up and fixed him upon the Rock of Ages, and established his goings. Beloved, can you give any account of the Lord so working in your soul to will and to do of his own good pleasure, so that you are necessitated to go into your closet or some quiet, secluded place for self-examination, to kneel down before the Lord and confess your sin and sinfulness; to tell the Lord that if he were to mark iniquity and deal with you according to your transgressions, you could not stand before him; to pray with earnestness and fervency that he would save you, teach you, guide you, and make you what he would have you to be? If you are born of God, there will be heart-felt sighing, groaning, lamentation, and woe in your souls, because of the discoveries you have made of the depravity of your nature, of the evil of your heart, and of your manifold transgressions. If you are born and taught of God, you will be arraigned at God's bar, in the court of your conscience, and tried by God's law; all hope of saving and helping yourselves will be cut off, and you will be brought in guilty and condemned; and lying at the feet of the dear Redeemer, you will say, "I am resolved, and that is my last defence, if I perish, to perish at the footstool of thy mercy."

These are some of the evidences that a poor sinner is born of God. Those who are born of God can no more live without prayer, without crying to God and panting, than they can live without food. Those who are born of God have their hungerings and thirstings after him. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." Natural water can rise no higher than to its own level,—natural and worldly things. Grace, like spiritual water, will rise to its own level,—spiritual realities. "The water that I shall give him (regeneration, my Holy Spirit, and my grace) shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The springing well is felt in the heaven-born soul, who feels and says with David, "My soul followeth hard after God." "As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." In the soul that is born of God there is a going out in meditation, in prayer, sighs, groans, pantings, breathings, and longings after the Lord, that we may know him feelingly and experimentally for ourselves, and that we may have his sweet love shed abroad in our hearts. Man, in a state of nature, never wants to feel the love of Christ. The heaven-born soul cries to the Lord that he may have a knowledge of and interest in redeeming love and blood; that, living or dying, he may be found clothed in Immanuel's robe of righteousness; that he may stand complete and accepted in the Beloved; that he

may be conformed to his image and may live to his honour and glory. This is the evidence of life in the souls of God's living and regenerated family. Do you know anything of it? I hope many of you can say, "My soul responds to these Bible statements and these experimental evidences of being born of God."

But again. Another evidence of being born again we have in our Lord's own words, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." In what sense of the word are we to become as a little child? Nicodemus could not make this out; he was amazed at the doctrine. "Can a man," he said, "enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" O no; "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Yet the metaphor holds good. If we are born of God, we are converted, and experimentally become as little children. We have the emblem described more fully by the Lord himself in Ezek. xvi., under the form of a new-born child cast out into the open field to the loathing of itself, in its blood, unwashed, unsuckled, unclothed, destitute, indigent, and forlorn, the very picture of helplessness, unable to do the least thing for itself; it can do nothing but cry. Now there is not a man that is born of God and truly taught his weakness and helplessness, his depravity, nakedness, and inability even to think a good thought, who does not see in this child an emblem of himself. More than forty years have I seen myself described as a poor sinner in the new-born babe, under these very circumstances. If any of you think you have a good heart and can do anything for yourselves towards your salvation, either in whole or in part, you are not true-born babes, you are not truly and spiritually born and taught of God and made acquainted with your indigence and helplessness. This emblem will not only fit the new-born babe in grace; but the child, the young man, the father and mother in Israel will find themselves as weak and helpless, and as dependent upon the Lord as the new-born babe was.

Before I left the vestry to-night and entered the pulpit, though I have long been in the work of the ministry and long known the Lord, I think I felt my own weakness, inability, and insufficiency to do anything spiritually good, to preach the word of life to comfort, profit, and edification as much as I ever did in my life. If we are born of God like this little child, we feel our weakness and helplessness. And we cannot, my friends, be too sensible of our own weakness, helplessness, and sinfulness, nor lie too humble in the dust before the Lord. Paul says, "When I am weak, then am I strong;" and the Lord says he gives power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increases strength. See the regard that the Lord has for a poor sinner that is truly born of God, converted, and become as a little child! In the very ease under consideration we read that the Lord passed by and saw the new-born babe, looked upon it with compassion and love, and spread his skirt over it,—typical of his glorious robe of right-

ousness with which he adorns the heaven-born family, the heirs of immortal bliss. He washed the child, —emblematical not only of the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, but of all our sin and pollution being washed away in the atoning blood of the Lamb. Heaven-born souls cannot do without blood, the atoning blood of Christ, the precious fountain open for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The Lord adorned and decorated the child, and so the time was a time of love. Thus we see the evidences of being born again and becoming as little children,—seeing and feeling our helplessness, weakness, insufficiency, inability, and our real, spiritual poverty and destitution. All we can do is to add sin to sin, and to bewail our wretchedness. But the Lord will have mercy and compassion upon the poor sinner thus born of his Blessed Spirit, and will do everything for him that he stands in need of.

I have no doubt there is many a precious soul here to-night that says, "Well, the emblem of a new-born babe sets forth my case. I am as weak and helpless, and as dependent and indigent as the new-born babe. I am nothing but sin and weakness. I can do nothing but make the rent worse. The Lord must do all, or I am undone." Do you really feel thus? Are you brought to the point that you really and solemnly feel that you are nothing and that you can do nothing, and that all must be done for you? Have you really learned that solemn truth that dropped from the Master's lips, "Without me ye can do nothing?" and that if Christ strengthens you, you can do all things? These are Scriptural marks and evidences of a child being born of God.

Again. Peter illustrates this by a metaphor similar to that which we have just had under consideration, only he directs our attention in another channel. "As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." Now, first to the emblem, and then to the illustration of its spirituality.

The God of nature has implanted in the very constitution of the new-born babe a craving desire for the breast and milk of its mother, that it may grow thereby. The affectionate mother takes the babe in her arms and puts it to the breast; and how naturally does the child begin to suck, while the mother looks down upon it with the greatest love and affection, and if she is a gracious, God-fearing woman, she looks higher and prays that ten thousand blessings may rest upon it. Then come to the reality of the subject. The God of grace has implanted in the very constitution of a regenerated child of God a fervent, earnest, craving desire for the sincere milk of the Word, the Word of God's grace, the sacred Scriptures, and a desire for the ministration of the word by his sent servants. As sure as a poor sinner is born of God he will be led to obey the Word of God: "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." I have seen many who have been born of God, and before that time they could not read a chapter, and some of them did not know even

their letters; but a thirst came upon them, such a desire for the Word of God, that they have got some friends to teach them their letters, then they have been able to put two or three words together and read little sentences; and then they have got into the New Testament, and could read the sermon on the mount: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Afterwards they have got some books and some hymns that they found good to their souls. O how fast they learn! They are the best learners, because they have the Spirit and grace of God dwelling in them and creating a fervent desire to know the sacred Scriptures, to have them written upon the fleshy tables of their heart by the Spirit of the living God, that they may be the living epistles of our Lord Jesus Christ, known and read of all men, written not with ink, but by the Spirit of God, not upon tables of stone, but upon the fleshy tables of their hearts.

We had some years ago a singular incident illustrating this. There lived in a village an old grey-headed sinner, bordering upon fourscore years old. There were two Godfearing men in the village, who felt for the old man, and one of them said to him, "Our minister is going to preach at a friend's house on such a night; I will call for you. Will you go with me?" "No," he said, "I won't. I will have nothing to do with you Dissenters. I am a Churchman. All my ancestors were church-people. I was christened, confirmed, and married at church, and I intend to be buried there; and it is enough for me." "Well," said the other, "you and I have been good friends. I have several times done you a kindness, and I should take it as a kindness if you would come with me and hear our minister preach the word of eternal life." "Well," said the old man, "you certainly have been a good neighbour and have done me many kindnesses, and if it will oblige you, I will go." The time came, and the Godfearing man called for the grey-headed sinner and poured out his heart in prayer that the Holy Ghost would wound the conscience of the old man. The minister drew the bow at a venture, the Holy Ghost directed the arrow, and the man felt a wounded conscience. He went home, and, sitting by the fire, he reflected, and looked into the grate, but he said not a word for a considerable time. His old wife, an ignorant woman, said to him in the Lancashire dialect, "What's to do?" "I cannot tell," said the old man; "but yonder minister said words that sank deeper into my soul than any that ever dropped from the lips of man in all my born days." "Ah!" she said, "I thought how it would be. They'll make us as bad as themselves. We'll not desert our religion. Thou shalt go no more." So much for her ignorance. But when the word of the Lord is rivetted in the conscience like a nail in a sure place, it cannot be erased. The next time the old man did not want to be called for; he longed for the time to come, and he went again, and the Lord wrought more powerfully and effectually than before. He returned with greater exercises and soul-concern about eternal realities than ever he felt before. He sat in the

same position before the fire as he did on the previous occasion, and as a new-born babe this man of fourscore years desired the sincere milk of the word. "I wish," he said to his wife, "you would find me our old Bible." It needed to be found up, for it had not been used for months, or perhaps for years. The Bible was found. The wife takes her apron and rubs off the dust, and gives the book to her husband. He reads a little here and there, and ponders it over in his mind, and then he says, "I say, wife, is this our right old Bible that we had ever since we were married?" "Yes," she said; "you know we never had any other." Then he reads again, and after thinking, with greater earnestness, he says, "I say, is this our right old Bible?" "Yes," she says; "Why, can't you believe me? We never had another." "Well, then," says he, "if it's our right old Bible, I've got new een"—that is, new eyes. Yes, the eyes of his understanding were opened; the veil of ignorance was rent off; he had a new heart, new desires, and he began to see the wonders recorded in the sacred Scriptures.

As sure, my friends, as a soul is born of God, so sure will that soul have a desire for the Word of God; and though it condemns and reproves him, he must come to the light. "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." "O Lord, teach me. I am dark and ignorant; instruct me." If we are born of God, we shall be glad that we have the Scriptures in our own mother tongue, and we shall read them for edification, comfort, and profit, and say, as Jeremiah did: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." "How sweet," said David, "are thy words to my taste, yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth." The soul that is not born of God does not enjoy this sweetness; he does not eat the word of God and inwardly digest it, and live upon it by precious faith.

But more on this branch of the subject. A man born of God, prior to that birth may have been spending his Sabbaths in carnal pleasures and amusements, as thousands have been doing in your great metropolis this day, neglecting the means of grace and turning their backs upon the preached gospel; and when I look at that class, I have no stone to throw at them. I see the day in the eye of my mind when I hated the means of grace and fled from them as much as I could. The people of God were to me a people of no pleasure and enjoyment. I remember saying when my father and his associates used to meet in prayer, "Poor moping fools! Men of no pleasure and enjoyment!" And I said within myself, when my father would compel me to attend prayer-meetings, for I did not like this exercise of his authority, though I revered him as a natural father, "The day will come when I shall be my own master, when I shall be from under your authority, and then I will go with my companions, and have my enjoyment." But, Oh! I have blessed the Lord a thousand times

that before I came to that age, my soul was born of God. God's grace and kingdom were set up in my heart, and the result was that old things passed away, old companions were forsaken, old practices left off, and new feelings and desires filled my soul. Where there is a thirst for the Word of God's grace, the soul will go to the house of God and love to hear the character of the poor sinner described, delight to hear the way of salvation pointed out through the precious blood of the Son of God. Where there is a desire for the sincere milk of the word, as recorded in the Bible; where there is a desire for the ministration of the word, and a delight to hear the silver trumpet of the gospel blown, that soul is born of God. The tabernacles of the Lord become amiable. O what an amazing change regenerating grace produces! The soul that is born of God can say, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord! I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, where prayer is offered, praise is sung, the everlasting gospel preached, and where the saints of the Most High God meet, than dwell in the tents of wickedness." O how amiable is the place where the Lord condescends to meet with and bless his family!

These are tokens, undeniable, Scriptural evidences that we are born again; and if we are born of God, we are the sons of God, and joint-heirs of God, heirs with the Lord of life and glory.

But, in connection with this subject, we observe again, that if we are born of God and blessed with spirituality, the new man is created in righteousness and true holiness. O let us pause here and seriously examine ourselves by the rule laid down. If we are born again of God we have a spiritual appetite, a spiritual palate, and nothing can satisfy our longing desire but God, the living God of grace, the God of salvation. If a soul is born of God, let him have all the gold and silver, and lands and tenements heaped upon him; let him have all the honours and titles that can be given among men; will they satisfy him? Will they bring peace and rest and joy into his soul? No; the heaven-born soul in such circumstances will feel, "All is vanity below the sun, and vexation of spirit," and will exclaim,

"Were I possessor of the earth

And called the stars my own."

And, O, my soul has felt the next lines:

"Without thy graces and thyself,

I were a wretch undone."

The heaven-born soul can never be satisfied with the world, but must aspire to nobler, more glorious, and substantial things.

Again, if we are born of God, we shall never be satisfied with ourselves and our efforts. Other men are pleased and delighted with what they do, and have a good opinion of themselves. They are pure in their own eyes, and never see their need of being washed from their filthiness. If you and I were to test ourselves by this principle, if we are born of God, the longer we live the more dissatisfied shall we be with our depraved nature, our evil

hearts, our vain thoughts, our sinful inclinations, our evil tempers, and our murmurings and repinings. A heaven-born soul exclaims, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." Thus if we are born of God, we have humiliating views and feelings concerning ourselves; and a minister of Jesus Christ, lifting up his voice like a trumpet, can never lay a heaven-born soul too low. The soul that is thus laid in the dust and on the dunghill of self-abasement, responds inwardly, and says, "O wretched man! Unprofitable, hell-deserving sinner that I am. I never can be laid too low!" The ever-blessed Spirit of God always brings down lofty looks, abases proud hearts, and lays them as beggars in the dust; and according to Hannah's song, such shall be regarded of the Lord, and set among princes; they shall inherit the throne of glory; for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's. If we are born of God, nothing will satisfy our appetite but what is embodied in that blessed declaration, "I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread." Here, heaven-born soul, are the Lord's hungry poor, and here is the provision of the Father's house that satisfies the Father's children. The poor prodigal was born of God when he began to be in want and to feel a craving appetite for the bread of his Father's house: "In my Father's house, there is bread enough and to spare. I will arise, and go to my Father." He does not say, "I will tell him what a good lad I have been." There is not a word about goodness or worthiness; but he says, "I will tell him that I have sinned against heaven and in his sight, and am no more worthy to be called his son." O brethren, nothing will satisfy the heaven-born soul but Jesus Christ in his glorified Person, Immanuel, God with us; Jesus in his covenant engagement; the precious Christ in his incarnation. Christ in his glorious robe of righteousness, who has finished transgression, made an end of sin, and reconciled us unto God; Christ and him crucified; Jesus bearing our sins in his own body and carrying them into the land of forgetfulness, dying for our sins, being made a curse for us; salvation finished by the incarnate God on the cross, exclaiming, with his last expiring breath, "It is finished." Heaven-born souls are never satisfied, never happy, never comfortable, but as they seek and enjoy their dear Redeemer as their All-in-all. What is your comfort, friends? What is the joy and rejoicing of your soul? If you are born of God and know anything of his love, your answer is, "Christ Jesus is precious to my soul; he is the joy of my heart. O that he would but shed abroad his sweet love in my soul, and constrain me to love and serve him better, more acceptably, with reverence and godly fear."

Again, the heaven-born soul, like Paul, renounces everything in himself, counts all but dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord, for whom Paul suffered the loss of all things, and counted everything but dung that he might win Christ. Then the heaven-born soul says, "O that I may be found

in Christ, not having on my own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness of God by faith; that I may be found built on the Rock of Ages, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail; that all my sins may be washed away in the blood of the Lamb, and my conscience be sprinkled with that blood of atonement which speaketh better things than that of Abel; that I may be conformed to the image of Christ, have the mind of Christ, the Spirit of Christ; and that I may honour and glorify him with my body and spirit, which are his; that I may hold on and endure to the end, be kept by his power, upheld by his mighty hand, and landed safe in immortal glory. The prayer of the heaven-born soul is, "Guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." The song of exaltation of the heaven-born soul is, "This God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our Guide, even unto death."

But the strength of my body fails. Glad I am of your attention to these solemn realities. Let me ask how many of us have reason to believe from these statements, founded upon the Word of God, that we are born again? Some dear child of God may say, "I can scarcely tell what to reply. I hope and trust I have some of the marks. I do love the brethren. I revere the place where God's honour dwells; but I have such a hard heart, and with me the great difficulty is I cannot tell when the work was begun." Paul, for instance, could tell. Lydia could tell about God opening her heart to attend to the things spoken by Paul. Zacchæus could tell when the Lord called him down from the tree. The woman at Jacob's well could tell. I could tell sundry times when my conscience has been wounded; when the power of God has laid fast hold of me and broke my soul down, so that my eyes have flowed with tears. But there are others of the Lord's family who, I believe, if their salvation depended upon it, could not tell when they were first called by divine grace and born of God. They have had convictions; their conscience has been wounded; but those convictions wore off, and they sank back again for a time into sin. The Lord followed them, by grace hunted them out, sickened them of the world and themselves, and eventually brought them, lost and ruined, and miserable in their feelings, to the feet of Jesus, and enabled them to rest their souls' eternal all upon the dear Redeemer.

We read in God's Word, "The wind bloweth where it listeth; thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit." The Spirit is compared to wind, which bloweth where it listeth; it is in the hand of God and under his direction; and when divine grace comes into the soul of the poor sinner, in some more gently and in others more powerfully, when the conscience is alarmed, the sinner cannot tell whence it comes nor where it will end. He begins to feel a concern for his soul, and is separated from the world; he is convinced of sin by the Holy Ghost, of God's righteousness and justice, and of the certainty of the day of judgment. If you are truly taught of God, your mouth

will be stopped, and you will acknowledge yourself guilty before God. This text shall be fulfilled in the most extensive sense of the word. But there is discrimination in it. Every elect vessel of mercy that is born of God has his mouth stopped while in this life; that is, when he comes before God he is dumb, inasmuch as he has neither a good thought, nor a good action to make mention of concerning himself; he is dumb. God says to his minister, "Open thy mouth to the dumb, and speak to the comfort and consolation of the dear child of God." Now, if you have been brought dumb before the Lord, it is grace that has brought you. God's work is in you; and when the Lord opens his truth in your heart, and leads you into it by his Spirit and puts peace and pardon into your soul, then the tongue of the dumb shall speak plainly, and shall bless the Lord and glorify him, saying, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me bless his holy name. Forget not all his benefits, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies." The sword of the Spirit cuts two ways. O that it may do so to-night, and that such of you as have reason to believe that you are born of God may be thankful to the Lord, and say with the apostle, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

And you, my friends, whose consciences bear testimony that you are strangers to heartfelt, experimental prayer, strangers to your weakness and helplessness; you that neither see nor feel your need of grace and the blessings of salvation treasured up in Christ, who see no form or comeliness in him that you should desire him, you are in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity; and if you die in that state, you will die in your sins under the curse of God's law, and lift up your eyes amid the horrors of the damned. O that the Lord would awaken the careless sinner, that the thoughtless would consider his latter end, that it may be said in the day of God, that this and that man was born here! O that a good work of grace may be wrought in your souls this night! Lord, grant it, if it be thy sovereign pleasure. Amen.

THE everlasting gospel is to continue throughout all ages as the means of regenerating and renewing souls.—*Howe.*

CHRIST is all with God, he is all to God, and he is all from God. We have no acceptance but in him, we only come to God by him, and receive all from God through him. He is all in redemption, all in satisfaction, reconciliation, justification, union and communion, in regeneration and sanctification, in pardon, peace, and in all glorification. Christ is the Foundation on which we are built, the Fountain in which we are washed, the Bread of life on which we are fed, and the Water of life of which we drink. In a word, he is our Life, our Light, our Strength; and he is made everything to our souls that we need. He is the power of God. Christ is the great Repository of sacred truth and of all grace; and Christ is the great Outlet or conduit Pipe of all that grace and goodness we receive from God also. Thus is the glory of the Son of God revealed.—*B. Keach.*

THE HIDINGS OF GOD'S FACE.

BY RUSK.

(Continued from page 23.)

THEN again, if we possess the life of God we shall have a *good hope*. Every man has a hope, except those in black despair; but none have a good hope but quickened souls; and this Paul calls "a good hope through grace;" and it is founded upon the unconditional promises of God in Christ Jesus. Hence David says, "Remember the word unto thy servant upon which thou hast caused me to hope." It is also founded upon sovereign mercy: "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy" (Ps. cxlvii. 11); and it springs up in the soul when there appears a peradventure, a "Who can tell but that there may be mercy yet for such as me?"

I knew a good man who is now in glory, and he was suddenly convinced of sin as he sat at tea with his wife, who was a worldly woman. He jumped up and cried out, "I am lost! I shall be damned! There is no hope for me." For several days he was in great distress of soul, and feared the sentence of condemnation was fixed; but at length it came into his mind that as he was still spared and the sentence not speedily executed, who could tell but there might be mercy for him, and with that a hope sprung up, and a voice spake to him, saying, "Go and pray to Jesus Christ." He kneeled down and began to pray, and the Lord heard him and set his soul at happy liberty. Paul says that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures we are to have hope; and this is felt sometimes in meditating on the encouraging parts, such as the invitations which God gives in his Word to the poor, needy, lost, wretched, fatherless, and widows to come just as they are, without money and without price, and that he will in no wise cast such out. Peter calls this a "lively hope."

The life of God manifests itself in our having a thirst for Christ and his salvation. If God the Holy Spirit has quickened your soul you will hunger and thirst after righteousness, after the Bread of life, and after the living and true God. You will not be able to feed under a letter-preacher. If you are dead in your sins you may be able to feed your judgment under such men; but this will not satisfy you if you have life. There is a sweet unction and savour communicated to the soul under an experimental ministry that none can understand but those who have been quickened into life; and in this the apostle triumphed. Hence he says, "Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place." (2 Cor. ii. 14.) Paul does not say, "causeth us always to triumph in Christ;" for then there would be no changes. This will be for ever our employ in glory above; but not till then. Say you, "There is plenty of cause for us so to do." Yes, there is; and that is Paul's meaning in saying,

“who always causeth us to triumph in Christ.” Weigh well the words. Again. He does not say, “who maketh manifest the knowledge of Christ;” because a man may have a deal of head-knowledge; but he says, “which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the *savour* (mark that!) of his knowledge by us in every place.” Where there is this life in the soul there will be a hunger and thirst after a crucified Christ, and there will be a tasting that the Lord is good and gracious. You will relish experimental preaching and a sweet savour will attend it. That which is savoury will be eaten, and in time you will feed upon Christ and find his flesh to be meat indeed and his blood drink indeed.

Then again, the life of God will discover itself by various sorts of trials that will come upon you; for as you go on you will find the path to be exceedingly rough. Wave upon wave, affliction upon affliction; and yet the Lord will so carry on his work that you will flourish in soul in the midst of all this chequered work. A multiplicity of crosses will come upon you; so that at times you will be ready to say, “Lord, where will it end?” and you will long to quit the body. But all is sent in love, only this is hidden from us. We shall not have one trial, one temptation, one family or bodily affliction, one outward or inward enemy, one frowning providence, but what shall prove in the end to our real advantage; for “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” I have had to pass through much of these afflictions, and I find my soul flourishes in them all; and yet I continually shrink from them, and am ready at times to give up all for lost. Never was there a weaker creature than I feel myself to be; but the blessed Lord comes again and then all is right. If we could see things in a proper light we should see how much *life* there is in all this; for under these things we feel fervent wrestlings and crying to the Lord from a deep sense of our need, and have a keen appetite for hearing the word, a cleaving to Zion, and a watching the Lord’s hand. David said, “This is my comfort in my affliction; for thy word hath quickened me.” (Ps. cxix. 50.) And again he says, “Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me,” and to revive is certainly to quicken, as you may clearly see if you read 2 Kings xiii. 21. Hezekiah said, “O Lord, by these things (painful as they are) men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit.” (Isa. xxxviii. 16.)

Then again, the life of God is clearly manifested to us when the Lord fully delivers our souls and sets our feet in a large room. O how wonderful is this to us when faith lays fast hold of Christ Jesus and of every unconditional promise, so that we can claim them as our own, being “heirs of promise;” and when we feel the blessed witness of the Spirit in our hearts, and can call God our Father, our God, and the Rock of our salvation. Then after sore conflict we can rejoice that our names are written in heaven; and, with the eye of faith, can see that Christ’s incarnation into

this world was for us, that he obeyed the holy law of God for us, that he was apprehended by divine justice for us, and that all his sufferings in life and death were for us. This is a personal thing, and every child of God must know it for himself. I write from blessed experience. In this way we are to know that we have life; for such are at times spiritually-minded, and that is life and peace. This is the way in which the Lord is pleased to remove out of the way the obstacles that are in us through the fall.

Death is now quite removed, and we never shall any more be in the sleep of death as we once were. But in order to illustrate this part of our subject I will suppose that a person shall from infancy be trained up in a religious way by their parents to read the Word of God, good books, and unite with God's family in attending upon all religious ordinances, have a gift in prayer, both in the family and in public, be very honest in their dealings among men, circumspect, and liberal to the poor, visit the sick, talk and pray with them, be sound in every doctrine essential to salvation, and, according to all appearance, very exemplary indeed. A person may be all this and yet not one obstacle be removed which is in the way of such a one, as in all others, by the fall? Such things are good and very commendable, and would God there were more of them amongst men; but depend upon it if you never go any further than this, you will come short at last. Reformation and head-knowledge are quite distinct from regeneration and a heart-felt experience of God's truth; and therefore you and I do well to look to the groundwork of all and to see whether self or Christ is at the foundation.

Another thing which is done in us by the Holy Spirit, is *regeneration*, or forming a new man to oppose and war against the old man, or against flesh and blood. This new man goes by various names in Scripture. Peter calls it the "divine nature," the "incorruptible seed," and the "hidden man of the heart." Paul calls it the "new man," and Christ speaks of it as "that which is born of the Spirit," in opposition to that which is born of the flesh. It consists in a spiritual birth and is essential to salvation; for "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Say you, "O that I did but know that I was born again!" If this is the real desire of your soul I will tell you what the Scripture says about this new birth.

First, then, there is a begetting: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth" (Jas. i. 18), by which I understand a filling the mind with truth: "Let them hear, and say, It is truth." (Isa. xliii. 9.) This begetting is attended with quickening and enlightening: "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. i. 1); and in Isaiah we read: "They that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. (Isa. ix. 2.) Where this is the case there will be soul-travail: "I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, and the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child, the voice

of the daughter of Zion that bewaileth herself, that spreadeth her hands, saying, Woe is me now! for my soul is wearied because of murderers." (Jer. iv. 31.) "Thus saith the Lord; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it" (Jer. xxx. 5-7), from all which you clearly see what a painful thing is a spiritual birth, and what hard labour and travail there is between hope and despair, faith and unbelief, love and enmity, a sight and sense of sin working in us from day to day, an angry God in the law and Moses bringing in bill after bill against us, and Satan, the world, and professors all accusing, together with our own consciences. If thou art in this soul-travail do not forget that although this is such a day of trouble that for greatness there is none like unto it, yet how absolutely sure it is that such shall be fully delivered; for God says: "He shall be saved out of it." Hence he says, "Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord; Shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God." (Isa. lxvi. 9.) Therefore there shall be a full deliverance, however long it is before it comes, and such shall know that they are born again. This is done by the Holy Spirit casting out all slavish fear and torment, and then shedding abroad the love of God in the heart. Hence the Word says, "He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."

From what has been said respecting the new birth how absurd it is to believe, as many do, that water baptism is the new birth. We all know that water only cleanses the body, and is only a sign of something greater. Agreeable thereto is what the apostle Peter says, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. iii. 21.) Thus there are two obstacles removed out of the way by the Holy Spirit. First, the sleep of death which we are all in by nature, and secondly, we are not now in a natural state as heretofore, but are new creatures, sin not now reigning in us. Its reign is destroyed, and although it is not annihilated, but is still in us, yet its power is broken, grace being implanted in the heart by regeneration.

Can you come as far as this? Although you may be much in the dark about your state, yet do you find yourself very restless and uneasy about it, and cannot you look back to a time when you were wholly at ease and quiet,—in the sleep of death and wrapped up in carnality? A careless spirit may come on again for a time, but it will not continue; for something will come to stir you up, and bring all your convictions upon you again; so that you never will again get into that sleep of death that you were once in. Being thus regenerated, do you not find sweet lifts and

encouragements under the preached word, in reading good books, conversing with the saints, meditating on the Word, confessing your sins and pleading the promises; and although these lifts are but of short duration, yet do they not encourage you to hope for better days? If this is your case, God has begun a good work in you and he will perfect that which concerns you. Therefore press on. You are a babe, and the babes shall be fed with the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby.

Another obstacle that the Holy Spirit is pleased to remove from us is the *heavy burden of sin and guilt*, which David said was to him a sore burden, too heavy for him to bear. As we go on in the divine life we shall have clearer and clearer discoveries of our lost estate, which is attended with very keen feelings, and the Lord will show us our own hearts until we are terrified, and will bring us to a full point that we are the chief of sinners, vile, as was Job, from head to foot full of wounds, bruises, and putrifying sores, as Isaiah speaks, and born in sin and shapen in iniquity like David. Until you and I are brought here, so as to set to our seal, from heart-felt experience, that God is true in what his Word declares about the fall of man, we shall not be fully delivered in soul; for until this is the case our working arm will not be broken nor our power all gone, but there will be some shut up and left. However as it is all God's work from first to last he will bring us here; for he says: "Ye are my witnesses," and we are witnesses to the truth of our dreadful fall in Adam the first. This is a law-work, and everyone of God's elect experience it in a greater or lesser degree. Hence you read: "A certain creditor had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both." (Lu. vii. 41, 42.) Let us ask ourselves this question as in the sight of God, "Have I nothing to pay?" If we have any one thing, the debt-book will be kept open; for "to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." (Rom. iv. 4.) It is this and nothing else that keeps God's family tarrying long at the strait gate in the place of the breaking forth of children.

The Holy Spirit removes sin and guilt away from us by testifying that Christ's blood cleanses from all sin, and then taking of that blood and applying it to our consciences: "He shall take of mine, and show it unto you," that is, show you your personal interest in his great atonement and finished work; for his blood cleanses us from all sin.

Another difficulty that the Holy Spirit is pleased to remove out of our way is *self-righteousness*. Self-righteousness will hold us fast, and is a far greater obstacle than all our wickedness; for it stands opposed to the whole of Christ's work. Say you, "Blessed be God I do not depend upon any works of my own, but upon the righteousness of Christ." You may say so, as many have done who never trusted in anything but their own righteousness. If you have really been brought to renounce your own righteous-

ness, you will remember the time when you trusted to your own obedience, and how hard and difficult it was to give it all up and come naked to Christ to be clothed, as well as filthy to be washed from all your sin and guilt. This you will find out in the following way:

You will hate boasting. A boasting Pharisee will stink in your nostrils; for you will know that he is robbing God of his glory, which will be a tender point with you. You will also hate and abhor yourself, as Job did after he was stripped, and you will say from the heart, as the church did by the prophet Isaiah. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." (Isa. lxiv. 6.) Paul, before he was stripped, thought that touching the righteousness of the law he was blameless; but he being a chosen vessel of mercy the Lord stripped him, after which he called his own righteousness dung and dross. Have you ever been stripped? Say you, "I do not like this close work." What, then, would you like to be built up in lies and deception? If so, you will never stand the test; for "the hail (or God's judgments) shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters (of God's wrath) shall overflow the hiding place." (Isa. xxviii. 17.) But why? Because it is a bed too short for a man to stretch himself on, and a covering too narrow for a man to wrap himself up in it. God says, "Woe to them that cover with a covering, but not of my Spirit, that they may add sin to sin." Joshua, the high priest, had got this on; but God says, "Take away his filthy garments, and clothe him with change of raiment." The Holy Spirit does this; for he not only takes of Christ's blood and shows it to us and our interest in it; but he also takes of his righteousness. Hence you read that "we are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

(To be continued.)

How constant is God's friendship! He loves with an everlasting love and to the end.—*Howe*.

ALIENATION from God signifies estrangement and unacquaintance with God, and that without any inclination towards him or disposition to seek him. The word signifies people of another country, and you were like people of another country. Of such a different language, manners, and behaviour they that are converted are to you and you to them; you are estranged to their speech, customs, and ways. Men in their unconverted state are strangers to God.—*Howe*.

THE holy women who mourned and wept at the cross did not forget their dear Lord at the sepulchre. Thither their thoughts ran during that Sabbath day on which they rested according to the commandment; and with the first dawn of the next day—the first day of the week, they sped their steps, with spices, to anoint that dear Object of their faith and love. The mystery of the resurrection was indeed hidden from their eyes; but they ceased not to love in death and in the sepulchre that sacred form which they had loved in life.—*J. C. Philpot*.

THE BALM OF GILEAD.

My dear Friend,—As we advance in years we may reasonably expect aches, pains, and infirmities to come as so many messengers or notices to look out for our removal from this state of constant changes into an eternal, unchangeable one: "In this tabernacle we groan being burdened;" but such are said to have the first-fruits of the Spirit, and if so we shall surely come, in due time, into the full and everlasting possession of the glorious inheritance. In prospect of this the apostle reckons all the trials and sorrows of this militant state as "light afflictions, which are but for a moment." This kind of reckoning is not after the flesh; for that ever did, and ever will oppose the Spirit. Nor do we, as we approach the end of life's journey, find it less powerful; but the contrary.

The other day I lighted upon a letter of the late Mr. Huntington's, written the same year in which he died. Its language so agreed with my own path that it afforded me some encouragement; for he speaks of the power and working of indwelling sin, day by day, and that his own seasons of relief therefrom were when engaged in the pulpit. In the onset of my spiritual life, if I may say so, I foolishly thought it would be the reverse. Thus we are led to see that "as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts." Yes, and sometimes I am led to see and admire God's way of instruction. It is quite necessary that we should know experimentally what sin is in its horrid nature, and what it has done for us, how low we are sunk by the fall, and how powerless to help or deliver ourselves; as without such experience all our knowledge of the gospel would be superficial and notional. A real malady, if cured, must have a real and a suitable remedy. Consequently our blessed Lord told the Pharisees that "the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." None but diseased souls, incurables, will ever value the balm of Gilead. Therefore I am brought to the conclusion that I must be the daily subject of conflict between the flesh and the Spirit. Hezekiah tells us how he lived. There will be no discharge from this war until we resign our breath; then we and sin shall part for ever. One can but little imagine what it is to be freed entirely from sin. On a few occasions in my life, when sweetly indulged with the presence and love of my blessed Jesus, I have felt for a short season perfect freedom therefrom. But, alas! Or ever I was aware, this monster came up again with double strength.

I hope to be at Abingdon next Friday, it being fifty years since dear Mr. Tiptaft built the chapel. I was elsewhere expected on that day, but having known and loved that dear man, as well as knowing many of his people, I thought they had a prior claim upon my poor services. May the Lord make it a Jubilee indeed to some who may be present. Now, dear friend, I must close, with our united kind love to yourself and sister, and to all those friends

who are known to me. I fully reciprocate your wish for the Lord's presence, if again favoured to meet. That the blessing of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob may be with you, is the desire of

Yours affectionately,

R. KNILL.

Croydon, March 20th, 1882.

A RIGHT INCREASE.

My dear Friend,—I have lately learned by a person who has just come from Bedford that you are building, &c., and that you wished to hear from me respecting my engagements for the time about which you mean to open your new room. To meet your wishes I would inform you that I am bound for Kent next Tuesday, and have promised to supply at Gower Street next Wednesday night. (I mean to-morrow week.) I think also Mr. Warburton from Trowbridge is now at Gower Street, and will be there for some time; and, probably, he, or Mr. Fowler, could be obtained to preach in it the first time. And I must add, I would strongly recommend either of them for the purpose. I might return by you out of Kent about the 8th, or 9th of June.

I would commend to you the encouragement and the directions which the Lord gave to Abraham: "I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect." (Gen. xvii. 1.) The margin has it: "Walk before me, and be thou upright." God, as all-willing and all-able to help and save to the uttermost, is the only Object of our trust, and as such we cannot make too much of him in every need and in every trouble. If we ask anything in the Name of Jesus it is abundantly promised; but then walking uprightly always follows true faith, not as a merit, but as a proof of the truth of our faith. True faith rests on nothing but God's Word; the Holy Ghost being the Author of it, he will build it on nothing else. He never makes faith a pillow for sloth nor a motive to presumption. He charges conscience to keep guard over our hearts, lips, and ways, while he purifies the heart by faith. He never inspires a prayer for anything to be consumed on our lust, nor a desire for a gift without teaching the soul to regard the great rule of prayer: "Thy will be done."

God give you grace in your assemblies to mind chiefly and only his presence and blessing; to dread any increase but the increase of God; to be ever aware of the dividing schemes of Satan, and the workings of pride, malice, and sloth. May you wish to hear the whole truth of God. May you be regardless of high things, and content to be of no reputation for Christ. May you love all saints, not only in word, but in deed and in truth. May all your things be done with charity.

Yours Truly in the Service of Christ,
 Leicester, April 27th, 1830. THOMAS HARDY.
 To Mr. Geo. Stocker.

MERCIES FROM THE THRONE OF GOD.

Dear Madam,—I was sorry to receive such an account of your house as you sent me in March, but thought then, as I do now, that if you and your house are serving the Lord Christ, as I trust you are, all will be well; for whoever served such a Master without being constrained to say, "He hath done all things well?" I have often thought of writing to you between that time and this, but one thing or another has prevented the doing of it; not want of regard, for I know few people for whom I feel so great a regard as yourself, and with whom I can more readily weep or rejoice, as you communicate to me your sorrows and joys.

It is the happiness of a Christian, though sorrowful, at times to rejoice in his sorrow; for God in Christ, seen and known by faith, is the Fountain of eternal joy. Even when he sends chastisements, which do not seem for the present joyous but grievous, we know that he is love. This is his name and this his nature. He changes not, whatever changes may be in our condition; and "having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." (Jno. xiii. 1.) There is, in one respect, therefore, a perfect sameness in the condition of a believer; for he may say of every dispensation, "This is love."

The late visitations in your house are as so many fresh mercies flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb, and perhaps you have discovered them to be such before now. Afflictions, however light and but for a moment, are sufficient, in the hands of an almighty and all-bountiful God, to work for you and your servant "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." I am really anxious to hear from you, how you do, and how your soul prospereth; and hope you will write to me as soon as you can. I have no claim upon you for this, having deferred writing so long myself; but as I live by an act of grace every day and every hour, and can ask pardon at a throne of grace for sins of as deep a dye as scarlet and crimson, and more in number than the hairs of my head, so I can ask forgiveness of a fellow-creature.

You and I, dear Madam, must learn to take up our cross and follow Jesus. His sufferings increased every day from his birth in a manger to his death upon the cross; and the moment that he suffered most was almost the moment of his departure, when he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Do not wonder, therefore, if your trials should increase in the decline of life. Look upon them as trials of faith; and, depend upon it, that faith is more precious than gold which perisheth, and will be found, though it be tried in the fire, to the praise and honour of its Author and Finisher, Jesus Christ, at his appearing.

Mrs. Cadogan, who is well, joins with me in kind regards to yourself and all your house, and all our Christian friends in your neighbourhood.

I am, dear Madam,

Very Sincerely yours,

W. B. CADOGAN.

Reading, May 19th, 1790.

GROWTH IN GRACE.

I received my dear Friend's letter and think she overlooks our ever-adorable Jesus in setting any value upon a poor dirty worm. If his grace raised it from a dunghill and set it upon a throne with his princes, who shall have the glory—the worm or Jesus? Shall any of his due praise be given to it? God forbid! There ought to be a holy jealousy in you and me that we rob not God of his glory. If we do rob him of ever so little he will wither all our comforts and graces; but if we give him all the glory, which we cannot do unless he be All and we nothing, then everything will go well with us. We get exalted as we are humbled. The lowest is the highest; which makes me fear to look at any good in myself unless the kind hand which gave it me be seen at the same time, and afraid to hear anything good of myself unless I am sure the Master has all the praise. Long experience and many humblings have brought me to it. I have grieved to see how much of my time ran to waste, partly for want of knowing what to do and partly through perplexity about what was done, lest it was not done aright; and, therefore, I was led to endeavour to bring the business of every day into a little compass, that at one view I might satisfy myself whether I had answered the end of living another day.

I have no doubt about my belonging to Christ and am brought to live in constant dependence upon him, and hope I am growing daily in the knowledge and experience of that dependence, which is thus expressed: "The just shall live by his faith." Being justified, or made just, he shall not live by any works or by any stock of grace, by being faithful to any talents received, but he shall live upon the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, receiving from him continually grace upon grace. The believer's growth in this his dependence is thus spoken of: "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. iii. 18.) Grace is the free love of God to poor sinners through the plan of salvation, for the whole plan of salvation from first to last is of grace; but in the knowledge and experience of this there is growth. The believer learns more clearly that all is of grace, and that he has no hand in saving himself, but an empty receiving hand. Grace comes to pull him down and to set up Christ. When the heart is established with grace, the creature is stripped quite bare, without a rag to put on, or money to buy any, or wisdom to know where to get it. Grace pulls down all high things, levels all distinctions, and leaves the poor creature nothing at all to trust in or to boast of, but to live upon Christ's alms; so that the sense of our lost, guilty, hapless state is the only thing that can make us willing to live upon a whole Christ.

And while a believer lives thus, how can he grow in grace, if he be not discovering every day more of the depth of iniquity which is in him? Grace cannot be magnified unless nature be humbled. Jesus Christ cannot become more precious unless self

become more vile. As the believer sinks in his own eyes Christ rises in his esteem; and this, in my opinion, is growing in grace. Growing in the sense of our weakness magnifies Christ's strength; our sinfulness, his righteousness; our folly, his wisdom; our misery, his mercy; our outward, sorrowful state, his inward peace and joy. Thus the growth in the knowledge of Christ is closely connected with the knowledge of self, and that makes me afraid of anything which tends to weaken this view of things, because it would weaken my dependence upon Christ, and I should not see or feel my want of him so much, which would interfere with the life of faith, and thereby eclipse the glory of Jesus. You see my jealousy, and, indeed, I have great reason for it.

After all my experience, which you have in "The Life of Faith," I have a revolting heart still. I would turn from and live without Christ if I could. Pride puts me upon it. O this *pride!* It is the very devil. It attacks not the heel, but the heart of Christ, and wants to rob him of his crown; and I have so smarted for it that the most distant approach is terrible to me. Think what you will of me, but never mention me without mentioning the grace of my dearest Lord who has made me all that I ever shall be, but sin and misery.

Adieu, my friend. Remember yours in our precious Immanuel

WILLIAM ROMAINE.

Hartlepool, Ang. 7th, 1764.

THE STRUGGLE WITHIN.

Dear Friend,—I felt thankful to receive yours and to know that you are travelling in the narrow path. I find it indeed to be a narrow path. It is a long time since I was first made to feel my state as a sinner before God. I have met with many persons who have appeared to have some concern about their soul and who have travelled ten, twenty, and thirty years, made a great profession, and stood high in the estimation of the Lord's people, and yet when they have come to die we could not entertain the least hope of their resurrection unto eternal life. These are trying things to witness; but the Word of God tells us it is he that endures unto the end that shall be saved. Judas was one of the twelve apostles that were sent out by Christ to preach, and no doubt he was a gifted man and endued with the gift of the Holy Ghost to work miracles; and we have no reason to think that either of the eleven apostles had any doubt about his sincerity, nor that he doubted it himself. This, to me, is one of the worst marks against a man and a proof that such a one is not in possession of vital godliness. The Word of God declares that faith shall be tried as silver and gold are tried; but where there is not the faith of God's elect, it cannot be tried. We read that "the wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God; God is not in all his thoughts."

For many years I have had to travel, for the most part, in a gloomy path where there has been but little bright shining; yet blessed be God I am not left altogether destitute of hope, and seem at times to have life enough to sigh and say with one of old, "O that I were as in months that are past, when the candle of the Lord shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness." Sometimes I shed tears, having a broken heart, and say, "O that I knew where I might find him!"

But although I have many dark and gloomy days, when neither sun nor stars appear, yet I do not crave an untried path; for I feel sure that an untried faith is not the faith of a believer in Christ, and I know that an untried religion never came from God. A religion that the devil does not interfere with is not worth having; for I cannot find such a thing in the Bible. It is through much tribulation that we are to enter the kingdom.

In every regenerate soul, born again of God and quickened into life by the Holy Ghost, there are two distinct principles. The old nature remains the old nature and will remain so as long as life shall last; but there is also a new creation, for "we are created anew in Christ Jesus unto eternal life," and "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven." This is to have a pure and holy principle implanted in our hearts which is born of God and therefore cannot sin, and we read that "the wicked one toucheth him not." God has put enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. Thus the trial of faith commences as soon as life divine enters the soul. Here the struggle between the two natures begins, and the more the soul is kept alive in the things of God, the sharper will be the struggle within. The one loves sin, the other hates it; one loves God, the other hates him with a perfect hatred; and these two are not likely to be at peace with each other. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other."

When for a time the struggle within is not so much felt, the soul will become barren, cold, and, more or less, unconcerned about the things of eternity. Then it will begin to tamper with little sins and so on to greater, until it may be said of it as of Ephraim, "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone." O my friend, this is a fearful thing! I know by painful experience what I am writing about. Many talk of a renovation of nature, but I hope we know by painful and also by blessed experience that such doctrine sprang from the bottomless pit and from the father of lies, and never will it meet with the sanction of a covenant God.

I do hope I have been brought, as you say, to the judgment bar to meet my fierce accuser face to face, and I had nothing to plead on my own behalf why the law should not take its course and I receive the just sentence as a law-breaker; but the Lord Jesus stepped in; and in him all the Three Persons in one undivided Jehovah were well pleased. Here I saw the Father in his eternal choice, the eternal Son in the redemption price,—his

own heart's blood, which he had paid to satisfy law and justice on my behalf, and the eternal Spirit in the work he had undertaken to convey the message to a poor lost, undone soul. Then the enemy fled, my soul rejoiced, and the words came into my mind, "I have meat to eat that the world knoweth not of;" so that I scarcely knew whether I was in the body or out of the body. Many days have passed and many changes I have witnessed since then.

This is a rambling letter, but I hope heart, mind, and pen have, in some measure, gone together, and may the Lord pardon what I have written amiss. The Lord bless you with every needful, covenant blessing, is the desire of

Westham, April 2nd, 1875.

E. MILLOR.

THE VOICE OF FAITH.

I HAVE received my dear Friend's scrap, which, like Joseph's coat of many colours, is a miscellaneous piece, a composition of many fragments, but always welcome to poor me, as it savours and sounds of what I am much accustomed to hear and to taste.

It is an allegorical dialogue, in which different members of different classes bear their part. *Truth* has her voice, and faith seconds all her motions; then comes in *carnal reason*, showing her opinion, and *unbelief* approves and confirms her sayings. Then *honest conscience* brings in his judgment of the case, and *hope* approves and sides with him. The will is sensible of its own integrity in what it chooses, craves, and seeks; but the carnal mind, being enmity, when stirred up by Satan, doubts of all and calls the whole in question, because the fullest assurance of faith, which works by love and casts out all doubting, is not attained.

But among all the different voices that are found in the book of Job, in the Song of Solomon, and in the dialogues of Zion by the prophet Isaiah, in which faith and unbelief, hope and despair, expectation and despondency, truth and falsehood, submission and rebellion, resignation and desperation, acquiescence and perverseness, all make their speeches and put forth their voices, nothing at last stands good and meets with confirmation from God, but the voice, the assertions, and the declarations of faith.—"I will arise, and go to my Father," says the Prodigal. *That* is ratified by God: "This is my son." But all the rest, about being made a hired servant, falls to the ground.

So the speech of the three children at the mouth of the fiery furnace: "And God will deliver us out of thy hand, O king," stands fast, while the after-speech, attended with ifs and buts, is lost in the fog. And so in Job. "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold; I shall see God for myself, and not another." This is all ratified and confirmed in heaven; for he came forth as gold, crying out, "But now mine eye seeth thee," whereas all the rest, such as: "I know thou wilt not hold me

innocent;" "Thou hast sealed up mine iniquity in a bag;" "I shall go to the land of darkness, and the shadow of death &c.," stands for nothing. A merciful God makes all these unbelieving speeches to be nothing worth. "There be many devices in a man's heart, but the counsel of the Lord, *that shall stand.*" Hence the question, "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" And sure I am that carnal reason and infidelity are none of the Lord's prophets, nor are they of his counsel; and it is well for us they are not.

Farewell. Faith and hope be with thee. So prays

Your willing Servant in Christ,

The Cabin, July 30th, 1801.

W. HUNTINGTON.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

My dear Friend,—I am sorry to hear that you are again afflicted in body, and my desire is that you may be favoured of God, so that you may feel it good to be afflicted. May the Lord fulfil your desires and grant you a visit from himself; for he can cure your sin sicknesses as well as heal your body, and cause you to feel Christ exceedingly precious to your immortal soul; so that you may be enabled to say with one of old, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters," &c. Perhaps you may think, "Shall I ever be able to use that language? My dear tried, trembling friend, what would you not give to be enabled to say so? Methinks you answer, "Why, I would give all the world, did I possess it." Then, as sure as ever the desire is in your heart, so surely shall that desire be granted; for "he satisfieth the desire of every living thing." May you be enabled to lay hold of the Lord's gracious promises; for can you not look back and remember many precious love-tokens with which you have been favoured during your many years' sojourn in the wilderness? and he who has helped you hitherto will help you unto the end.

Cannot you look back upon some seasons when the God of truth has caused your heart to run over in gratitude for a hope in his mercy and from feeling Christ near and dear to your soul, while you have had a sight of the Son of God suffering to put away your sins and work out a glorious righteousness just suited to clothe your soul, as well as the soul of the sinner who is trying to scribble these few lines to you? I know you are well assured that you have no righteousness of your own, and Christ himself says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." This is the declaration of the God of righteousness, and he will never lie. Rich, self-righteous souls never hunger after Christ's righteousness, for they have plenty of their own; and those who have not enough try to get more by their alms deeds, church or chapel going, and the

many ways in which the devil prompts them onward, and all to blind them. The sinner born of the Spirit sighs, groans, and tries to pray to God to clothe him in the righteousness of Christ; for without it he feels he shall be exposed with shame before a holy God for ever and ever.

I know my fellow-traveller often cries out for God, even for the living God. I desire earnestly that you may, like Simeon, have God's Christ in the arms of your faith, and hear his almighty voice, saying, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." Perhaps you will say, "That is too good for such a poor sinner as I am to dare hope for;" but would you not love to have it granted, and to be assured that Jesus' agonies and death were for your soul's salvation, and that God's only-begotten Son was nailed to the tree and made a curse that you should be saved through the merits of his blood and at last be with him in eternal rest? Read hymn 703 and see if you cannot find in it something of which you hope you have tasted and want to taste again; for a bleeding Jesus seen by faith will cure the most deadly poison that ever the old serpent infused into a poor sinner.

Grace, eternal grace reigns to pardon crimson sins. The Friend of sinners says, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. i. 18.) O what grace! Yes, and to the deepest-dyed sinners, though as black as Manasseh, Mary Magdalene, or the writer, J. B., Christ came to put away sin by having all the sins of his church laid upon him. Herein is love. That a Man, yes, and the glorious God-Man, too, should die for his enemies. When I took up my pen I had no idea of being led thus, but I feel I should like to sound abroad the name and glory of Zion's Lord and God, that you, my dear tried sister, may feel his worth and preciousness. O the love of Jesus Christ in coming down into this lower world to bear the infinite wrath of God that his poor fallen church should know his eternal love and taste a little of it while in the wilderness, and when delivered from this mortal tabernacle drink full draughts of it above!

The Word says, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." This is the voice of love and mercy. The poor man who came to the Lord Jesus Christ about his son said, with tears, "Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief." But did he not reap in joy when the Lord was moved with compassion and gave him a blessed answer; so that he went away with a good harvest? *All* who sow in tears *shall* reap in joy. You have sown in tears and desires, and said, "Give me Christ, or else I die," and my dear friend, God will not lie unto you, nor deny himself. Jesus ever liveth to intercede and to save all that come unto God by him. May the Lord, in mercy, satisfy your longing heart. So prays

Your Wellwisher,

Aldershot, Sept. 27th, 1883.

JOHN BENNETT.

SALVATION BY GRACE.

“By grace ye are saved,” how precious the word,
 How sure the salvation which flows from the Lord.
 His sovereign good pleasure he freely makes known
 To poor guilty sinners, vile, lost, and undone.

“By grace ye are saved,” ye children of God,
 Your sins are all drowned in Jesus’ rich blood;
 He effected your ransom, he died to atone
 For all your transgressions and make you his own.

“By grace ye are saved,” the righteous demands
 Of God’s holy law at Jesus’ dear hands
 Received satisfaction, complete and divine,
 Here mercy and pardon transcendently shine.

“By grace ye are saved,” the devil may roar
 And floods of temptation maliciously pour
 Upon thee, believer, yet safe thou shalt stand
 Upheld and preserved by omnipotent hand.

“By grace ye are saved,” from curse ye are free,
 There’s no penal wrath, believer, for thee;
 There’s no condemnation, this Jesus endured,
 And thy everlasting salvation procured.

“By grace ye are saved,” though Satan annoy,
 And oft vex thy soul he cannot destroy.
 Thy life, O believer, in Jesus is hid,
 In God, who will surely destruction forbid.

“By grace ye are saved” and shortly shall prove
 That God has prepared a mansion above;
 There ye shall adore him and evermore trace
 With sweet satisfaction the wonders of grace.

J. BURTON.

WHAT is all religion without a divine beginning, middle, and end, commenced, carried on, and accomplished with a heavenly power, supernatural life, and spiritual unction?—*J. C. Philpot.*

A DEPENDENT soul will be content with anything if the Lord will but own him, if Christ will but smile and entertain him. This was visible in the returning prodigal. (Lu. xv. 18, 19.) The soul can say, “Lord, let me be anything, so that I may have a being in thy house. Let me but come under thy roof and I will be content though I have no other usage. The meanest office in thy house is too good for me, only let me not be shut out of doors.”—*Clarkson.*

POOR struggling child of God, who art tried with sin, troubled with Satan’s suggestions, and tempest-tossed in thy mind, see what a sympathizing Saviour thou hast; and may you never forget that he knows all your wilderness trials, that he knows the path you are now walking in; and though you may have lost sight of him, and are ready to say with Job, “O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his mercy-seat!” his eye of compassion is fixed on thee, and he will appear for thy deliverance.—*W. Gadsby.*

REVIEWS.

The Saving Health of the Gospel. Twelve Sermons by Eli Ashdown.
—London · J. Gadsby, 17, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, E.C.

THE ministry of the gospel being God's own institution is of divine authority, and is made useful to the quickening, calling, comforting, edifying, and establishing of his own beloved and redeemed people, who are brought to know the power and saving effects of his grace.

From the beginning of the world God has had his witnesses who have testified of his sovereign grace and quickening power in the salvation of their souls. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all experienced the same divine teaching and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost. Moses, David, and the prophets were all raised up as witnesses of the holy and righteous character of God in his law and were also made partakers of the benefits and blessings of the gospel, of which they had the substance in their hearts when the Spirit testified in their souls of the sufferings of Christ and of the glory that should follow. Like Abraham of old they saw Christ's day and were glad.

But it was not until after the incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation of Christ at God's right hand that men were endued with that excellent and gracious measure of the Spirit which enabled them to preach the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, by which such wondrous changes, conversions, peace, pardon, and forgiveness of sins were manifested to the sons of men, and by which the elect angels learned the will and wondrous acts of God in his grace; as Peter says: "Which things the angels desire to look into."

Sin laid the whole human race in the lowest depths of misery, wretchedness, and enmity against God, and brought them into such a state of weakness that not one soul could recover itself from the sad and fearful consequences into which the disobedience of one man had brought us all. Before the fall of man took place God had arranged the plan of salvation and stored up in his covenant, which he made with his dear Son Jesus Christ before the world began, mercy, grace, and salvation full, free, and eternal, which he was determined in the fulness of time should abound and superabound over all the miseries, sin, enmity, darkness, and death into which we were fallen; and thus rescue his own beloved people from under the power of the enemy and bring them to the knowledge of himself and his crucified Son Jesus Christ, whom to know is life eternal.

To this end he sent forth his apostles, who were the first ministers raised up to preach his gospel, and through their instrumentality sinners, yes, *thousands* of heathen, idolatrous, *gross idolatrous* sinners were delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son. God continually gave effect to the word of his grace; for with authority the apostles preached the word and with majesty God owned their

labours. The word entered the hearts of sinners, it rent the veil, and destroyed the covering cast over all nations. "So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." (Acts xix. 20.) Those who heard it, but felt not the power, were left to revile, oppose, and persecute both those who preached and those whose eyes and hearts were opened to receive the word of God, which effectually worketh also in them that believe. The Jews required a sign and the Greeks sought after wisdom; but to the Lord's elect the gospel was made the power of God unto salvation.

Unadorned by human oratory, preached out of the sincerity of their hearts, power attending their word, devils were cast out and Christ entered into the hearts of sinners; his kingdom was set up, and a divine, lasting, eternal change effected, which neither sin, men, devils, time, life, nor death could ever possibly undo. "It pleased the Lord by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor. i. 21.) Christ fulfilled to his servants in those days the last promise that he made to them: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 20.)

And from the days of the apostles the Lord has had his witnesses by raising up men to preach his gospel and people to hear it; his servants being witnesses by being commissioned to preach the doctrines of sovereign grace, the Godhead of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the work of the Spirit on the hearts of his elect, and how the work of grace when once began is carried on and perfected effectually and completely by the power of the Spirit of God. The Lord's people who are brought, through grace, to feel themselves sinners and to hear the word preached, and feel the power, grace, goodness, and pardoning love and mercy of God to their souls are witnesses that what his servants proclaim is in accordance with the will and Word of Him who is unalterable in his nature, unalterable in his purpose, and unalterable in the gospel of his grace. So it may be said, both of ministers and hearers, "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord."

The age in which we live is a day of small things as regards the effects of the gospel of God, especially in striking conversion of sinners, though there is cause for thankfulness that the Lord has his servants, who, if they preach not the word of God with the power and success they could desire, they at least preach it in its purity and according to the ability and grace which God bestows upon them. But it is a lamentable fact that in many places where truth once prospered and where many souls have been blessed, there is a manifest declension in doctrine, in power, and gracious experience both of law and gospel. It is indeed a miracle to hear of a man or a woman being brought, through the preached word, into such a state of condemnation and guiltiness before God as to be constrained to cry out, like the jailor of old, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" The word of God is preached in many places, but we think it will be readily admitted, both by the servants and saints of God, that there is very little power attending the word.

It has been God's prerogative at different periods of the gospel dispensation to allow a cloud, a thick cloud, to come over his church, and for darkness, error, and superstition to prevail amongst the people, even in this our favoured country. Then he has been pleased to manifest his kindness in raising up a Wycliffe, a Bunyan, or a Huntington to thrash the mountains and to make the hills as chaff; and he has made their preaching light, life, and power to the salvation of his own redeemed. We know God is too wise to err and he cannot do wrong; yet, have we not great cause to mourn that the church in the present day is not favoured with preachers such as we have just named? Where shall we find a man with the determination of Wycliffe, with the grace of Bunyan, or with the light, gift, and power that God bestowed upon Huntington? Ministers, as we have said, preach according to the ability that God has given them. We each one from Sabbath to Sabbath bear testimony to the truth of God's Word, and feebly set forth the way in which sinners are saved; but O, how short we come! What little effects are produced! How few are pricked to the heart, and how few know that the kingdom of God is not in word only, but also in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance! What a sweet sight it is at times to behold the children of God sitting under the preached word with weeping eyes and broken hearts produced by the Spirit applying his own word to their hearts and consciences with power, which sometimes it is one's joy and pleasure to behold.

The Sermons we are about to notice are by Mr. Ashdown. We may rather call them Fragments of Sermons; for, as stated in the preface, they were taken down for private use only. There is nothing very striking in them, either for height or depth; but in them, in a simple and homely way, the truths of the gospel are set forth and a living experience in the soul contended for. We hope they may be made useful to the church of God. We will give an extract from a sermon preached from Isa. lv. 1-3. Speaking of a thirsty soul Mr. Ashdown says,

“Another thing these have a particular thirst after is wisdom. If you thirst after that, it shows you have lost your own; and you will want wisdom to direct you in all things. If you are employed in any matter, you will cry, ‘Lord, do give me wisdom to do this.’ You will want wisdom to walk among men, among your friends and relatives; yes, and before him too. When Solomon was anointed king of Israel, the Lord appeared to him in his sleep, saying, ‘Ask what I shall give thee.’ And Solomon said, ‘Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad.’ Well, the religious world would say, ‘Any fool may know that.’ Not a soul knows good from bad unless he is taught by the Holy Ghost. I am speaking now of spiritual discernment, not of moral. If your religion does not go further than moral good, it is of no use for eternity. Every living soul wants wisdom to perform what he has to do consistently with God, and to walk before him. Sometimes he

feels he wants wisdom to speak to his children or to his wife, for he does not know what to say. He feels like David, 'If I speak thus, behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children.' It is said, 'Seek righteousness; seek meekness'; and where meekness is, the man wants wisdom.

"Give wisdom to direct our way,
And strength to do thy will.'

Another thing he thirsts after is righteousness. 'O,' saith the soul, 'I would be holy.' We read, 'Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness;' showing that those who are spiritually taught are destitute of it altogether and of any power to work out a righteousness; and being in a dry and thirsty land, they hunger and thirst after it. 'They shall be filled.' 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.' Milk is very nutritious and suitable for babes; and hence this invitation takes in all God's family, little children as well as those of matured age, as they walk through this vale of tears, where no water is."

On page 132, speaking of those who are blessed in Christ, he says,

"The first blessing is a heart to seek God. The heart that seeks him is under the control of his grace, blessed in him, and is under the promise: 'Your heart shall live that seek God.' But how shall we discern between real seeking and the hypocrite's prayers, which are an abomination to the Lord? It is said, 'Lord, in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.' That is a particular time when God's people pray, when his chastening is upon their spirits and they are in guilt, sin, and trouble. David says, 'I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord, O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.' 'Pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.' The publican cried, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner!' and poor Hannah, under the hidings of God's face and his chastening on her spirit in her barren state 'prayed unto the Lord and wept sore.' She says, 'Out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto.' Do you ever cry in your trouble, when you are surrounded with cares in providence and feel guilty? You fear yourself, those about you, and the path you are in, lest you should be swallowed up from all his saving mercies, and you cry. That is God drawing your soul; you are blessed in him already. He is with you, and his name shall endure for ever."

But though we approve of these Sermons by Mr. Ashdown, we feel bound, in love, to point out a few mistakes. The first occurs on page 11. Respecting the fallen angels it is stated that before their fall these angels were as holy as God is holy. This cannot be supported from the Word of God which distinctly declares, "There is none holy as the Lord; for there is none beside thee; neither is there any rock like our God." (1 Sam. ii. 2.) And again,

it is written: "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods?" (Exod. xv. 11), which includes both angels and men. Angels have a created nature which Christ, when he became incarnate, passed by: "He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." (Heb. ii. 16.) God has an uncreated, holy nature which is incapable of sinning. If the angels that fell (which were only created beings) had been as holy as God is holy, they could not have sinned; but being only created and mutable creatures they could and did sin, and the elect angels which sinned not with the rest were as capable of sinning, but were preserved by the keeping power of God. They may have been tempted by Satan to take part in the great rebellion, for which the angels that sinned were expelled from heaven; or they may have been moved with pity and hard thoughts at the inflexible justice of God by which their comrades were banished for ever from his presence. This may give light upon and be an explanation of the Scripture which says, "Behold, he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly." (Job iv. 18.)

On page 44, speaking of Adam in his primitive state, Mr. A. says, "His nature was holy, for he was made in the image of God." This again is a mistake. The nature of Adam was of the earth, earthy, without a particle of holiness. The word "holy" is not applied to Adam, or anything else in the first creation; therefore the application of the word is unscriptural. If Adam's natural frame had been suffered to lie on the ground for a thousand years after God had fashioned it, it would have remained a natural body; but God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. Thus he was a natural, upright man, possessed of perfect moral capabilities to serve God according to the covenant of works under which he was placed. Now if God had seen fit to recall Adam's soul out of his body before he sinned, the body would again have been a lifeless, natural body, of the earth, earthy, though without sin or corruption. The bodies of the saints will at the resurrection morning be fashioned after the image of the Second Adam, who was holy at his birth, and in his life and death. Holiness is a new covenant blessing to be bestowed upon the children of God at the resurrection morning.

On page 71 it is stated of Christ that *his glorious Majesty lay in the tomb*. The Majesty of Christ never lay in the tomb. His sacred, lifeless body was laid there by Joseph of Arimathæa and Nicodemus; but his Majesty was his Deity, by which his body was raised again out of the tomb.

There are also a few expressions which savour of creature-power. On page 51 the following occurs: "I would encourage you to live to him, to honour him, to fall flat into his hands, to commit your troubles to him, let him be all, and surrender yourself to him to be crucified; and he will accept you as you surrender yourself by precious faith altogether to him, and fall flat on his person and merits." A preacher may occasionally by a slip of the tongue use an expression which may not convey his real meaning, but

this is inexcusable in print. The Lord's people cannot, except by divine aid, surrender themselves to be crucified.

Again, on page 142, it reads, "We learn in necessity it is his will we should hold fast our confidence." Should it not rather read, "In necessity we learn how much we need the mighty power of God to enable us to hold fast our confidence?" On page 143, speaking of sanctification, Mr. A. says, "How is that done? Only by *holding your heart* by faith in the atonement." Are not the Lord's people brought sensibly to feel that it is only by the indwelling power of the Spirit that they are sanctified, and that he alone can create faith in the atonement? In noticing these mistakes we do not in the least disparage Mr. Ashdown's sermons, but feel bound, in love, to point out what we consider to be objectionable.

Wishing that they may prove a blessing we commend them to the notice of the church of God.

Memoir, Sermons, and Letters of the late Mr. William Ferris.—London: J. Gadsby, 17, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, E.C.

For more than thirty years it was our privilege to know and walk in unbroken friendship with the late Mr. Ferris. As the Lord is pleased to remove one after another old and valued friends, how desirable it is that he should raise up others to follow in their footsteps. Mr. Ferris was what he professed to be,—a meek and lowly follower of the Lamb of God. For more than sixty years it was his mercy to know the Lord by divine teaching in his soul, and during the whole of that time he was kept steadfast in the truth as it is in Christ, and adorned the doctrine which he professed, both in his walk and in his conversation. For many years he was a preacher of the word of God, and supplied a great many of the churches in Wiltshire, where many of the Lord's people who knew him are still living. The Lord was not pleased to endue our friend with great gifts, nor was he blessed with great oratorical powers; but the Lord gave to him what far exceeds both these, and that is grace, life, and humility of spirit, and he was enabled to preach the truth, as far as God gave him ability, in simplicity and love.

The Memoir has already appeared in the "G. S." for July, 1887, also one or two of the letters. As a specimen of Mr. Ferris's simple and experimental way of preaching we give the following extract:

"No man by mere reading and natural instruction can enter into the secret—'Ye must be born again.' Now there is a going into this way and explaining it, if we were to speak of it firstly, secondly, and thirdly, but I must speak of it as it comes. There is the entering in at the wicket-gate, and into the narrow way. Why, friends, is it called a narrow way? Because it is narrow and difficult and pressing. There are such things outside and such things inside, that we feel sometimes that we hardly squeeze between and travel along."

Mr. Ferris knew what changes of soul were, for he often passed through darkness and through light, through evil and through good report, as may be seen by the following extract with which we conclude our Review:

“I thought that if I lived so many years I should become so strong, and able to overcome this and that; but I find that I grow no better; I groan being burdened. I want to believe at *all* times, but find I cannot always. This afternoon I was very tried, and I was obliged to come to Jesus for help and strength. I name this to show the child of God grows *two ways*. He becomes more deeply exercised with sin and self, and learns more of his own heart and his own weakness and infirmities, and finds he cannot get out of his bonds; he is walled up, as it were, but he groans being burdened—‘Lord, *release* me. Lord, help me. O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me.’ I had a secret place. I begged for *patience*, that he would enable me to wait and be still. I mean in temporal things, but I could leave it with the Lord, with Jesus who is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. O how he prayed,—prayed to his Father that his church and people might be delivered out of the hands of their enemies.”

THE Bible is a sealed book until the heart be awakened, and then he that runs may read.—*Newton*.

As ministers we preach to those who have like passions and infirmities with ourselves, and by our own feelings, fears, and changes we learn to speak a word in season to them that are weary, to warn those who stand, and to stretch out a hand of compassion towards them that are fallen; and to commend it to others, from our own experience, as a faithful saying, that Jesus came to save the chief of sinners.—*Newton*.

TAKE all the depths unfathomable, unfathomable, of your own heart, or look at the vilest wretch whom sins of every shape and name have debased to the lowest pitch, say a Norfolk Island convict, or Australian bushranger, steeped to the neck in blood and crime, so sworn a foe of all laws, human and divine, that, if to be taken in no other way, he must be shot down like a wild beast for the security of the lives of the community; when you have probed the depths of your own heart or painted in your own imagination the blackest wretch that the hulks have ever held or vomited forth on a penal colony, you have not then seen or imagined in your mind the millionth part of what human nature really is as sunk and debased by the Adam fall.—*J. C. Philpot*.

THE chief difference between us and the disciples when our Saviour was on earth, is in this,—they then walked by sight and we are called to walk by faith. They could see him with their bodily eyes; we cannot. He said before he left them, “It is expedient for you that I go away.” How could this be, unless that spiritual communion which he promised to maintain with his people after his ascension were preferable to that intercourse he allowed them whilst he was visible with them? But we are sure it is preferable, and they who had experienced both were well satisfied he had made good his promise; so that though they had known him after the flesh, they were content not to know him so any more.—*Newton*.

Obituary.

JOSEPH GRAY.—On Oct. 10th, 1888, aged 66, after an illness of nine months, Joseph Gray, for thirty-eight years a consistent member of the church at Gower Street Chapel, London, and a deacon for eight years. Also honorary secretary for the last ten years of the "G. S." Aid and Poor Relief Societies.

I desire to write a few things concerning the work of God upon the soul of my dear departed husband, as displayed in his life and conversation for over forty-four years. May God the Spirit help me to write with a single eye to exalt the riches of his grace; and to him shall be all the glory.

He was baptized by Mr. T. Ricketts, at Dunkerton, near Bath, in May, 1845, and afterwards joined the church at Eden Street, London, on Dec. 12th, 1850, and removed with them to Gower Street. He was a peacemaker, a man of real prayer, and a true lover of Zion. He has not left any written experience, but from extracts from letters written to various friends I have gleaned the following account, and amongst his papers I found the following in verse, which describes his early experience:

- "Lord, help me now and every day
To look and ponder o'er the way
Which thou hast led thy worm.
Unworthy of thy leading kind,
With wandering heart and stupid mind,
So prone from thee to turn.
- "In looking back, though distant far,
I can't forget when at thy bar
A criminal I stood.
Conscience condemned, condemned by thee,
Nor could I hope that thou wouldst free
My soul by Jesus' blood.
- "Then, Lord, thou didst thy Spirit send
Into my heart and made it bend,
And bow before thy throne.
With wringing hands and burdened heart,
My soul distress'd in every part
Could not forbear to groan.
- "These groanings, Lord, thou didst regard,
And set at length my soul at large
In thy appointed time.
Of that blest time I've often thought,
And gloried in the grace that brought
Me near and seal'd me thine.
- "That chamber sacred to my soul,
Though I should roam from pole to pole,
No place to me so dear.
There Christ bless'd me and I bless'd him;
There Jesus lov'd, I loved again,
Alone with Jesus there.

“Alone with Jesus! O how blest!
 Alone with Jesus! What sweet rest!
 From every burden free.
 My sins have gone, my fears are fled,
 And I with joy lift up my head
 Now I'm alone with thee.”

Referring to 2 Pet. ii. 5, 6, in writing to a friend, he says, “Never till my latest breath shall I forget the blessed effects of pardon through blood flowing indescribably sweet into my soul. When we get home our employ will be to sing of Jesus' precious blood in sweet, seraphic strains: ‘Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.’ If there were no virtue in Christ's precious blood we must for ever remain unpardoned. O that I could again prove, in a very powerful way, its virtue, to soften, cleanse, pardon, and make me every whit whole. I hope I prize the fountain of a Saviour's blood; but I want to prize it a thousand times more. How exceedingly hard the heart becomes! I wish I could more clearly set forth the beauty I see and the blessedness I feel in that precious heart-warming and soul-ravishing truth that it is God and Man in one glorious Person, who is touched with the tenderest sympathy, pity, and love towards every weeping child of his.

“It may be asked, ‘Have you proved in an experimental manner the things you speak of, even the virtue of a Saviour's death? And do you live in the continual enjoyment thereof?’ Here are two questions combined in one, and I must answer them separately. In reply to the first, I do believe and feel that I can, with all humility and as in the sight and fear of God, answer in the affirmative, that the Lord has sweetly and powerfully delivered me from the guilt of sin and the fear of death and hell; so that I could then boldly have sealed it with my blood, yea, and welcomed death with pleasure, ‘when my Husband (Christ) by me stood’; and this by virtue of a precious Saviour's death. Say you, ‘Well, you must be a blessed man indeed.’ Yes, I felt I was a blessed man; for I had then got the blessing. Shall I tell you what it was? You yourself well know what it is, for you have realized it in your own experience. It was Christ in my heart and I in his. None but those who have felt the blessed effects thereof can understand the indescribable sweetness there is in the experience of this abundant favour. It is the earnest of eternal joys, or, in other words, it is heaven begun below.

“But to the second question suggested, ‘Do you live in the continual enjoyment thereof?’ I answer, No; for many fears, many distresses, and much guilt have distressed my mind by the way which I have come. The hardness, deadness, unbelief, and infidelity that I have been the subject of since a precious Christ was formed in me the hope of glory I never can tell. Nevertheless I believe, with the poet, that

“‘Whate'er I found him at my best,
 He's at my worst the same;

And in his love will ever rest:
My Husband holds the claim.'

This is my resting-place; for although I change, he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself. Beloved, it will be our privilege, the Lord enabling us, to keep our eye steadily fixed upon Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, feeling this to be

“Our point of rest
Though hard the battle seem,
Our Captain stood the fiery test,
And we shall stand through him.”

This brings me to my husband's last illness and death. Towards the close of last year he had these words given him, “I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself.” (Jno. xiv. 2, 3.) He dated his illness from the first week in January, 1888. It being very foggy about that time much irritated his throat and made his cough exceedingly troublesome. We thought but little of it at the time, thinking he might have strained himself by coughing. His health however began gradually to decline and his prayers were very solemn. He begged of the Lord to give us grace to bear the trial that was coming upon us in a becoming manner, as those who professed and possessed the gospel of Christ, whatever his righteous will might have designed for us to go through. We were comforted a little in meditating upon the footsteps of the flock, from Abel down to the last of the worthies in the Hebrews, they being footsteps of suffering, like unto their glorious Head when here below in this vale of tears.

One morning he was very poorly and had his breakfast in bed. I went into his bedroom to see if he required any more food and to read to him, when he said, “O my dear, I have had such a breakfast. The Queen has had no better. The Lord has enabled me to take a retrospect of his dealings with me these last forty-four years in the wilderness. Goodness and mercy have followed me, and not one good thing hath failed. Bless his precious name! He has done all things well. Yes, *my Jesus has done all things well!*” He burst into a flood of tears and said, “My heart is broken all to pieces.” It communicated softness to my heart and we shed sweet tears together. He went into the country for a fortnight, and during his stay there I received the following letter from him, dated, May 11th, 1888:

“My dear Sarah,—I hope you are getting on nicely without me. If you have the presence of the Lord, that will more than make up for your loss of mine. I went for a walk in the fields this morning and was favoured with a little softness of heart, which came about in the following way: As I was walking in the fields I observed many weeds amongst the different crops. I stood and looked at them. I thought, ‘What a picture of my heart!’ And the words came: ‘Cursed is the ground for *man's* sake.’ I saw sin was the cause of all these weeds, and that if left they would choke

the fruits of the earth. So the evils in my heart would choke everything that is good. Passing into another field I saw a man hoeing weeds. Now, in the hoeing there are two things done. The weeds are cut off, and the soil being loosened around the plant causeth it to thrive. You know the husbandman, or the farmer, sends the man with the hoe to do the work. I began to think about the heavenly Husbandman. It appeared plain to me that my affliction was to do similar work to the man with the hoe. There is so much in my naughty heart that needs hoeing out and cutting up, and I also saw that I needed loosening from the things of this vain world. Then came the words: 'If ye are without chastisement whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons.' Much light seemed to come with them and softness of heart was produced; so that I could scarcely keep from shedding tears. I saw in a moment that I had been reckoning wrongly altogether; for I had been reckoning something like dear old Jacob when he said, "All these things are against me." I was favoured to see that this was the portion of a child and a beloved son. O my dear, what a blessing is a soft heart and the Lord's sweet company; for I feel, great as he is, he did condescend to take a walk with me this morning. 'O bless the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together!' Fare thee well. Excuse more from

"Your loving Husband,

"J. GRAY."

He came home from the country to fetch me, but was too poorly to return. He was suffering much from rheumatism, and the substance on his chest began to increase. I sent for his doctor, and he told me privately that the complaint was cancer. Deeming it necessary to have further advice, another doctor was called in and a consultation was held. They came to the conclusion that the case was hopeless. My dear husband wished to know the worst. They said, "Mr. Gray, you must never hope to get better; your disease is incurable." He received the intelligence with great calmness. I shall never forget the sweet submission that was given him to fall into the hands of his God and Father. The next morning he said, "I plainly see that if we do not go away at once, you will not get a change into the country and the little rest which you so greatly need." Accordingly we went the same day to our dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. Cattell, where he had much enjoyed spending a little time in the spring of the year. Nothing seemed to do him much bodily good, but when he was favoured a little with the Lord's presence he was happy. He said to me, "Why should I wish to stay here, if my place is prepared for me in heaven? I must go and fill it. It is only going from the church militant to the church triumphant."

Referring to his affliction, in a letter to a friend, he said, "It is the messenger of death planted in my bosom for me to nourish until it be strong enough to take me through the portals of death to the grave and my ransomed spirit to the Lord who gave it; and if my dear Lord has my seat ready in the church triumphant, why

should I complain to leave my place here in his church below? I believe I have had some little taste of what heaven must be in my affliction; for the goodness of the Lord has broken my heart all to pieces more than once. O how sweet is his melting love! What sweet tears, and what sweet softness of heart it produces. O my friend, it is good for me that I have been afflicted, and it will be good when my Father says, 'My child, come home.'

He was favoured with a spirit of grace and supplications whilst with the dear friends at the little chapel at Alvescot. One Lord's day especially he was very solemn in prayer. It was a time not easily to be forgotten. He gave out hymns 995, and 1083 Gad.'s Sel. Some mornings he did not get up till 11 or 12 o'clock, as he had such restless nights. With all this I entertained a hope that he would get better.

One morning I was walking in the front of the house getting a little fresh air, when in passing his bedroom window, I heard him talking aloud, and thought someone was with him. I went upstairs, and when I got to his bedroom door he was repeating the verse commencing:

"Here I raise my Ebenezer;
Hither by thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home."

Then he said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul!" I went into the room and found he had had a sweet visit from the Lord. When he again sank low in his mind he begged of the Lord for another crumb of mercy, and these words were given him:

"Then trust me and fear not, thy life is secure," &c.

We returned home at the end of July, and he assisted at the Lord's table the first Sabbath in August for the last time. The disease began rapidly to increase and he seemed as if he had nothing to do but to die. He said to me one day, "The Lord gave me a sweet promise forty years ago when I was in great trouble and walking up Holborn Hill. It was this: 'My God shall supply all your needs;' and he has done so up to the present time, and you are a proof of its fulfilment at this moment, being such a support to me in this my time of need." He looked in my face, gave me a sweet smile, and said, "He will never leave thee. He will never forsake thee." I was leading him out of the room when he said, "A faithful friend of grief partakes." He was very grateful for all that was done for him. At another time he said,

"Yes, I to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given," &c.

He said also, "I want to go home to my heavenly home, my celestial home, where saints and angels dwell."

One evening he sank very low in his mind and begged of the Lord to come to his help; but he did not seem to come then as he could wish. Mr. Ashdown called the next morning and read

and prayed with him, and he was greatly comforted thereby. After Mr. A. had gone he was meditating upon the good things that he had said, when the enemy came in and said, "Do you know how it is that the friends esteem you so much?" My husband answered him not a word when Satan said, "I can tell you. It is for your gift in prayer." He said this quite knocked him down; but he was not down three seconds, when the words were dropped with power into his soul:

"Then tell me how is it I find
Some sweetness in waiting for thee?"

He then said to Satan, "I cannot create this sweetness, nor can my friends create it for me, and you cannot, Mr. Devil." With that he skulked off like a thief. At times the enemy made sore thrusts at him, but his Lord and Master stood by him and rebuked the devil. One day he said,

"Sweet was the time when first I felt
The Saviour's pardoning voice,"

and quoted the verse commencing,

"Hark! the voice of love and mercy,
Sounds aloud from Calvary!"

Also:

"Did Jesus once upon me shine?
Then Jesus is for ever mine."

And again:

"On the Rock of Ages founded," &c.

The last week of his life three mornings he engaged in solemn family-prayer, and pleaded very earnestly for the peace and prosperity of the church which lay very near his heart, and that every grace of the Blessed Spirit might rest upon myself, his son, and family. The last Scripture I heard him repeat was out of the Gospel by John: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." I read hymn 483 to him, which commences,

"Yes, I shall soon be landed,"

when he said, "Yes, that is every bit true." The day before his ransomed spirit took its flight, his weakness was very great, and he could only say, "Yes," but was quite conscious. I repeated the verse to him commencing,

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

He lifted up his dying hand and waved it three times. I quoted several verses of Scripture and hymns to him during the night, and he gave assent by raising his hand. I said, "My dear, you will soon join in the everlasting song: 'Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.'" He again raised his hand as high as he could. Two of our members were sitting up with me, and our hearts were broken with joy, and we kissed his forehead and wept together. It was a solemn, sacred time. At twenty-five minutes past eight o'clock A.M. he quietly fell asleep, and was gathered to his fathers. S. GRAY.

HARRIET ANN BRIDGER.—On July 16th, 1886, aged 66, Harriet Ann Bridger.

I first became acquainted with her in the year 1863, about which time she was baptized and joined the little church at Haslemere, Surrey, where I was then a member. In 1865 we were married, and as long as we lived in Haslemere she was a constant attendant on the means of grace whenever opportunity offered. She was also very fond of the "Gospel Standard," the late Mr. Philpot's Meditations, and other books of truth. Although she was naturally of a reserved disposition, yet she loved conversation on spiritual and heavenly things, and would now and then drop in a telling remark.

In 1870 we removed to the village of Chiddingfold, where we sometimes met for worship with a few Huntingtonians, under the pastorate of that dear man of God, the late Mr. J. Whitbourn; as distance and infirmities often prevented our going elsewhere.

She was very much afflicted with rheumatic gout, and her sight failing her for several years before she died was a great trial to her, as it prevented her reading, of which she was so fond. Her infirmities increasing it soon became evident to us all that the Lord was shortly about to take down her earthly tabernacle. The last year of her life she suffered very much from pleurisy in the left side, and most solemnly and feelingly did she speak of the great change that awaited her and of the awfulness of being deceived. She often felt refreshed in hearing read the sweet Obituaries of departed saints in the "G. S.," and expressed a wish that her last end might be like theirs.

Through the winter of 1885 and the early part of the spring of 1886 she became very feeble and was not able to go to the house of God much, although it was within a short distance of where we lived, and her sight being very bad she was deprived of those means of grace which she had so often enjoyed; but the Lord was about to shortly take her to himself, and although with the return of warm weather in June she appeared to get a little better, yet she still suffered much from her left side, and often expressed a fear that she should quite lose the use of it, the pain being so acute sometimes that she could scarcely sit upright.

On retiring to rest on the night of July 13th she was suddenly seized with a fit of paralysis which took away the use of the left side. I hastened to her assistance and was just in time to prevent her falling on the floor. We at once sent for a medical man, who, after examining her, stated that a small blood-vessel in the brain had given way, and should it be followed by another, death might occur at any moment. After taking the medicine prescribed by the doctor she was seized with violent sickness, and it was distressing to witness her sufferings. Often did she entreat the Lord to come and take her to himself. The remaining part of the night was spent in great searchings of heart by us both. She felt how needful it was to have a religion of the right sort, and when a little free from pain she would sweetly converse on

eternal and heavenly things, often entreating the Lord not to let her be deceived. Feeling convinced that her end was near, she often spoke of the solemn change that awaited her and of the importance of being found of the Lord in peace. She often exclaimed, "What should I do if I had to seek a Saviour now, stretched as I am on a bed of suffering and unable in any way to help myself!"

On Wednesday, the 14th, her sufferings were not quite so severe, and in the intervals of ease she would calmly and composedly talk of her approaching dissolution as the glorious termination of all her sufferings, and of our short separation from each other, which, though keenly felt by me, I knew was right. She often said, "My Jesus has done all things well." Towards the evening of the same day she seemed much easier and was able to take a little nourishment without causing sickness as it had done before, which gave us a faint hope she might be spared a little while longer.

Early on Thursday morning she seemed in a comfortable doze for four or five hours. After I had attended to my morning business I again went in to see her, and she still seemed easier and able to converse freely. I asked her if I should read a portion of Scripture. She replied, "Yes, read where it says, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.'" I then read Job xix, and she seemed much to enjoy it and made some sweet remarks upon the verse just quoted, and also upon the words: "Whom I shall see for myself." Soon after her medical man called in and said there certainly was a change for the better and that she might yet rally a little; but our fond hopes had soon to give way; for early in the afternoon she seemed to have another slight attack, which again brought on sickness and at times most acute pain. Earnestly did she entreat the Lord that he would give her strength and grace to submit to his heavenly will. I left the room for a few minutes, and when I returned I thought she was asleep, and said to my sister, "She seems to be asleep." She immediately said, "I am not asleep, and I shall not sleep again in this world." I said, "My dear, you will not sleep in the next; there are no sleepy eyes in heaven." She replied, "And there will be no weary bodies, no sickness, no sorrow, no sin there." In the early part of the evening a dear friend called to see her whose conversation she much enjoyed; for when her intense sufferings were a little abated she loved to talk of eternal and heavenly things, and often exclaimed, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Come and take me to thyself."

A little before eight in the evening sickness in its severest form seized her, and we felt assured that her end was near, while her countenance bespoke the dreadful sufferings she then endured. When for a minute she was free from these violent pains she would break forth in some such precious words as these: "My Jesus has done all things well! His lovingkindness, O how free!" This violent sickness continued, more or less, for about twenty minutes, until her poor body seemed quite worn out.

She wished to be raised up in bed, when she again broke out with the words: "His lovingkindness, O how free!" and wished us to sing that sweet hymn all through. We told her we could not sing; but she said, "Yes, you can. I could sing it;" and again repeated: "His lovingkindness, O how free! His lovingkindness, O how good!" She entreated us to sing. My sister said, "My dear, you can sing, but I cannot. I do not feel so happy as you do. You are near home, and therefore can sing." In this sweet frame she continued for several minutes until nature seemed quite exhausted, when she looked up at me with such a heavenly countenance as I shall never forget. It seemed to say, "Farewell to all below. The port is gained. The conflict is over. The victory is won." She then sank down in a state of semi-unconsciousness, and thus remained until about a quarter to one on Friday morning, July 16th, when, without a struggle, she peacefully breathed her last, and thus entered her heavenly rest, while I am left below.

J. BRIDGER.

ELEANOR SKINNER.—On Oct. 16th, 1888, aged 25, at Tunbridge Wells, Eleanor Skinner.

She was the eldest daughter of the late William West, of North End, Croydon, whose Obituary appeared in the "G. S.," April, 1879. She grew up ignorant of her state as a sinner and regardless of the things of God. The first time I heard her express any concern was after the death of her baby, when she said to a friend, "I feel God has taken it away from me in anger." The friend replied, "I should rather think in love," which remark she thought over and felt it might be so. This was about two years ago.

Twelve months since she had a severe illness. She had left off reading light, unprofitable books, and read the Bible, and good books. I went to see her, and was very glad to find her concerned about her immortal soul. She told her mother she had thought much about eternal things and had been exercised in mind, though she had not spoken of it. On one occasion during this illness she was greatly encouraged in reading the portion for Sept. 28th, from the late Mr. Philpot's "Harvested Sheaves." It was upon the following words: "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. iv. 15, 16.) Referring to the description Mr. P. gives of the many supplicants around the throne of grace, she said in reading it she felt she was one of them, and several times asked to have the portion read to her, both in this illness and in her last also.

After this, when very ill and not expected to live, she was greatly distressed, fearing to go to sleep, lest she should die and be lost. One night, while her dear mother and myself were

watching, thinking her end near, she exclaimed, "O Grandma! God is so good to me. I feel sure I shall get well." Her face beamed brightly and her whole countenance seemed to shine. I could not help saying, "My dear, it may refer to your soul;" for I could not think her body would be raised up. After this she asked to be turned in bed, and slept quietly for two hours. From this time, contrary to all expectation, she began to recover. She desired and prayed that she might recover, but hoped she would not lose the feelings and desires she had for the things of God. She read the Bible and good books, and I believe was kept earnestly seeking the Lord.

She remained better until last June, when her health failed again, and she continued to get worse. I believe the Lord deepened the work in her soul during her last illness. She said to me, "It is so little that I know, and I fear I have not felt myself such a sinner as I should have done." I said, "Do you feel the need of the blood of Christ?" She replied, "Yes, I do; and I cannot give up my little hope." She told me these words came to her: "Hold fast that which thou hast," and remarked, "I do try to hold it fast." She said, "The Lord will not deceive me, will he?" I answered, "No, never," and tried to encourage her by reminding her of the many sweet promises in the Word of God to the coming sinner. She remarked that it was free-grace alone by which she could be saved, and not by anything she had ever done or could do. At one time she rather made a covering of her consistent, moral life; but she said, "I have now been brought off that and can see the deception of it."

In the early part of her last illness she told her mother she had felt to be in such a bad state for some time and could not pray, though she much desired to do so, and then, in her simple way, she said, "It seemed to come all at once, and I could no more help praying than before I *could* pray; and I felt I must keep on." At another time she said, "Father used to say his religion was only *fifteen ounces*; but I am afraid mine is only *one*." Frequently during her illness she would say, "It is so little that I know." The character of *Ignorance* in the "Pilgrim's Progress" deeply impressed her, particularly where it speaks of him reaching heaven's gate and then being shut out. I said to her, "He never had the fears and honesty that you have about eternal things."

In her first illness she said the following words seemed against her, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Lu. xiv. 26); but in her last illness she said, "I feel so loosened from all earthly ties, and if I were sure of being right, I am willing to go. Though I cannot get to the Lord, he can come to me." The following words were a great help to her: "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart. Wait, I say, on the Lord." Upon her mother entering her room one morning she told her

when she awoke in the night she felt so calm and peaceful in her mind; but was afraid afterwards it was nothing. She often said, "If I could only feel as I did last year when I was ill; that is what I want." A friend sent her an illuminated text with the words: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," and "He is faithful that promised." On this being read to her she exclaimed, "That is just what I want." At another time she said to her mother, "Satan tries to make me give up my little hope." Psalms xx, xxiii, xxvii, li, and others were a great comfort to her in her last illness, also Heb. xii, and whenever able to bear reading she asked for them.

Three days before her death she asked for Heb. xii. to be read to her. She often repeated the hymn commencing,

"'Tis a point I long to know,"

and frequently asked that the one beginning,

"Sovereign Ruler of the skies,"

might be read to her. The last few weeks all clinging to life was taken away, frequently saying, "If I only felt sure I was right." During the last week she was frequently heard to say, "Do Lord, come and take me." The last words she said distinctly were: "Lord Jesus, come quickly."

For two days before her death she was unable to speak. After very great suffering she quietly passed away, we trust to the rest she had so earnestly desired.

About the time of her birth her dear father told me he felt a comfortable persuasion that she was a vessel of mercy. She died of Bright's disease, which also removed her father, and was buried in the Croydon cemetery on Oct. 22nd.

A. WEST.

THE evidence of our election is in time; the decree itself is from eternity.—*Sladen*.

FROM daily experience we are constrained to confess, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." This is humbling, but not discouraging. The Lord knows thy compound state. The desire to do good is from him; the evil from thyself. Paul was upon a level with the weakest believer, alike naturally prone to evil, destitute of inherent power; but yet, saith he, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me."—*Mason*.

IN a natural state we have very dark and indeed dishonourable thoughts of God, and conceive of him at a distance; but when the heart is awakened, we begin to make Jacob's reflection, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." And when we receive faith we begin to know that this ever-present God is in Christ; that the government of heaven and earth, the dispensations of the kingdom of nature, providence, and grace are in the hands of Jesus; that it is he with whom we have to do, who once suffered agony and death for our redemption, and whose compassion and tenderness are the same now that he reigns over all blessed for ever, as when he conversed amongst men in the days of his humiliation.—*Newton*.

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The following Cases are selected from the TWENTY-EIGHTH SERIES now Publishing in the Weekly Journals:

CONSUMPTION—Miss E. SMITH, of HOLLOWAY.

This is a very interesting and remarkable case. The patient saw a notice of my treatment in a weekly journal, and came to me on the 10th May, 1887.

She had suffered from cough for years, in the winter only, but now it had become constant, summer and winter both. For twelve weeks blood had been occasionally brought up mixed with her expectoration. The cough had become worse, the breathing very short, pains in both sides, she had begun to lose flesh fast, but feet and legs were swollen. She had lost a brother with Consumption. Her father suffered from Asthma.

She came again on 23rd June—was feeling better. The cough was better; she was stronger; diarrhœa had ceased.

She then wrote in July. Her "Cough had almost gone." In August: "Appetite better; can sleep well; stronger, though still weak, and no faintness in the morning such as experienced before." In Nov.: "I am pleased to tell you I have a very good appetite now; chest very much relieved by your prescription for liniment."

She came again in January last. Was so much better that I allowed her to reduce the frequency of her doses. And again she visited me in March, when I had the satisfaction to find her nearly well.

The patient acted more wisely than many, and still continued under my treatment. In August last she writes me: "I am quite well now in every way. I thank you much."

The last letter I received from her was Nov. 1. She says: "I shall be pleased to give my testimony as to the great good your kind advice has done for me, for I am indeed very grateful. I am quite strong and well. I never felt better. If this will induce you to try your treatment I shall be glad. EMILY SMITH, 26, Union Street, Tufnell Park HOLLOWAY."

BRONCHIAL ASTHMA—ASTHMA and WEAK HEART—SON of a P. M. MINISTER at BRISTOL—and ANOTHER CASE.

This case was brought under my notice several years ago, by the Father of the patient Mr. G. MORGAN, Minister, then of Chippenham, now of Stanley-villa, Eastville, BRISTOL.

The symptoms were those of Bronchial Asthma, accompanied with night sweats and debility. The patient was eight months, I believe, under my treatment.

Writing me May 14th, 1888, Mr. Morgan says: "You have done my son so much good—in fact he is quite well now—I have recommended you to others. A member of one of my chapels is suffering from asthma and a weak heart, and I believe it would do him good," &c. Accordingly advice, &c., were sent.

In answer to my inquiries, Mr. Morgan, writing me Nov. 17 last, says: I had much pleasure in stating that my son greatly improved under your treatment, likewise the member of my congregation for whom I wrote.

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THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

MARCH, 1889.

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

THE HIDINGS OF GOD'S FACE.

BY RUSK.

(Continued from page 68.)

ANOTHER obstacle that the Holy Spirit will remove is *unbelief*. When Adam fell, and we all fell in him as our federal head, our sworn enemy, Satan, communicated this spawn to us. Hence we read: "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." (Rom. xi. 32.) The Holy Spirit will in his own time effectually convince all God's elect of the sin of unbelief and bring them down in the dust before God, before he blesses them with a comfortable persuasion of their interest in Christ Jesus. We are shut up under the law before faith comes, that is, *faith* to lay hold of all the promised blessings which we have in Christ, our covenant Head and Representative; but after this things go on in quite a different way; for old things pass away and all things become new; so that at times we enjoy a heaven upon earth; for faith to the soul is, as Mr. Hart says, like the hand to the body, and brings every covenant blessing into the heart. The Word says, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith" (Eph. iii. 17), and we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in him.

We are blessed with *pardon*, and God purifies our heart by faith. *Righteousness*, and "he that believes is justified freely from all things;" for "the righteousness of Christ is to all and upon all them that believe." *Life*, and "he that believeth hath everlasting life." *Love*: "We have believed the love that God hath toward us." *Joy and peace*. Hence Paul says, "We have joy and peace in believing." *Rest*, and "we which have believed do enter into rest." A *comfortable persuasion* of our eternal salvation; for he that believeth shall be saved. Thus I might go on and show what a blessed thing is real faith in Christ Jesus; that it is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen; so that a real believer in Jesus can at times realize and experience in this world heavenly delights.

He now views God the Father as his covenant God and Father, reconciled and well pleased with him in the Son of his love; he feels every obstacle now quite removed, and finds access, with confidence, by the faith of Jesus Christ; for his adoption is now made clear to him by this faith; for we are all the children of

God by faith in Christ Jesus. Wisdom's ways are now ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace.

The Holy Spirit also removes the *enmity, malice and hatred to God* which, by nature, we are all rooted in. Say you, "No; I bless God I always did love him, and am altogether unacquainted with that enmity and hatred of which you speak." This shows that you are in your natural state, dead in trespasses and sins, with the veil upon your heart; so that you neither see nor feel spiritually. You are wrapped up in carnal security, and living and dying in that state you will perish. Paul was once in your state and prided himself on his love to God, and thought that touching the righteousness of the law he was blameless; yet he persecuted Christ, was exceedingly mad against the church of God and wasted it, and held the clothes of them that stoned Stephen;—all this he thought was loving God, for this is what the law requires, and in this he thought he was blameless. What a depth of deception was this, and you are in a similar state. You have got some idol in your heart; this you call God, and this you worship; but you are ignorant of the true God, as was Paul before his conversion.

God's family labour under a feeling sense of this enmity; for the Holy Spirit shows them their true state by the fall; and though they may and do try to alter it, yet the Ethiopian can as soon change his skin and the leopard his spots, as those that are accustomed to do evil can learn to do well. If you belong to God you will have to set to your seal that God is true where he says that the carnal mind is enmity against him, and that we are hateful and hating one another, being to every good work reprobate. But blessed be God this shall not always be the case, for he has made the two following precious promises upon this head: "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." (Deut. xxx. 6.) The other promise you will find in the Song of Solomon, where Christ says to the church, "Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth; there will I give thee my loves;" and all this is done by the Blessed Spirit; as Paul says: "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

But in order that I may not lay any stumblingblock in the way of the weak in faith, the tried and tempted, I would observe that although these six things which I have just named are removed out of the way by the Holy Spirit, yet we shall feel them again and again all our journey through, and this will keep us from a self-righteous spirit, that we may never forget our base original, but say, with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am;" and so all boasting except in God will be for ever excluded.

These precious things are only enjoyed by abiding in Christ

manifestly, but after death there will be an effectual removal of all that we now labour under in soul, and the Holy Spirit will also change our vile bodies and fashion them like unto the glorious body of Christ.

I will now come more particularly to the words of our text: "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel the Saviour." I will endeavour to show how we are to know when we have the smiles of God and what are the blessed effects of his face being toward us. In this matter thousands are deceived, as I will try to prove; for I wish to make clean work.

Then observe, we cannot find this out by having plenty of this world's goods; for these things are no proof at all that the Lord's face is towards us; for "no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before him," says Solomon. The children of Israel, as a nation, were particularly provided for in a way of providence. Hence Moses declared, "What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for?" (Deut. iv. 7.) But nothing of this was durable; for having brought them out of the land of Egypt, the Lord afterwards destroyed them that believed not. These temporal things are to many a snare and a trap; for they are good soil for our corruptions to grow in. We read that "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation." Fullness of bread and idleness is what our nature likes, and this brought down God's just judgments upon the four cities of the plain, which Jude tells us "suffered the vengeance of eternal fire." Asaph says that the wicked are set in slippery places, and they often get entangled this way.

Again. Temporal advancement in this world is no proof whatever of God's smiles, his love, or his favour, although he does sometimes exalt those that he really loves; but this of itself is no proof of his love. Pharaoh, king of Egypt, was exalted, also Nebuchadnezzar, Ahasuerus, Haman, and many others; yet it was to their own destruction. Such often reign over others to their own hurt, for pride in them gets to the highest pitch, while others that they oppress shall be well humbled in this way, and so learn of Him who is meek and lowly in heart. Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord that I should obey him?" Nebuchadnezzar said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" (Dan. iv. 30); but we read that, according to Daniel's prediction, he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, &c., to teach him that God in the heavens ruleth. Thus pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. God sometimes exalts his own people, as we may see in Abraham, Mordecai, Daniel, and the three worthies; but these things are by no means a proof of God's favour, love, or smiles.

Again. To have a large share of natural and acquired abilities is a gift from God, for some are very deficient in this respect. We read that God furnished Bezaleel and Aholiab for all the

curious work of the tabernacle in the days of Moses. We read also that God giveth discretion to the ploughman to sow his seed. All natural gifts are from the Lord, but they are no proof whatever of his love and favour, or that his face is toward any such characters. These things are good in their place and not to be despised; but if we attempt to set up human wisdom as a judge in spiritual matters, it is no better than blasphemy; for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, and he taketh the wise in their own craftiness; for he says: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (1 Cor. i. 19, 20), by which I understand that although these are his own gifts, yet if we set them up in spiritual matters, 't is vile and abominable in God's sight. Human learning when not kept in its proper place has been a snare and a trap to thousands: "Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee" (Isa. xlvii. 10); as we see in the case of Arians, Socinians, and Sabellians, &c. All this is not the least proof of God's face being towards us.

Once more. Real gospel gifts without grace are no proof of the love and favour of God, or of his face being toward us. God is pleased to give these to a servant as well as to a son. Read Ezek. xlv. 17. "If the Prince (the Lord Jesus Christ) give a gift unto his servant, it shall be his till the year of liberty, and after this return to the Prince." This is very deceptive to us, especially when we are first seeking the Lord; for we cannot make out how a man can advance so much sound truth and yet have no real experience of it himself. Hence you read, "He that hath not (grace), from him shall be taken away, even that which he seemeth to have." The apostle Paul tells us that a man may have all knowledge and understand all mysteries, speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have all faith so as to remove mountains, and yet not have charity; therefore he is nothing after all. Thus none of these things are any proof that God's face is towards us or that we have his approbation. As it was wholly in and through the Lord Jesus Christ that every obstacle was removed; so it is wholly in and through him that God can ever smile upon us. Take notice how Paul words it: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. iv. 6.)

But how are we to know when we have the smiles of God and that his face is toward us? I answer, by a manifestation of pardon to our souls. Say you, "You are always harping upon these things." I tell you plainly, you and I are either in our sins and in our blood, or we are cleansed from them; and it is of the utmost importance for us to know this. We must die for ourselves. The whole church of God combined can do us no good if God is our enemy. Into the heavenly Jerusalem shall nothing enter that

defleth; and Christ says, if we die in our sins, where he is we shall never come. If it be asked, How shall we know if we are in a pardoned state or not? I answer, by the Lord removing the weight and burden of our sins from our conscience. Before David was pardoned he found sin a sore burden; but after the Lord had pardoned his sins, he said, "As far as the east is from the west; so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

You will feel a love to Christ, as Mary did. Her sins were many, but they were forgiven her; therefore she loved much, and praise will surely follow. All this is the fruit and effect of the Lord's presence. David said, "God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us." But why do you want the Lord to do this, David? What effect will it have? "That thy name may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations." (Ps. lxxvii. 1, 2.) Thus God fulfils his promise to us in Christ Jesus: "Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth." (Jer. xxxiii. 6.) I am a living witness that this is a truth. All sickness, either in soul or body, arises from sin, and therefore in glory above the inhabitants of that celestial place are no more to say, "I am sick," for the people that dwell therein are to be forgiven their iniquity. What are all our pretensions to religion short of this, and what comfort can arise in religion until we know it? Christ came to give the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of sins. This is vital godliness; and when, by blessed experience, we realize this, rest is enjoyed in our souls; for we rest from all legal labour and heavy bondage: "And it shall come to pass in the day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve." (Isa. xiv. 3.) The Lord is there speaking of Israel under that monster Pharaoh, and we were the same under Satan, and in bondage to a broken law until this blessed change took place. The Psalmist said, "There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin." (Ps. xxxviii. 3.) None but those who are quickened to feel what sin is, know the hard struggles that God's people have; but how is this rest given? By the Holy Spirit drawing forth faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ; for we come to him labouring and heavy laden, and he gives us rest. We now leave off working, and are delighted with this new way of believing; for they which believe do enter into rest, and cease from their own works, as God did from his.

Again, God leaves off contending with us. Hence we read that "in this mountain (Mount Zion) the hand of the Lord shall rest," all of which proves to us that we have his smiles, and that his face is toward us in the sweet enjoyment of it. This is what Moses prayed for when he was leading Israel through the wilderness, and God answered him, saying, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."

God saves his people from the reigning power of sin. Say you,

"If I could but believe he would save me from that, but I feel that sin has the dominion over me." To this I answer that if sin has dominion over you, you will be easy and quiet; but if it does not reign, it will rage desperately. It did in Paul when he complained of the law in the members, and cried out, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death?" and in David when he tells us that iniquities prevailed against him. In Asaph also when his feet were almost gone and he envied the prosperity of the wicked. Jabez also, and many others. The strong workings of sin, when they become our burden, which at certain times they will, are no proofs that sin has the dominion, but quite the contrary. Say you, "But at times sin seems pleasing and not a burden; therefore I fear sin has the dominion." No, it has not; for it was pleasing to David when he walked on the house-top, and also to the incestuous person; but still sin had not dominion over them, for they were brought back with broken bones, and grace reigned after all. Now Christ Jesus is to save his people from their sins, and therefore he will let them feel the powerful workings of sin, and that they cannot break its power.

We are also saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us. But we are not to suppose that if we are saved from them they will be easy and quiet. No; they will rage the more, and of this the church in all ages complained. Then why should inward enemies surprise you and you conclude you are under sin's dominion? We are also saved from Satan; but he will worry, tempt, accuse, and reproach us more or less all our days. *Salvation* does not make him *rest*, but it makes him *desperate*. See Job, Peter, and Paul. And we are saved from the wrath to come through Christ; yet we shall feel a little of God's wrath, but never his vindictive wrath. All these things come to us through the Lord's smiles and his presence being with us.

We may know when the Lord smiles upon us by our being strengthened by his Spirit's might in the inner man; for there is such a thing as being strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. At such times you will feel strong in faith, give glory to God, and abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost; for the joy of the Lord will be your strength. This you may see in Gideon when the Lord looked on him and said, "Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel;" and although Gideon was tried after this, yet he was the means of delivering Israel from the Midianites. A look from the Lord always produces real repentance, godly sorrow, and self-loathing on account of sin, as you may see in Peter after his fall. It is said, "The Lord turned, and looked upon Peter, and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly." This was true repentance that needed not to be repented of, and is always attended with a forsaking of sin with all our heart for the time being. We may, through temptation, be again ensnared

by the devil and our evil hearts, but when the Lord smiles upon us a sweet peace is sure to follow.

With Israel of old, who were a typical people, the Lord dealt in a different way to any other people. The Psalmist said, "He hath not dealt so with any other nation." Therefore the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, "Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." (Numb. vi. 23-26.) What a cluster of blessings lay in this benediction! Aaron was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ in his priestly office, and first, he is to bless them, and God's blessing is eternal life; secondly, they are to be kept—not from troubles, but from eternal ruin: "Kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation." Thirdly, "The Lord be gracious unto thee." Here is the everlasting love of God flowing to all God's elect through Christ, in which God the Father makes known his covenant name which is "Gracious, merciful, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." Lastly, peace. This is the happy and blessed effect of this blessing: "The Lord will bless his people with peace." By these things you and I may see whether he ever did lift up the light of his countenance upon us or not.

If the Lord smiles upon us and we have his approbation he will sometimes shower down, in an abundant manner, his grace, which may come when we are looking for some sore visitation, knowing our just deserts. This will swallow up all our sins, backslidings, and revoltings. Hence you read that God is rich in mercy, plenteous in redemption, that he will abundantly pardon, and that the skies shall pour down righteousness and the earth (or our hearts) open to receive it. Blessed work is this. Hence you read that "in the light of the King's countenance there is life, and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain." Here I may say as Job did, "O that I were as in days and in months that are past," and with Micah, "My soul desireth the first ripe fruit." However, this we shall enjoy to the full in glory above; for in God's presence in glory there is fulness of joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

(To be continued.)

A HUMBLE soul will be apt to say, "How can I believe the Lord will hear me who am so vile, not only in respect of the common condition of mankind, being but dust and ashes, a worm, yea, less and worse; but also being more than ordinarily sinful; and, in respect of my condition in this world, being so mean and contemptible? Remember, the Lord never heard any that either were really worthy or did account themselves so. All that ever had access to and audience with God have been really and in their own esteem unworthy. The Lord requires not that his people should bring any worth with them to commend their prayers to him. No flesh is justified in his sight.—*Clarkeon.*

A VEIN OF GRACIOUS EXPERIENCE.

BY THE LATE J. KEET.

It is indeed a rare thing to meet with a choice cluster of souls enriched with the blessing of eternal life in these last days and perilous times in which we live. A form of godliness without the power seems to run through the general mass of professors in this cloudy and dark day in which our lot is cast. Too many there are who esteem outward gain as the main branch of godliness, whilst others, wrapped up in Pharisaic pride, can never be satisfied unless they can mount up into the uppermost seats in the assemblies and have everything their own way. Others there are who attain to clear and consistent views of gospel truths in the letter, but give no evidence in their walk of their being renewed in the spirit of their minds. It is not so when we get into the company of a real Christian, for he is the least and the last in his own account, and no place suits him but the lowest room. No comparison can he find except with the poor in spirit and the contrite in heart. Simplicity and godly sincerity are all in all with him, and when he meets with such a one, whether high or low, rich or poor, a father in Christ or a newborn babe in grace, a spiritual union is sure to take place; and such, like Ruth and Naomi, cleave to each other, and even death itself can never break this sacred bond.

Many instances of this kind have I met with in the course of my pilgrimage. The apostle Paul, when under sore exercises, tells us that when he and his companions were come into Macedonia, their flesh had no rest, for they were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears; but under this trial his dear Master did not leave him to faint in the day of adversity; as we read: "Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus."

When that man of sorrows, Jeremiah, had been hunted about, persecuted, put in prison, and at last thrown into the dungeon, the Lord would not suffer the ungodly to destroy him, but sent Ebed-melech, the Ethiopian, to draw him out of the miry dungeon, and so ruled in the midst of his enemies that he was supplied with bread until the day the city was taken; and then, in the midst of the destruction, the hand of God preserved poor Ebed-melech from the power of the sword.

Many such instances are recorded in the book of truth to convince us that the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations and trials, and likewise to assure us that his tender mercies that are over all his works are more especially manifested towards the subjects of his grace and the objects of his choice. Our own utter unworthiness is no bar to his goodness. His thoughts towards us are thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give us a great salvation at the very time when we, like Israel at the Red sea, are drawing the worst conclusions, bowed down with sinking fears, and ready to say that our strength and our

hope is perished from the Lord. A self-lost sinner is often full of confusion and at his wits' end, so that he cannot tell where he is, what he is, nor how matters will end; still he is kept moving on, though he thinks he gains no ground, but fears he is going backward instead of forward. The Lord is leading him by a way that he knows not, and in paths that he is unacquainted with; but the promise to such blind ones is, "I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." (Isa. xlii. 16.)

If you turn to Acts viii., and begin at the twenty-sixth verse, you will there find an account of a poor lost sinner and of the gracious dealings of the Lord with him. The Eunuch had been a long journey up to Jerusalem to worship according to the little light which he had, and was returning again in the same bewildered and confused state in which he went. No doubt he was troubled and disquieted in his mind, and had no light upon his path and no one to take him by the hand; but being a chosen vessel of mercy, he was not to perish for the lack of knowledge. The eye of God was upon him; his wanderings were all numbered, his tears were bottled up and noted down in the book of God's remembrance. The set time to favour him was fully come, and the Holy Spirit ordered Philip to join himself to this particular chariot. The Eunuch was reading Isa. liii., which is a beautiful prophecy of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. This sublime subject was too wonderful for the poor man to apprehend without an instructor; but in the desire of his mind no doubt he was feeling after Him who is ever nigh unto all that call upon him in truth. At this period of time came Philip, the Holy Spirit's messenger, with good tidings of good, and he goes up into the chariot, and opens up and explains the mysteries of redeeming love, while the astonished Eunuch listens, and his heart opens, as the Blessed Spirit testifies of Christ, works faith in his heart to believe the report, and love to embrace the suffering Saviour as his All in all. Now this lost sheep was found *indeed*, and his cheerful heart was filled with all joy and peace in believing. Then, as soon as he was baptized, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip and the Eunuch saw him no more. The servant was gone and the Master was come; and having found the Pearl of great price, he went on his way rejoicing.

This wonderful event took place in a dreary desert; and as it was then, so it is now. Our covenant God finds us in a desert land and in a waste-howling wilderness. He leads us about and instructs us, and keeps us in all our wanderings as the apple of his eye. We may, for a long season, wander in the wilderness of this world in a solitary way, disquieted, discouraged, and cramped up in mind and soul, hungry and thirsty, and our souls fainting within us; but this is a safe way, yea, it is the Lord's way in which he leads us forth out of all confidence in the flesh, out of the congregations of the dead, out of the ministrations of

letter-preachers, who are nothing but "sons of death," and out of the formal religion that we may have received by tradition from our fathers. The Lord will in due time bring us to the city of habitation, though we are often greatly discouraged on account of the way.

The Most High first scatters Israel out of all their false refuges, and then he gathers them and keeps them as a shepherd doth his flock. Ponder over the thirty-first chapter of Jeremiah, and you will there find mental entertainment in reviewing the state, the way, and the fare of our good Shepherd's flock, the sheep of his pasture, and the purchase of his precious blood. He brings them into his fold from the north country, and some we know have been and still are gathering in North America,—and from the coasts of the earth, yea, the ends of the earth; for though they are far from him, as the Prodigal was, yet these he will gather. They are a great company, and all, by nature, in a lamentable condition,—the blind, the lame, the woman with child, and her that travaileth with child together; but remember, they are not now dead in trespasses and sins notwithstanding all their helplessness. Spiritual life produces motion, and the promise is: "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them; I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble." (Jer. xxxi. 9.) They shall leave the stagnant pools and broken cisterns behind them, and come to the life-giving streams of gospel-truth: "They shall come and sing in the heights of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord"—to the feast of fat things full of marrow, and wines on the lees well refined; and here they shall enjoy *wheat*,—Christ crucified, the Corn of wheat, *wine*, God the Father's everlasting love, *oil*, the softening, supplying, comforting anointings of the Holy Spirit, *the young of the flock*, the paschal Lamb, and *of the herd*, the fatted Calf of the Father's own providing for his own returning, prodigal sons and daughters; and when once brought to partake of this royal banquet, they shall hunger no more after any other kind of provision; for the promise will then be fulfilled: "I will satiate the souls of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord."

This is a blessed banquet indeed, and my poor soul hath in times past enjoyed such seasons of feasting in the ordinances of God's house as I never can describe, when our beloved Pastor, W. Huntington presided as under-shepherd at the King's table; for he was a noble householder that brought out of his treasuries things new and old. But now it is a very great mercy to find one of the days of the Son of Man in public ordinances, so as to sit down under his shadow with great delight and find his fruit sweet unto our taste; yet in the midst of all discouragements "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." (Psalm xxxvii. 18, 19.)

The present time is an evil one, and there certainly is a famine of hearing the word of the Lord; nevertheless the covenant God of Israel will not suffer the souls of the righteous to famish. If all the congregations that have been gathered together by the ministers of the Spirit should be scattered abroad, if there was to be no succession of spiritual teachers to fill the places of those who have finished their labours; still the great Master of Assemblies, the good Shepherd, whose own the sheep are, will keep a watchful eye over those whom he hath purchased with so great a price. They may, in this militant state, be minished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow, yet they never can be destroyed; for he hath said: "Because I live ye shall live also;" and the faith of God's poor children lays fast hold of his truth and faithfulness; and when surrounded with manifold tribulations, the language of faith is, "I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted and the right of the poor." "Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name; the upright shall dwell in thy presence." (Ps. cxl. 13.) If we enjoy the gracious presence of God we are at home in any place.

We may enter many grand places of worship and attend upon what is called divine service where there is no trace of the Lord's special presence; but a living saint can never be satisfied with empty formality or bodily exercise. When Moses, the man of God, was ordered to bring up the people out of Egypt, his chief concern was to have the Lord's presence with him: "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth." (Exod. xxxiii. 15, 16.) Moses would sooner abide in that wilderness, with all its barrenness, than lose the presence of his God that he had enjoyed there. Thus we see the Lord's presence constitutes and includes all the happiness and felicity of his people in this time state. Nothing less will satisfy them. All the outward enjoyments of the things of time and sense can never afford true contentment to the new-born soul. David knew this when he said, "In thy presence there is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." This, in a sweet measure, may be known even in this present life, when the Lord shines upon our souls and upon our path; and though the visit may be of short duration, yet it is a real earnest of the future inheritance; and both the earnest and the inheritance are of the same quality, only they differ in quantity.

You may say, "But if persecution should take place, and the church of God be driven yet further into the wilderness, how shall we fare then?" Why, nothing is impossible with God, and for aught I know we may fare as well then as we do now. It was a dismal, dark day when the prophet Malachi sojourned in the land of Israel, and yet in that gloomy period God had his remnant. They were kept alive, they were favoured with the Lord's pre-

sence, and I believe they **managed matters much the same as we do now.**

The temple worship was altogether contaminated, the carnal priests despised the Lord's name, offered polluted bread upon his altar, brought the torn, the lame, and the sick for offerings, and caused many to stumble at the law; for they awfully corrupted the covenant of Levi and dealt very treacherously; yet in the midst of these dreadful departures, there was a remnant left in whose hearts God had put his fear; and his chosen few, this small number, compared to the shaking of an olive tree, two or three berries here and there among the branches,—these despised ones found means to get together, and spake often one to another of what God had done for their souls, the deliverances he had wrought for them, the mercies bestowed, and his gracious visitations with which they were now and then indulged. Thus these poor outcasts whom no man cared for, found the gracious presence and approbation of their covenant God. He hearkened and heard, and their names were noted down in the book of his remembrance; and for their strong consolation they were assured that they were numbered and reckoned up among the jewels, and the peculiar treasures of the Lord of hosts.

Well; as it was then, so it is now. The Lord's jewels are not to be found in large, congregated bodies; they are scattered hither and thither, and if we find a few of them together, they are generally in a low, secluded, hidden spot: "I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom." (Zech. i. 8.) The night shows the dark state of the church, the bottom, their low condition, their being compared to myrtle trees shows they are evergreens and in possession of divine life, though low in their own eyes and least in their own esteem. The Man can be no other than the Lord Jesus Christ, riding upon a red horse to denote his triumphant victories over all their enemies; and his being among these myrtle trees shows that he will be with them in every state and in whatever condition they may be in, agreeable to his promise: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

According to my view of things this appears to be the real state of the church in this land in the present day. How matters are on the other side of the Atlantic I cannot ascertain except by report; but in this great city (London) within the last thirty years the purity, life, and power of godliness have been evidently on the decline. Many ministers who shone like stars in the firmament of Zion are now set, and the present race of preachers are of a different caste, except a very few. There are some clear enough in doctrine, some well furnished with scholastic wisdom, and some embellished with fine oratory; but the power of godliness and the unctuous experience of divine truth is seldom to be found among our modern teachers. The prophet Hosea in his tenth chapter and eleventh verse delineates their character

thus: "Ephraim is as an heifer that is taught, and loveth to tread out the corn." They have light in the Scriptures and delight to appear in the pulpit to tread out the corn or preach the word; "But," says God, "I passed over upon her fair neck," which I take to signify his handling their neck and putting on the yoke, or teaching them experimentally by the yoke of their own transgressions and the yoke of legal bondage in their own souls; and having thus handled them, they are gradually fitted and qualified to wear Christ's easy yoke, or to preach the gospel from an experience of its power and sweetness in their own souls; which will be the case if they are proper *Ephraims*, that is, "very fruitful." Such are Pastors qualified to feed the Lord's flock, as himself declares: "I will make Ephraim to ride (as an overseer); Judah shall plough, (in the mysteries of revelation), and Jacob shall break his clods" (or be used in the Lord's hands as a hammer to break the obdurate hearts of God's chosen ones, and prepare them to receive the good seed of the kingdom.)

The apostle Paul underwent this kind of tuition when he was arrested on his way to Damascus. He was a very zealous man in the Jewish religion and very high in his own opinion before the Lord took him in hand and passed over upon his fair neck, stripped him of all his supposed righteousness and excellency; and when the Saviour sent Ananias to him he received mental as well as natural sight, and above all the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him whom he before persecuted in the saints; and afterwards blessed Paul was qualified to *ride*, to *plough*, and to *break the clods*.

There are I believe a few, even in this dark declining day, or rather night, whom God hath called and engaged in the work of the ministry, who have received a measure of the same grace that so abundantly dwelt in the apostle Paul; but their number is so small, that we may truly say they are "more precious than fine gold; even a man (of this description) than the golden wedge of Ophir." (Isa. xiii. 12.) Nevertheless our glorious Immanuel still rules over all. His throne is in heaven (in the church), and "he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." "His eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him" (2 Chron. xvi. 9); and such is his tender care over the feeblest of his children that nothing can touch them without his observation; yea, if we are only in possession of what we term the *first rudiments*, we are safe enough; for "the Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him; in them that hope in his mercy."

Souls who are striving to enter in at the strait gate meet with many impediments from Satan, indwelling sin, and from blind guides, who, like the lawyers of old time, enter not in themselves, and those that were entering they hindered. If there were none of our stamp in the church many of the promises and declarations of the gospel would lie dormant. Christ said, "With-

out me ye can do nothing." Now if there were no helpless cripples in God's family this word must fall to the ground; but this can never be; for heaven and earth shall pass away, but the Lord's word shall never pass away. If there were no confused, bewildered, blind, beclouded, and self-lost ones in the chosen family, why should so many sweet and suitable promises be put into the well-ordered covenant; such as Isa. xlii. 16, and many others? Look at them, and beg of the faithful promise-Maker to bless you with the enjoyment of their rich contents. Wait for the fulfilment of them, for "he waits to be gracious unto you," and remember, "the Lord is a God of judgment," and knows how and when it is the best time to visit our needy souls. "Blessed are all they that wait for him."

How far these effusions of my heart may prove seasonable or acceptable to my brethren depends entirely upon the Lord's blessing. If only one sentence is suitable or profitable may you be enabled to give all the glory to God. On the other hand, anything that clashes or appears imperfect, place that to the account of the poor scribe who is made up of imperfections.

AN EXPOSITION OF A FEW VERSES IN JNO. VI.

BY J. DENNETT, AT FREDERICK STREET CHAPEL, BIRMINGHAM,
DECEMBER 25TH, 1885.

THIS chapter contains the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and he who uttered these words is the true God and Eternal Life, of whom it is said, "Never man spake like this man." His words were spirit and life. He knew the mind of the Father and came into the world to do the will of God; and that will was that he should die to save sinners. He could not have saved sinners without taking upon him flesh and blood like our own, sin excepted. That flesh and blood he did take, and so became incarnate; for "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (Jno. i. 14.)

Not only did Christ become incarnate, but he laid down his life for sinners; for this he could and would do. What a wondrous thought! This is good news of salvation to those who are truly convinced of their need of a Saviour, having had their sins laid upon their consciences, the holiness of God revealed, and their lost condition opened up to them; for although Christ is precious, great, and kind beyond expression, yet no one values, covets, or desires him but those who are truly brought to know their need. It is a poor, tried, and tempted child of God that values Christ: "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious."

But how can we believe on him unless he gives us true faith from heaven? Those who have a view of him by faith as coming into this world are enabled to believe on him by grace divine. They are humbled for their transgressions and brought to seek

the Saviour from absolute need. To such sinners as these Christ speaks, saying, "I am the Bread of Life." This Bread is not visible to us like the manna was to the Israelites in the wilderness; nor is it merely viewing Christ's humanity that brings life; but it is tasting of his grace and Spirit. Peter says, "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." It is only as we taste of this Bread that we have life. The Spirit of Christ regenerates the soul, and where this is done the sinner begins to hunger for the Bread of Life. There is no Bread like Jesus. As only one kind of manna came down in the wilderness to sustain the Israelites; so Christ is the only Bread that came down from heaven, and on this every child of God is made to live.

The Lord willingly constrains his people to come unto him: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." (Ps. cx. 3.) There is a time when all God's people are made to come to Christ. It is not for a week, a month, or a year, but a coming to the end of our days,—a lifetime coming. You are always coming sinners, and the invitation always stands good: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isa. lv. 1.)

"He that cometh to me shall never hunger." What a mercy it is that when you have weighed up everything that is against you, and made all the objections that sense and reason can heap together, including all the baseness of your nature and your past evil practices, together with your sins which are as numerous as the stars, and condemned yourselves a thousand times over for your follies and backslidings; yet if you are coming to Christ with your sins and transgressions the promise stands: "He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." "But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise *it* up again at the last day." This clearly shows that Christ will not lose one of his members. It is the Father's will that Christ should raise the whole of his people. Christ here uses the neuter gender, which takes in the whole election of grace, the whole body of believers, the whole family of God. All who have come to Christ, he will raise them up at the last day out of their graves, and not a child of God shall be missing. Yet how few are concerned to hear about the resurrection, either as it concerns their bodies or their souls. Beloved, we are not ignorant of the resurrection on our souls if we have felt God's love melting us, casting out our sins, making our consciences clean, and filling us with thanksgiving: "O give thanks

unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." (Ps. cxxxvi. 1.) If we have experienced the resurrection power of Christ on our souls we shall most surely at last experience it on our bodies. Here the Lord takes the church in the aggregate.

Then in the next verse he says, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise *him* up at the last day." Here he speaks to the people of God individually for their comfort, as you may see by the little word *him*. Have you ever seen Christ and believed on him? Not that you have seen him with your mortal eyes, but with the Spirit of faith, and in soul gone out after him, feelingly worshipped him, and fallen down to him; for "he is thy Lord; and worship thou him." Has your soul been enamoured with him, drawn to him, felt him, and his blood and righteousness made precious to you? If so, there is no hell for you. These are the sinners Christ will raise up at the last day.

"Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life." It is a life that never will end; for the word *eternal* goes beyond all calculation. These are the people that will share in the resurrection of the church when Christ shall come to raise the dead out of their graves, when he shall say, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." (Eph. v. 14.)

"The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the Bread which came down from heaven." Carnal people always murmur at Christ, and are continually striking at his Deity and Eternity. They say he did not come down from heaven, that he is not the Lord of life and glory. This foundation they are constantly trying to destroy; but with all their striving, inventions, and false doctrines it still remains: "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Ps. xi. 3.) What would our guilty souls do if Christ were not the Lord from heaven? But he is what he is; as himself declares: "I am that I am." They were not true believers that murmured at him, but the carnal Jews. And why did they murmur? "Because he said, I am the Bread which came down from heaven." What precious Bread was this that came down from heaven—Deity to inhabit humanity! That the Mighty God should come down to die, and that his flesh and blood should become the meat and drink of every child of God!

"And they said, [Is] not [this] Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?" They only knew him after the flesh. Can we rise a little higher than this? Have we not risen in our feelings a great deal higher, even to see him as the Son of God. The unclean spirit said, "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." (Mark i. 24.) Peter said, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." "Jesus, thou Son of David," said another. If our faith can rise as high as this, it shows we are not left among those who are carnal.

“Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.” As if Christ should say, “Why do you murmur? Your murmurings are only proofs that you know me not and that you have not come to me for life.” “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” These people,—scribes, high priests, and elders were all dead in their sins, far off from Christ in heart, even while conversing with him; therefore they could not come to him. They had no grace; no spiritual life had entered their souls. This was their state, and it is yours and mine by nature. Well do I remember when the Lord began to draw my soul after himself, and when his grace and Spirit entered into my heart and convinced me of my sin, how I turned aside by prayer and supplication to seek him, and with a burdened conscience I cried for mercy. Others knew not what was the matter with me. Sometimes I read God’s Word with brokenness of heart, and O the contrition of spirit it produced! It was indeed more precious to me than my daily food and than thousands of gold and silver. As my soul was drawn after Christ, I trust, by the Father, O the beauty and blessedness I saw in him; so much so that I have taken off my hat many times when out to bless and praise his holy name; and sometimes he has so filled my soul with his goodness that it was just as though I “could hold no more of everlasting love.” What blessed seasons are these! Many of you know something about them.

Could we have come this way unless the Father had drawn us? No, we should have gone quite a contrary way. We should have lived and died as the beasts of the earth, and said, “Let him go. Let others have him; for ‘we will not have this Man to reign over us.’” But now, with all our hardness, darkness, and death, there is something in our hearts that cleaves to him, and we are hoping for something beyond what we have attained to. We long for a further knowledge of Christ. Not that we look for any change in our bodies whilst we live upon the earth. They are still sinful, carnal, and full of evil; but there is a promise of what Christ will do for them: “Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” (Phil. iii. 21.) What an image to be conformed to! Such an image as no man on the earth could look upon and live. Then to have a hope that we shall be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body!

“It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.” God will see that his promise is fulfilled. Men may fight against it, and set up doctrines of Free-will, and human power and ability; but it leaves the world where it was, dead in transgressions and sins; but God will see that his word and promises are fulfilled to his elect. If God had not taught me, sure I am no one else could have taught me. If God has taught you his secret, made you to know your sin and ruin, and

to know Jesus Christ, drawn your soul a'fter him, and made you know what a guilty, hell-deserving sinner you are, he has done that for you that no human power could do. By the Spirit's teaching we learn the holiness of God, the holiness of his law, and the inflexibility of his justice, and learn in our consciences and souls that God is a God of wrath to the wicked; for "he is angry with the wicked every day;" but he is not angry with those sinners who are drawn to Christ.

"Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father." God is invisible, yet the Lord's people believe in him and worship him: "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (Jno. iii. 24.) The Lord descends to meet his children, even the weakest believer. The Lord here condescends to speak to every poor coming sinner who has a particle of faith, and believes in and worships him. What does he tell this poor sinner in few words? Why, that he has "everlasting life." Not that he is fully satisfied; for he never will be until he is taken into heaven. Not till then will a child of God have everything that he wants. But by the way Christ drops this encouraging portion into his heart: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life;" and in having this he has the root of everything that is good.

"I am that Bread of life." There is no death to a child of God. What is death, or the death that will hurt a person? Why, for the soul to die under the wrath of God and the justice of the Almighty. With those who have experienced a divine change in the soul, at death the body goes into the ground to be changed afterwards; but the soul goes immediately into heaven. So we hope that when we have spent our time here, and come to lay down our poor frail tabernacles, it will be for our bodies to go into the grave and our souls ascend to God who has loved and redeemed them. We now live a life of faith on the Son of God, and after death we shall live with Christ in glory for ever and ever.

"The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." There was no other flesh but that of Christ that was not sinful and there was no other flesh that was free from transgression. There was no sin in Christ's human nature, and being joined to Deity it is the flesh of him who is God as well as Man. The redemption of a child of God is by Christ and the blood of atonement; for Christ has borne away the transgression of his people for ever and ever; and on what he has done a child of God lives: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.)

"The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Here they stumbled again. That is just what people with false religion in their hearts do.

If they have not the root of the matter in them they are sure to stumble at these things; for reason says, "How can these things be?" "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." This cut off the Jewish nation, except a very few; for spiritual life was the very thing of which they were destitute. They knew him not by faith, therefore could not eat his flesh and drink his blood; but when Christ comes into the heart of a poor sinner who has been brought in guilty before God, how precious he becomes to him, and he receives Christ, a full Christ, into his very soul.

"Who so eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." I have often thought on this wise as regards eating Christ's flesh and drinking his blood, that it is all summed up in this: "Christ in you the Hope of glory." You cannot receive Christ into your hearts without having his righteousness, peace, and all that he is. Now, have you and I ever had Christ in our hearts in his preciousness and blessedness? If so, that is eternal life; and we must know something of these things if we are to go to heaven.

"He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." See the blessed union it brings about, which neither time, trials, men, devils, nor even death can ever break. O what a joint union is this! It brings a sinful worm into union with Deity.

"This is that Bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead; he that eateth of this Bread shall live for ever."

HE that has the faith of dependance has an interest in all the privileges that attend assurance, though not in his own apprehension.
—*Clarkson.*

FAITH is not without hope; but hope there may be where there is no faith. Job speaks of the hypocrite's hope,—a hope like the spider's web, which, together with those that rely on it, will be swept down into destruction.—*Clarkson.*

THE day of death is the last day of a Christian's wearisome pilgrimage and that which brings the stranger to his long home, into the bosom of God, into the embraces of Christ, into all those joys that his own country affords, such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard.
—*Clarkson.*

THE Lord sometimes answers prayer by bestowing only some degree of the thing desired, not the whole. The Lord answered Moses' prayer by giving him a view of Canaan, not the possession. Those who pray for increase of grace are answered when the Lord draws out the heart in stronger desires after it. Desires after grace are a degree of grace. If the messenger of Satan against which Paul prayed were some corruption, his prayer was answered, not totally, so as to be freed from assaults, but in some degree, so as to have power sufficient to resist.—*Clarkson.*

THE MAN, CHRIST JESUS.

I DESIRE, as the Lord shall help me, to make some brief remarks concerning the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am deeply conscious of the importance of adhering to the express declarations of the Scriptures on this subject, and trust that I shall be preserved from saying anything that is not fully warranted by its plain teaching.

It is astonishing how very shallow are the thoughts of many Christians in regard to this matter, and how easy it is to fall into error, from which God would have his children preserved. I do not doubt that the great aim of Satan in these days is to seek to degrade the Person of the Son of God, and so to hinder souls from receiving the eternal benefits which come from a true knowledge of the Christ of God.

There appears to be a desire to profanely democratise Jesus, and so to make him popular by representing him as what has been termed, "one of ourselves," by which is meant a son of man, perfect it may be, but in this respect only differing from the natural descendants of Adam. Now, Scripture gives no warrant for any such idea, which, if true, would make it impossible for him to have been what he was, blessed be God, a Sacrifice for sin. I am sure that the only preservative from error on this most important subject is the Word of God; and taking its simple statements no saint, however ignorant of theology, need go astray. The Gospel, which sets forth the divine glory of Jesus, thus refers to the Incarnation: "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." And Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews also makes reference to the same truth in these words: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he *by the grace of God* should taste death for every man." (Heb. ii. 9.) The importance of the express statement referring to his death, which I have given in italics, will appear later on; for the present I quote the Scripture to show how the *fact* of the Incarnation is referred to by inspired writers.

Now, as to the *mystery* of the Incarnation, Scripture is no less explicit in its statements, showing that it was a miracle of a most stupendous character. Matthew says, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." This we are told was done in fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel

which being interpreted is, God with us." Luke, who in his Gospel sets forth Christ as the Son of Man, thus writes of this same event: "And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest. . . And the angel said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Now, from these Scriptures it appears plain that the human nature of Jesus was of a character wholly unique (that is, not another like it); so that it is as incorrect to refer to it as being of the character of Adam in his unfallen as of Adam in his fallen condition, Christ's human nature being begotten holy, which Adam's, in his original state, was not, it being only pure and good.

I am aware that with many theologians it is thought to be absolutely necessary to affirm either the one or the other of these conditions as attaching to our Lord's humanity; but Scripture forces upon us no such necessity. Indeed, it is all the other way, for even the innocence of Adam's nature was not impregnable, whereas of our Lord it is distinctly declared that he was in all points tempted like as we are, entirely and wholly *apart from sin*, sin never coming into question. Thus, then, we see that Adamic innocence was peccable, but the human nature of Christ was impeccable.*

But further, Could it be said of Adam unfallen that he was either righteous or holy? Scripture does not say so, neither can it be inferred therefrom, because the mere absence of evil is certainly not holiness. There must be an intrinsic and inherent predominancy over sin positively expressed in the very nature of holiness. And this characterised the Man, Christ Jesus. Who will dare to deny it? The mistake of attributing the necessity of an Adamic character to the Manhood of Christ lies in having confused ideas respecting human nature. To refer again to

* Bunyan, in his sermon on Acts xiii. 23, thus refers to the Incarnation: "I come now to the second question,—to wit, *How he took our flesh*. This must be inquired into; for his taking flesh was not after the common way; never any took man's flesh upon him as he, since the foundation of the world.

"1. He took not our flesh like Adam, who was formed out of the ground. 2. He took not our flesh as we do, by carnal generation. 3. He took flesh, then, by the immediate working and overshadowing of the Holy Ghost. And hence it is said expressly, 'She was found with child of the Holy Ghost.'

"But again, Though the Holy Ghost was he by which the Child Jesus was formed in the womb, so as to be without carnal generation, yet was he not formed but by her conception. Wherefore he took flesh, not only in, but of the virgin. Hence he is called her Son, the Seed of the woman; and hence it is also that he is called the Seed of Abraham, the Seed of David, their Seed, according to the flesh. The overshadowing of the Holy Ghost and the power of the Highest—the Father and the Holy Ghost—brought this wonderful thing to pass, for Jesus is a wonderful One in his conception and birth. This mystery is that next to the mystery of Three Persons in one God; it is a great mystery. 'Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh.'

John's Gospel. There we are told that the Word became *flesh* and dwelt among us. In his first epistle he tells us that one of the marks of the spirit of antichrist is the denial that Christ is come in the flesh. Now from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke we have seen how and by what power the human nature of Jesus was formed. Not of an immaculate virgin as the Romanists falsely affirm, but by *the power of God*. So that in the very highest meaning of those words we might say Jesus was born, not of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, *but of God*. And of Him who was born of the Virgin the Holy Ghost could say, "That Holy Thing which shall be born of thee," &c. Thus we see that in Scripture we have *human nature* described in three ways: First, *innocent*, represented by Adam as he came from the hand of God. Secondly, *fallen*, through the successful temptation of the devil. And I would here remark that it is to this condition to which *mortality* attaches as the fruit of sin, so that to say "a mortal man" is equivalent to saying "a sinful man." But to return. The third Scriptural description of human nature is, *holy*; this last being used exclusively in reference to the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am aware that Christians are called in Scripture "Holy brethren," but this is in reference to the new nature and their standing in Christ, and has no reference to their bodies which are still bodies of humiliation and await the transforming power of Christ at his second coming, when they shall be changed into the likeness of his glorious body.

When those Scriptures are considered which refer to the temptations and sufferings of the Lord, they will be found to fully bear out the correctness of this view of the nature of his blessed humanity. Take for instance that word in Heb. ii. 18: "For in that he himself hath *suffered* being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Did Adam suffer when tempted in Eden? There is no proof whatever that he did; but we know he readily yielded. As an innocent creature he had no knowledge of good and evil (that is, he had no experimental knowledge of evil). Do we suffer being tempted? Well do we know that there is in us that which responds to the suggestions of the evil one, and it is the new creature, or holy part in us that shrinks from evil. But Jesus suffered, *being tempted*. In the full knowledge of what sin is in its nature the *suggestions* of Satan were most repulsive to his soul and body, both of which were holy. This is a most important consideration, and we cannot make too much of it; for it has a direct bearing upon the qualification of our blessed Lord as our great High Priest, who we read was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," in order that "he might be a merciful High Priest in things pertaining to God." It is in this connection that we have the Scripture to which reference has already been made concerning his temptation: "For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, *yet* without sin." (Heb. iv. 15.) Some think that the word "yet"

is an intrusion in the A. V. and clouds the whole sense of the passage, the very point of which is to set in contrast the priesthood of Christ and that of Aaron as a man compassed with infirmity and sin. It must never be forgotten that in the miracle of the Incarnation it pleased the Father that in Christ all fulness should dwell. How, then, could there be the possibility of limitation—such as humanity in its Adamic character, even in its innocency contained—in the humanity in which God was manifest in the flesh? The idea is inconceivable. And when we remember that in the Incarnation the Word was pleased to become flesh never (after the resurrection) to put off humanity, it seems to me to be an absolute necessity that it should be of a character worthy of himself.

In that wonderful chapter in Corinthians in which the subject of the resurrection is treated, the Spirit of God distinctly *contrasts* Adam and the blessed Lord Jesus in these words: "And it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the *last Adam* a quickening spirit." "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the *second Man* is the Lord from heaven As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Cor. xv. 45-48.) Here, then, we see that our humanity which by nature is identical with that of the first Adam, for we are his children, is to become changed into the perfect humanity of the last Adam, for, "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but *we shall all be changed*. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

There is yet another point to which I wish to refer in connection with this subject, and it is that which relates to the manner in which our Lord speaks of his life and death. He says, "No man taketh it (his life) from me, but *I lay it down* of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." (Jno. x. 18.) When before Pilate he declared in answer to the threat, that he had no power at all against him except it were given him from above. And we know that when after his crucifixion the soldiers came to break his legs in order, as they supposed, to hasten death, they marvelled to find he was dead already, for crucifixion was by no means a quick mode of execution. From which facts it is abundantly clear that the death of Jesus was the voluntary *accomplishment* of his decease as of a work he had come to do. This we know was the case, for he saith, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, *but a body hast thou prepared* (or, as the margin reads, "fitted") *me*;" in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God (Heb. x. 5-7), which will was the offering of himself as a sin-offering. (Isa. liii.) And he could offer himself to God as a sin-offering, because upon him was laid no *necessity* of death excepting as such. He tasted death by the *grace* of God.

I fear very much anything like speculation respecting the

Person of the Saviour; but when Satan is doing his utmost to dim the glory of Christ by means of the marvellous mystery of his humiliation, I do feel that it behoves us to hold fast to the essential dignity which belongs to the Incarnate Son of God. Of Adam in Eden's paradise it were impossible to say "that Holy Thing," but of Jesus this is emphatically the truth, who in his humanity was the Second Man, the last Adam, the Lord from heaven.

C. FOWLER.

A FEW RECORDS FROM ABROAD.

BEING SHORT ACCOUNTS OF THE LORD'S DEALINGS WITH
DEPARTED ONES.

ELIZABETH CARMICHAEL.—On Aug. 20th, 1885, in her 77th year, Elizabeth Carmichael.

Her maiden name was Campbell. She was born in Argyleshire, Scotland, and came to Aldboro, Ontario, in the year 1819, where she remained until her marriage in 1825 to Hugh Carmichael, of Lobo. Shortly after Elder Dugold Campbell came to Lobo, and under his preaching many were brought to the knowledge of the truth, among whom were Mrs. Carmichael and her husband. The great work then accomplished through the Lord's blessing on this zealous minister of Christ was no mere flash of excitement, but genuine and deep, both in wounding and in healing,—in the depth and reality of conviction and the clearness and evidence of deliverance and assurance.

Mrs. Carmichael came before the church on Feb. 5th, 1829 and related her Christian experience, and was accepted and baptized the same day. From that time until her death—a period of 56 years, she continued a faithful and consistent member, always taking a lively interest in the Lord's cause. Her husband died in the year 1862.

She was afflicted for about three years with that dreadful disease, cancer, which finally caused her death; but through all her protracted sufferings she was wonderfully sustained by the lovingkindness of the Lord. She would often, in the midst of the severest pains, bless and praise God for his love and goodness, and spoke of many portions of Scripture which had been a great comfort to her. Only a short time before her death she told her daughter that the following words had been very sweet and comforting to her:

"From every snare and evil work,
His grace shall me defend,
And to his heavenly kingdom safe
Shall bring me in the end."

Soon after the promise thus given was made yea and amen to her, as she sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.

H. MCCOLL.

MALCOLM MCALPIN.—On Oct. 5th, 1888, in his 86th year, Malcolm McAlpin, of Ekfird, Ontario, a member of the Covenant Baptist Church, Lobo.

He was born in Argyleshire, Scotland, and came to Canada in the year 1830, when it was mostly a wilderness. He was brought up a Presbyterian and was regarded as a member of good standing, though, as he himself expressed it, with no more knowledge of true religion than a brute.

Soon after coming to Canada a wonderful work of God was going on among the Highland settlers of several parts of western Canada under the preaching of Elder Dugold Campbell, and others. The manifestations of divine power in the conviction and conversion of sinners were so marked that he regarded it as witchcraft, but before long, under the preaching of the late Elder Thomas Mc. Coll, the same quickening Spirit dealt with him also in an effectual and saving manner. He remained in great distress of mind for a length of time, seeking pardon, bearing the burden of sin, and seeing his own position as a hell-deserving sinner.

One day, when on the way to the house from his work, in deep distress, the infernal pit seemed to open before him with its devouring flames, and he could see no way or hope of escape. After a time this dreadful vision passed away and he reached the house. On going in there was first presented to him a view of Christian leaving the *City of Destruction* with a great burden on his back; and then the words came: "All the promises of God in him are yea and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us." With this a light, far beyond the brightness of the sun, filled the room, and the Lord Jesus was presented to the eye of his faith in his Person, blood, and righteousness as the glory of the gospel and the sum and centre of all its promises of free-grace and everlasting love. Joyfully and gladly receiving a full and finished salvation, and filled with a peace that passed all understanding he cried out like Thomas, "My Lord and my God." For some days he dwelt in such a region of unclouded love, light, and joy that he scarcely knew whether he was in or out of the body, and was quite unfit to follow his ordinary avocation.

At another time he was greatly troubled about the doctrine of the incarnation, but told how the Lord Jesus was revealed to him with such blessed unction and clearness that he no more doubted. He was naturally strong in body and mind, and was also, for the most part, strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. He was for a long time a member of the church in Ekford, but for reasons which need not here be given and which related purely to doctrinal differences, he ceased to be a member there, but was a member of the church in Lobo until his death. His life, throughout a Christian pilgrimage of about half a century, was singularly consistent and upright, and in his last illness he bore ample testimony to the reality of his hope, the divine faithfulness, and the stability of God's promises. Two days before his death, though then very weak, he gave to a friend, who had called to see him, a clear and detailed relation of his Christian experience. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

H. McCOLL.

HUGH CARMICHAEL.—On Aug. 12th, 1885, in his 53rd year, Hugh Carmichael, of Lobo, Ontario.

The following account of him was written by his widow, Isabella Carmichael, who is a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church, Lobo:

“From his youth my late dear husband loved the truth. When I was received into the church, he said it was his first awakening. He went with me to the baptismal waters, and from that time his continual cry was, ‘Lord, help me.’ At a meeting held in the month of June he was in great distress, and continued in this condition until one day in August. He was at work in the field and came in, saying he had received great comfort from the following lines:

“Come let us to the Lord our God,
 With contrite hearts return;
 Our God is gracious, nor will leave
 The desolate to mourn.
 Long hath the night of sorrow reigned;
 The dawn shall bring us light;
 God shall appear and we shall rise
 With gladness in his sight.”

But he was soon back in the same trouble again. He would often say, ‘Poor wretch that I am! When I go on my knees to pray something says, ‘God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.’ His cry was: ‘Lord, teach me and bring me to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. O if I only knew it is the Lord that is dealing with me!’ One day, when ploughing, these words came to him with power: ‘Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.’ Also: ‘The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.’ O what joy he had for a few weeks! He would say, ‘I know and believe the Lord will satisfy my soul, for I am hungering after righteousness.’ He rose one morning with these words in his mind: ‘Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.’

“He took great interest in the spiritual welfare of others, was in deep trouble for their salvation, and often spent time in trying to warn, instruct, and comfort them. Some of those he had been trying to comfort were set at liberty and received into the church. He counted himself unworthy, and would say, ‘I dare not say, Abba, Father yet.’ He again became greatly distressed, fearing it was not the Lord’s work in his soul. He would say, ‘O I wish I had never opened my mouth to anyone about myself! I will not go to the meeting any more, for there is nothing for me but blackness and despair. I fear I am given over to hardness of heart. I cannot pray for myself, and yet I am always praying for others that they may be brought to the knowledge of the truth. I often feel some of my friends before me when I am in prayer, and the tears run down my cheeks with the love I have to their souls.’ He would often say, when hearing a preacher

tell the people they could believe any time, that he had not found it so; for he had to wait for the *Lord's time*; and *that* did not come until about two weeks before he died.

"He had been for some time in poor health, and as he walked across the room he said, 'When we are weak we are strong. I know that I have passed from death unto life.' He spoke for a long time and I said, 'Perhaps you will be baptized the next Sabbath we have preaching.' He said he was willing; but before that time came he had passed away. On the Thursday before he died, at midnight, he asked if I was asleep. I said, 'No,' when he broke out weeping, and said, 'My soul is full of the love of God.' He wept a long time. The next morning he asked me to find where Christ spoke to Nathaniel. (Jno. i. 47-49.) That was the last time he spoke to me on this subject. He died the following Wednesday morning, and although he never joined the church below, I have no doubt his ransomed spirit went to join the church above."

H. McCOLL.

ISABELLA McTAGGORT.—On Oct. 16th, 1887, at Lobo, Ontario, aged 79, Isabella McTaggart.

She was born in Argyleshire, Scotland, and came to Lobo with her husband in the year 1829. In 1832 she related her experience before the church, and was baptized by the late Elder Dugold Campbell, and maintained her Christian profession consistently to the end of her days. For the last two years of her life she was afflicted with rheumatism, which rendered her helpless, and so affected the organs of speech that it was often difficult for her to make herself understood. Through her long and trying illness she was wonderfully sustained by the Saviour's presence, and, as she could give them expression, she repeated many passages of Scripture which were sweet and comforting to her. She would often say, "Is it not good now to know that the Lord is my Shepherd? O that he would soon come for me!" She often repeated the following lines of a bymn:

"Soon shall this earthly frame dissolved
In dust and ashes lie;
But better mansions wait the just,
Prepared above the sky."

She fell asleep in Jesus at the date above mentioned.

H. McCOLL.

WHILE Daniel was speaking in prayer, an angel was sent in answer to his desires.—*Clarkson.*

WHAT would a thousand worlds avail me if, after a momentary enjoyment of them, I must go to hell for ever? What will these profit me, so long as the Lord's wrath burns against me? What will all the pleasures and riches of the world avail me, so long as I am but a condemned person and in danger every hour to be led forth to execution?—*Clarkson.*

THE BLISS OF BOTH WORLDS.

My beloved Friend,—On my bed this morning I had a sweet manifestation of Him who was foretold by the prophet and whose name was to be called “Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” I was led to meditate on the first miracle which showed him to be the Creator, when the water was made wine by him. What shallow views we have of the written and incarnate Word except under “the anointing which we receive of him, which teacheth of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught us, we shall abide in him!” Precious truth! To feel the blessed conformation of it in our own experience, how it raises us out of the dunghill and makes us sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus; while, at the same time, we have right thoughts of ourselves as poor sinful nothings!

I have told you of the day of prosperity first, as it was just fresh on my mind; but now I will tell you a little about the day of adversity. One morning this week I had a solemn time as I lay in bed. I felt great searchings of heart, with some fears lest I should be found wanting at last. A black catalogue was presented to my view and my evidences all seemed dark. The two last verses of Ps. cxxxix were my prayer and the atonement of Christ my only refuge, while I wanted to feel the application of it renewed. After breakfast I read Ps. lxxxvi, and it seemed so suitable to me. Then I turned to Rev. xxi, and it was a precious cordial. I compared the second verse with Isa. liv. 5, and lxi. 10. To see myself thus arrayed by the great sacred Three-One God and to feel that I should be with him for ever is indeed a grand and glorious anticipation. Well may we unite with the sweet singer of Israel in Ps. cxlv.

In the midst of changes and changing scenes how good and tender the Lord is to us! I could rejoice in his goodness toward you, dear friend, in granting you such blessed testimonies of his mercy. He will not leave you until he hath done that which he hath spoken to you of, and then he will take you to your Father’s house for ever. Unworthy as I am, I hope I shall also be found with that glorified family, and then what a shout we will give and say, “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” May the Lord keep our hearts in the love of God, and the patient waiting for Christ.

I feel more than ever my need of being kept by his power, and how awful it would be if my salvation depended on anything out of him. Even for the things of time he is my only Refuge; for I can say in truth that I never felt so stripped of looking to creatures as I do now, God having made me feel my sin and folly in so doing. Yet how little I know of my desperately wicked heart, though I know enough to make Christ exceedingly precious, I have

of late been in a low place, with many gloomy fears and questionings respecting my state before God and many thoughts of heart as to how it will be with me at last. I can, when helped, cast myself at the feet of Christ as at the first, hoping in his sovereign mercy through blood,—the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanseth from all sin. A fresh application of this is what I want, and the Blessed Spirit to bear witness with my spirit that I am his.

Musing on the years that are past and my present lot, how much have I to praise him for in supplying all my temporal needs! I have lacked nothing in all the changing scenes, and am now much liberated from those cares I was so unequal to, and supplied with comforts of which thousands more worthy than myself are destitute. He has never failed to do me good, and hath and is still leading me, as Israel of old, in the wilderness; and O may I hope for an eternity of happiness and rest with Him who is the bliss of both worlds!

I am sure you will be found among that number of whom it is said, "These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Blessed be God's holy name, he hath and doth make us so dependent upon him that we cannot do without him one step of the way, and, as you say in your letter, "none but the Holy Ghost can fill our hearts with Christ, and none but Christ can satisfy our hearts." What you write of these things finds an echo in my soul. I want to know and love him more and be more deeply affected with his great love, who, I hope, gave himself for me.

Yours in much affection,

M. E. GREGORY.

Wolverhampton, June 28th, 1877.

THE VIRTUE OF JESUS' NAME.

My dear Friend,—The wheels of time which never cease and deviate not have brought you round to your birthday, on which may the wheels of grace bring down from the throne of God some gracious token of his divine favour and love to your soul, that you may have meat to eat that the world knoweth not of, even the secret of the Lord which is with them that fear him. To be born into this world and to go out of it and not be born again of the Spirit is sad indeed, and this is how most of the sinful race of Adam die; but, through rich mercy, this will not be your case, for you have been born twice—once after the flesh and once after the Spirit, and this is proved because you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. This taste of his grace has drawn your heart to Christ, who is wise in his work and ways; and he has won your soul; for "he that winneth souls is wise." By him you have been made wise to discern between good and evil; for your eyes see Christ as the good and great God, and Satan as the source of all evil. Through life and grace imparted

from God you have chosen Christ for your Portion; for "he is thy Lord; and worship thou him." The Desire of all nations has come, and the doors of your heart have been opened to let in the King of glory, whose presence has at various times filled the temple of your soul; so that the priest, or minister of God has not had room to minister; for Christ was then the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the End of your faith, which owns no other God but him.

This is the Tree of Life to make one wise, and the leaves of this Tree are for the healing of the nations; nor have any other leaves in them virtue or power to heal the bruises, sores, and sicknesses caused by sin. He who suffered the Just for the unjust and shed his blood to give health and cure to our wounded souls, says, "I am the Lord that healeth thee." Having felt the virtue of his name, grace, and blood we believe in his Godhead and Manhood; as Peter says: "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious." Our bruise now appears greater, our wounds deeper, and our disorders more malignant than when we first believed; but this is because we at first only, as it were, beheld the surface of our disease. Our eyes having been from time to time anointed with fresh eye-salve we see that our disease has thousands of roots, which have spread themselves through every part of our body and soul, and there is no part healthy and sound; for our comeliness is turned in us into corruption; so that to look to self for any good of a spiritual kind is as foolish as to look for the love of God in Satan or for spiritual evidences of the new birth in one dead in his sins. Hence the meaning of the words of the man of God: "Turn off mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken thou me in thy way;" that is, Lead me to seek holiness and happiness in and through the Person and work of Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. One touch from his holy hand cures the leprosy, and when we touch the hem of his garment we are made whole; and a view of his pierced hands and side brings out of the heart and mouth the wondrous words of faith, "My Lord and my God." "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation;" and this encouraging appendix is made to the last quoted Scripture: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

What we have already received is of more worth than all the wealth of India and the riches of Peru; for the quickenings of the Spirit, the grace of Jesus, and the smiles of his face are eternal life. So sweet have these been to our taste that they have, when we have before been in a sleepy state, made our lips to speak and say, "He is the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely." By this teaching and these favours we are spoiled to all natural religion, natural hope, natural faith, and everything that is not of the Holy Ghost, Christ, and the Father.

Death, fear, doubts, terrors, and the temptations of Satan may

and will dwell in us, and we shall be plagued with them; but they cannot drive us into the religion of dead professors; for weak, vile, sinful, and ruined as we are, we would rather wait a whole year for one fresh and real token of God's love and mercy than act presumptuously and have the dead faith of those who profess to know God and are dead in trespasses and sins. Faith says, "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him;" and God says to this soul, "They shall not be ashamed that wait for me." The life of faith is believing in the Father and Christ, and in waiting for his visitations, hoping in his mercy, watching for his operations on the soul under the preached word, or by the voice of his sweet Spirit by which the heart is wooed, won, melted, humbled, strengthened, encouraged, refreshed, and restored, whilst the voice of the Bridegroom softly whispers, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away."

"Where these things have been felt and realized, as they have been many times in your soul, it is eternal life; for they are accompanied with the knowledge of God and of Christ; and "this is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." These things and nothing else are the life of your spirit, and I know your heart says, "Lord, give me more of this treasure, more of thy love, grace, mercy, and peace. Lord, give me thy presence and thyself; for nothing greater canst thou give and with nothing less can I be satisfied." If this be not the secret desire and experience of my friend's heart, let her make me a liar and make my words nothing worth; for, notwithstanding the deeps of sin, vileness, and wickedness of every sort and shape that dwell within this Shulamite, there is room in the inn of her heart for Him in whom the world sees no beauty and for whom they feel no desire.

That the Holy One of Israel may set thee as a seal upon his heart, as a seal upon his arm, and indulge thee with a sweet kiss of his lips on thy returning birthday is the desire and prayer of my soul; and may he break down every separating wall, and say unto thee, "Thy Maker is thy Husband; the Lord of hosts is his name." I cannot conclude this letter without acknowledging your *sincere* and *constant* friendship. When our life on earth shall terminate may it be our sweet and happy lot to lie down in peace, and enter into the joy of the Lord.

My pen has run on, and unless I check it I know not where it may lead me; therefore I will say, Adieu. The unction of the Holy One be with you.

Yours in Best Bonds,

Birmingham, May 28th, 1887.

J. DENNETT.

PRECIOUS TEARS.

My dear Friend,—I have tried my best to put off the thought of writing to you, lest it should appear as though I want to make a show in the flesh; yet I know sometimes these insinuations

come from the enemy and not from the Spirit of God, on purpose to prevent the servants of God receiving the encouragement that they so much need; for it must encourage them to know that their labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Surely as cold water to a thirsty soul, so was the good news of the gospel that you were enabled to proclaim on Sunday night to my poor bewildered and tempted-tossed soul; for it was like oil to my troubled spirit. I came to B. as miserable as I could be; but as soon as you began to speak from the words in Isa. lvi, about the son of the stranger that hath joined himself to the Lord, I felt that although I was separated from the Lord's people in person, yet I was joined to the Lord in ties of love and blood; so that neither sin nor Satan, with all his infernal train, could ever dissolve this union. I felt I could have wept my soul away at the gracious feet of my Lord and Master, and I cared not for all the *Simons* in the world that might condemn me, any more than Mary did when she washed the feet of the Saviour with her tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. I returned home like a giant refreshed with new wine, and with a good conscience and the approbation of God in my soul, which we do not feel when we are going in a wrong direction. O how sweet it is to sit under the droppings of his love and to feel our icy hearts begin to melt, the tears of love and contrition flow, and our souls full of love to him who is the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely! At such times I feel that I shall never be satisfied until I see him as he is.

I felt on Sunday night that I could bow before him and worship and adore him; and yet I had such a poor sacrifice, for all I had to offer him was this poor weak, cold, lifeless, and sinful heart; but he came, blessed be his holy name, and bestowed upon me the sacrifice with which he has declared himself well pleased, namely, a broken and a contrite heart. Thus the poor, empty sinner and a full Christ met together, and he became so precious to my soul and accepted the sacrifice which he himself had bestowed upon me, that

"My full soul could hold no more
Of everlasting love."

Had it not been for my tears relieving my feelings I must have burst out in praise to the God, whom I hope one day to see without a veil between.

Sometimes when I have these precious, heart-melting seasons the enemy tells me it is only fleshly excitement, but at other times I would give the world to feel melted at the Saviour's feet; for although there is no salvation in it, yet it is a sweet and blessed token of our salvation in a precious Christ. When the Lord comes and puts in his hand by the hole of the door and we are enabled to open to him, and feel our hands drop with myrrh and our fingers with sweet-smelling myrrh upon the handles of the lock, it is then that we can say with the spouse, "**My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.**"

O my dear friend, so far from me writing this to flatter you, I can only say that you did not half exalt Christ, nor did you half describe his beauties; but you did say, and I believed it too, that you would exalt him higher and speak better of him if you could; but

“Living tongues are dumb at best,
We must die to speak of Christ.”

Still go on, my dear friend, and although you will never be able to speak of him as you would, I am sure you will do your best, and if Huntington ever preached Christ better, he never preached a better Christ.

May you still see more beauty in him, and be enabled to set it forth that saints may be comforted, sinners attracted, and your own soul comforted more and more, is the sincere desire of

Your unworthy Friend for Christ's sake,

Old Hill, Nov. 7th, 1888.

A. ADAMS.

KNITTING OF HEART.

My dear and much-beloved Friend,—Grace unto you and peace be multiplied. Your sweet and savoury letter much cheered and comforted my heart. How nice it is to hear from or converse with one to whom we feel a real union of soul, for there is then a sweet knitting and uniting of heart to heart, and a kindred spirit is felt and enjoyed, hoping and believing that we are fellow-citizens together of the household of God. Such was indeed my feeling during your short stay with us.

Alas! How few we meet with in the present day who can enter into those sweet, blessed, inside things that so much delight the soul. We meet with many that can talk freely about the doctrines of grace, but cannot say much about the sweet and blessed effects of the same in their own soul's feeling. What is religion without the blessed enjoyment of it felt within! We cannot but hope that we have passed from death unto life when we feel that our inward experience is such a key that it unlocks the precious treasury of God's Word. What a mercy it is to be enabled to understand, in some little measure, Paul's experience when he exultingly cried out, “Who shall separate us from the love of God? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.” But it is, as you say, my brother, that “although at times we are raised above all the dying things of time and sense, yet we still are poor, we are beggars, we are sinners, we are guilty and filthy;” nevertheless, in our darkest moments, we hope that at last we shall be found in him, “not having on our own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” O the mercy of mercies, as dear Tiptaft used often to say, to be made right and kept right.

May we not say, when we take a retrospective view of the past, "Who hath made us to differ, and what have we that we have not received?" I have seen those who knew me well in the days of my madness gaze and wonder at the change, and to see me brought to the Saviour's feet. Not unto me, not unto me, but unto the Lord's name be all the praise.

I have written to several friends in different parts of the country stating the blessed effects your ministry had upon the hearts of the people when you lately preached here. I never witnessed so much rejoicing at the close of a service before, and it was general throughout the congregation. Many went away weeping, and some said their souls were singing and dancing for joy. It was such a sight that it reminded me of a Pentecostal day. O for more of these refreshing seasons! How cheering and pleasing it is, and what a comfort it must be to the Lord's ministers to find, in this dark and cloudy day, that the Lord is making use of them to the ingathering of his own elect, and still raising up witnesses for himself to defend the truth as it is in Jesus, as we hope they will do when our heads are laid low beneath the clods of the valley.

I am sure it must be very encouraging to you to receive such testimonies of the Lord's work amongst your own people so soon after your return home and to find that he is, in such a marked way, blessing his word. No doubt the feeling of your soul under it is as the Psalmist expresses it: "Marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well."

Melancthon was once in company with Luther and a number of other godly men, and at the time of speaking in prayer he was very low and sorrowful; but leaving their company for a little while, he returned with his countenance beaming with delight. So great was the change in his appearance and manner that the friends present inquired of him what had caused it, and he replied, "I have been in another part of the building and have just heard that, through the Lord's blessing, there are a number of young captains being raised up to defend the truth when we are removed from the battle-field." Thus it was with the Lord's servants of old, and so it is with every true servant of the Lord Jesus in the present day.

And now an old pilgrim who is hobbling and plodding on through the wilderness with a hope that he will reach the desired haven, would say, "The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace;" and may he continue to make the souls of the people who are favoured to sit under your ministry as a watered garden. So prays one who loves and highly esteems you for your works,
make,

JAMES KNIGHT.

Southport, Oct. 17th, 1888.

REVIEW.

The Autobiography of a Soldier in India, by Thomas Witts.—London: F. Kirby, 17, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, E.C.

WERE not salvation entirely of free, unmerited grace, no flesh could be saved. Such is the depth of the fall and the awful wickedness into which we through it are plunged, that had not God laid the deeper depths of grace, mercy, and love in his plan of salvation, Satan would have accomplished his design and dragged the whole of Adam's ruined race into everlasting misery; but God's foreknowledge and the provision which he made for the redemption of his own elect forestalled Satan's device, defeated his purposes, and will bring good out of evil, and honour and glory to the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, God's only-begotten Son.

Sin has not only defiled, but it has completely ruined every man, woman, and child that has been born into the world, except the holy Child Jesus. Sin did not partly, but wholly wreck man's body and soul; for it deprived him of all power, either to serve God or seek his face. It made him a stranger to his best Friend and a foe to him in whom he lives and moves and has his being. It darkened his understanding; so that there is no judgment in his goings. (Isa. lix. 8.) Ignorance, darkness, and death prevail over the souls and minds of all men in a state of nature, whether high or low, rich or poor; for "darkness hath covered the earth, and gross darkness the people." (Isa. lx. 2.) There is a covering upon the face of all people and a veil spread over all nations. So broad is this covering and so thick is this veil that nothing but regenerating grace, or the Word and Spirit of God can pierce it through or rend it asunder; and in this state men choose and even love to dwell; as Christ said: "Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." (Jno. iii. 19.)

Sin has placed man at such a distance from God that, if left to himself and regenerating grace is not given to him, he strays and strays, wanders farther and farther, places himself, if possible, at a greater and greater distance from the Lord of heaven and earth, until he falls into hell and is swallowed up in the gulph of eternal misery; for man, by nature, is far off from God by wicked works.

Sin has deprived man of all power and right desire to seek after or return to God, who is the Fountain of happiness, the River of life, the Sea of love, and the Ocean of holiness. So we read: "There is none that seeketh after God." (Rom. iii. 2.) This Scripture shows the universal weakness of man and his utter destitution of power to make that friendship with God which is essential to his eternal good.

Sin has polluted the souls of all men and sin has polluted their bodies, and mind and body join together in following after, practising, wallowing and delighting in that which God hates, loathes, and detests,

Sin in some form or other is a sweet morsel to every sinner whilst in a natural state; hence body and mind go together, and what one proposes the other consents to. Therefore Paul reminds those who had been brought out of their natural state of what they once were, saying, "Amongst 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. 3) We are all by nature inclined to evil, but not one is inclined to holiness. The law of God strictly forbids every kind of sin and threatens death to everyone who shall come short of its precepts; yet, in the face of it, men go on breaking every commandment, indulging their lusts, disobeying their Maker, disregarding his threatenings; and unless grace,—sovereign, free, unmerited grace rescue them, they perish in their own destructions. One wallows in one sin and another in another, being led captive by the devil at his will, and those who are not slaves to obscene lusts and the coarser kinds of sins and pleasures, are beguiled by Satan and wrap themselves up in their own morality; so that the most rigid moralist, the drunkard, the thief, and the swearer, at death enter into the same place of misery, where light and hope can never enter. It is a mercy of mercies for those who are chastened for their sins and made partakers of the grace of God.

Who the Lord's people are, into what depths of sin they may be sunken, the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of wickedness which they are allowed to practise before they are called by grace, no one but a God of infinite wisdom can know. Manasseh was allowed to make the streets of Jerusalem swim with blood, to practise idolatry, to disregard the warnings of the seers and the prophets; and yet all the time he was loved of God. Mary Magdalene in her natural state was, doubtless, a profane character, and in her dwelt seven devils; yet, notwithstanding this, she was from everlasting loved of God. Many there were when the Lord Jesus Christ was on earth who imbrued their hands in his innocent blood, and out of the enmity of their minds gratified their carnal passions by putting him to death; and yet at that very time Christ, the Father, and the Holy Ghost loved them, watched over them, and afterwards called them by his grace. Saul of Tarsus, that inveterate enemy both of Christ and the church, was allowed to blaspheme the name of Christ, persecute his people, and even compel them to blaspheme; for he hailed them to prison and put many of them to death; yet whilst in the very height of his wickedness, whilst breathing out slaughter and threatening against the disciples, he was dear to God as one of his beloved sons, dear to the Lord Jesus Christ as one of his redeemed, and dear to the Holy Spirit who suddenly entered into him and made his body one of his temples. Such are the amazing ways and wondrous works of God that they are past finding out. This David evidently

saw and felt when he penned the 107th Psalm, and said, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" (Ps. cvii. 15.)

The cases we have named, and many others we might name, are proofs of the Lord's unchanging love and his determination to save and deliver his own elect from the slavery, misery, bondage, death, and enmity into which sin has plunged them.

To the truth of these remarks the author of the book before us can well bear witness, being left as he was in his natural state to go into the depths of sin and wickedness far, very far beyond the majority of the Lord's people. Given up as he was for a long time to all kinds of pleasure, sin, and wickedness, he may well stand amazed at the wondrous lovingkindness and mercy of God to him. Attended as he was in his sins with continual reproofs and dread of God, he found, for he writes from experience, that sin was too strong for every resolution of his mind, and he proved that he was led captive by the devil at his will. If our readers would like to know the history of one who is a miracle of grace and has been rescued from a thousand sins and deaths, who has been delivered as a prey from the hand of the mighty, who has been plucked as a brand from the burning, who has been delivered from the power of darkness, who has been brought from enmity to love, from the broad way to the narrow way, and out of the service of Satan into the service of Christ, they will be gratified in reading this highly-interesting account of Thomas Witts.

The author has done what few autobiographers do—that is, he has entered into the details of his sinful life, and written it in such a way that we feel it to be one of the most unvarnished and best accounts we have read for a long time of man's total corruption and badness and God's extreme forbearance and goodness. The following extract, in which he refers to some of his ungodly ways, may be interesting:

"I sigh while the pen just hints and my conscience reflects upon the subsequent wickedness of the next fifteen months. O what an ungodly wretch I was! The details are too horrible to relate; too disgusting to commit to paper; and too vile for any lover of morality to peruse. Suffice it to say, the misery, the pain, the lashes of conscience, with many a secret sting, were verifying the Word of God in me with a witness: 'Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.' (Prov. i. 31.) Yet could I in no wise alter my course of drinking and gambling. O the wretchedness I often felt through the power and love of sin! Yet if hell's mouth had been open before me to engulf me in its awful abyss or rolling billows of tormenting flame, I could not have rooted up or out that inveterate love of sin which was ingrained in every fibre of my constitution; yea, was my very life-blood! O the desperate love of sin that rules in sinners' hearts where grace reigns not! Where 'the strong man armed keeps his goods in peace,' till

'the stronger than he' comes and dispossesses him. That the 'strong man armed' is the devil himself is very evident (Matt. xii. 26-29); and however a poor deluded sinner may groan under the galling shackles that fetter him, he cannot cast out Satan. Where this tyrant has possession of the heart, neither vows, resolutions, strong desires, nor imprecations upon a man's soul, will keep a sinful mortal from doing his behest. This was proved again and again by the writer, to his shame and astonishment. How often has he made the bitterest oaths, and called on God to witness if he again committed certain sins! Yet has he broken the solemn asseverations. 'Be astonished, O ye heavens' at this; that God dealt not with me according to my folly, by bringing upon me what I called upon him to do if I sinned again as before!"

We have said there is one deep that is deeper than sin, and that is the superabounding grace of God. This and this only can conquer man's stubborn heart, and incline his will to seek God. This only can bring him down as a penitent to the footstool of divine mercy. Grace alone can convert and save the soul of man, and where it enters it is irresistible. It brings life, it gives power, it changes the heart, it subdues the love of sin, it creates a choice for that which is good, it leads the soul to prayer, to confession of sin, to self-loathing and shame on account of past transgressions, it creates love to the Word of God and to the God of the Word;—in short, it makes a man a new creature and saves him from all his sins, however many, however great, and however long continued they may have been; for grace, free grace, saves fully, completely, and eternally.

Mr. Witts had enlisted in the army, and here it was that he was brought to know the folly of his own way, experience the bitterness of sin, and learn the hardships of a soldier's life, into which he very minutely enters. Whilst in the army and smarting under the bitterness of his past transgressions the Lord very graciously appeared to him and blessed his soul; for whilst he was reflecting upon his past life and sins from childhood to manhood, and fearing destruction, he says,

"About twenty yards from where I sat there appeared a great pit with rolling or curling flame issuing from the top. It was suggested to my mind, 'That is your desert!' At the far outside I saw on a wooden cross the mangled form of the dear 'Man of sorrows,' with his outstretched arms, his lovely head inclining to the right, which tacitly said, 'There is your Saviour.' The tears rushed to my eyes, and I exclaimed, 'Lord, make me a better man!' Then I knew it was the Lord (and called him so) who was set forth in and crucified according to the Scriptures; and crucified in vision before my eyes. I never was quite certain as to the portion of Scripture that came to my mind on that solemn occasion; therefore I write somewhat cautiously, for fear of exaggeration. I believe it was, 'Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they

shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' (Isa. i. 18.) The invitation was certainly intimated by the astonishing views then passing before me; such as sin in all its horror and heinousness, as committed against the best of Beings; the justice of God in denouncing it; eternity with unending woe, as punishing it; and the scarlet dye and crimson hue of mine was glaringly made manifest. As it passed away I said in a surprised tone under the sensations, 'What is it?' 'Whatever was it?' Pacing up and down in not unpleasing frames of alternate wonder and awe."

We cannot enter into all the changes that Mr. Witts passed through whilst in the army, the dreadful scenes he witnessed, the ungodliness of barrack life, and the many marvellous deliverances that he experienced; but if this should meet the eye of young men who think a soldier's life desirable, they would do well to read of what they may expect to meet with should they enlist in the army. After the author had been so blessed with revelations of Christ and his interest in God's love, he was left to backslide time after time, and he has been honest enough to state these things in their true colours.

After many hardships, loss of health and loss of his hearing he was discharged from the army, and returned to his native town—Reading, where he thought he should be able to live to God and be delivered from all his backslidings; but here he again proved that sin was too strong for him, and he fell again and again through its deceitful and powerful workings. Mr. W. whilst in the army had very vehement longings to return to his native country, and the Lord granted him his desire. He is now living in Sydney, Australia, where he is a preacher of the gospel. Why he left his native country to settle in a foreign land we know not; but as he has intimated that there will be a second part of his life published, no doubt this matter will be cleared up, and the dealings of God with him and what he has experienced both of goodness and mercy whilst in Australia fully entered into.

The book we are Reviewing contains as much matter as would fill about three hundred and thirty pages in the "G. S." It is not mere tautology, but there is a freshness throughout the whole which attracts the mind of the reader and leads him to admire the goodness and mercy of God, and stand in awe of sinning against him. We heartily and sincerely recommend this book to the lovers of free and sovereign grace, and hope the sale may be sufficiently large to enable Mr. W., without loss, to publish the second part.

Moses prayed that he might take possession of Canaan, and although he was not heard as to that particular, yet the Lord showed him what he desired in a miraculous way, and translated him into the heavenly Canaan, where Moses will acknowledge it was the sweetest return of prayer he ever experienced.—*Clarkson*.

Obituary.

PHILADELPHIA WALTER. — On Aug. 23rd, 1888, Philadelphia Walter, a member at Rehoboth Chapel, Tunbridge Wells.

She was born at Mayfield in the year 1836. Her father died when she was young, leaving several children. Her mother was married some time afterwards to Mr. James Richardson, whose name appears on the "G. S." Supply List. She was a God-fearing woman, and about two years ago died a very happy death at Mayfield.

I have heard Mrs. Walter say that she was a very proud young woman and determined to have her fill of the world's so-called pleasures. She was apprenticed to the dressmaking, and when out of her time was married to a man of the name of Grover. She had one son by him, who, at an early age, went with a gentleman and his family to Australia, where he arrived safely, but after a short time never wrote to his friends again, which was a great trial to his mother. In course of time her husband was afflicted with a sad complaint, which proved to be an abscess on the brain, and caused him to have fits of a very distressing nature, and in time terminated in his death. She was thus left a widow, and again followed her trade.

She was convinced of her lost state as a sinner in the sight of a holy and righteous God under the preaching of the late Mr. Russell, of Rotherfeld, but I do not know how long she remained under the condemning power of the law before she was blessed with a felt sense of God's pardoning love and mercy, which she afterwards realized. She sat under the preaching of a Mr. Edwards for a time, and then went to Hanover chapel, where a Mr. W. was pastor. She joined the church at Hanover on June 24th, 1872, a Mr. Webb being at that time the settled minister, but when he left she came to Rehoboth and was one of the twelve who joined the church when it was first formed by myself and Mr. Hull, on May 6th, 1877.

She walked consistently with her profession, but, like myself, was not perfect in the flesh. She was naturally of a suspicious turn of mind and made many mistakes in her judgment of people and their actions, and thus brought herself into much trouble of mind; but she had one good quality, which was that when she found she was wrong she would confess her faults to the aggrieved party and try to make crooked things straight. She became acquainted with her second husband, and they lived happily together up to the time of her death.

She was often afflicted, and for two or three years suffered much pain, especially in one leg, and the doctor thought it was sciatica, but another doctor being consulted he pronounced her affliction to be internal cancer, which proved to be correct. Occasionally she was able to get to chapel, but took to her bed on Aug. 30th, 1885, when the Lord broke in upon her soul, and she

said to those around her, "If I had strength enough, I could shout *Victory!*" On Sept. 1st she said, "I shall reach that blissful face, and not a wave of trouble will then roll across my peaceful breast." After a time she repeated the verse commencing,

"In themselves as weak as worms,
How can poor believers stand?"

The next day, when being moved, she fainted, but afterwards said, "I have seen the Lord, and a wave or two more will waft me unto him."

She so far recovered as to be able to get to chapel for several months, but after that she gradually got worse again. She at times experienced great darkness of mind and was sorely tempted to believe that all she had experienced was wrong; but on Nov. 9th, 1887, she had another blessed time of refreshing from Ps. ciii. She was again confined to her room, but not altogether to her bed. During this season of confinement she expressed a great desire that God would so strengthen her poor frail tabernacle that she might once more be able to attend the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and he was pleased to grant her the desire of her heart on the 1st of June, 1888. She then had a most blessed time, and so did I myself and several others. She returned home and was singing most of the night. To my great surprise her husband drove her to see me the next morning, and she stayed at my house about four hours and then left. She spoke very freely of the Lord's goodness and mercy unto her. From this time she seemed to improve in health, but this did not continue long.

On June 24th she was favoured with another sweet visit from the Lord. I saw her the next day. She was very weak. I read and engaged in prayer with her, felt much brokenness of spirit in pleading on her behalf, and she was very much favoured in her own soul. After I had concluded she took my hand and said, with tears of love, "The Lord bless you. He has blessed you and he will still bless you." I then left her with a sweet persuasion that I should meet her in heaven. I saw her again on Aug. 3rd. She was then confined to her bed and very weak. I quoted the verse to her commencing,

"Yes, I shall soon be landed."

She looked at me and said, "Those words have been on my mind for several days." I saw her again on the 10th and 16th, but she was very much exhausted and not able to pay attention to reading, as she was often attacked with severe sickness. I quoted the lines to her:

"Poor and afflicted, Lord, are thine,

Among the great unfit to shine,"

and she finished the verse in a whisper. I prayed with her and then left, as she was too weak to converse. She lingered until the 23rd, when her race was ended, the battle fought, the victory won, and her spirit departed to be with Christ which is far better.

W. SMITH.

WALTER THOMAS JUDD.—On Oct. 26th, 1888, in the 49th year of his age, Walter Thomas Judd, a member at Rehoboth Chapel, Tunbridge Wells.

He was baptized by a minister of the name of Bax, and joined the church at Rehoboth; but the ministry of Mr. B. did not profit his soul, nor the souls of others in the church; so they left, and used to walk to Rotherfield to hear the late Mr. Russell, under whose ministry they found savoury meat such as their soul loved. When I came to Tunbridge Wells in the year 1876, he and his wife sat under my ministry, but he never joined the church. Since his death I have learned that the reason why he did not do so was because for several years he was involved in trying circumstances, and was afraid he should fail and bring a reproach upon the cause of God and truth, and thus make sad the hearts of the Lord's people. In this snare Satan was permitted to hold him for several years, but I believe towards the end he was led to see his folly; as just before he was taken ill he talked about joining us in church-fellowship, but was not permitted to do so.

His last illness was caused by a strain, which he received from jumping over a high fence at Highgate while superintending the building of some houses there. This caused him great pain for some months. He told me that once, as he was limping along, such a soft feeling came over him, and he said, "Lord, I would rather be a limping beggar all my life than be left to be deceived at last." From this time he felt very poorly, and he and his wife went to Hastings for a change; but while there he walked about too much, and so was not benefited. After his return home he soon had to lay up, as he perceived a substance forming on the left side. It was thought to be an abscess, and three doctors consulted together and decided to perform an operation. Just before they began to operate a sweet spirit of submission was given to him, so that he felt he could commit himself wholly into the hands of Him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

Friend Manktelow frequently went to see him, and read and prayed with him. He sometimes seemed to be favoured with a little feeling of love and gratitude. He once had a sweet time in hearing friend Manktelow in prayer, and he also spoke of different times when he had been favoured under the preached word; but said that all he had received was not enough. I said, "You want the Lord to give you a good lift." He replied, "Yes, I wish he would." One day hymn 693 was very sweet to him. He lingered on day after day, and seemed at times unconscious to all around him. I saw him on Oct. 25th, but he seemed too far gone to recognize anyone. I had said that I believed the Lord would appear for him, which he did, for a little while before he died friend M. visited him, and asked him if he felt Christ precious. He appeared unconscious, but as our friend

was leaving the room he opened his eyes and said, "Yes, yes," after which he closed them and never spoke again. Soon after his soul left the clay tabernacle to enter into eternal rest.

W. SMITH.

LOUISA GARDNER.—On Oct. 18th, 1888, at Tunbridge Wells, Louisa Gardner.

She was a lover of experimental truth and of those ministers whom she was favoured to hear preach it. She formerly sat under the ministry of Mr. Edwards until he advanced his belief in the doctrine of annihilation, when she left and came to Rehoboth, where she remained a hearer and a good supporter of the truth until the day of her death. She never joined the church, so I cannot say where or by what means she received her first impressions as to her state as a sinner in the sight of a heart-searching God; but I have heard her say enough to convince me that she felt herself a lost sinner and was encouraged to hope in the mercy of God through Jesus Christ. On one occasion she told me what a good time she had had while I was preaching, and at another time she said, "I want one more manifestation of the Lord's favour, and then I should like to be baptized."

Just after this she went to Bournemouth for a change, and returned much benefited; but before the Sabbath after her return she was seized with a fit of apoplexy, which caused her to feel deaf. I called to see her, when she said, "If I had passed away without regaining consciousness, it would have been all right with me." I visited her twice afterwards. She said, "The Lord will not leave me. I am not afraid to die. I hope he will soon take me." I had to leave home to go and preach at Ticehurst, and while I was away she seemed to get better. Mrs. Smith went to see her, and she spoke of the Lord's goodness to her. During the following night her husband was alarmed by hearing her breathe heavily, and sent one of his sons for the doctor, but when he arrived her spirit had taken its flight to the realms of everlasting bliss.

W. SMITH.

CHARLOTTE WALKER.—On Oct. 28th, 1888, in Australia, Charlotte Walker.

Her complaint was cancer. In a letter to Mr. Witts, dated March 28th, 1888, she says, "I received your welcome letter, and cannot describe my feelings while reading the encouraging remarks you made, which greatly comforted me. I am still gaining a little strength, for which I hope I am thankful; but as I cannot tell when my illness may come on again, I thought, with God's help, I would write a few lines to you while I am able to do so. I desire to be kept from murmuring, for no one could have had better health than I had for thirty-six years, with the exception of a fever, from which the Lord was pleased to soon restore me, while others were taken out of the world by the same complaint, which

made me feel afraid that I also should be taken, and in my poor way I prayed earnestly to the Lord to save my soul and heal my body too. I thought what a good life I would live if I recovered; but I found as I got better my old nature was most served. This was four years ago.

"I had often thought when I saw any afflicted person, how much more I should think of the things of God if I had some affliction, and, to my shame, I have almost prayed that something might come upon me, which I can see now was very wrong; for God is as able to bring his people to him in health as in sickness. I find my heart at times quite as far from him now as it was when I had good health. You will think I was very foolish; but so it was. I feel I cannot now pray that my affliction may be altogether removed, but I hope it may prove for my good and God's glory. I am sure what you say is true, that if God sees fit it should be a cross that I shall have to carry as long as I live, there is no skill of man that will be able to take it off. I know what it is to have hard thoughts of God, discontent, peevishness, and self-pity, but not to such an extent as I have heard some say they have had, for I am naturally of a quiet mind, for which I have often felt thankful; for I know the Lord has made me what I am.

"You, dear friend, have had your troubles, both in soul and body. May the Lord spare you for many years to teach and comfort his people. I saw a piece of yours in the 'G. S.' for last month. O what sweet pieces there are in that magazine! 'Peter's Fall' is a very touching piece. What a mercy it is that the Lord gives his ministers wisdom to open up the Word of God for the comfort of the weaker ones. I saw more in Acts. x, to which you refer in yours, than ever I saw before. I spend many an hour in reading over your letters, for the most that I can now do is to write, read, and think, and I feel it a blessing that I am able to do that. O that I may be enabled to wait on the Lord all the days of my life. I felt a change for the better as regards my body just at the time that you say you remembered me at the throne of grace."

In the following October her complaint became more violent and she had to be taken to the hospital. I was in constant attendance upon her from the Friday until the Sunday morning when she died. On the Friday afternoon, as I was sitting by her, she placed her arms around my neck and kissed me. She then said, "My dear mother, I want to leave a good testimony behind me. You know I have been seeking God for a long time past. I have sought him and now I have found him. He is my God, and I am not ashamed to own him, nor am I ashamed of my profession. I am going to him. I am dying. This is death. Yes, *this is death*. What is death to me, for I am going into life eternal? I am going over Jordan. Now, my dear mother, you must say good-bye to me, for I am dying. I know you will grieve at my death, but you will not have to sorrow as those that are

without hope, for I have a good hope. O what a blessing to have real faith!" The doctors ordered her to be kept quiet, so the matron and inmates tried to keep her from speaking, but the more they tried, the more fervent she was. She told them when they were brought upon their death-bed, as she then was, if God was pleased to show them his mercy in like manner as he had to her, they would remember her and know that what she had told them was the truth. She said, "If this is the first testimony of God's goodness that has been heard in this hospital, you will not forget me."

She then remarked to me, "O I often think of that dear Mr. Witts! When I am gone, do not forget to let him know that I have found my God and that I am gone into life eternal. Dear man! What a comfort his writings have been to me." She then kissed me for each of the family, and said, "May God bless them, and you, my dear mother. I hope you will go to heaven. And now you must say good-bye, for I am dying." After this she lay very quiet and took but little notice of anyone. I sat by her bedside, and when she opened her eyes and saw me she made some sign to show that she knew me. Thus she quietly passed away, to be for ever with the Lord. I cannot but mourn my loss, for she had been a kind, affectionate child to me all through her life. She felt leaving me more than anything else, because she knew I should be alone after she was gone.

C. WALKER.

JOHN LITTLETON.—On Nov. 16th, 1888, aged 56, John Littleton, Baptist Minister of Sydney, Australia, late of Bath.

Mrs. Littleton writes: "The time has come to convey to you the glad news of my poor suffering companion's entrance into life. Yes, the groaning of the prisoner has ceased. Dropsy set in, and was the means at last of taking him home. His mind was kept without a care, doubt, or anxiety, sweetly calm, and 'peaceful as a river,' as he expressed it. He was constantly holding quiet converse with the Lord when awake, and muttering his name and praise in half sleep for many weeks. His distress was great the last two days by increased hot winds. We carried him from room to room for cooler air. He did not appear to think his end was so near, and often spoke of the future. The last afternoon he said, 'You won't have this trouble to-morrow.'

"There was a tenacious clinging to a desire to serve the Lord to the last day, and if it had been possible he would have gone out to speak of God's salvation that very last day. It was the life of his soul and the one end of his life; all else sunk into the shade. Notwithstanding the long years of misery through ill-health, he gave up with reluctance. One day he said, 'Well, if he needs me no more, if there is no more for me to do, the will of the Lord be done.' Yet after that he began to speak of preparing the next number of the Australian 'Gospel Standard.' Truly he counted not his life dear unto him. The last time he

spoke at Mr. Witts' service he read Ps. ii., and made remarks upon it. His voice was clear, and he spoke from the heart of the hidden treasure within. Naturally he had little energy, but in the truth of God his perseverance only left him with his breath. The peace of Zion was his highest aim and her scattered condition his greatest grief. He once said, 'O that I could have one bitter cry! What shall I do? Father, dear Father, in his name once more O come, and give me a little relief and ease!' Just before unconsciousness came on he said, 'O let us sit together with thee!' Thus he passed away."

E. LITTLETON.

MARY, OR THE POWER OF PENITENCE.

ONCE a poor woman fill'd with grief
Sought unto Jesus for relief;
Her weight of sin she knew full well
Would sink her guilty soul to hell.

Despised, rejected by mankind,
Behold her come and stand behind
The great eternal King of kings
To find a rest beneath his wings.

Behold the tears how fast they flow,
Down to the Saviour's feet they go
To wash them; then, with loving care,
She wipes them with her prided hair.

"Woman," said Christ, "thy sins are forgiven.
Go thou in peace and wait for heaven;
Upon me live by faith and see
The wondrous grace which makes you free."

Now Mary's freed from weight of sin,
No law or curse will e'er condemn.
Spotless and free she stands complete,
While devils roar Christ her acquits.

I like unto her fain would lie
With contrite heart and weeping eye,
Till I am called to rise and soar
To dwell with Christ, to part no more.

No more shall sin, nor care, nor pain
Molest her troubled heart again;
A heavenly calm now fills her breast
And she is in eternal rest.

S. M.

THAT Christ is the Son of the living and true God is a truth not known but by revelation.—*Clarkson.*

ONE sincere prayer pleases the Lord better than hundreds of rams or thousands of rivers of oil.—*Clarkson.*

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N. B.—THE APPENDIX

To Mr. GEO. THOS. CONGREVE'S WORK ON CONSUMPTION, contains

226 MOST INTERESTING and AUTHENTIC CASES

That have appeared in the Weekly Journals and Monthly Magazines from 1881
to the present time, with

NOTES APPENDED TO MANY, showing the PERMANENCE OF
CURE. Containing also LETTERS FROM A LARGE NUMBER
OF MINISTERS.

*The following Cases are selected from the TWENTY-EIGHTH SERIES
now Publishing in the Weekly Journals:*

DEBILITY (GENERAL) WITH CHEST AFFECTION.

Miss S., a nurse in middle life, writing me from Oakham, made known her case to me about three and a half years since. She had lost relatives from Consumption, Asthma, and Bronchitis. She had suffered for years, and more especially from severe cold, through all the previous winter months, which had caused excessive weakness, feeble action of the heart, hot flushes, difficult breathing, and other symptoms, for which she had been dosed with Nitric Acid, Strychnia, and Bromides, as well as taken tonics of Iron and Quinine.

Having seen some notices of my treatment in the "Christian Age," she applied to me. She continued for some time under the instructions given to her by me.

I had lost sight of her case till writing me recently from Scotland. She says: "I should like your new work on Consumption, for a friend of mine. Since I received such great benefit from your treatment for the complaint that had troubled me for many years, I always recommend it to all my friends."

BRONCHITIS AND ASTHMA CASE at LEYTONSTONE.

On the 23rd August, last, I was consulted by Mrs. E. JONES, of 23, Forest Drive West, LEYTONSTONE, Essex.

Twelve months before coming to Coombe Lodge, Mrs. Jones had an attack of pneumonia, which was followed by a cough—which she did not lose; and this was followed by bronchitis in the early spring, which assumed the chronic form, and became bronchial asthma.

At this time the cough was very bad, the expectoration tinged with blood, and the breathing short. She had begun to lose flesh, and was becoming weaker daily. She had been under two doctors prior to this.

I received a letter from Mrs. Jones on the 18th Oct. in which she says: "I scarcely know how to thank you enough for the good done to me. I was very ill, and had suffered for many months. I am now quite well and strong. It is a surprise to every one, and I have recommended you to all my friends. You are at liberty to make any use of this."

DISEASE OF THROAT AND LUNGS—CASE of a YOUNG LADY AT OSWALDKIRK, YORKS.

Mrs. T. ELLEBBY, writing me from HIGH MELTON, Doncaster, says: "My cousin, Miss E., was under your treatment for twelve months. The doctors pronounced her consumptive; you entirely cured her. She is now stronger than half the girls of our acquaintance."

On referring to this case in my book, I find that the patient had always been delicate prior to this—the prominent symptoms being hoarseness, a very weak throat, a very irritable cough, and was getting gradually weaker.

She gradually recovered.

Mrs. T. ELLEBBY (who has removed to Chigwell, Essex), in a letter dated, Oct. 30, 1898, says, "Most willingly I allow you to mention my name in reference to my cousin. She feels (as we all do) that she owes her life (under God) to your excellent treatment."

* * * DAYS OF CONSULTATION at COOMBE LODGE—TUESDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY
Evenings only.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

APRIL, 1889.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

MADE NIGH BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

A SERMON PREACHED AT FREDERICK STREET CHAPEL, BIRMINGHAM,
BY MR. DAVID SMITH, ON LORD'S DAY, JUNE 19TH, 1887.

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."—Eph. ii. 13.

THIS text is like an egg full of meat. I very much like the little word, "*in* Christ Jesus." My friends, where were you when God first found you? The characters are clearly described in this text: "Now in Christ Jesus *ye who sometimes were far off* are made nigh by the blood of Christ." In the first verse of this chapter the apostle says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." When God begins a work of grace in a poor sinner he raises him up from the depths of sin and gaping hell, and, as the poet says,

"Makes his standing more secure
Than 'twas before he fell."

Has he quickened your souls from a state of death in trespasses and sins? Has he brought you from being afar off, and made you nigh by the blood of Christ? You remember what manner of life the devil led you into before God called you by his grace.

The Lord had a few of his elect amongst these wicked people of Ephesus, who worshipped the great goddess Diana, and called her the queen of heaven; yet God had a people amongst them, and sent the apostle to preach the gospel to them, that upon them might be bestowed the riches of his grace; as we read: "That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." (Eph. ii. 7.) The apostle, in describing the case of these people, describes the wretched state of all God's people; for by nature they are all far off, far from God and from righteousness, without hope and without God in the world. This is the state of all the human race at the present day. What a mercy if God has called you out of the ruins of the fall and brought you nigh. Have you ever tasted the bliss and joy of communion with the Father of spirits under the divine anointings of the Holy Ghost? and have you ever come so nigh that the world has no more charms for you? Have you been brought near into sweet communion and fellowship with God; so that you have tasted a little of the joys of heaven in your soul? The Psalmist says, "How sweet

are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (Ps. cxix. 103.) That is what I call being brought nigh.

Boaz said to Ruth, "The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust." The church rests under the wings and under the shadow of the Almighty: "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." (Song of Sol. ii. 3.) By the fruit we may understand the sweet promises of God's Word. A living, heaven-born soul, is one that is regenerated and renewed by the Spirit of God; for God never gives this knowledge to any of the non-elect. These are the joys that God has prepared for his suffering saints, and now and then he gives them a taste of the bliss and blessedness of it. If ever you have tasted it I dare to say that you have passed through floods and flames to come at it. You have had to be stripped and brought down to be nothing, and then God has enriched you with his presence, and you have been comforted and refreshed. You could then give up all your earthly friends and part with your stock and store. There is in this something more blessed to the child of God than the rich feel when their corn and their wine increase.

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." I desire, my friends, that we may rejoice together, and bless and praise our God that he has brought us from being afar off, and brought us nigh by the blood of Christ. If we could go into every church and chapel in Birmingham, perhaps we should not find one living soul that could tell how God had brought them and delivered them from under a broken law, how Christ was made a curse for them, and how they had been brought nigh by his precious blood.

My text says, "Ye who sometimes were far off." I will tell you where I was when God first convinced me of sin, and laid it as a heavy burden on my conscience. It is our Queen's Jubilee this year, and blessed be God it is mine also; for it is fifty years since God convinced me of my sins. I had been rambling on the Sabbath in the fields and woods with my companions; and I have never yet seen one of those men called by grace. Most of them are dead, and I never heard of any signs of life or God's grace being manifest in them. That Sunday night, as I lay in bed, in my mind I saw a pair of scales hanging upon the wall, and the words over the top of them: "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting." I did not know that God's Word contained any such sentence as that until years after; but I *felt I was wanting*, and thought I should have gone to hell before the morning light appeared. I perspired until I could have wrung my shirt. There was no sleep for me that night. The terrors of hell gat hold upon me. I was brought into want, and have been in want ever since, nor shall I ever be satisfied until I wake up in glory.

Where were you when God first convinced you of your sins? I do not insist that you must have had such a law-work as I have had; but we read in God's Word: "Ye must be born again." I believe this is done as quickly as a man can clap his hands. A person is born again in a moment; he is passed from death unto life in the twinkling of an eye. This is the work of God. The Lord does not work upon all men alike, that is, to the same depth of conviction and condemnation. No; but it is the same work, and he implants the same divine faith in the heart; as the Word says: "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." (Jno. iii. 8.) These are Christ's own words, and I do not want anything better. All the reasoning in the world could not persuade me that anything else would do. There are many poor souls that are hungering and thirsting after Christ; they are quickened into life, and yet they do not really know it, but have a thousand fears that a work of grace has not been begun in their souls; and yet this instantaneous work has taken place, and they are born of the Spirit. Hence living desires spring up in the heart, and hungerings and longings to be like God's people. Says some one, "That is just it. I wish I was like such a man or woman; for I know they are the children of God." Perhaps you could not bear their troubles, afflictions, and distresses. You do not know what their exercises are. You look upon them as almost angels, which is because you have a love to them. If there is one person more favoured than another, it is to them you feel the most love. I am a living witness of this. The Word says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." (Jno. iii. 14.) Can you come in there?

Twenty or thirty years ago I was living and working near Leeds, and on my way to my work there was a cottage on one side of the road, and I had to pass it every time I went home to my meals. In this cottage there lived one of God's jewels,—a gracious woman, but one that had many fears and doubts concerning her standing before God. She said to me one day when I called to see her, "David, is there a passage of Scripture which says, 'We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren?'" I replied, "Yes, Betty, there is." "Bless God," she said; "for that is the only passage in all the Bible that I can rest upon." What is it that you can rest upon? The Bible is full of promises, and it contains many blessings. Now, on which part can you rest? Poor Betty afterwards lived and died in the enjoyment of the gospel. I had to leave that neighbourhood before she died, but I met her husband two or three years after her death, and I said to him, "Abraham, how did it end with poor Betty?" He replied, "O, it ended well! She called me to her and said, 'Abraham, I have been living all these years in doubts and fears concerning my standing before God, but now he has come, and has told me he has pre-

pared a mansion for me, and has said to me, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world,' and she died whilst uttering the words." My friends, that was a good end.

Notwithstanding all the doubts and fears of a child of God, there is an inheritance reserved for him in heaven and he will go to possess it; for it is an everlasting kingdom that God has prepared. All the hindrances and difficulties by the way can never obstruct that path, so as to prevent the end of a child of God being well. The poet says,

"How would the powers of darkness boast
Should but one praying soul be lost!
But I have trusted in thy grace,
And shall again behold thy face."

God will bring you through all your troubles, and he will deliver you,—I know he will; and you will prove that, in spite of all your doubts and fears, he makes a way where you can see no way; for he has promised, saying, "I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight." (Isa. xlv. 2.) Do you suppose he will ever forsake a person that is brought nigh, quickened from the dead, and into whom he has put spiritual life? Impossible.

That divine faith which he implants in the soul is according to his purpose of life and grace, and with it he imparts the divine nature, that is, the life of God; as Peter says: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." (2 Pet. i. 4.) In this consists regeneration, and by this blessed work of the Holy Ghost the soul is sealed by eternal love and grace, and not all the men on earth nor fiends of hell shall ever cause that soul to be separated from a precious Christ. No, never. God's work is a perfect work, and if it has changed your heart and renewed your will, you will go to heaven. Satan may tempt, harass, and perplex you, try to reason you out of it, and tell you you have no interest in this secret of the Lord which is with them that fear him, and all manner of filthiness will rise up in your corrupt heart, enough to sicken you and cause you to feel that you are a base and vile sinner, and you may at times conclude God can never have mercy upon such a sinner as you; but it is

"Sinners can say, and none but they,
'How precious is the Saviour!'"

The teaching of God brings people into such a low state, and such a state of condemnation in themselves, that they are sick at the sight, and cry out, "Can ever God dwell here?" The Lord's people are a peculiar people, and they are a separate and distinct people from all other people on the face of the earth. They have different desires and different views; and they cannot mix up with the people of the world any more than water and oil can mix. The apostle says, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying un-

godliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." (Tit. ii. 11, 12.)

In the chapter from which my text is taken it says, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. ii. 10.) So this new, regenerated race are the workmanship of God. The apostle says, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved)." Grace is a flowing stream, which overtops every sin and transgression, and it comes from the river of God; for we read: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." (Ps. xlv. 4.) What are these holy tabernacles? God's people in whom he has taken up his abode. If God had not loved you as much when in your sins as he does now he would never have called you, and you would never have been where you are; but "because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." There never was a time when God did not love his people, nor when Christ did not love his church. In eternity God chose a people for himself, and he says, "They shall show forth my praise." We stood in this covenant of love that was made with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost before time began, and before Adam's dust was fashioned into a man. All the names of God's people were registered in it, and they shall all arrive in glory. There is a time when God calls his people and puts new life into them. The Psalmist says, "My times are in thy hand." Do you believe these things? I have no doubt some of you do not believe them, and you never will unless necessity is laid upon you, so that you cannot help believing them; and you may just as soon try to shoot down your Town Hall with some peas, as to try and make some persons believe these things; but if God is dealing with any of you, you will be brought to submit to his righteous will.

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." God brings his people nigh. Look at the thief upon the cross. We can never understand the depths of God's grace; we can never fathom it in time, and I do not know that we shall in eternity. God's grace reached the poor thief just before he died on the cross. He never did a good work all the days of his life. He hung upon the cross at the same time as Christ was suffering for the sins of his people, but from a very different cause. Christ put grace into his heart and caused him to cry, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Did ever such a cry come out of your poor soul for God to remember you? The answer to that prayer was: "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." O the depths of grace and the heights of love! O the fulness and blessedness of the grace of God to save from hell, sin, and all its consequences,

independent of man's works and man's merits! It is salvation worthy of a God, and glorifying to a precious Christ and the Holy Ghost; for the Trinity in Unity are worthy of all praise for planning out such a way of salvation to save poor sinners from all their sins. I hope many of you here present can say, "He hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. i. 9.)

The verse preceding my text says, "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." We were aliens before God called us by his grace, and without hope and without God in the world. We could not be farther off than that. We were far off from God, and far off from righteousness. O to be called, as the poor thief on the cross was called, and brought nigh! He could not die until Christ was manifested in him, and after that he was soon singing in eternal glory, to him that had loved him and washed him from his sins in his own blood. Just look at the change,—being brought from afar off and a state of death in transgressions, and brought nigh in a precious Christ; for he cried to him, and God heard his prayer and answered it, and he was at once delivered from the body of sin and death, and taken home to glory. O the riches, fulness, and freeness of that grace that saves them unto the uttermost that come unto God by him!

We have a man in our church that used to be an infidel. He denied God's Word and laughed at those who believed it; and for anything I know I may have some of this sort here, for there are some of these clever people in most of our large towns, and they seem to have more knowledge in their way than seven men that can render a reason. But "every word of God is pure; he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him." (Prov. xxx. 5.) When God the Holy Ghost is pleased to apply the Word to the heart of a poor sinner he rejoices in it, and he keeps viewing fresh glory and grandeur in the Scriptures. The man we have in our church who was an infidel is now a God-fearing, gracious man, and one of the most humble that we have. I once said to his wife, "Fanny, has the grace of God made any difference in your husband?" She replied, "Yes, it has. I have had two husbands in one man—one of the worst of husbands and one of the best of husbands." So you see the grace of God makes bad men into good men; it makes bad women into good women, and bad children into good children. It brings sinners from afar off, even infidels, murderers, and idolaters. Whatever they may have been before, when God lays hold of a man he convinces him of sin and of judgment to come, and makes him a new creature. He is born of God, and is brought to rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. You will acknowledge this before the Lord if he has brought you from afar.

God brings men to love that they once hated. We once would not have reproof, and we rejected God's Word, did not care to read it because it condemned our sin, for we could scarcely open a leaf of it but it found us out; so we had no desire to meddle with it. When God has a work to accomplish in a sinner he fastens his Word in the heart as a nail in a sure place. It is like the angler's line which has a hook upon it, and the fish seizes the bait, thinking he has a prize. God lets his people bite very keenly at the Word, and they cannot put it on one side. The Lord's people cannot take up their religion and put it down again. Men may preach as though the elect were the people of God to-day and the devil might have them to-morrow, but that is a lie. God begins the work of grace in the heart of a sinner, and never leaves that work until the poor soul is brought home into heaven, there to bask and bathe in the full enjoyment of his eternal pleasure. He brings them to acknowledge their transgressions and to confess their sins before him. He does not send them to the priest to hear their confessions. Did you ever confess your sins to God? Did you ever cry out from your inmost feelings, "God be merciful to me, a sinner?"

I have wondered sometimes how it is that the Lord Jesus noticed two or three in the Gospels who were the chief of the publicans. The publicans were hateful in the sight of the Pharisees, in fact the Jews hated a tax-gatherer, and if he was one of their own fraternity he was despised and rejected by all others. The publican went up to the temple to pray, though according to the law of the Jews no publican had any right to go into the temple to pray; therefore he stood afar off. He was an outside worshipper. The Pharisee, with all his pride and hypocrisy, could go into the temple and pray, but the publican must not; he was forbidden to do so. The Pharisee began to pray thus, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." (Lu. xviii. 11.) All Pharisees begin to tell of what they are doing and have been doing, and there are a great many on the face of the earth yet, for they are not all dead; and they are determined to put their finger to the work, and say it is half of works and half of grace; Christ has done his part, and we must do ours. But this poor publican that had broken the law and was verily guilty, smote upon his breast and cried, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." That is a sinner's cry. I do not care what man he is, if God has convinced him of his sin and brought his law to bear upon his heart, he will begin to cry, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." I began with that cry when God opened my eyes to see my state, and that has been my cry ever since, as much to-day as it was the first day God opened my eyes; for I need fresh manifestations of his mercy and grace every day of my life, and the Lord has led me to see there is no salvation without Christ. Salvation is all of grace from first to last.

What is grace? It is the free, sovereign goodness and favour of

God in the salvation of a poor sinner without any works of his own to help him. Grace strips a man of pride and brings him in empty, needy, naked, and poor, so that he has not one word to say in his own favour nor a stone to throw at the vilest rebel under heaven. If you possess grace, when you see a policeman collar a man and take him to the station, you say, "There should I myself have gone, but for the grace of God." God preserves the lives of his people in the midst of dangers, that, at the appointed time, he may make manifest in them his grace. The Lord saved me two or three times from being drowned in the sea and from other dangers before I knew his grace. God takes his people out of the ruins of the fall, fetches them out of their hiding-places, brings them to the knowledge of themselves as lost sinners, and then makes known unto them the riches of his grace, and they see that all is sovereign, rich, and free, without money and without price. This religion is too deep for Pharisees, but it is just what suits a poor, guilty sinner that stands condemned before God. Christ said of the publican, "This man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." A man cannot be more than justified; for if he is justified he is looked upon by God as though he had never sinned. The child of God is freely justified from all things, from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses. Christ is the Head of the body, the church; therefore he shed his own heart's blood, and gave his life for the life of his people, to bring them home to God.

Now let us look at another publican who is said to be the chief of the publicans. As Christ was going up to Jerusalem, a certain man of the name of Zacchæus, "because he was little of stature, ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him. And when Jesus came to the place he looked up and saw him, and said unto him, 'Zacchæus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house.' And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully." (Lu. xix. 4-6.) The Pharisees saw what was going on, and they said scornfully, "He is gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner." What a mercy it is that Jesus receiveth sinners, and sits with them and drinks with them. Then Zacchæus said to the Lord Jesus, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." This would be a stumbling-block to the Pharisees. God's people help the poor as far as they can. We have a living proof of it in this man, for when divine grace took possession of his heart and accomplished salvation in his soul, he said, "The half of my goods I give to the poor, &c.," and Christ said, "This day is salvation come to this house, forso much as he also is a son of Abraham," one that God had from all eternity decreed to save. The water of life had flowed into his soul; as the Word says: "There is a river the streams whereof make glad the city of God."

The blood of Christ is the price paid for the church of God; and this price was paid for the sins and transgressions of all God's elect; for Christ has paid the price due to justice. His blood cleanses his people from all their iniquities, and he has made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness which is to all and upon all them that believe. If you had sent a man to jail for debt and another came and paid that debt, the jailor must set him free; for the law has no more claim upon a man to keep him in prison after the debt is paid. So the precious blood of Christ ransomed all his guilty church; for it is redemption's price. God's people are a race ransomed from sin, hell, and the grave, and the message of God the Father applies to every converted sinner, "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom." (Job xxxiii. 24.) Have you found a ransom in a precious Christ and his atoning blood?

We read about the blood being sprinkled upon the lintels of the doors of the Israelites; and that was emblematic of the blood of Christ. They were to slay the paschal lamb, and the blood was to be put in a basin and sprinkled upon the lintels of the doors before the destroying angel came; and inside the houses where this blood was sprinkled there were Israelites, and the angel that came to destroy the firstborn in Egypt passed over those houses on which the blood was sprinkled. Unless the blood of Christ is sprinkled on your conscience and mine, you may depend upon it God in his wrath will not pass over us, but cut us down as cumberers of the ground. Those now around the throne of God had this blood sprinkled on them, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore they appear white and clean in heaven, accepted in the Beloved, and made holy and pure through a precious Christ. This blood is redemption's price—a price paid and a price accepted, and therefore the sinner is made free, and his guilt is removed.

As the sins of the Israelites were laid upon the head of the scapegoat in days of old, and he carried them into the wilderness, which is another figure; so all the sins of the church were laid upon the head of our spiritual Scapegoat, and he has borne them into the land of forgetfulness; so that when sought for, they shall not be found.

Now notice the distinction between the life and death of Christ. I have been showing you clearly that Christ's blood is the price paid down for our redemption, even for the chief of sinners; but the obedience of Christ is the righteousness of his church; and the sinner is not only pardoned, but he is freely justified in the righteousness of Christ. Christ never needed a righteousness for himself; for "he is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." The Lord Jesus never committed a sin in thought, word, or deed; therefore he rendered obedience to God's righteous law, that his righteousness might be imputed to the poor sinner. Of this the church of God in all ages had a saving knowledge.

In the book of Samuel you read of a person called Hannah, and it is said of her that "she prayed in her heart." Ah! It is a great thing to pray in our hearts. Our prayers are worth nothing if they come not from the heart. It is heart-prayer that goes up to God. The poor, needy soul does not make a long speech and a long prayer. No. When the Psalmist came to the Lord he sometimes came with this, "Make haste, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O Lord." As though God must come that very moment to deliver him. Do you not sometimes feel as vain, foolish, and devilish as sin and Satan can make you, and hateful in your own eyes? God the Holy Ghost shows you your sins and abominations, and makes you cry with the Psalmist, "Make haste, O God, to deliver me." You are just like a man or a woman at the brink of a precipice and ready to fall over. You want present deliverance, and for God to come and make a way for you; and blessed be his name, he does come in the most distressing hour. Is it not so? You who have been brought from afar know this to be true.

The apostle was speaking of past ages when he said, "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands." I cannot attempt to explain the subject of circumcision. It is a peculiar and deep doctrine, and one that, with the little learning and ability I have, I cannot unfold with any discretion; therefore I will pass over that and go on to the next verse: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." You know you were once in that state, and it is sad if any of you are there now. Nothing can bring you nigh but the blood of Christ. Grace alone can open blind eyes. The blind man could say, "Whereas I was blind, now I see," and all the men in the world could not reason him out of it; and if you had been born blind as he was and had your eyes opened, no one could reason you out of the reality of your sight. I am sure it is so spiritually; for I was once as blind as a bat. I understood not the gospel and wanted it not, and should never have had anything to do with it but for God's manifested grace to my soul, his determination to save me, his stopping me in my wild and mad career, bringing me as a poor beggar to cry that he would have mercy on my soul, and to submit to his ordinances and do his will as far as in me lay; and to this day I am as willing as ever I was, and if God required me to go through the ordinance of baptism again, I could go through it a second time.

Hannah, after she had prayed and received the answer to her petition, could say, from heartfelt experience, "He raiseth up the poor from the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." She knew this path experimentally. She knew what

it was to be raised up because she had been bowed down, for she had been sunk almost into despair. She had been reproached on account of her barrenness, and set aside by everyone but her husband Elkanah, and then she found that the Lord came in his own appointed time and way. God always hears the prayer of the needy. It was a sad time to Hannah when Eli told her to put away the wine from her; and she replied, "I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord." Her lips moved, but no words were heard; therefore Eli misjudged her case. We have sometimes prayed, and our lips have moved, but no words have been uttered; but God has listened to and regarded our cry.

The apostle says, speaking of a precious Christ, "He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us." This is a great thing; for the sufferings and death of Christ abolished the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, "having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." So the church of God, both Jew and Gentile, is built upon Christ as the Foundation-Stone laid in Zion. Now those who are thus brought nigh are no longer strangers and foreigners. God puts upon his people a peculiar mark; so that they are no more strangers and foreigners who have no right to have an inheritance amongst God's people; but are "fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Perhaps some have come into this chapel and you have looked upon them at first with a little shyness and diffidence, and have waited and watched to see their movements; and after a time you have got into conversation with them, and have found that they are taught of God; then they were no more strangers and foreigners to you, but you felt you could embrace them in your arms of love, and you want them to walk with you, and they also want to walk with you in the fear of the Lord, and show you that a divine change has taken place.

In this chapter the apostle says, "Ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the Chief Corner Stone." God's people are reckoned as living stones. In the building of this chapel each stone had its allotted place; so in God's house every vessel of mercy is a living stone and has a name and a place in his house; for they are built upon this solid Foundation, even a precious Christ. God has loved his people with an everlasting love, and they are called with a holy calling, quickened into life by his Blessed Spirit, and united together to worship him in spirit and in truth. They are a people made to hate and have no confidence in the flesh, and to believe in a precious Christ as their All in All; and thus they experience the peace of God which passeth all understanding. This enlarges

the soul and brings it to say with the Psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." What for? "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies." (Ps. ciii. 1-4.) In another place the Psalmist says, "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." (Ps. xl. 2.) Here is a bringing a man from a far off state, from being bound fast in the chains of the sins of his youth, and bringing him with weeping and supplication to his feet to acknowledge and confess his sins, and bringing him into sweet union and communion with the blessed Head and Representative of the church, Christ Jesus, where he enjoys something of the fruits and blessedness of that covenant which is ordered in all things and sure, and knows something of the secret of the Lord which is with them that fear him.

It is heaven on earth to enjoy a little of the blessed presence of the Holy Ghost in the soul. I have felt a little of it a few times in my life, and when I have been under the enjoyment of it, I have felt I could lay down this mortal body, take the wings of a dove, and fly away, to be for ever with the Lord. Christ brings his people into felt union and communion with himself. O that he would grant you and me more of these sweet visits and love-tokens as we travel along towards the city of habitation, whose Builder and Maker is God; for his name's sake. Amen.

THE Lord may hear your prayer, though he does not answer it presently. Delay is no denial. Prayer is sure to be heard, though the Lord sometimes seems slow in granting what is prayed for. Delay is sometimes a mercy. The Lord never defers when it is reasonable to grant. "The Lord is not slack, as some men count slackness," that is, as though he had altered his purpose, forgot his promise, or was careless to accomplish either. He defers in mercy, in longsuffering. He is not slack, though he may seem so to us.—*Clarkson*.

WE are sorely hindered in running the race set before us, being burdened, having to carry about with us a body of sin and death, which is our constant grief and plague; and the flesh lusting against the spirit, as well as the spirit against the flesh, we cannot do the things that we would. We are also beset by innumerable temptations, have often to mourn over our darknees, deadness, coldness, and unbelief, as well as on account of the hidings of the Lord's face, and the absence of that blessed Comforter, who alone can console the cast-down spirit. Still, though in themselves grievous hindrances, spears in our side and thorns in our eyes, these things do not utterly quench that prevailing bent of the renewed heart to look up and look forward to a brighter day, when tears shall be wiped from off all faces. As, then, a view of the glory of Christ is obtained, and his coming again is realized by a living faith, the soul looks beyond this time-state, and all the cares and sorrows of this vale of tears, to that glorious day when it shall be perfectly conformed to the glorified image of Christ, and never sin against him more.—*Philpot*.

MEDITATIONS ON PSALM XXV.

BY THE EDITOR.

THE Word of God, with all its variety, has been given to us under various and sometimes exceptional circumstances. The Holy Ghost marvellously instructed and inspired Moses, the man of God, to write the Pentateuch, showing the mighty acts of God in judgment and mercy during more than two thousand years. The prophets had very blessed revelations of the will of God and the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, being led to search what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify; and through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost they were constrained to write the things which the church of God in all ages of the world have received and loved.

The Book of Psalms is a summary or compendium of the whole Scriptures. Most of them were written by David, the man after God's own heart, under the same Spirit by which Moses and the prophets were inspired to write their testimony.

The Psalms are one hundred and fifty in number, and in these one hundred and fifty Psalms there is a great variety. Some of them have special reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. The eighth Psalm was written respecting the God-Man, Christ Jesus, who has dominion over all things in heaven and in earth, in the sea, and on the dry land. The twenty-second Psalm refers to the Person of Christ, and gives a minute description of his sufferings,—how his hands and feet were pierced by his enemies, and the blessings that should flow from his death. The sixty-ninth Psalm, in a different way, speaks of the Person and sufferings of the Son of God under the imputation of the sins of his bride, with his prayers and cries to God for strength and help. The apostle tells us "he was heard in that he feared." (Heb. v. 7.) The one hundred and tenth Psalm speaks of his majesty and of his everlasting priesthood which he received by oath from the mouth of his Father, with which oath none of the priests under the law were installed into their office. The one hundred and forty-fifth Psalm is upon the Person of Christ as King in Zion, the character of his subjects, and his everlasting kingdom; and it describes the wants of all his subjects who have been brought to feel the majesty of his kingdom and talk of his power. In none of these Psalms does David say much about himself and his inward life, experience, and exercise before the Lord. If we want to get at the heart of this dear man and what the breathings of his soul were before God, we must not go to the battle-field to search for it, nor to his council-chamber where he consulted with his advisers, nor look at many of his acts when he was left for a time to his own way and spirit.

When reading this Psalm upon which we are about to offer our meditations, we may, in the spirit of our mind, behold him in some secret place, shut out from all the noise and strife of the world, retired from the presence of his counsellors and the great men with whom he was surrounded, withdrawn from his wives,

his family, and his closest and truest friends, seeking the Lord, his grace, his mercy, and his salvation, pouring out one prayer after another, each prayer containing only just a few words expressive of the inmost wants and desires of his heart. His words, like ours, were only the expressions of what he really felt to need from the living God. It was not his words that gave him spiritual feelings, spiritual desires, and spiritual breathings; but by his words he expressed to God his wants, all of which were known to his heavenly Father before he said one word. Even so is it with the children of God to this day. Our words are not our spiritual life, desires, and longings, but simply the expression of these things.

In reading this Psalm we observe what David, the king of Israel, was as a sinner in his own eyes, and how he went boldly to the throne of grace to call upon the name of the Lord, that he might find mercy, and obtain grace to help in time of need; and his experience was only a continuation of the divine teaching of which those who had gone to heaven before him had been the subjects, as may be seen in looking through the sacred pages of immortal truth.

Job, that tried servant of God, in the midst of his affliction felt what a poor, withering creature man is through sin, and said, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble." (Job xiv. 1.) Into the truth of this he experimentally entered; for he was at that time in the furnace of affliction, where God was consuming his dross and trying him, that he might come forth as gold. It is in trouble that the Lord's people are constrained, through the Spirit's help, to seek the Lord. This the prophet felt when he said, "Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them." (Isa. xxvi. 16.)

No one knew God better nor had sweeter access to him through Christ than David, the man after God's own heart. The Spirit of the Lord was with him and gave him an inward, experimental knowledge of good and evil, of himself as a sinner and Christ as a Saviour. He knew powerfully the drawings of God's love, the anointings of his Spirit, and frequently enjoyed soul-ravishing views of the Son of God as his Saviour, Redeemer, and King. He also knew well the plague of his own heart, and felt the law of sin in his members warring against the law of his mind, which made him say, "Mine enemies are lively, and they are strong; and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied." (Ps. xxxviii. 19.) He was a man of much prayer; for God taught him how to pray and what to pray for. He knew the throne of grace and was often constrained, under the Spirit's influence, to go boldly unto it. He was a sinner needing mercy, as all God's people do, and felt that there was no refuge to his soul like the Lord. His soul, which was once dead in sins, God had quickened into spiritual life, and brought him up, as he says, out of the grave and delivered him from the pit; and many times had he been

favoured to know the forgiveness of sins and to enjoy peace and pardon through the Saviour's blood. Many times had he called him his King, and his God, and felt the sweet assurance that he was the Lord's. The anointing oil of his God had been poured upon his head, joy and gladness had sprung up in his heart, and, from the depths of his soul, he had blessed God for redeeming his life from destruction and crowning him with loving-kindness and tender mercy.

But, notwithstanding all this, he was subject to many changes, many infirmities, and many sins. His past joys and comforts did not exempt him from present sorrows and afflictions. These afflictions arose from different causes. Sometimes they were bodily afflictions, sometimes mental afflictions, sometimes family afflictions, and sometimes providential afflictions; but they all served to make up his cup of trial and make his pathway similar, in the general, to the Lord's tried and exercised people in all generations.

But in the cup of mixture which the Lord gave him there were the sweet ingredients of love, mercy, and a Saviour's blood, and his pathway, which was one of trial and temptation, was also strewn with favours from the covenant of grace, which helped him to hold on his way, and by faith to say, "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies." After the Lord had once quickened, humbled, and blessed the soul of this dear man he felt himself to be in constant need of more grace, more strength, and more life to set his affections on high. So we find him crying out, "I am poor and sorrowful; let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high." (Ps. lxi. 29.)

David's experience is, in measure, the experience of every child of God that is born again of the Spirit, from the least and feeblest believer to the greatest and strongest saint; for everyone that is in the way to heaven is brought to know their sin, the plague of their heart, and their great need of the whole salvation of God.

In the first verse of this Psalm, David, feeling his need of the Lord, is drawn by the Father of all mercies and prompted by the Holy Ghost to lift up his soul unto the Lord, that is, to Christ. This is exactly how every child of God is drawn and led to Christ. They all have soul wants, which they were strangers to while dead in trespasses and sins. It is the soul that has to do with God, and where the new birth has taken place the sinner cries out, from inward feeling, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." He has wants that nothing on earth can satisfy; he has a case which none but God can understand and which none but God can reach. He is brought to a consciousness of what he is, and cries, "Heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee." Nothing but God and his mercy can satisfy this sinner, and in due time the Lord invariably blesses the souls of his own children and gives them to feel the peace of God which passeth

all understanding, his mercy which is from everlasting to everlasting, and his love which is better than wine. These sweet cordials subdue his fears, overcome his sins, and produce joy and comforts; so that the child of God breaks out, saying, "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."

Whilst these things are enjoyed the soul is happy, humbled, and amazed at the goodness of God; and the sinner thinks he shall tread a pathway of joy and consolation all the way to heaven; but he lives to find that he has made a mistake, as David also did when he said, "Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong; thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled." (Ps. xxx. 7.) Very few saints who were favoured in their souls whilst on earth, went to heaven without leaving their first love. This was the charge which God brought against the angel of the church at Ephesus. But it is a mercy that though the children of God lose the comfort of their first love they never lose the root of it. Of this Job could testify in the depth of his affliction, when he said to his brethren who falsely accused him, "Why persecute ye me, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?"

It was no small act of God's power to quicken our souls when dead in trespasses and sins; for hell and earth with all their powers, and our own carnal minds were, by nature, opposed to God, whose grace proved too strong for our enemies, external and internal; for grace is irresistible, and brings the soul that realizes it to call upon the name of the Lord, to hunger and thirst after righteousness, to mourn over sin, and to seek the face of Christ, where love, mercy, grace, and power shine in all their effulgent glory.

David well knew these things, and he as well knew his need of fresh communications, fresh life, and for mercy and power from the Fountain of all grace, when he was constrained to come to the Lord and say, "Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul." This is the case with all who are born again of the Spirit and are being led in the way to the kingdom of God; for first it implies that such know the Lord, and they know he alone can heal them, save them, bless them, and give them their heart's desire; and they know sufficient of him to be assured that he is the Lord, and that he can do exceeding abundantly above all that they ask or think. It also implies that where the soul is lifted up to God there is a living faith in the heart, and that this faith discovers in Christ Jesus just what the soul needs; and what faith discerns in Christ, that the soul longs and hopes for; for "faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen." Moreover, this lifting up of the soul implies that the Holy Ghost is in that soul revealing the Lord Jesus Christ as the sinner's Friend; and for the help of the Holy Ghost the Lord's children,

with David, are made to earnestly pray, saying, "When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." That is a *blessed* soul that is thus led; it is a quickened soul, and a saved soul, which will ultimately realize all that it is seeking for. The Saviour has said, "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." (Matt. vii. 7.)

The Psalmist says, "Unto thee, O Lord," which shows how his mind was taken up to heaven, there to behold God in Christ, and Christ at the right hand of the Father, as he expresses it in another Psalm: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." (Ps. cx. 1.) Soul blessings do not come from earthly things nor earthly creatures; they come from above, even from God, to whom, when the soul is healthy, it is lifted up; and to be spiritually-minded is life and peace. When the disciples asked Christ to teach them how to pray, he said, "When ye pray say, Our Father who art in heaven." To the Father of mercies the mind of David was directed, with God he pleaded, and unto the high and lofty One his soul ascended in humility and prayer; and all God's children are led now by the same Spirit in the same way and to the same God. In these souls which are thus lifted up to Christ the Lord dwells; for great, incomprehensible, and infinite as he is, he condescends to dwell in his own children; for we read: "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." (Isa. lvii. 15.) These poor, humbled sinners have God for their Father and Christ for their Portion; they are the inheritance and portion of the Almighty; for "the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." (Deut. xxxii. 9.)

In the preceding Psalm it is written, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." This doubtless refers to the entrance of the Lord Jesus Christ into heaven after he had gained the conquest over sin, Satan, hell, and the grave, when he entered the mansions of everlasting life and love, where he was to live and reign as King eternal, immortal, and invisible; and all the hosts of heaven and the spirits of just men made perfect who were then in the kingdom of God above, heartily welcomed him as the conquering Saviour, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of peace. Then he took his seat at his Father's right hand, there to live and reign as King and Priest over the house of God throughout a never-ending eternity. In the Psalm upon which we are writing, possibly the Psalmist, in allusion to the above was lifting up the gates of his soul, desiring that the Lord would sway his sceptre, dethrone every idol, subdue every sin, and as his Lord and his God reign supreme in his affections.

And truly this is no strange feeling to the children of God; for they know what it is, when the Blessed Spirit helps them, to

lift up the gates of their soul, and for them to fly wide open; and occasionally they have known what it has been for the Lord to come in, bringing with him his soul-ravishing love, and causing the waters of eternal life to copiously flow over their whole soul, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin. This the Lord sometimes sweetly effects in the soul of a poor guilty sinner while in the courts of Zion; as we read: "There the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams." (Isa. xxxiii. 21.) After the sweetest visitations of the Lord the gates of the soul may again soon close, and none can open them but God; and closed they remain until the Blessed Spirit opens them again in prayer for the Lord Jesus Christ to descend into them, for he that ascendeth (that is, Christ) is he also that has descended into our souls.

In verse two the Psalmist says, "O my God, I trust in thee; let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me." Though in trouble about his sins and not enjoying the love and mercy of God as he could desire, yet he retained a confidence of his interest in the Lord; for though he had changed, God had not changed. David was still a child of God and God was still his Father. The relationship was not broken, and blessed be God it never can be broken, nor can we lose our interest when once we have tasted that the Lord is gracious. God is our God as much in the dark as he is in the light; as much when he is absent and hides his face, as when he is present and shows us the beauties of his countenance; as much our God when we are cast-down as when we are lifted up; as much our Father when we feel fresh bondage, temptation, and are ready to faint through fear lest we might have been deceived as when we are enjoying clear revelations of our interest in Christ; and there is still a cleaving to him and hanging upon him as a merciful, faithful, and unchanging God. That is a comforting portion in Isaiah: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." (Isa. l. 10.)

David had felt the Spirit of adoption, and although his cup was not now running over with joy, yet having in time past experienced the Spirit of adoption, he still retained his confidence that God was his God. The Lord's children are often tried upon this point, even after having felt sweet assurance in their souls. Nevertheless, the grace of hope is kept alive, and they cannot give up hanging upon the Lord; but when in weakness and fear, and under soul-desertion they dare not presume, but cry again for the Spirit of power to visit them and cry in them, "Abba, Father."

Many of the dear children of God are tried because they have never risen to such high confidence nor been blessed with the Spirit of adoption to say, "Abba, Father," or, "My Lord and my God," but they have a promise left them in the Word that God both cares for them and will attend to their wants; for we read:

“He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.” (Ps. cviii. 9.) This will surely be performed, sooner or later, wherever God has caused the soul to *truly* long for his presence, his light, his life, and himself. In nature, a child as soon as it is born into the world is a son or daughter; and from its birth a relationship to its parents commences, which nothing can break as long as life shall last. So everyone that is quickened by the Spirit is a child of God, and from that time a manifest relationship to the Father and Christ commences, which will last to all eternity. When a living child is first born into the world the parents do not scold or think less of their child because it cannot speak and say, “Father,” or “Mother”; nor do they disown the child on that account. Neither does God cut off his children because they are not able to say, “Abba, Father,” or address Christ as their Lord and their God.

Parents out of love attend to the wants of their children, and feed, clothe, and comfort them long before they know how to speak or are able to walk. This they do out of love, because they are their children. So with God. He feeds, clothes, and comforts his children from the very day that they are born of the Spirit; and this he does out of love, because they are his children. So, although many of God’s saints are not able to speak out with boldness, and say, “My God,” yet they are the children of God, and God is their Father; and they are as much loved as David himself was loved, who so often through the Book of Psalms addressed the Almighty as his God; and he endeavoured to strengthen his more feeble brethren by saying, “Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord.” (Ps. xxvii. 14.)

The Psalmist further says, “I trust in thee.” This trust or faith in God was first implanted in his soul when he was called by grace in early life; for when asking God for fresh help and strength he said, “Thou art my hope, O Lord God; thou art my trust from my youth.” (Ps. lxxi. 5.) He trusted in God for further help and strength, even when in the midst of difficulties, reproaches, and when surrounded with those who devised to take away his life; for he said: “I trusted in thee, O Lord; I said, Thou art my God. My times are in thy hand.” (Ps. xxxi. 14, 15.) He had proved God to be a Friend to him in times of trouble, and in his faithfulness his confidence was placed. This is where the Lord brings all his people to hang for salvation and deliverance, and for a continuation of his mercy, grace, and power; nor will he suffer such to be cut off from amongst his people, much less from himself; for “they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.” (Ps. cxxv. 1.) The word “trust” is another word for faith, and when this faith is implanted in the soul, as it is in the hearts of all the elect vessels of mercy, to such the Holy Ghost speaks, saying, “Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.” (Isa. xxvi. 4.)

The church and people of God are separated from the world, and are surrounded with enemies and beset with sins, snares, and temptations on the right hand and on the left, both inwardly and outwardly; yet the Lord has given them the goodly inheritance of the gospel of his grace; and having called them and placed them in this, their own land spiritually, he leads them on to trust in him, and do good works as the effect of his kingdom being set up in their hearts, and to show that they are in his kingdom and created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Hence the force of that text: "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed" (Ps. xxxvii. 3); that is, God shall supply all our temporal needs and feed our souls with the sure mercies of David, and grant us to taste and live upon the broken body and precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, who has said, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life," and those who have eternal life can never die; for "he that believeth on me," saith Christ, "shall never die." So death itself will not hurt a poor child of God who is made to trust in the Lord of life and glory; for he is now and will be in death and for ever and ever a blessed man; as the Psalmist has said: "O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee." (Ps. lxxxiv. 12.) So the poor believer in God and in Christ, in whom, through the Holy Ghost, his faith or trust is fixed, will be held up in and through the swellings of Jordan, and enter into the city which he now seeks—a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God; for when corporal death shall come upon him, as it certainly will do sooner or later, he has the promise on his side, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." (Isa. xliii. 2.) Christ has conquered death for his people, even for the weakest believer who is made to hunger and thirst after righteousness, to long for God's salvation, to believe in and worship Christ as God, and come to him as unto a living Stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious; and he will also conquer death in them, and put death away from their souls, and even out of their bodies, which will be the last act of his power; as Paul says: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

The man that is brought truly to trust in God for salvation, forgiveness of sins, deliverance from all his enemies, and eternal life has also God for the Object of his hope, as well as the Object of his faith; for God has blessed such persons with the knowledge of his name; and the Word says: "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." (Jer. xvii. 7.) No sooner does regeneration and conversion to Christ take place in a sinner's soul than the Holy Ghost begins to train up this child in the way he should go, and leads him to Christ as a poor, frail, guilty sinner seeking for mercy, peace, and

the forgiveness of all his sins through his atoning love and blood. This is most clearly expressed by the apostle as being the way in which the Ephesians were led as soon as the Word of God had taken root in their souls, and the Lord Jesus had been set before them as the true God and eternal life; for he says, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." (Eph. i. 13.) Where sinners are led by the Spirit to honour the Lord Jesus Christ, God also honours them, and blesses them more and more, even to seal them with the Holy Spirit of promise, "which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

Having this faith or trust in God, the Psalmist cries out, "Let not mine enemies triumph over me." From this we see that he had enemies,—enemies which he feared, and enemies which none but God could conquer. He was assured that the Lord only could overcome them and destroy them. These enemies of which he complained were enemies that tried and fought against him internally, together with Satan, who wars against the life and faith of God in the soul. This was what he sought to destroy in Job. It was not so much Job's property or Job's flesh that he aimed at, though God permitted him to touch both; but it was the fear or faith of God in Job's soul that he so much desired to extract out of his heart. But God knew what Satan was after, and said unto him, "Touch not his life." As Satan thus sought after the life of God in Job's soul, so does he war against the life, however small, in the soul of every believer, and seeks to destroy it; as Peter says: "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." (1 Pet. v. 8.) But God has not left it to the believer to preserve his own life, nor does his security stand in himself. The Lord has put it in a better and safer place, where it cannot be lost, nor even touched. To every child of God the word applies, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. iii. 3.)

Therefore, neither Satan, nor sin, nor the world with all its lusts, nor even death itself—that combination of enemies, will God suffer to triumph over those who are brought experimentally to lift up their souls to him in prayer, to trust in him, and cry that they may not be ashamed, and that the Lord will not allow their enemies to triumph over them. God will finally bring every poor soul that has tasted of his mercy and his loving-kindness to triumph over all his enemies, and at last exultingly to say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. xv. 55-57.)

(To be continued.)

REHEARSING THE RIGHTEOUS ACTS OF THE LORD.

WHEN Moses, the man of God, repeated the law of God in the hearing of Israel, he uttered the following testimony: "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no." (Deut. viii. 2.) As it was with God's national people, so it is with his spiritual people; for he finds them in a desert land; he leads them about and instructs them, and keeps them as the apple of his eye; for "as an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." (Deut. xxxii. 11, 12.) God only knows what a carnal state his people get into before he stirs up their nest. There are seven things which are an abomination to the Lord, and a proud look is one. (Prov. vi. 17.) How many unhumbed (because untried) professors have uttered hard things against God's poor tried and tempest-tossed ones!

My desire is to give an account of the Lord's dealings with me during several months' illness in which it was his pleasure to bring me into darkness and not into light. (Lam. iii. 2.) My affliction set in the latter part of Dec., 1874. The nature of the affliction was diphtheria, which quite prostrated me, and my medical attendant pronounced me unfit for all manual and mental labour, in consequence of which business and speaking had to be laid aside for a fortnight, at the end of which time I made an attempt to speak at O. on the Lord's day afternoon. Having to walk three miles from C. owing to my pony having met with an accident, it was too much for me in my weak state of health. When I got into the pulpit a strange sensation seized me, which I shall never forget as long as memory holds her seat. But recovering a little, and with the blessing of God the Holy Ghost, I got through the service, and announced to the people that I would try and speak again in the evening. The friends seeing how very ill I was prevailed on me to return after the afternoon service, which I did.

No sooner had I entered my dwelling and seated myself in my chair than another sensation like the one I had in the pulpit came over me, and with it a very solemn impression that I was dying, and that in a few minutes I should stand face to face with the Judge of quick and dead (Acts x. 42), which impression made me tremble like an aspen leaf, and lo, a horror of great darkness came over me. (Gen. xv. 12.) The sun was going down, and my towering notions of doctrine were like rotten props, which would not do to lean upon in the day of trial in which alone is learned the difference between notion and reality. I had said, when nothing called for the exercise of faith, "My mountain stands strong; I shall never be moved." Fancied faith in untried professors is

much larger and more ready to speak than real faith in God's tried people, the language of whom is: "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." (Ps. xvii. 5.)

Soon after I got home on the Lord's day evening referred to above, I retired to bed with the impression that I should never leave that bed until carried therefrom to my long resting-place. Night after night I have not had ten minutes' sleep. I well remember being thankful for a thunderstorm one night in January, as it seemed to cheer the hours and gloom of the long, weary night. On the following Monday morning, as I was lying upon the bed in much agitation of mind, the following words came with great power: "I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees." (Zeph. i. 12.)

Such was the effect of the words that were applied to my mind, namely, "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully" (Jer. xlvi. 10), that I thought they would have sunk my soul at once to hell. O how they searched me, and caused me to take a survey of the past years of my ministry and life of profession! The words brought to light every inconsistency, and I thought that I had never done anything acceptable to God, that I was nothing but a painted hypocrite, and that God was showing me up to his people in my true colours. I thought God had put up with me as long as he could, and now he was about to lay judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet. Legal bondage took possession of my mind, the carnal enmity of my heart was stirred up, and I proved the truth of the apostle's words: "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Rom. viii. 7.) Yes, not only is it in enmity against God, but against his law and his sovereignty in the salvation of his people, also against God in his dealings with us in providence. When in affliction we come to ourselves, prodigal-like as we are, hewed by the prophets and slain by the words of his mouth, and his judgments are as the light that goeth forth (Hos. vi. 5), then, with his people of old, we say, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us; in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." (Hos. vi. 1, 2.) Now when these poor, afflicted fools return, where do they find their covenant God and Father? Why, abiding in his covenant faithfulness, and saying to them while a great way off, "Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? For since I spake against him I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord." (Jer. xxxi. 20.) O what poor, helpless, hell-deserving sinners we are! Well might the Psalmist say, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" (Ps. viii. 4.) Poor, weak, vain, boasting creature! Yet the ever-blessed God hath been pleased to fix his love upon him, adopt him into his family, redeem him from all iniquity, renew him by his grace, dwell in him

by his Spirit, supply him out of his fulness, and says, "Where I am, there ye shall be also."

On the Monday morning we called in the doctor who said I should have to give up for a long time both speaking and business. I asked him how long he thought it would be. He said it would be quite three months, which made me sink very low in mind. It was from that memorable morning the solemn conflict began with the words to which I have before referred, and for about eight weeks my former profession seemed to be shattered with the threatenings of God's Word, which made me roar like a bear and mourn sore like a dove. I thought I stood in God's account among such as Cain, Esau, Balaam, Judas, and those spoken of by Paul in Phil. i. 15, 16. Thus, standing, as I supposed, upon the brink of eternity with no better religion than theirs, which I felt was a head-knowledge of the doctrines of grace without the grace of the doctrines in my heart, how vividly did I feel my case to answer to the character spoken of by Paul in Heb. x. 26-31, and in the epistle by Jude 10-13. Yet I felt encouraged by the words in Heb. x. 29, for I felt I had not treated the blood of the covenant as an unholy thing. I did not talk about cultivating grace at that time nor since. People speak about poverty, helplessness, and destitution of all good, but such was my case with a witness, and so full was I of all that is wrong that I felt more like a walking hell than a child of God. I do not wonder at poor creatures losing their senses under such scenes of soul-conflict and affliction.

About a week after this state of mind set in I remember once, just before going to bed, I had an impression that I should certainly die that night. I fell into a doze, but woke in a very short time in a fright, thinking I was dying, and the dreadful darkness of my mind is indescribable. I remember the words coming to my mind which I had heard or read somewhere, "Now for the grand secret;" but to me it was the solemn secret of being banished from Him I had professed into outer darkness. My wife and a friend then with us stood by the bedside, and looking at them in a despairing manner I exclaimed, "I am dying, and have no hope! The lowest hell is my portion." No wonder Jonah said, "Out of the belly of hell cried I." (Jonah ii. 2.) O how I wished I had never been born, or that I had died in infancy, or as an untimely birth had been hidden; yea, that I had perished before the breath of the Almighty had entered within me. (Job iii.) The whole of that chapter breathed the real sentiments of my mind at that time. If those who profess to believe in the doctrine of annihilation were brought into such a state of soul and God were to enter into judgment with them, as he did with me, their rotten sentiments would fly like chaff of the summer threshing-floor before the whirlwind; for that night I was led into the solemn matters of eternity as I never had been before. Like Peter I felt to be sinking, for the wind was boisterous, and like him I cried out, "Lord, save me; or I perish." My prayers,

though I thought them very poor and unheeded by God, were very earnest; for they were the language of a sinking soul deeply needing divine help. Refuge (human) failed me, and I feared divine help would never come.

One day, walking round my room like a poor condemned criminal, the words of the poet dropped into my mind with a little sweetness and relief, which just appeared to save me from the gulph of despair:

"I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand;

Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand;"

and following close upon them were the following:

"Ye feeble saints, fresh courage take,

The clouds ye so much dread,

Are big with mercy, and shall break,

In blessings on your head," &c.

Now as the above came with a little power, they helped me, so that with Jonah I said, "I will look again toward thy holy temple." (Jonah ii. 4.) The enemy and unbelief tried to snatch the blessing from the hand of faith, and prevailed to a very great extent. Yet, as the Psalmist says in one place, "That thou givest them they gather" (Ps. civ. 28); so that the effect designed in the application shall not fail. Surely it was of God; for one in such a state as my soul was in has to prove their need of the application of the promise by the power of the Holy Ghost before they can lay hold. God makes his people honest, and they will not steal; but, like the woman, prefer begging a crumb from the Master's table. It is when they hear their Divine Husband saying, "Eat, O friends," that they can lay hold with boldness, and then their reply is, "My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness." (Ps. lxxiii. 5.) The little gleam of light which broke into my mind through the words before named being applied, soon gave way to the clouds of darkness which again covered my mind, and the little help they afforded me seemed to be lost sight of. The enemy was permitted to take advantage of this by suggesting to my mind, "You only thought of it; it was not of God," &c., under which I sunk very low.

About this time a very strong desire arose in my mind to see a Mr. C. who was preaching in a village a short distance from where I lived, and I believed he would come to see me, for my mind was led to the account of Peter's visit to Cornelius. (Acts x.) That account had a wonderful effect on my mind. When Mr. C. entered my room he came up to me and asked me how I was, at which I burst into tears, exclaiming, "O, sir, I am sinking to hell!" He said, "No, John, you will not go there." After recovering a little I told him the state of my mind and the portions of God's Word that had distressed my soul. I found him to be a brother in adversity. Little did I think of finding one who could enter into the exercises of my soul so sweetly. Several other ministers called to see me, but to them I was a stranger and they were strangers to me; but my friend was an interpreter,

one among a thousand, for he entered blessedly into my path. I had no idea previous to this interview that he had travelled the same path; so that the great desire to see him and the impression that he would come the day he did, must have been of the Lord. To his honour be it spoken. Bless his holy name! How very beautiful the words of Solomon appeared as my friend conversed with me: "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." (Prov. xxvii. 19.) I need not say I felt a soul-union to my friend, and felt thankful to the Ruler of all circumstances and Controller of all events for the interview, believing it was of Him that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, apart from whose knowledge not a sparrow falls to the ground. Therefore I would say, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever!" I felt very much encouraged by the testimony of Mr. C., for the way was one that I had not gone heretofore (Josh. iii. 4); and not only so, but I thought none of God's people had either, and that what I was called to pass through was a proof I was not a child of God. I do not wonder at the Lord's poor tried people wanting a tried ministry. On the other hand I wonder not that such a ministry should be distasteful to untried souls. Such may well look with scorn and treat with contempt such a ministry; for not having been emptied from vessel to vessel (Jer. xlviii 11), such cannot enter into it, therefore have no sympathy with it.

The above-named interview did not work my deliverance, for the furnace-work was not over, and I again sank as low as ever, if not lower. The next day the enemy seemed to possess such wonderful power over me as to make me believe Mr. C. had only come to prove me to be the greatest hypocrite in existence, under which temptation I sank fathoms in soul-distress.

By this time my body was very weak and much wasted, and we thought we had better consult another doctor, which we did, and it was the opinion of both medical gentlemen that a change would be beneficial to my health, and they advised me to go to H., which I was very much against, feeling I might die there, and then the expense would be so great to get me home, which would bring more distress upon my poor wife, for whom I could see nothing but destitution.

"O my distrustful heart,
How small thy grace appears"

seemed to be the most appropriate language to express the state of my mind at that time. But in spite of all my fears and dark forebodings, my dear wife and kind friends wished me to try it, and at length prevailed upon me to consent. The evening before we started a very kind friend came to see me, and before leaving gave me a very handsome sum towards bearing the expense of the change, which was very acceptable, and the spirit in which it was done was very cheering to me. The Lord reward them. It was on Saturday morning, Feb. 9th, that we started for H. Just as we got into the carriage my sister and youngest child

got out, and in taking farewell of my dear child, who was a babe of about eighteen months, I thought she with my other dear children would soon be fatherless and my wife a widow; while a host of other equally black and despairing thoughts rushed through my mind which greatly depressed my spirits throughout the journey. The feelings of my mind were, "I am lost to all the comforts of this life and the happiness of the next." Truly the Comforter appeared far off from me, and mine enemies chased me sore.

After changing trains at London Bridge station I turned to my wife and said, "I am lost! I am lost!" She quoted some Scriptures and hymns to me, which, as far as the letter is concerned, were most appropriate; but all appeared in vain; for my soul refused to be comforted. She watched me night and day, and although I said things to her which were enough, humanly speaking, to break her heart, yet the Lord kept up her spirits through it all in a most marvellous manner.

By the blessing of God we soon reached our journey's end, but my trouble, misery, and sorrow kept pace with me, and seemed to stick closer to me than the collar of my coat. Weary with my journey I was very glad to retire to bed as soon as possible; but, like Job, I had to say, "When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint; then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions" (Job vii. 13, 14.); so that there was but little rest for me the first night. The following day being the Lord's day we resolved to go and hear Mr. H. Never shall I forget the anguish of my mind when going to the house of prayer. When we entered the chapel the minister was in the pulpit, and my soul went up to God for a blessing, yet feared there was "no covenant blessing for me;" still my soul groaned for one. Ps. xxxiv was read, and much of it seemed applicable, and failed not to draw tears from my eyes, especially verse 6: "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles," and verse 18 to 20 touched my heart, and hope began to lift up its head. Many things in the prayer suited me, and were a little encouraging. O how I longed for deliverance, so that I died not in the pit. The second hymn was sung, after which the preacher read for his text 1 Pet. i. 8, 9. The subject was the end of faith the salvation of your souls. The minister showed how it was possible for one to go very far in a profession of religion, and how near nominal faith approached in appearance to vital and saving faith; and he went so far as to cut poor wretched me all to pieces. The very portions which had so terrified me during my deep trial were quoted by him and dwelt upon at some length, especially the one in Isa. l. 11. Down I sank again into the deep, feeling confident that the Holy Ghost directed the minister to those things in judgment against me; and looking back upon all the sweet time of liberty and enlargement in private meditation and in public ministrations, it all appeared sparks of my own kindling.

With a heavy heart I returned from the house of God that morning, and Satan did not fail to take the advantage of it; but the apostle assures us that God will not suffer one of his people to be tempted above what they are able to bear; so that the enemy cannot do as he would with the people of God. This is amply proved in Job's case, concerning whom Satan said, "Hast thou not made a hedge about him?" (Job i. 10.) In this I am inclined to believe Satan to be a much sounder theologian than many in these days who are titled "D.D."; for what Satan said to the Lord is as sound as what Paul wrote to the church at Colosse, namely, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." The Psalmist conveys the same great truth in Ps. cxxv. 2: "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth, even for ever." (Ps. cxxv. 2.) O that I could always realize that I form part of his people, or be helped to rest upon the promise, "I will be a wall of fire round about her." Instead of which doubts and fears crowd into the mind as so many Canaanites, which rob me of all my comfort, leaving me wounded, robbed, and half dead, and often do I exclaim, "What will the end of these things be?"

On Monday morning we walked out on to the parade at H. The whole scenery seemed to possess many harmonious voices to utter the praise of their divine Author; but however sweetly nature sang her Maker's praise, she failed to charm my soul and cause me to enter into the dances of them that make merry; for it was no more to me than the river of Babylon was to the children of Israel. Like them my harp was on the willows, my wound too deep, and my soul too much afflicted for anything to cheer me short of a visit from the great Physician of souls. It was truly a strange land, and as for singing one of Zion's songs, I dare not do it while in that state of mind. But blessed be God, I have been enabled since those days to sing Zion's songs with some degree of feeling and sweetness. To his name be all the glory.

During our first week at H. I received a letter from a young friend then living at C., which made we weep for joy. I had been very much tried about the success of my ministry, thinking at times there had not been one genuine case in proof of God being with or his blessing the word through me; therefore this letter proved to be a great encouragement to me, and I was greatly humbled at the feet of Him whose I am and whom I serve, feeling a sense of his goodness, wisdom, and power in making use of such a poor ignorant creature as I truly felt to be; but so Wisdom hath designed it that no flesh should glory in his presence. It was likewise a powerful rebut to the enemy of my soul, and had a blessed tendency for a short time of silencing his voice in my heart; but the time of deliverance had not yet come; therefore the enemy found it easy work to cast me down again, and this he very soon did with the following sug-

gestion: "It is very possible to be a servant of God, and yet not a son." It was a home thrust, and I fell beneath the stroke. O what tossings it cost me! The thought that the Holy Ghost might make use of me for the sake of his elect, yet have no inheritance with God's family, this made my soul groan, sigh, and cry out, "I am oppressed; undertake for me." (Isa. xxxviii. 14.)

Shortly after I received the above-named letter I passed a day of awful blasphemy from the enemy, and on account of my evil heart the thoughts that rolled through my mind are too vile to mention. It really seemed as though I had reached the very climax of rebellion against God and his sovereignty. While walking on the parade it seemed as though I saw God upon his throne "high and lifted up," and his people surrounding him as in a circle of an impregnable wall which could not be scaled, and perfect happiness reigned throughout. I thought those within the blest enclosure could not get out and nothing could put them out, and those outside could not get in and nothing could put them in, and I thought myself outside. At that moment it was suggested to my mind, "You see what election and God's sovereignty have done. All his elect are encircled in safety and happiness, and all the others, do what they may, cannot be saved; and you with all your sighing, praying, weeping, and sorrowing, it makes no difference, you are out, and you cannot get in, so you might as well give it up in despair." Following these suggestions the most horrid feeling of rebellion rose up in my mind against God's sovereignty in the election of his people. O how true it is that the rebellious dwell in a dry land, and that the carnal mind is enmity against God, on account of which I felt myself to be a very great sinner, and the most loathsome thing in existence before God. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself!" Yes, and as far as help in ourselves is concerned we are destroyed for ever; but blessed be the God of Israel, he hath said for the encouragement of his people, "In me is thine help." (Hos. xiii. 9.)

In the evening of the same day I took up Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," and in opening it my eyes fell upon the wonderful description of the man in the iron cage, which at that time seemed so exactly descriptive of my case that it was like giving the last blow to one already deeply wounded, and it caused me to sink into the very depths where the waterfloods overflowed me. "Am I to be in this dungeon as long as I live in this world," said I, "and then sink to hell at last?" I left the room, went upstairs, dropped on my knees by the side of the bed, and if ever I prayed in earnest it was then. It was a poor sinking creature crying for help, and it must be help afforded there and then. It was no formal round of a duty-faith prayer; but it was a distressed creature passing through the pangs of soul-travail. Before I had uttered many sentences on my knees the following words were applied with power and light, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for mine own sake,

and will not remember thy sins." (Isa. xliii. 25.) The room seemed filled with a supernatural light; it was the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and it was very blessed.

When I went downstairs and entered the room where my wife was sitting she said, "What have you had?" I replied, "What makes you ask me that?" She said, "I am sure you have had something by your countenance." I got the Bible and showed her the portion, and I continued to read as well as I could the first six verses of Isa. xlv., but could scarcely read for tears gushing from my eyes. O what a broken heart I had and what self-aborrence I felt! How blessed the words were: "Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant, and Israel whom I have chosen," &c. I felt my poor heart much refreshed and comforted, though it did not entirely deliver me, for my full deliverance was more gradual.

As my strength increased, so the various applications of Scripture became more confirmed in my mind. We left H. on the 23rd, and reached home in the evening. I was not so depressed in the return journey, so that I think the change did me a little good. The next morning I called to see my doctor. He said I was better, but on leaving him he said I should have to give up speaking altogether, or it would bring on permanent heart-disease. When I left him my heart went up to God, and I said, "O Lord, if that be it, I do not desire to live." Now again Satan rushed upon me and said, "You never had any right to preach, for if you had, you would have had strength to have continued all your life." Down I sank again in soul-conflict for days and weeks, and it seemed as though what little strength I had must all go; yet the Lord was my stay. (Ps. xviii. 18.) Well do I remember one night retiring to bed, like a weary traveller worn out with the fatigues of the day and glad for night to come that he may get a little time for rest, so was I glad to go to bed to get, if possible, a little rest for the poor body, when the following words dropped into my mind with sacred and melting effect:

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

Truly I had the spiritual presence of Christ crucified in that room, for it seemed filled with light and glory. O how sweetly I lay for a time under the influence of the presence of Christ Jesus the Lord, and a broken heart caused tears to drop in rapid succession on my pillow. I could have died then. Yes, I could have left all on earth to have been with Jesus:

"If such the sweetness of the streams,
What must the Fountain be?"

After that time my soul did not sink so low again, though I was tempted to cast it all away the next day; but again and again has that visit been revived in my heart by the Holy Ghost as the Remembrancer, so as to quite break me down at his feet. Such

goodness seems too much for such an unworthy wretch who deserves nothing but the lowest hell.

On the first Lord's day in April, 1875, I met with the friends again after three months' absence and administered the Lord's Supper, but it was with much fear and trembling. O the unworthiness I felt and the many fears which beset my mind! It was no task to take the lowest place then. "The Lord upholdeth all that fall." (Ps. cxlv. 14.) On the second Lord's day in April, in the evening I went into the pulpit again and spoke in the name of the Lord, and was helped. Now I commenced to speak regularly twice on the Lord's days; but it was months before I dared to speak about my interest in the things of God; yet, as I gathered strength, courage returned, and I was brought into the enjoyment of the things of God. O what a difference I saw and felt there was between a high, dead notion of the truth of God and a humbling, experimental acquaintance with the same,—just as much difference as there is between seeing a well-furnished table with the necessaries of life, and sitting down and partaking of the same to satisfy the cravings of nature. Jeremiah said, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." (Jer. xv. 16.)

After my recovery my wife was taken ill and was very ill for weeks. She sank very low in her mind, but the Lord brought her up again from the depths; for which my gratitude was very small compared with the mercy. To my shame, how little am I engaged in praising the Lord, and even when I am professedly so engaged, how much selfishness there is in it. The accuser often says, "Ah, you are full of praise now you are having it as flesh likes to have it; but would you praise him if he had taken your health, your wife, your children, and your friends?" What can a poor rebellious and afflicted fool like me say? Do we not need mercy that is unmeasurably deep, infinitely high, and as boundless as immensity and durable as eternity? I am persuaded it is only mercy that could take me in hand, keep me in hand, and save me from myself and hell. O for more of its softening influence felt within! Spirit Divine, apply it to our hearts.

After my dear wife began to recover from her illness another trial overtook us, namely, our house was struck by lightning. One morning about eleven o'clock, I was at work in a gentleman's house in C. not far from my own dwelling. I was graining his front door, and while so doing the words came with great power into my mind: "By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation." (Ps. lxxv. 5.) In about an hour after a thunderstorm passed over the village, and my eldest son came and informed me that our house was on fire. I hastened home, and the first words which fell from my lips were to enquire after my wife and four children. Finding they were all mercifully preserved I felt thankful. The people expressed their surprise and astonishment that neither my wife, nor children were touched. I went out into the back-yard and with a broken heart blessed

the hand of Him who shielded my dear ones from the thunderbolts of his power and the arrow that flieth by day. (Ps. xci. 5.) About two hours before my wife was lying on the bed in the room where the most damage was done, and the pillow received a mark of the fluid, the bedpost was shattered into splinters, and the hangings singed. I can indeed say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits!"

J. P.

SUPPLICATION.

O MY indulgent Lord,
 I come a boon to crave,
 Encouraged by thy Word
 I come and hope to have;
 I come to seek reviving grace
 To cheer me in this wilderness.
 With weary steps and slow,
 This lower world I tread,
 I find no joy below,
 'Tis barren all and dead;
 To see thy face, to hear thy voice
 Alone can make this heart rejoice.
 Speak, Lord, by power divine,
 Some portion to my heart,
 By faith it shall be mine,
 And life and joy impart.
 Great is the portion that I claim,
 An interest in the bleeding Lamb.
 The land of promise fair
 Lies open to my view,
 Faith sees a mansion there
 And crowns of glory too;
 And pressing onward to the prize
 Does earth with all her toys despise.

A.P.

OUR blessed Lord had to found a church on earth. The corn of wheat had to fall into the ground and die, that it might bring forth much fruit. And after this corn of wheat had fallen into the earth and risen out of it,—in other words, after the Lord Jesus had put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, had risen from the dead, and gone up on high, it was the will of God that his death and resurrection should issue in a glorious crop of redeemed sinners. But that this crop might be gathered, labourers were needed; and that these labourers might go forth fully commissioned by the Lord of the harvest, they themselves must first be taught to plough, sow, and reap. Our Lord, then, for this purpose chose disciples, "whom also he named apostles, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils."—*Philpot*.

SOLID PEACE.

My dear Sister,—As I have not heard from you for some time I thought I would try and write you a few lines. I hope my letters will not be burdensome. My wife certainly is better. We have been from home three weeks. We stayed at Mr. Page's at Edburton a little more than a fortnight, which is about eight or nine miles from Bolney, where we went two Lord's days. There is a nice little chapel at B., in which the truth is preached. It is very near to the house where Mr. B. and family lived and the barn where dear Mr. Huntington preached. It is an old-fashioned house, much the same as the one in which you and I were born. I have often thought I should like to see that house and barn where the Lord condescended to visit and dwell in the hearts of the inmates, which is the greatest honour that could be conferred upon poor worms of the earth.

I am a witness that the Lord still condescends to dwell with sinners, and I hope you are too; and if he dwells in us by his Spirit and grace, it is a certain proof that we shall most surely dwell with him in glory. O what a soul-comforting thought is this in the prospect of our dissolution, for when flesh and heart are failing what are all things else compared to this? The greatest prize we can possibly attain is to win Christ, the most profound wisdom and knowledge we can possess is to know him, and the most peaceable and happy life we can live is to live upon him. It is true it is a path of tribulation, and we do not always rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, nor are we always filled with joy and peace in believing; for our hearts are sometimes filled with sorrow, and so oppressed that we know not what to do. I have often been and am still, when the Lord is not with me, a poor disconsolate man; but he comes again and always brings his reward with him, and then my heart rejoices, yea, my soul leaps for joy, and, through the power of the Holy Ghost, my hopes abound that I shall one day be like him, see him as he is, and reign with him for ever. This produces a solemn peace such as the worldly man, let him profess what he may, is a stranger unto; for it lifts up the oppressed heart, though surrounded with troubles, temptations, and cares; and at such times we can smile at the approach of death, and embrace the cold hand that is about to change our countenance and send us away where we shall rest in quiet out of the reach and fear of evil.

O what should I do without this blessed Lord Jesus Christ! He loved me when I was an enemy to him, he has been my help in a world of sorrows, and has so endeared himself to my poor sinful soul that I esteem his precious, atoning blood more than thousands of gold and silver. His agonies and sorrows are food to my hungry soul and in them I find real satisfaction; for he is my only Treasure, my Life, and the Length of my days. This, my dear sister, is a Portion that will endure when the world is in a flame and the rich worldlings perish with it; and as sure as he

takes up his dwelling in our hearts, so surely shall we dwell with him in glory. He dwelleth with the humble person, and I know you dare not say you are not a humble soul. The Lord help you and me, my dear sister, to labour after a deeper knowledge and heartfelt union to the blessed Jesus, for it is he and he alone that can make us truly blessed.

If we judge according to the life of men in general we cannot expect to be here long. The day will soon come when we must bid adieu to time; but O what a heart-cheering thought it is in the prospect of dissolution to feel that the blessed God, who is the Redeemer of his people, the First and the Last, the Almighty, He who was dead but lives again, and that for ever, and has the keys of hell and of death, and because he lives, every poor sin-oppressed soul who flies to him for safety from the impending storm and commits his soul to his protection shall live also,—I say, what a heart-cheering thought that this God is our God for ever and ever, and will be our Guide even unto death; and when flesh and heart fail us, he will be the strength of our heart and our Portion for ever. May it be our happiness to walk before him as Abraham and Isaac walked, though we must expect to find it a path of tribulation. The paschal lamb was to be eaten with bitter herbs, and though bitters are not palatable to the taste, they are often very beneficial to health, for they produce appetite, &c.

I think I told you in a former letter that Christ, the Pearl of great price, like the diamond, lies at the bottom of the deep waters, and if we know much of him we must expect to have to pass through some deep waters of trouble and affliction; but blessed be his dear name, he always lies at the bottom. The Lord has always been my help in the time of extremity, and he has pledged his word and faithfulness which cannot fail, that he will never leave us nor forsake us. I feel him this morning to be the Pearl of great price to me; but I am walking in the midst of trouble. I hope he told me once, when, with a heavy heart, I was walking up the hill from the back lanes near where master Kemp lived, that when I passed through the waters he would be with me, and through the fires I should not be burned; and he knows what fires and waters I have had to pass through since then; but I can say with the poet,

“Yet have been upheld till now,

Who could hold me up but thou?”

And now the night of affliction and trouble is far spent and the day is at hand,—that blessed and eternal day when there shall be no night, neither shall our sun any more go down. Therefore, my dear sister, may we be of good courage and press on to know him more, go to him in all our troubles, and pour out our souls before him; for he will hear the cry of the needy and not despise their prayer. He still lifts the poor from the dust and the beggar from the dunghill, and sets them with the princes of his people.

I suppose you have heard of the death of Mrs. Dunk. When I

was at Mr. Page's Mr. Pettit, from Ticehurst, and his son-in-law came and stayed one night. I cannot tell you all that passed, but the effect it had on me while I was in bed the following morning was to make me wet my couch with tears at the amazing mercy of God to me, a poor worthless wretch. My wife desires her kind love to you, and accept mine also.

Your affectionate Brother,

Aug. 20th, 1867.

ISAAC DUNK.

NEED OF PATIENCE.

Dear Friend,—We were glad to hear from you. You wish for a line from me, but I do not know what to write about. Well, in the first place, through mercy I am better. I was taken, after breakfast, with a pain in my right side, yet was in hopes it would soon go off, but instead of that it kept on increasing, so that on Sabbath morning I had to telegraph to the Wells. I hope you got a crumb at Smart's Hill. I found I had need of patience that, as Paul says, "After ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."

Truly, in one way or another, it is a path of sufferings, and my cup seems very bitter. But when we are doing the will of God flesh often makes great mistakes, and cries out, "What good thing can come out of this?" Joseph was doing the mind and will of God when he had to go down into Egypt, but he did not think so; for we are told, "Until the time that his word came; the word of the Lord tried him." (Ps. cv. 19.) The grace of patience was needed in such a spot as this; but he received the fulfilment of the promise, for his brethren did bow down to him; and of the promise of eternal life also, for he entered into the joy of his Lord. Jacob was doing the will of God when he sent his son Joseph to his brethren to see if it was well with them; but patience was needed when they brought Joseph's coat to their father. Truly he had need of this blessed gift; but it was not in exercise when he cried out, "All these things are against me." We may well cry, "Hold out faith and patience." Sometimes I feel as if I was destitute of both, and find that it is easier to preach about these things than to practise them. I find that you are, like myself, not long at ease. I wish my heart was more broken with the Lord's goodness, but unbelief robs my soul, so that I feel deprived of all comfort.

It is no easy work to stand against the world, the flesh, and the devil; and it is no light matter to have to stand on deck (the pulpit) when the waters are so troubled that the vessel rolls about. I do not expect my craft will get loaded with passengers of the first class. Now and then I take one or two on board, but they soon leave me for a better vessel, where they can lie down at ease, and at last open their eyes in hell. My Commander has told me in his chart (the Bible) not to expect many wise men, mighty, or noble; but to look out for the third class (the poor); and all

these are very weak, like the captain; and three of them would not make a good sailor. Once an able seaman said, when the waves came rolling over, "Now we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life." (2 Cor. i. 8.)

Also many of my crew have the leprosy, so that clean people do not like to sail with me. Sometimes when the fogs have dispersed a little and I can find some of my companions on board, such as faith, hope, charity, we then sail very comfortably.

I hope it is fair weather with you, and that your vessel is not stuck fast in the mud; for so many things then are out of place, and patience is wanted to wait for the returning tide. Sometimes it is a good thing to get set fast, for then we want power and a word through the trumpet in the pulpit to our souls.

But I must leave off writing, for the winds are rising, and a squall soon comes on, which brings on sea-sickness. Please give my kind love to your husband.

Yours, a Poor Worm,
T. S. SWONNELL.

Marden, Aug. 5th, 1875.

PROVOKING UNTO LOVE AND GOOD WORKS.

My dear Fellow-Traveller,—I thank you kindly for yours. It refreshed and strengthened me, for by it I see the truth of what you told me yesterday; namely, that we are drinking into one spirit, and I believe we are walking by the same rule and minding the same things; though, with respect to your enlargements, you have been and ever will be before me; so it must be in the order of things, because God is the God of order, and you know you were born a day before me, and one day is with the Lord as a thousand years.

I think our views have been enlarged in the same manner respecting faith. You speak with such a savour of the blessedness of a life of faith that it has had a tendency to increase in my soul more ardent longing after a further knowledge of the mystery of faith. Surely this is the provoking that Paul speaks of when he says, "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works." (Heb. x. 24.) It is in this way that the Lord will make us useful and bind us stronger and stronger to each other, and this is what is called the *communion of saints*; but the times and seasons when these things, or I should rather say, their effects flow out to each other are with the Lord, because of ourselves we are not sufficient, but our sufficiency is of God.

You tell me you would have gone further had it not been for your interruptions. I hope to be favoured with a more particular account of the Lord's dealings with you, and the openings and enlargements your soul has experienced in the paths of wisdom and the ways of understanding when God moves upon your mind so to do; and as God has given you enlargement of

heart towards me I hope this favour is in reserve; for the Lord has made me thus to find favour in your sight.

You spoke to me yesterday of some views you had had lately of love to the brethren in which light you had never viewed it before. I want to know more particulars about it, for I have had such enlargements in my soul more than once. Thus you see I want to partake of all your banquets. You know the eye is never satisfied with seeing nor the ear with hearing. God grant they may never be in the sense I mean. David accounts for this where he says, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness;" and I think we cannot be said to be perfect in Christ's likeness till we arrive in glory, when we shall leave this body of sin and death behind us.

You must think I have had exercise for faith and patience in my affliction. However, I can tell you that the Lord has been faithful to his promise and I have found that as my day has been, so also I have derived strength from him; and I send this to my dear brother to entreat his prayers on my behalf. You are well acquainted with the throne of grace. May the Lord give you a spirit of supplications for me.

To-morrow is the day the Lord has appointed for the tribes to go up to the temple to worship; but I must be constrained to tarry at home, which is no small affliction to my mind, and the Lord knows that the ordinances of his house and worship are the very life of my soul, and I have, with you, many times seen the goings forth of the Lord, the King, in the sanctuary, which has made me to adopt as my own the language of David when he said, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord, all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." (Ps. xxvii. 4.) My soul really anticipates the time when I shall be made a pillar in the temple above, never more to go out.

I hope you will favour me with a letter to-morrow by Mr. Hooper. Give my most affectionate love to Mrs. Morris. I hope she will not cease to remember her sister in the Lord. I can write no more, as I am quite tired, being obliged to write this sitting up in bed with a blister on my stomach.

If you can get Mrs. King's letter for me of Mr. H. and if she has had one since I should be obliged.

I now conclude, wishing that the best of blessings may descend upon the head and heart of Joseph; yea, and all that God has to bestow, even unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills, that you may be a fruitful bough, even as a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall. May the Lord pour down such a blessing into your soul that there shall not be room enough to receive it. I know he can do this without making windows in heaven. So prays

Your Sister in Christ,
MARY HOOPER.

To Mr. Jos. Morris.

THE GOLDEN SCEPTRE.

My dear Friend,—Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father. O that I could say, "Our Father" with an unwavering tongue!

Your kind letter came safe to hand, and it spoke the truth in love. There are but few in the days in which we live that love the truth, and very few that know the plague of their hearts, the craft of Satan, and the power of unbelief. But those who are made to know these things often groan; for they are so easily caught in some gin or trap that is laid in their path. This made the apostle say, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." (Eph. vi. 11.) How we need a Captain to lead us in the right way! It is only those who have to fight in the battle with sin, the world, inbred corruption, and righteous and sinful self that need this armour. The battle is so sharp at times that I fear I shall be overcome, and, feeling my own weakness, makes me cry, "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe."

After all that the Lord has done for me, the unbelief in my carnal heart fights against him, and the fiery darts of the enemy make me sigh and groan. How grievous it is to feel this inward cross from day to day! When a poor believer feels opposition within him to God and the things of God, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the old man against the new man, there is a continual war in his heart, and sometimes he fears the flesh will get the mastery, and that after all he shall be lost. O the many fears I have that my spot is not the spot of God's children!

After fifty years' travelling in this wilderness I feel such a mountain between the Lord and my soul, and it is so high that I cannot get over it, so thick that I cannot get through it, so deep that I cannot get under it, and none but the Lord can remove it and let me have a little communion with him. I long to have more of this as I pass on in my pilgrimage through this vain world, and my cry is, "O let thy good Spirit abide with me, that I may be enabled to trust in what thou hast done for me and in me. I desire to commit my cause into thy hands as my Advocate with the Father to plead the cause of the poor and needy;" and, bless his dear name, he pleads his own blood and righteousness for poor law-hunted, sin-sick, tempted, burdened souls who cannot help themselves in the least, but come to him just as they are—naked and wounded.

We have great need of patience; for there is a continual war going on within, and it is only now and then that we get a little rest as we pass on towards the holy city. The longer I live the weaker I feel and the more I need the strength of the Lord to keep and protect me. O if I could but live nearer to my best Beloved the few days that I may have to sojourn here below! I hope the Lord is blessing his truth at Milton. The chapel is well attended for a little village, and the Lord has, through his abundant goodness, given me to see six of my family attend the house of God.

I feel, like Esther of old, that if I perish I will perish at his feet. She had not been called in before the king for thirty days, and she felt the time long; and so do I. I often beg of the Lord to give me another visit, another token of my interest in his love; for I have such a host of enemies to grapple with, both internal, external, and infernal, and I am like a feather before them. This is the effect of the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, if I know it in truth, and sometimes the King is pleased to hold out the golden sceptre, and it is a sceptre of love and mercy; and when he enlarges my heart then I can praise him. How sweet it is to be melted at the feet of the dear Redeemer! I would bless the Lord that I am not a stranger to this, though I cannot get there so often as I could wish. I would live in this sweet place, if it were the Lord's will, and would say feelingly, "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid." Sure I am my strength is in him; for of myself I am perfect weakness.

May the Lord cause his face to shine upon you, and give you a plentiful rain; so that you may prove him faithful to his promise.

Yours in Truth,

Milton, March 12th, 1884.

W. BAUGHAN.

REVIEWS.

Romanism Scripturally Analysed. By an Oriental Traveller.—London: F. Kirby, 17, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, E.C.

In the present day errors are abounding on the right hand and on the left,—all of them pernicious to the souls of men and dishonouring to the living God; but none are so injurious, nationally and socially, as those held by the Roman Catholics. Their doctrines lead to all kinds of sin that it is possible for man to commit, and from these sins the priests profess to give absolution on earth, and then grant indulgences to again commit the same sins, or others equally base, whichever may be most suitable to the carnal passions of men and for the advancement of the Romish Church. Then, when these poor deluded creatures die, they all, according to the Roman Catholic doctrine, go into purgatory, and the relatives and friends of the departed must pay the priest, in order that they may pray them out of their torments. After so many years of suffering, the priests say the *blessed virgin*, the mother of Jesus, will implore her Son to receive their souls into his kingdom; but the release of the souls of the departed from purgatory and their reception into heaven through the intercession of the virgin, all depend upon how much money the priest can get from the poor dupes who are left behind.

Money, more or less, the priest *must* have, or else the departed souls must remain in purgatory for ever and ever. The priests have their box into which the money is paid, for which they pretend they can release souls from purgatory; for

"When in the box the cash doth ring,
The soul from out the fire doth spring."

Who but men of the most darkened understanding as regards spiritual things; who but men thoroughly indifferent to and regardless of the written Word of God; who but men willing to be blinded, deceived, cheated, and beguiled almost beyond all that is conceivable in reasonable beings, would believe, much less support, such abominable impositions practised by men, who, if there is a class of persons upon earth more base, wicked, and vile than other human beings, it is the Romish priests?

The work we are noticing is an exposure of the wicked doctrines of the Romish Church and the delusions into which her adherents are initiated. As Romanism is so prevalent in the present day, we strongly recommend this little book to our readers; the more so as some of the leading men in this country, through false charity and for party ends, either directly or indirectly support the Romish Church.

The Crown Prince of Austria lately died, as it is supposed by his own hand. A Requiem service was held at the Roman Catholic chapel in London for the repose of his soul. Lord Salisbury, the present Prime Minister of England, the Prince of Wales, and his two sons were present. Their attendance at this service, and thus pandering to the greatest of our national enemies, is, we think, calculated to arouse the utmost indignation against the Heir Apparent and the Prime Minister. Only imagine the Prince of Wales, who cannot come to the throne without declaring his adherence to the Protestant Oath, being present at a Requiem service in a Roman Catholic chapel, where a hymn was being chanted for the repose of the soul of one who had committed suicide, which is self-murder; and God has said in his Word, "We know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him!" Then again, only imagine Lord Salisbury, who is a Churchman and professed Protestant, the Prime Minister of England, and the great leader of the Tory and Church party, being found at a service where prayer was offered for the repose of the soul of one who had lived an ungodly life and died an awful death, without the least signs of repentance, and in whose end there could not possibly be the slightest hope! With the utmost indignation we raise our protest against the proceedings of the Prince of Wales and Lord Salisbury, and we believe the same feelings will have arisen in the breasts of vast numbers of the population of this Protestant country. We trust the prayers of the godly will go up to heaven, importuning the Almighty that the policy and influence of such men as these, who are not worthy of our national confidence, may be overthrown and brought to nought. Such conduct as this proves the Prince of Wales to be an unfit person to sit upon the throne of England, and Lord Salisbury to be utterly unworthy of the confidence of the nation.

The book we are Reviewing is about equal in size to one number of the "G. S.," and is published at the low price of 2d.

Twelve Sermons, by the late Mr. Irons.—London: F. Kirby, 17, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, E.C.

MORE than thirty-six years have elapsed since the late Joseph Irons, the author of these sermons, was called home to his eternal rest; but it may truly be said of him, "He being dead, yet speaketh." Whilst on earth he was valiant for the truth, and, to his utmost ability, exposed error and dealt faithfully with erroneous men. His aim was to preach the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and to enforce it in an experimental way on the consciences of his hearers. His labours were signally owned and blessed of God, who never sends men to preach his word without making that word in some measure successful to the desired and promised end.

Everyone of God's servants have their sphere of usefulness, and God has ordained where and when and to whom he will make their ministry a blessing. He not only raises up and qualifies his own sent servants to preach his gospel, but he has fixed their place of usefulness, and well knows beforehand what will be accomplished through his own honoured instruments. The Lord's servants, like the stars in the heavens, are not all fixed in the same part; but all shine, as do the stars, with that measure of lustre which God puts upon them.

London was the residence and sphere of usefulness allotted by God to Mr. Joseph Irons, who was a faithful witness in the large Metropolis of the truth of God, doctrinal, practical, and experimental. There are those now living who can testify by what they felt in their own souls under his ministry that he was a man of God and a sent servant of God; and they still cherish the remembrance of his name; for "the memory of the just is blessed."

Mr. Irons was a staunch opposer of Romanism, and with all his powers protested against the Catholic Emancipation Bill. In public and in private he contended that in passing this Act our leaders in Parliament of that day committed a disgraceful act, giving to the enemies of our liberties some hope and prospect of again bringing this nation into civil and religious bondage, from which it had been so mercifully delivered by the goodness and omnipotent hand of God. Mr. Irons' protest and hatred to Catholicism was very frequently vented in the strongest terms whilst in the pulpit preaching the Word of God, and at times it may have diverted him rather too much from gospel subjects and an experimental line of preaching which alone can edify the children of God, strengthen their faith, meet their fears, encourage their hope, and under which their hearts and souls are often softened, humbled, and constrained, from a feeling sense of God's goodness; to bless the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Two years ago we reviewed with approbation a volume of sermons by Mr. Irons, and from what we have heard from different persons we have every reason to believe that these sermons have been made a blessing. The present volume will, we trust,

prove as edifying, comforting, and instructive as those to which we have just alluded.

In a sermon preached from Ps. cvii. 8, speaking of his own experience, he says, "Not one thousandth part of the gratitude due to his holy name ever escapes from or is excited in my heart, much less does it excite due praise or adoration before his throne. I sometimes murmur and complain if I do not receive all I cry out for. Sometimes I groan out a request, perhaps very earnestly for some special mercies, and my spirit rebels because he does not give it me at my own time. O what depravity there is in the human heart! The occasions are very few, comparatively, in which even the redeemed soul pours forth aspirations of gratitude, giving vent to the feelings of the heart in expressions of joy and thankfulness, and gladness unto God. O God, give us more of this! Truly, if I survey and review only one week of his gracious dealings with me, and mark all he has done for me in nature, providence, and grace, I am fraught with the conviction, that if every waking moment of my life to the end of my days were employed uninterruptedly in sounding forth his honour, in expressing my gratitude, and in singing of his goodness, it would all be far too little. It requires an eternity to sing his praises. There, there is no interruption. This only comforts me here. This thought richly delights my soul—that there shall be a period when I shall be everlastingly engaged in praising the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

These sermons need no commendation from us, for they commend themselves; and it is evident they were preached out of a feeling heart, and at times under the anointings of the good and gracious Spirit of God.

EVEN an earthly parent is particularly tender and careful of a dying child. Much more will the great and gracious Father of the elect support, cherish, and defend his own children in the hour of death.—*Toplady*.

If we belong to Jesus and walk in obedience to his will and word we shall surely have many outward foes, "for all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution;" but they cannot really hurt us, for "who is he that will harm you if ye be followers of that which is good?" There are much more numerous and mightier enemies within than any foes without; and of these we may truly say with Judah of old, in the presence of the embattled host, "O, our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do; but our eyes are upon thee." (2 Chron. xx. 12.) And well is it when we can look up in faith and prayer to the blessed Lord as our risen Head and enthroned King, and, from a believing view of his surpassing grace and almighty power, ready to be stretched out on our behalf, can say, "Our eyes are upon thee." When we feel the power of sin, the tyranny of our vile lusts and passions, and what our nature is capable of if left to its own will and way, how sweet and suitable is the promise, "He will turn again; he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities." (Micah vii. 19.)—*Philpot*.

Obituary.

SUSANNAH TOWNSEND.—On February 8th, 1889, aged 67, Susannah Townsend, for many years a member of the church at Hebden Bridge.

She was called by grace in early life when attending the Baptist chapel at Wainsgate, near Hebden Bridge, the scene of Dr. Fawcett's labours, and was baptized and joined the church at that place. She continued there for some time, but did not get what her soul desired under the preached word. On one occasion she came to the "Dove chapel" as our old chapel used to be called, and there she found what her soul longed after, even the bread of heaven, which was food for her hungry soul, and clean provender which had been winnowed with the shovel and the fan. After this, to use her own words, she said, "I was often creeping down to my new chapel, going the quietest way, for I was frightened lest anyone should see me;" and the oftener she went the more she was convinced that these people were her people. She eventually joined them and remained a consistent member up to her death.

Being sorely afflicted in her legs for upwards of ten years, it was with the greatest difficulty she could move across the house, and also being quite deaf she was deprived of the public means of grace; yet I never heard her complain. The Lord wonderfully supported her, and favoured her with much of his presence. She rejoiced in the finished work of Christ, and often expressed herself in the words: "My Jesus has done all things well." Her Bible and hymn-book were her daily companions, and she often breathed forth the feelings of her soul in the language of some of our hymns. Many, who were eye-witnesses of her sufferings, were constrained to testify to the reality of her religion, which by the Blessed Spirit shone so conspicuously. Amongst her favourite hymns were those commencing,

"In heaven my choicest Treasure lies,"

and

"My God, my Portion, and my Love."

Her end was peace.

A. H.

JOHN WILCOCKS.—On January 30th, 1889, at Croydon, in the 80th year of his age, John Wilcocks.

He was baptized at Wandsworth and received into the church on September 3rd, 1832. A few years later he was removed, in the providence of God, to Hampstead, where he joined the Strict Baptist church in 1837. On March 2nd, 1845, he was chosen to the office of deacon, serving the church faithfully until the year 1852, when he was again removed, in the providence of God, to Forest Hill. He then met with some friends in a room at Sydenham. Subsequently he worshipped with the Strict Baptist church meeting at Pump Pail, Croydon, under the pastoral care of Mr. J. C. Thurston. He became a member of the church and was

afterwards chosen to the office of deacon, which office he most honourably filled, in company with the late W. Kennard, for upwards of twenty years.

His last illness, which was of very brief duration, was of a nature which almost entirely deprived him of the power of articulation, so that he was unable to express his feelings as he neared the border of his heavenly inheritance. He was a bright and cheerful Christian, very unassuming, and lived an honourable and consistent life. Many of the Lord's poor, for whom he had a particular affection, will sorely miss his kind consideration.

The following verses which were composed by him on December 31st, 1888, and which were found amongst his papers, will show where his best affections were placed, and that his spirit was indeed ripe for eternal glory:

“I need not go beyond
The circle where I move,
To learn how vain, how transient too
All earthly pleasures prove.

“And yet my foolish heart
So often fondly clings
To some delusive, fancied good,
Which only trouble brings.

“Some blessings which are true
And make a longer stay,
Teach me, dear Lord, to loosely hold,
For they will pass away.

“May I receive them all
As kindly lent to me;
And not repine when called to yield
Them back again to thee.

“The chequered scenes of life,
However bright they seem,
Will vanish soon and be unknown
Save as an empty dream.

“O may I then arise,
And my affections place
On things beyond the wreck of time,
Where all is solid peace.

“May Jesus and his love
My thoughtful mind employ,
Until I join the saints above
In their unmingled joy.

“No sickness, sin, or grief,
Affect that happy throng;
They praise the Lamb who brought them there
In one harmonious song.”

S. J. CLUTTERBUCK.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

MAY, 1889.

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

MEDITATIONS ON PSALM XXV.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from page 163.)

IN the second verse the Psalmist had begged of God that he might not be ashamed, to the meaning of which no child of God is a stranger, for frequently their fear is that they shall be put to shame. In the third verse the Psalmist, feeling that other saints would be tried and exercised as he was, and be the subjects of fears lest they should be ashamed, turns from himself and begins to pray for those who were brought by grace and faith to know the living and the true God. He knew that his brethren in Christ would be troubled and tried in their souls similarly to himself; therefore, turning from his own case, he lifted up his heart to God for others, who, like himself, were brought to wait upon the name of the Lord. The Holy and Blessed Spirit led him out of himself to seek and pray for the good of others. Like the apostle Paul, he loved to see the souls of the saints refreshed, strengthened, and built up on their most holy faith. A great part of Paul's work was in seeking the welfare of the church; for in writing to some of the churches he tells us that he prayed night and day, and his prayer was that the saints might be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that "they might be strengthened with the Spirit's might in the inner man."

It is for the Lord's blessing that we wait upon God in full assurance of faith that he is able to strengthen our hearts and grant us a feeling sense of the comfort of his salvation. This was the way good old Jacob had been led, and at different times he had been sweetly blessed; but perhaps he was never in a sweeter frame than he was when on his death-bed and when so near the gates of the heavenly city, for he was then realizing the Lord's presence and had the comfort of salvation in his heart. He then, when in the act of blessing his children, staid for a moment or two to lift up his heart unto God, and said, "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." He did not say, "I *am* waiting," for the Lord the Saviour was in him and with him; but, "I *have* waited for thy salvation, O Lord." The Lord's people who are brought to wait upon him, though not always in

a comfortable frame of mind, yet are they always in a safe and blessed state before God, for they are blessed with a living faith in their souls by which they discern the Lord Jesus Christ, and see in him everything that their poor cast-down, helpless souls can need, and Christ has said, "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord." (Prov. viii. 34, 35.) The church of God in days of old said, "My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God." (Isa. xl. 27.) Often do God's people get into similar straits in their own soul's feelings when God hides his face and Satan suggests that they are out of the secret and have never been born of the Spirit, nor received a promise from God into their souls; yet the Lord speaks to such, saying, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint;" and if our strength is to be renewed, our former strength must have been spent out.

But the mercy is that though we lose our comfort, strength, joys, and peace, God never loses his power to help us, nor his willingness to save us out of our distresses. His ear is open to the prayers of those who wait and call upon him, though it be only with an inward desire, groan, or sigh: "The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth." No matter how many times a child of God may have been blessed in his soul with peace and mercy, no matter how many times he may have mounted up to heaven as upon wings of eagles, he loses his comfort and has again to say, "O my God, my soul is cast down within me," and he has again, in the midst of his spiritual exercises and under feelings of weakness, hunger, and thirst, to return to the Lord, wait upon him at his throne of grace, and look up to his mercy-seat, for he has nowhere else to go; and the Lord himself for our comfort has declared, "They shall not be ashamed that wait for me." (Isa. xlix. 23.) The Lord's people are often tried respecting their hope and faith, and how it will be with them when they come upon a death-bed. They fear lest they should then be found like the foolish virgins with only a lamp, no vessel, and no oil in the lamp, and that, like them, when the Bridegroom comes they shall be put to shame. In this matter it is with God's own children as it was with Reuben in days of old, for it says, "For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart." (Judg. v. 16.)

But the Psalmist proceeds to put up another prayer, not for the righteous, but for the wicked: "Let them be ashamed which transgress without cause." He does not here pray absolutely for their destruction, or that God would curse them and cast them into hell; for his mind may have been led to ask mercy for his enemies; as Christ enjoined upon his disciples, saying, "Pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

David gave Saul and others no cause to transgress against him, yet they devised to take away his life. Enmity was in their hearts against him, jealousy burnt as a fire, and so the man of God was brought to understand the text: "A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty; but a fool's wrath is heavier than them both." (Prov. xxvii. 3.) But David would have been glad to see his enemies ashamed of their conduct and brought to acknowledge their offences before God. Saul, when in the cave, was in the hand of David, and he might have taken away his life, but he simply cut off the skirt of Saul's robe, and after he had departed from the cave, David followed him and held up the skirt of the robe before him, saying, "My father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand; for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it." (1 Sam. xxiv. 11.) Saul was then so overcome that he said, "Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept. And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I." Here, for a time, the king was brought to feel ashamed and to see that he transgressed against David without cause.

All transgression against God is without cause. The fallen angels sinned without cause. They had their being from God and were placed in a state of happiness, and lived in the presence of their Maker. There was nothing lacking to make their happiness complete, and yet they sinned, which is a mystery no one can find out, and for their causeless transgression they were banished from the presence of God as the penalty of their sin. Again. There was no cause why our first parents should transgress, yet transgress they did, and that, too, when surrounded with every comfort, whilst living in a state of innocence and a state of happiness with everything to satisfy the eye, gratify the mind, surrounded with every temporal blessing that could be desired, and above all the Lord came daily into the garden, and there communed with them as his creatures, having endued them with what he had withheld from the brute creation, namely, wisdom, understanding, and the knowledge of God himself. There was not a thing lacking to make them happy, therefore their transgression was without cause.

Even so is it with all the fallen race of Adam. God is good to all. "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matt. v. 45.) He doeth good continually, even to his greatest enemies. The infidel, the swearer, the thief, the whoremonger, the idolater, and he that oppresseth the hireling in his wages, God gives them no cause to sin; therefore he says he will be a swift witness against them. (Mal. iii. 5.) Even the Lord's own people before they are called by grace, some of them in particular, have transgressed to the highest degree against God in whom they live and move and have their being. See the case of Saul of Tarsus. How mad he was

against Christ and his saints; yet neither Christ nor his saints gave him any cause to persecute them; but it arose out of the enmity of his heart against real religion and the incarnate Son of God; and when the Lord brought him down, as he does all his own people in due time, how ashamed he felt of himself and his sinful course, nor could he forget it as long as he lived in this world; for just before he suffered for Christ's sake he acknowledged what he had been in his former days, saying, "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." (1 Tim. i. 13.)

But we may come a step nearer home and look into our own hearts. Since Christ has set up his kingdom there, since we have been born and led of the Spirit, enjoyed the Lord's presence, felt his mercy, and the aboundings of his grace over all our sins, how many times, to our shame be it spoken, have we transgressed without cause. Under a sight of the abominations of our nature which the Lord would have us to behold and into which he will lead us deeper and deeper, giving us fresh and clearer discoveries of what we are, how we are constrained to acknowledge that we sin daily against a holy, good, and gracious God who has never yet hurt one hair of our head nor done us the least injustice in any shape or form, either temporally or spiritually; and as long as we are in the body we shall have to learn more and more of the dreadful depths of the fall, the unsearchable depths of iniquity that are in us, and this, too, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit of God in our souls, who time after time speaks, saying, "Turn again, son of man, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these." So that we may safely say the angels, our first parents, the world at large, God's own people before they are called by grace, and God's own people after they are called by grace, all transgress without cause against God, against his mercies, and against his laws. We have all broken his laws and come short of his glory.

But the Psalmist proceeds to the fourth verse, and having dropped the plural he again commences to pray in the singular. He was concerned to have right views of God's ways. Jeremiah, when in great grief of soul, had to cry to the Lord for direction, for, like David, he felt his need of God, and said, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. x. 23), that is, not in the right way. Here the Psalmist lifts up his soul to the Lord that he would show him his ways. Clearly, then, he needed a revelation from God and instruction from the Almighty; for he felt assured that God's ways and man's ways were altogether opposite; and the Lord himself has declared this, saying, "My ways are not your ways, neither are my thoughts your thoughts." Man's way is a way of transgression; God's way is a way of reconciliation. Man's way is a way of sinning; God's way is a way of mercy. Man's way is the broad way to hell; God's way is the narrow

way that leads to the kingdom of heaven. Man's way is a way of misery and sorrow; wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. Man's way, if in a profession of religion, is to reconcile himself to God by works; God's way of reconciling man to himself is by grace, through the sufferings, bloodshedding, and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Man vainly thinks that there is a way to heaven by his own righteousness and strength; God's way is Christ, and Christ has declared and it will stand good as long as time shall last, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." We make ourselves sinners; God only can make us saints. We can bring ourselves into condemnation; God only can give us justification. We, by transgression, make ourselves worthy of hell and banishment from the presence of God for ever and ever; God's way is to save us from our sins, wash us from our iniquities, and make us fit to stand before him without a blemish or a fault; as Jude says: "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Have we not cause to lift up our souls with this dear, prayerful, Spirit-taught man of God and say, "Show me thy ways, O Lord?"

The Psalmist also says, "Teach me thy paths." When God called David by his grace and afterwards sent Samuel to anoint him to be king, little did he understand the way in which he was to attain to the throne. The oil was poured upon his head, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, but the paths of trial and tribulation were hidden from him. These things the Lord was not pleased to show him at first; but he was soon brought into paths that he had not known, for he soon had to encounter persecution and opposition. After the Blessed Spirit has come upon the Lord's people and their heads have been anointed with oil, they find the Lord's paths very different to what they had marked out for themselves. Very often some unexpected trials come upon them, and instead of going joyfully to heaven as they vainly thought they should, they find themselves, like the Israelites of old, who were led in a zig-zag way, and after years of travel often found themselves a long way from the land of Canaan. God confounds our reason in many things, and gives no account of the why and wherefore of some paths that he is pleased to lead us into; but we must go *through* tribulation, and the promise is: "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known." (Isa. xlii. 16.) There we have a promise of fresh leading into fresh paths, and what they may be God only knows.

When Job was blessed with every comfort and God had set a hedge round about him, when he was looked up to as a king, when he went through the gates into the city, washed his steps in butter, and the Rock poured him out rivers of oil, he knew not what outward losses he was about to sustain, nor what inward trials and temptations from the devil, his wife, and others were to come upon him; but God gave him secret sup-

port and led him forth by a right way, so that he could say, "He knoweth the way that I take; when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." We only know the Lord's will and way as he is pleased to unfold it. It is easy to get into wrong paths, to mark out our own ways, and so bring misery upon ourselves; therefore we need to be continually crying for the Lord to teach us his paths, grant us a prayerful and a watchful spirit, a tender conscience in his fear, a looking up to him for wisdom and for faith to discern what is right in his sight, and in taking any fresh step to cry, like Moses, "If thy presence go not with me, carry me not up hence."

But David did not only want to see God's ways and to be taught his paths, but in the fifth verse he entreats the Lord to lead him, saying, "Lead me in thy truth, and teach me; for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day." He knew there were ways of falsehood,—ways by which men deceive themselves, and he did not want his soul to be entangled in error or carried away with lies. He saw the end of many professors when he said, "There is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue." (Ps. v. 9.) Hence the force of this petition: "Lead me in thy truth," that is, in the way of truth. In another place he says, "I have loved the way of truth." The truth of God embraces all the great doctrines of the gospel, which is called the *word of truth*, and John tells us that "no lie is of the truth," for it is in perfect opposition to it. Everything that proceeds from God must be truth, for God cannot lie; but all the doctrines which proceed from men in opposition to the pure gospel are called a lie. There were men in the primitive times, who, after they had heard the gospel preached in its purity, turned from it. Hymenæus and Philetus were two of them, and Paul speaking of them says, "Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already;" and he saw that many others would depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; therefore he predicted that they should turn away their ears from the truth and be turned unto fables.

The Psalmist, like all the Lord's people in the present day, wanted to be led into the pure truth of Christ. The Word of God has always been a pure Word. We are surrounded with many changing scenes. The world is full of commotions and miseries. Death is constantly removing both the friends and enemies of God from the earth; but in the midst of all these things, God's pure Word of truth remains the same; as Peter says: "The Word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." (1 Pet. i. 25.) In the Word of truth God has revealed his mind and will, and he plants it and keeps it in the hearts of his people, and he also waters it, for there he loves to see it flourish. So said David, "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and

in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom." The hearts of natural men embrace error and lying doctrines, but the Lord's people who are by the Spirit taught truth in their inward parts are constrained to own it, hold fast to it, and profess it, nor can they speak against it; for we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth, and the Lord himself has said of those who are Israelites indeed, "The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies." (Zeph. iii. 13.) God gives his people a love to the truth, and they cannot and will not speak against that which they love, against that by which their souls have been quickened, and by which their souls have been saved; for they can say with David, "Thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes; and I have walked in thy truth" (Ps. xxvi. 3); that is, in the right way, not holding the truth in unrighteousness, but having experienced something of the power of it, delivering their souls from error as well as from death; and this is one of the promises of Christ: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (Jno. viii. 32.)

The Psalmist had a clear view of the truth, and longed to be led into the liberty and preciousness of it, but felt how much he needed a gracious teacher and instructor. The Word of God had been brought home with light and life to his soul, and faith was created in his heart to believe the testimony of God; so that amidst all the changes through which his soul passed he could appeal to the Lord and say, "I have stuck unto thy testimonies." This is the case with the Lord's people now. They have nothing else to cleave to and nothing else to hope in but the God of truth and the Word of truth; and as the Lord has made known to them the gospel of his grace and the power of his Word on their hearts their cry is: "Take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth."

It is by the Word of God that sinners frequently have their eyes anointed and their ears opened. Convictions of sin and of every false way are opened up to them, and the gospel of the grace of God in the love of it is implanted in their souls never, never to be eradicated. This was the case with the Ephesians to whom Paul wrote his epistle reminding them of their conversion and confidence in Christ; for he said: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation." The Word of God has a sanctifying and saving power upon the heart, turning sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. This was the effect of Paul's ministry on the Thessalonians whom "God had from the beginning chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth," and he reminds them that what he preached and what they received was the word of God and not the word of man, "but as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

Wherever this truth is received into a good and honest heart it begets love to the brethren and friends of Christ. This was

the effect of Peter's ministry on those who were converted through his preaching, for he saw and was glad at the blessed effects which the gospel had wrought in their hearts, and said, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." (1 Pet. i. 22.) Thus we see that the Word of God is truth, and those who have received it into an honest and good heart and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, these are the children of truth, nor will God give them up to believe a lie as thousands do; as it is written: "That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess. ii. 12.) Not so with those who have received the word, felt its power and preciousness, realized liberty through it, and had the truth unfolded to their understandings to see clearly that no lie is of the truth. Of these the Lord says, "Surely they are my people, children that will not lie; so he was their Saviour." (Isa. lxiii. 8.)

Some of the Lord's children of weak judgment may be for a time entangled through false, Judaizing teachers, as was the case with the Galatians. These teachers so wrought upon the corrupt and fleshly part of the saints that they stirred them up to become zealous for the law and for the covenant of circumcision, even after they had had liberty, peace, and pardon made known to their souls; but Paul would not in any way preach the law of works on which to build their hopes for eternity. He had showed them that by the works of the law no flesh could be justified. Now he says, "If I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor," and he showed them that if righteousness come by the law, then Christ died in vain; for if they could get to heaven by the works of the first covenant, then there would be no need for the covenant of grace, and for the sufferings, merits, and death of Christ. Being thus beguiled Paul addresses his converts calling them foolish, asking who has bewitched them, and why they should not obey the truth, seeing Christ had been set before their eyes in Paul's ministry as he who was crucified for their sins and who had gone to the end of the law for righteousness on their behalf; and as a proof that they were not under the covenant of works, but under the truth of the gospel, or the covenant of grace, God had sent the Spirit of life and liberty and power into their hearts.

Therefore Paul, who was their father in Christ, again addresses them, saying, "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" As if he should say, "If by the Spirit your religion was begun, your hearts changed, and Christ revealed to you as the end of the law, and this came to you by the hearing of the word of truth which I preached to you, are you so foolish, so beguiled, so stupid, and so blinded by these false apostles and deceitful workers as now to turn back to the covenant of works by which no soul ever yet was or ever can be saved? Are you so foolish as to think you are now made perfect by the flesh?"

Did not God at first send into your hearts the Spirit of truth whilst hearing the word of faith preached, just the same as he sent it into the heart of Abraham; for you heard the same doctrine from my lips that Abraham received from the lips of God, and 'Know ye not that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham?' Have you not been justified from all your sins and received the Spirit of liberty and the Spirit of adoption into your souls, and felt the truth so precious to you as it fell from my lips that you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me? Now come, you foolish Galatians, answer me this one question, 'Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?'" Then he again reminds them what a good beginning they had had, how willingly their feet ran in the ways of God, how their hearts were strengthened with what he had preached to them, and says, "Ye did run well. Who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?"

But though they had been thus zealously affected by false teachers and were ready to exclude Paul, he still owns them and still loves them; for he knew full well that they were sons of God and that he had begotten them unto God through the truth of the gospel. Therefore he turns to them with affection, kindness, and love, saying, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." He did not call them old men in grace, nor even young men, saying, "Ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you," but "*Little children,*" and he was willing to nurse and give them milk and meat that they might grow; nay more, he travailed in birth that Christ might again descend with power into their hearts and root out of them all these false doctrines and errors, and even the false zeal and false love with which these Judaizing teachers had affected them.

The Psalmist evidently saw the truth of God clearly; but poor man, like ourselves, he was often with fetters bound, and unable to take one right step forward in his own strength, and quite as unable to go back into error. So it is with the people of God, —they cannot go back into error; for "we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." (Heb. x. 39.) Yet though the truth is set forth before us with all its varieties, how the children of God have to pray that God would lead them into it, that is, into the comfort of it and into the liberty of it; so that their souls may rejoice in the truth; as Paul speaks of love: "Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." (1 Cor. xiii. 6.) David had enjoyed these things in his soul many, many times when he prayed this prayer; for he saith in another Psalm, "He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." By *truth* we may understand God himself, even the Father of mercies; for he is called the God of truth. Whatever he has said must be right, and whatever he has promised he will perform; for he has said, "Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto

David" (Ps. lxxxix. 35), that is, not only unto David personally, but unto all David's seed; for he has said, "They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them."

This was one of the great doctrines that Christ engraved on the heart of the poor adulterous woman of Samaria when he said, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him." (Jno. iv. 23.) This is the worship the saints of God love to feel in their hearts, and those who do so are the true circumcision, who worship God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh. The prophet Isaiah saw the love of God's heart and his way of saving sinners, and felt the Spirit of adoption when he said, "O Lord, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth." (Isa. xxv. 1.) He saw the things on which the counsels of God were founded, namely, faithfulness and truth. Moses, speaking of Christ, says, "A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Jeremiah had a similar view of the Eternity of the Lord Jesus when he said, "The Lord is the true God, and an everlasting King" (Jer. x. 10); and when Christ came into the world to do his Father's will, grace and truth in all their fulness were with him; for "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Those who saw Christ by faith and were brought to know him, who had received him into their hearts as the Son of the Father in truth and love, beheld him as the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

With the truth of God the Blessed Spirit girds the loins of all the saints; as Paul says: "Having your loins girt about with truth." (Eph. vi. 14.) He evidently refers to what the Lord said to the Israelites when he commanded them to partake of the Passover previous to their exit from Egypt; and told them they were to eat it with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand. (Exod. xii. 11.) Christ, the Incarnate Son of God, "was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." (Rom. xv. 8.) The Psalmist had a sweet faith's view of Christ when he penned the words: "Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven." (Ps. lxxxv. 11.) This was fulfilled when the virgin Mary, who was of the earth, earthy, gave birth to her Firstborn, when God sent a multitude of the heavenly host, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Lu. ii. 14.) But more especially when Jesus was baptized in Jordan did righteousness look down from heaven; as we read: "The heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Then the second time truth sprung out of the earth when Jesus was raised again from the dead by the glory of the Father, who was well pleased with

Christ as the law-Fulfiller and Redeemer, and he who had reconciled the church unto God by his own blood. The substance of all this poor Simeon, who waited for the consolation of Israel, realized when he took the Lord Jesus in his arms and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

Then again, the Blessed Spirit is the Spirit of truth whom Christ sends from the Father to guide into all truth. He it is who testifies of Jesus, leads us to him, makes known his Person, and shows to us his beauty and blessedness, and enables us to say, "Thou art fairer than the children of men." This is the blessed Leader and Instructor who teaches all the children of God; for "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God;" and to him the souls of the Lord's children are led to pray, saying, "Lead me in thy truth." That is, lead me into the enjoyment and liberty, into the life and power and blessedness of truth; and *teach me*. As if the Psalmist should say, "O Lord, thou knowest how weak I am, and cannot lead myself. Thou knowest how ignorant I am, and none but thou canst teach me; and as thou teachest thy people truth in the inward parts,—as thou teachest them everything that is essential to salvation, O teach me,—poor, foolish, ignorant, bruised reed as I am, a poor worm of the earth, and let me not be deceived; but let integrity and uprightness preserve me."

Whilst waiting on God and pleading with him the Holy Spirit wrought confidence in David's mind that God was the God of his salvation. The truth and power of this he had realized many times before. Sovereign, regenerating grace had made him a new creature; he had experienced the new birth; according to the new man he delighted in grace and exultingly cried, "Salvation is of the Lord."

It is very blessed after seasons of darkness and death for the Lord again to revive his work and answer the petition of our poor souls when we have been led to say, "Show me thy mercy, O Lord, and grant me thy salvation," that is, the joy and comfort of it; for if once the soul has been brought from death unto life and realized the converting grace of God, it never can be lost, though all joy and comfort may be taken away. But as it was with David, so is it with the souls of God's people now. They remember what they have had and long for a restoration of former joys and consolations, and cry, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit."

(To be continued.)

WE cannot fully understand the sufferings of Christ. God only knows what is in the curse of the law. God alone knows what is the true and utmost desert of sin. How, then, do we know what Christ suffered, when the punishment due to our sin, when all our iniquities, and the curse of the law met on him! God only knows what is in these things.—*Owen*.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF SOME OF THE LAST WORDS
OF THE LATE THOMAS HALYBURTON, WHO DIED
ON SEPT. 23RD, 1712, AGED 37.

On Wednesday, Sept. 17th, when a friend in the morning asked him how he had rested during the night, he said, "Not well;" and spoke of how he had been sorely tossed with the thoughts of eternity; "but," said he, "I dare not say they were distracting. My evidences are much clouded indeed. I have been thinking on the terrible things of God, and all that is difficult in death to a saint. All my enemies have been round about me. I have had a great conflict, and my faith was like to fail. O that I may be kept now in this last trial that is ensuing from being an offence to his people!" In the afternoon, when some of his brethren came in to visit him, he said to them, "I am but young, and have little experience; but this death-bed now makes me old, and therefore I would encourage you to faithfulness in the Lord's work. Ye will never repent this. He is a good Master; I have always found him so. If I had a thousand lives I would think them all too little to employ in his service." All this day and some days preceding it he was under a cloud and desertion.

Sept. 18th.—When a friend asked him how he was in the morning, he broke silence with these words: "O what a terrible conflict had I yesterday! But now I can say, 'I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith.' Now the Lord has filled my mouth with a new song. Praise is comely for the upright. Shortly I shall have such a sight of God as I have never yet had, and be more meet to praise him than ever. O the thoughts of an incarnate God are sweet and ravishing! I wonder at myself that I do not love him more and that I do not admire him more! O that I could honour him! What a wonder that I enjoy such composure under all my bodily pain and in view of approaching death! O what a mercy that I have the use of my reason till I have declared the Lord's goodness to me!"

To his wife he said, "The Lord came to me in the third watch of the night, walking upon the waters; and he said to me, 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; I was dead and am alive, and live for evermore; and have the keys of hell and of death;'" and added, "He stilled the tempest, and now there is a sweet calm in my soul." Then he said, "I shall see my Redeemer stand on the earth at the last day; but I hope to see him before that, the Lamb in the midst of the throne. O it will be a glorious company,—the spirits of just men made perfect, and Jesus the Mediator of the covenant! O for grace, grace, to be patient to the end!"

When the physician came in, he said, "Is my pulse weak, doctor?" The reply was, "Yes." He then said, "Doctor, as to this piece of work, you are near an end with it. I wish you may lay it to heart, for it will come to your door too; and it is a business of great moment to die like a Christian. Christ him-

self has told us that there are but few that shall be saved, even among them who are called outwardly. There is a reality in religion, doctor; but this is an age that has lost the sense of it. The Lord has not said to the seed of Jacob, 'Seek ye my face in vain.' Atheists will see one day whether it be so or not. I am so far from altering my thoughts of religion by reason of the present contempt thrown on it and opposition made to it, that this endears it the more to me. As to the simplicity of gospel-worship, many must have gaudy pomp now-a-days in worship; it is an evidence of the decay of religion; for when folk lack the power and spirituality of it, they must have something to please the carnal heart. This is my sense of it; and they are the words of truth and soberness; and I speak as being shortly to appear in judgment, and hope to give an account of this with joy, as a part of the testimony of Jesus."

After a pause he said, "Everyone that is in Christ Jesus must be a new creature; he must have union with Christ, and a new nature. That is the groundwork of religion. The Christian religion is little understood by the most part of us. Verily, there is a reality in religion. The little acquaintance I have had with God within these two days has been better than ten thousand times the pains I have all my life been at about religion. It is good to have him to go to when we are turning our face to the wall. He is known for a Refuge in the palaces of Zion, and is a very present help in trouble. O there is a strange bardness in the heart of man! We must have an ear from God before we can hear."

"We are foolish creatures; we would have all the trial at our disposal and limit the Lord as to the circumstances of our trial. Why should I complain of a little trouble in lying on this bed? Blessed be God, there is an everlasting rest; yea, Christ has perfumed the bed of languishing and the grave—he has unstunged death.

"Ministers may have a clear call to work in a place, even where they have the certain prospect of difficulties and winnowing trials. I long for Jerusalem's peace and joy. I must have a word to my brethren in the ministry, for it is on my heart. I am young, but I am near the end of my life, and that makes me old. It was the delight of my heart to preach the gospel, and it made me sometimes neglect a frail body. I ever thought if I could contribute (instrumentally) to the saving of a soul, it would be a star, a crown, and a glorious crown. I know this was the thing I aimed at. I desired to decrease, that the Bridegroom might increase, and to be nothing, that he might be all; and I rejoice in his highness. I rejoice that the Lord's grace enabled me to this. I was foud enough of books, but I must say, in the course of my ministry, what the Lord let me see of my ill heart and what was necessary against it, was more useful to me than all my books. O that I had the tongue of men and angels to praise him!"

When advised to lie quiet a little he said, "Whereon should a

man bestow his last breath, but in commending the Lord Jesus Christ, God clothed in our nature, dying for our sins? As I preached the gospel in my life, so I desire to die preaching it." When his wife asked how he was, he answered, "My dear, I am longing for the salvation of God, and hastening to it." Then, seeing her very sad, he said, "My dear, encourage yourself; here is a body going to clay, and a soul going to heaven, where I hope you are to come."

Sept. 19th.—When desired to lie quiet, he answered, "Should I lie here altogether useless? Should I not spend the last bit of my strength to show forth his glory?" He held up his hands and said, "Lame hands, and lame legs; but see a lame man leaping and rejoicing." At another time he said, "Here is a demonstration of the reality of religion, that I, a poor weak, timorous man, as much once afraid of death as any,—I that have been many years under the terrors of death, should come now, in the mercy of God and by the power of his grace, composedly and with joy to look death in the face." Then he said, "I hope the Lord will deal tenderly; but pray for me, that my faith fail not. I loved to live preaching Christ, and love to die preaching Christ." Then, as to his spiritual enemies, he said, "I think I am now almost out of their hands." One said, "That is a great victory." He answered, "I dare not speak of victory; but the Lord holds me up. I am afraid to speak, lest that cursed enemy, *self* lie at the door to catch; for when I have had the greatest blessings, I have felt corruption stirring, and inclining me to spoil my Lord of his glory. I bless the Lord that ever he honoured such a sinful, unworthy worm to preach the glorious gospel of his Son. I confess I have but ill-managed this glorious trust; and my manifold corruptions made me a sinner in all I did exceedingly; yet, so far as I know my own heart, it was the life of my life to preach Christ crucified. I bless God that he has cast an insignificant worm's lot among those to whom his weak labours were not unacceptable; and I look upon it as a high privilege to have the countenance of the saints, the excellent ones of the earth. I have desired to live with them here, and desire to have my lot with them eternally hereafter. O the wisdom that is laid up in the Book of God, and is to be found only there! The operations of the Spirit of God are maligned this day; but if we take away the operations and influences of the Spirit of God in religion, I know not what is left. I rejoice that the Lord is taking me away in my younger years, that I shall be free of the transgression of the wicked; and it has many a year grieved my soul to see it."

After a little he said, "There is a sweet composure on my spirit; the beams of the house are, as it were, cracking. I am laying down my tabernacle, to be built again. O for grace to be faithful unto death; for after we have gone through many things, yet we have need still to wait on God till the last; for it is he that endures to the end that shall be saved. I owe the Lord so much that I cannot but commend him. As far as my

word will go, I must proclaim it; he is the best Master that ever I saw."

To a minister who came from Edinburgh to visit him, he said, "Come, and see your friend in the best case that ever you saw him in—longing for a deliverance, and hastening to the coming of the day of God; waiting for the salvation of God, on a bed of roses, though nature and skin say not so; but it is a bed perfumed. O let us exalt his name together! Glory dwells in Immanuel's land. 'Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love.' Then to one of the elders of the parish he said, "James, you are an old man, and I am dying; the child is going to die a hundred years old. I am like a shock of corn fully ripe. 'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright?' I am not calling myself perfect; the Lord knows I am far from it. I have found corruption stirring this morning." One said, "The Lord's dealings with you have been very uncommon." He answered, "Very uncommon indeed, if you knew all that I know; yea, but therein is the glory of the Lord, that he makes the weak strong, and thus the excellency of the power is more remarkably seen. Here I am now, a weak man, in the hands of the king of terrors, rejoicing in hope of the glory that is to be revealed, and that by the death and resurrection of a despised Christ."

He, apprehending himself very low, said, "Come, sweet Lord Jesus, receive this spirit fluttering within my breast like a bird to be out of a snare. When shall I hear thee say, 'Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away?' Come, sweet Lord Jesus, and take me by the hand, that I stumble not in the dark valley of death. I am weary with delays. I faint for thy salvation. Why are his chariot wheels so long a-coming? I desire to be patient under his hand; but he must open my heart to glorify him. Thou that knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. I find corruption vigorous and strong. I am a monument of the power of God. My trouble is great, but I am helped to bear it. My desire has been these many years to suffer for the truth of our religion, and now God has given me the greatest honour, to be a living witness to it and a monument of it, that 'we have not followed cunningly devised fables.' I shall be in heaven shortly. I shall go there by the word of my testimony and the blood of the Lamb. All is of grace. He has chosen me, called me, justified me, and sanctified me by his grace. He gives grace and glory. Here I lie pained, without pain; without strength, and yet strong. Many times when I have thought on the worthies that lived in the days of old, I have said I was as one born out of due time; but now I think I am born in due time, for I shall see Jesus, who delivers from the wrath to come."

"I am full of matter. I know not where to begin or end. The Spirit of the Lord has been mighty with me. The Book of God is a marvellous thing. It is written within and without. I never studied it to the half of what I should; but now God has given me much of it together. Never was I more uneasy in my life,

and yet I was never more easy. All my bones are like to break, —they stick through my skin; a hand is a burden to me, my mouth is a burden, and yet all is easy: 'Not unto us, not unto us.' I am more than a conqueror; yet not I, but the grace of God in me. By the grace of God I am what I am. The God of peace has bruised Satan under my feet. You see affliction is no mark of God's displeasure. I often wondered how the martyrs could clap their hands in the fire, but I do not wonder at it now. I could clap my hands, though you should hold burning candles about them, and think it no hardship though the flames were going round about them. And yet I should cry and not be able to bear it, if you but touched my toe, if the Lord withdrew. I could not have believed that I could cheerfully have borne this rod so long. This is a miracle, pain without pain; and this is not a fancy of a man disordered in his brain, but of one lying in full composure. O blessed be God that ever I was born! O if I were but where he is! And yet, for all this, God's withdrawing from me would make me as weak as water. All this which I enjoy, though it be miracle upon miracle, would not make me stand without new supply from God. The thing I rejoice in is that God is altogether full, and that in the Mediator, Christ Jesus, there is all the fulness of the Godhead, and it will never run out."

To his wife he said, "My dear, we have had many a sweet day together. We must part for a while, but we shall meet again, and shall have one work, even to praise God and the Lamb." Then to some present he said, "Were it not for the power of grace, nature would be distracted under what I have upon me now; but the Lord upholds me. I do not weary; but the hireling longs for his wages. He seems in his adorable wisdom to try me further, and holy and reverend is his name. He is not wanting to me. I am carnal, but I long for a deliverance from a body of sin. Shame belongs to me. I am a sinner; the praise of all belongs to the Lord. Glory to him that ever he revealed himself in me. He is free in his love. I was wallowing in my blood; but he passed by, and cast his skirt over me."

After prayer, he having joined in singing, said, "I had always a mistuned voice, and a bad ear, but which was worst of all, I often had a mistuned heart; but when I join the temple service above, there shall not be one string of the affections out of tune. I am nothing, less than nothing—a vile sinner; but mercy does all, I bless his name. I am lying his debtor, not able to pay a mite of it. I am one of the chief of sinners, yet very kindly dealt with; whence is this to me? These are the two worst enemies I have—self, with its fair shows and secret insinuations; and unbelief struggling hard against me. O to be where there is no sin! How sweet has even this bed been, though sin remains and my trouble is great; yet I have been composed in the midst of my trouble. Glory to God that a vile worm, the chief of sinners, is singled out to be a monument of his grace and a trumpeter of his praise. Who is a God like unto thee? It is

the power of religion, and not a name, that will give the comfort I now find. I am dying as one unto whom the Lord is showing himself marvellously good. This is no raving of a sick man. I bless God I never had my judgment more distinct all my days than I have now, which is an evidence of the reality of religion."

To a gentlewoman he said, "You are come to see your old dying friend—a wonder indeed, but a wonder of mercy. The God of glory appeared to me; and the first sight I got of him was such that it won my heart to him, so as it has never been loosed; for though I have had many wanderings, yet I can say, I was never myself till I got back to the centre again."

He then had a little rattle in his throat, and said, "This may be irksome to you; but every messenger of death is pleasant to me, and I am only detained here that I may trumpet forth his praise a little longer." About noon he said, "I was just thinking upon the pleasant spot of earth where I shall lie, beside Mr. Rutherford, and others; and I shall come in as the little one amongst them." Then to some ministers when they came in he said, "What a demonstration has God given you and me of the immortality of the soul by the vigour of my intellect and the lively actings of my spirit after God and the things of God, now when my body is so low, and also pained!" At night he felt very weak, and after a sore conflict, he said, "Ebenezer." One said, "The Lord has helped hitherto, and he will help." Then he said, "When I am not able to speak, I will show you a sign of triumph when I am near glory, if I be able. The conflict is long, but blessed be he that gives patience." A little after he said, "Lord, pity."

To his wife he said, "My dear, be not discouraged, though I should go away in a fainting fit. The Lord's way is the best way; and I am composed." One said, "You seem to be near the crown that you have been wrestling so long for." He cried, "Free grace! Free grace! Not unto me." Speaking of his body, he said, "Why should it not go to dust?" One said, "You have been crying much to God to be with you; and I doubt not but that you are finding it so now." He said, "Yes." One said, "Now you are putting your seal to the truth that *great is the gain of godliness.*" He answered, "Yes, indeed." When he could not speak, he lifted up his hands and clapped them. He spoke little the last six hours before his death, only some broken sentences, which with difficulty were understood; but often cried, "Pray, pray." He fell asleep in the Lord on Sept. 23rd, 1712.

OLD ADAM never was a saint yet, and never will be. (Rom. vii.) On the other hand, the new man, or principle of grace in the heart, never sinned, and never can.—*Toplady.*

THE WORD of God will not avail to salvation without the Spirit of God. A compass is of no use to a mariner unless he has light to see it by.—*Toplady.*

THE HIDINGS OF GOD'S FACE.

BY RUSK.

(Continued from page 103.)

ANOTHER proof to us that the Lord smiles upon us is this, that we shall feel the sentence of justification in our souls; and this is what every convinced sinner should seek after. People will tell you that they are converted, and it was all done very quickly with them under one sermon, and that many years ago; but how have they gone on since? O very comfortably and happily, and they do those things that are pleasing to God. Such have no changes and therefore they fear not God, which fear is the beginning of wisdom. They are deluded by the devil, for if it were God's work they would find it a path of tribulation as well as others. Justification, therefore, is essential; for "the unrighteous shall not enter the kingdom of God." The Prodigal enjoyed this when the father said, "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him." Also Joshua, the high priest, when the Lord said, "Take away his filthy garments, and clothe him with change of raiment;" and the church triumphed in it, saying, "He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." This righteousness Christ wrought out in all his holy obedience, and "by his obedience many shall be made righteous." Faith, under the Spirit's influence, apprehends and puts it on. All this is brought about by the Lord shining on us, and by his smiles, as you may see in the poor woman taken in adultery, whom the Pharisees brought to Christ. They all accused her, saying that Moses in the law commanded that such should be stoned, and asked Christ, "What sayest thou?" When they continued asking, he lifted up himself and said unto them, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her;" and being convicted by their own conscience they went out one by one, until Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. Then when Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more." (Jno. viii. 10, 11.) The blessed effect of all this was justification; for if Christ did not condemn the poor woman, he must have justified her, not in what she had done, for he told her to go and sin no more, but in his own righteousness. Hence Solomon says in his Proverbs, "A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes." (Prov. xx. 8.) This King is the Lord Jesus Christ: "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." (Ps. ii. 6.) Christ sits upon the throne of judgment. Hence he said, "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." (Jno. ix. 39.)

Under the teachings of the Holy Spirit God's elect are convinced of their blindness and ignorance, and such shall see their interest

in Christ, and that their judgment was fully executed upon him; but all those who boast of their light shall be made blind. They are blinded by the god of this world, and being left in that state, "the wicked shall besilent in darkness." Now this King scattered away all these accusers from this poor woman, for they went out one by one. A look from Jesus makes every enemy fly, and this poor woman was made a partaker of God's Spirit, for she called Christ, Lord, and "none can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost."

Another proof that we have the Lord's smiles, his visits, and his approbation, is a feeling sense of his love shed abroad in our hearts. This love is sovereign and free. It is sovereign because all men do not experience it, and free because it is wholly, and altogether to sinners. Say you, "They *were* sinners, but are not so now, for they are converted and become saints." That they are converted and are saints I fully believe, but still they are sinners, and that they well know to the grief of their souls, not openly (though they may be left to fall into sin as David, Peter, and others), but a body of sin and death they carry about with them, and this Satan, by divine permission, works upon in all directions. Say you, "I deny that ever a converted man can thus go on." Then you deny the infirmities of Bible saints and of the church of God in all ages, and prove to a demonstration that you yourself were never taught of God. O how a poor child of God groans under the weight of this old man, which I well know by bitter experience. The cravings and lustings of the flesh cause him many a bitter hour; yet nothing can eventually stop this love of God in the manifestations of it to such a soul.

I had a proof of this again last night; for I went out to hear the word, and on the road I felt worldly and carnal, and an indulging things I ought not, and felt averse to all that is good. I thought of prayer, but unbelief worked so strong and I regarded iniquity in my heart and felt poorly in body. However, against wind and tide and only in words, I called on the Lord, and very shortly after he visited me with his love. I felt the change, and could immediately see that it was a free love and not at all depending, in the manifestations of it, on my diligence, spiritually-mindedness, nor having my heart in tune by prayer, faith, or any other thing; but that the Lord loved me amidst all my baseness, as much as when I lived ever so near him and did that which was well-pleasing in his sight. Now I will tell you what effect this had upon me. It did not make me sow to the flesh or try to gratify what was before working in my heart. No; but I felt a persuasion that the Lord was with me, and felt nearness of access, and a cry to him for myself and others, particularly for one who desired an interest in my poor prayers. I now felt I could pray for that person. When I reached the house of God I heard the word sweetly, felt peace, quietness, and no condemnation; and this feeling abode with me till I went to bed.

These visits are sovereign and free, and often come when we

know we deserve the rod and fully expect it. You may clearly see all this experience in Ephraim. All he had done to procure a manifestation of this love was going on in the way of his own heart, and a shocking way this is. But does the Lord say that if he will alter and turn over a new leaf and walk uprightly, that then he will manifest his love unto him? No; if he did he never would have known anything of it, and that the Lord well knew; but the Lord's love to him as well as to all his chosen people is sovereign and free: "I have seen his ways (of covetousness and going on frowardly), and will heal him; I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners." (Isa. lvii. 18.) This is the way the Lord gets all our heart. What effect had this upon Ephraim? Did it make him go on again frowardly? No; but he tells us that he repented, that he was instructed, and that he smote upon his thigh, being ashamed and confounded. What said the Lord? "Is Ephraim my dear son? (by election and by adoption) Is he a pleasant child? (as considered in Christ and according to the new man of grace) for since I spake against him (in the law), I do earnestly remember him still (in Christ Jesus). I will surely have mercy upon him." (Jer. xxxi. 20.)

Mr. H. told me in a letter he sent me that the Lord would kill me with kindness; and nothing else will so kill us to everything of this world and our own corrupt hearts. It was a sweet sense of God's love that so overcame Mary and drew forth the love of the new man in her. When the Lord grants us his presence and the smiles of his countenance it overcomes us and warms our hearts. Hence the two disciples on their way to Emmaus said one to another, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" When the Lord smiles upon us we shall know it by the heavenly provision which we shall have and which we much need. You know this stands good literally. If you are poor and need food, and if a friend of yours should see you, he will give you food, or if he does not do so, he is not a true friend to have plenty himself and yet see you in want. This is love in word and in tongue, but not in deed and in truth. Say you, "There are plenty of these sort of people." I well know there are. But not so with this Friend that loveth at all times. When on earth he proved the truth of this literally to his disciples when he said, "Children, have ye any meat?" and we read that "he had compassion on the multitude because they had been with him three days, and had nothing to eat."

Say you, "What is this spiritual food?" I might mention many things, but in a word it is all comprised in this, Christ crucified experimentally and savingly known, felt, and enjoyed by a poor perishing sinner. This you may see in the poor prodigal, and therefore he cried out, "I perish with hunger;" and what fed him? Why, the fatted calf, typical of the Lord Jesus Christ; and he tells us that his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed; and says, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my

blood, hath eternal life;" "I am the Bread of life;" and he has promised Zion an abundant supply: "I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread." (Ps. cxxxii. 15.) You see who they are that shall be fed—the perishing and the poor. No man living can be said to be in this state that can feed upon any of his own performances; and the reason you and I are kept so short of this food is not owing to any deficiency of it, for there is bread enough and to spare in our Father's house, and all fulness of grace in the Lord Jesus Christ, for in him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; but it is our legal spirit that holds us down. Those who come stripped of all, without money and without price, such are told to eat that which is good, and to let their souls delight themselves in fatness. I have often proved this, and yet am just as prone as ever to look for something in myself as a preparatory work to the reception of this food.

The Lord has promised to make a feast of fat things for his people, of fat things full of marrow. This feast which the Lord of hosts makes is the Lord Jesus Christ. So says Paul, "Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast." His love is better than wine, and it is called "wine on the lees" because it is pure and unadulterated love, and with it he will feed the poor of his flock. When we go to hear a sent servant of the Lord it is well for us to consider, not whether we *were* poor, but whether we are *now* poor; for "he will satisfy his *poor* with bread." All this comes from Christ's presence, who is the Bridegroom of the church. Hence he says himself, in answer to the Pharisees, who wished his disciples to fast as well as John's disciples, "Can the children of the bridechamber fast while the Bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the Bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days." (Mark ii. 19, 20.) Thus his presence is their food, and in this way they have his smiles; for he says, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved!"

I will now speak of the various mountains of difficulty that appear to us very formidable and also insurmountable, which are sure to come down at the Lord's presence, and by which we may know we have his smiles and approbation. One mountain that stands in the way of God's people is Mount Sinai, and so Israel of old found it; as we read: "And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off." (Exod. xx. 18.) This is to teach us that there is no access to God in this way. The law having been broken in our first head, Adam, we are all lost and gone, and can by no means of our own get back to God. We have lost all power to do good, every faculty of our souls is depraved; for "by the offence of one man, judgment came upon all men to

condemnation;" so that "by the deeds of the law no flesh living can be justified." When Satan threw Adam down and us in him, he did not leave us there, but blinded our eyes, and has, in a crafty way, worked on our fallen nature, and he makes us all vainly suppose that we are not so fearfully fallen; and it is from this that we suppose that we can alter ourselves; so to work we go. But God appears to the quickened sinner arrayed in terrible majesty, and he sees the thunderings and lightnings, hears the voice of the trumpet, and sees the mountain smoking, which makes him keep at a distance, and teaches him that there is no access to God in this way. This Adam himself found. Hence you read of the cherubims and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the Tree of life.

In addition to this there is another mountain which stands right in the way, and that is the mount of corruption: "And the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of corruption, did the king defile." (2 Kings xxiii. 13.) Here it was that Solomon built the idol temples to please his outlandish wives, and his heart was turned away from the Lord. When the Holy Spirit shows us our hearts, O what idols, what vile and filthy lusts, uncleanness, and every other abomination we find to be there, and we prove that our carnal minds are enmity against God, and that we are hateful and hating one another, which teaches us that we are quite as opposite to God's law as hell is to heaven; and we may tug and toil as long as we like, but we never can alter ourselves in the least; for all flesh has corrupted his way. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil." (Jer. xiii. 23.) It is *light* that makes us see this mountain and *life* that makes us feel it; for before we had *light* and *life* we were in no trouble about these things.

God's strict justice is another great mountain which we cannot get over; for we think, How can ever such a guilty, polluted, vile, and abominable wretch and God ever come together? He is just; I am unjust. He is good; I am evil. He is love; I am enmity. He is holy; I am filthy. He is righteous, and I am altogether unrighteous; and as he is immutable and never can change, he never can show mercy to such a wretch; for the Word says: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Thus we view God's righteousness and immutability as a high mountain. Job says, "I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent;" and again: "He is in one mind, and who can turn him." (Job xxiii. 13.) David said, "Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep." (Ps. xxxvi. 6.)

Again. There are two mountains called "mountains of brass" (Zech. vi. 1), and I believe that these two mountains are election and reprobation. We have a strong faith in all these things. We believe that God in the law is against us on account of our sin, and that there is no access to God in this way. We also believe

that we are all overcorrupt, full of wounds, bruises, and putrifying sores, from head to foot, and no part sound or healthy. We also believe that God is strictly righteous and unchangeable in his nature: "I am God; I change not," and "he will by no means clear the guilty." We are fully persuaded that all the world is divided into two parts,—elect and reprobate; and what makes these two last mountains so formidable is that we are sure in our own minds that we are reprobates; for we never can believe that God would ever choose such vile and abominable wretches as we see and feel ourselves to be; and here our souls keep sinking lower and lower, and despair makes great head; for Jesus Christ is hid and we only see our sins and God as a sin-avenging God. This terrifies us, and Satan is permitted to distress us with various texts of Scripture that belong only to hypocrites, and they enter deeply into our hearts, so that our life is a burden to us.

Another mountain is this,—the oppression of men; and this comes to some every way. Satan being at the head of it, having liberty from God, as he had in the case of Job, he stirs these people up, and we sorely feel it; for having life in our souls, our feelings are keen. You will find in God's Word that his family have often suffered in this way on account of their sins. See in the case of the children of Israel. How many times we read of their backslidings and of their oppression under Pharaoh as well as what they suffered at various other times. Midian oppressed them a long time; and as it was with the Israelites as a nation, so it ever has been with the church of God individually. But shall they gain their end? Will God leave his people and cast them off for ever? O no. Therefore let them take crafty counsel, as they do, against God's hidden ones, yet it shall come to nought; and let them speak the word, yet it shall not stand; for God is with us. He only suffers it for a time to humble our pride, lay and keep us low in ourselves, make us feel our dependance upon him, and to ripen them for destruction by their cruel treatment and hard speeches. But in the end he will appear to our joy and they shall be ashamed.

(To be continued.)

THERE is nothing sweeter than the love of God, and the tasting of that sweetness is the earnest of our inheritance.—*Goodwin.*

"ALL my springs are in thee," said the man after God's own heart; and well may we re-echo his words. All our springs, not only of pardon and peace, acceptance and justification, but of happiness and holiness, of wisdom and strength, of victory over the world, of mortification of a body of sin and death; of every fresh revival and renewal of hope and confidence; of all prayer and praise; of every new budding forth of the soul, as of Aaron's rod, in blossom and fruit; of every gracious feeling, spiritual desire, warm supplication, honest confession, melting contrition, and godly sorrow for sin—all these springs of that life which is hid with Christ in God are in a crucified Lord.—*Philpot.*

THE BACKSLIDER IN HEART.

NOTES OF A SERMON PREACHED BY THE LATE MR. PERT, AT FLIMWELL,
ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, APRIL 14TH, 1872.

"The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways; and a good man shall be satisfied from himself."—Prov. xiv. 14.

As the Lord shall enable me, I shall make a few solemn remarks on the words I have named for a text. My dear friends, you and I may make a great profession of religion, and that for a long time, and at last completely give it all up, turn back in the day of battle, and so live and so die; but this would be only a backsliding from profession. To be a real backslider, in the strictest sense of the word, we must know what it is to be brought nigh to God in regeneration. You can never truly be a backslider if you never went forward in the ways of God. I have seen numbers go back into the world and turn their backs upon the truth. Some turn to all sorts of error, and others to dissipation; and so live and so die.

Not so with those who have known what it is to be born again of the Spirit, for these, when they backslide, have known better days. They have known the time when real religion with them was the one thing needful, and when all the troubles of this life were a mere vapour to the trouble they had about what would become of their souls; and, from sheer necessity, they have been led to cry to the Lord, hoping for the time when they should get some help and be more satisfied about their eternal state; and sometimes they felt such love to the ways and house of God as they could not describe. But, after a time, a gloom came over them; their sweet, lively feelings, and their anxiety about their eternal state seemed to dwindle away, and they became careless, prayerless, lifeless, cold, lukewarm, and indifferent about the most momentous thing in the world. They may not have been left to go back into the world, so as to open the mouths of enemies to say, "Report; and we will report it," but have fallen back into such carelessness, coldness, lifelessness, with no heart to read, no heart to pray, and no heart to converse with God's people upon soul-matters. Prayer has been neglected, the world comes into the heart, and the things of time and sense carry them right away; and there they are in such a state as is more easily felt than described. Yet there is a secret dissatisfaction at the bottom, and at times they remember that there was a season when they knew better days,—when they were more lively in the things of God; whereas now there is death in everything. They cannot go back into the world, nor can they go forward; the Lord hides his face from them, and when they cry and shout he seems to shut out their prayer, and there they are, like the barren heath or like a standing pool, and at times they are afraid their religion never began right and never will end right; and when they come to cast up accounts, they feel ashamed to approach the Lord. He hides his face from them, and they cannot get near him; and they

find that they have procured this to themselves, and are completely filled with their own ways. Their confusion is continually before them, and sometimes they are afraid it will continue and they shall die in despair.

I know there are persons who, because they have not fallen outwardly, do not consider themselves backsliders. My dear friends, if you are made tender in God's fear and have a religion that will do to live and die by, the more you have been favoured with evidences of grace and with a lively hope and the Lord's sweet presence, the more you will mourn his absence. Conscience will be a court of equity, and when you cast up accounts you will be forced to say, "Tekel;" and you will acknowledge what a wayward wretch you have been; for though you may not have brought open reproach upon the cause of God, you are a backslider in heart. Prayer has been neglected; conversation with the saints and reading the Word in private have been neglected, and thy heart has gone after this and that object of a worldly nature; and God has shut thee up in the prison of unbelief for it.

My text says, "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways." The Lord said to backsliding Israel, "Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee;" "Turn, O backsliding children; for I am married unto you." When the Lord sees the sinner brought into a state of misery, bondage, and distress, and brought to acknowledge that he has procured it unto himself, then he gives him to feel that God is a God of judgment, and to realize the fulfilment of the Scripture which says, "Blessed are all they that wait for him."

The most highly-favoured men have been constrained, when in their right minds, to own what backsliding wretches they have been; for though they fell not into open sin, their consciences bore testimony that they had backslidden in heart. The Lord will be sure to bring his people to feel, and acknowledge their own backslidings, and to mourn over them. To such he says, "I have seen his ways, and will heal him; I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners." (Isa. lvii. 18.) For, "Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord." (Jer. xxxi. 20.) If the Holy Ghost has brought you to know and feel that you are full of your own ways, you will not have a stone to throw at the worst wretch that has fallen into open sin, but you will say, "So did not I because of the fear of the Lord." "If the Lord had not held me up, I should not only have backslidden in heart, but in life and practice till all my bones were broken. Therefore how kind the Lord has been in making me sick of my ways, and bringing me to repentance." God says, "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke; turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I

was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh; I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth."

My text says, "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways." Where is the man or woman taught of God but what must plead guilty to this? In looking back at the days of their espousals and the kindness of their youth, when they went after the Lord in the wilderness in a land not sown, they see that, from morning to night and from week to week, there were not many hours but what soul-matters were uppermost; and O how tender they were over their words, actions, and ways. Things which are called by some people "little sins," they did not find to be such; for they found it a bitter thing to sin against God. But their tenderness is now gone. Sin is of a hardening nature, and it goes from one "little" thing to another, till the poor sinner gets into such a state that he sins against light, against a better judgment, against all God's mercies, and he wonders at times that the Lord has not cut him off and appointed him his portion with unbelievers. How ashamed he is, and how full of his own baseness! He cannot say to the vilest sinner out of hell, "Stand by thyself; for I am holier than thou," but acknowledges with one of old, "Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man." "I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls." "I watch and am as a sparrow alone upon the house-top."

The more heavenly light shines into the soul and the more tender we are kept, the greater discovery we shall have of our vileness, and we shall come into the place to say with Jeremiah, "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" The Word says, "Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted." (Ps. cvii. 17.) One of old said, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause." (Micah vii. 9.) Ah! my friends, talk about non-backsliding! Look at the man that was going from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves. Jerusalem was an emblem of the church of God. The man went from Jerusalem to Jericho, an emblem of the world; and there he was wounded, stripped of all his religion and left half dead. See what a desperate state sin brought him into. Well then, it chanced that the priest and Levite came that way;—the one looked at him with disdain, as if to say, "Why lie there half dead? Why not get up and be doing?" And on he goes. Then comes the Levite, and he passes by on the other side, looks at the man lying there in a most dreadful state, and takes no notice; and all the poor, half dead thing could do was to groan and sigh over his sad state. By-and-bye the good Samaritan,—a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, came where he was, and he knew that "a living dog is better than a dead lion," and understood his sighs, tears, and distress; and he bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and then took up the

poor, half-dead man and put him upon his own beast (that is, the gospel of Christ, who is the Lion of the tribe of Judah), took him to an inn (where the gospel is preached in all its saving benefits), and commanded the host (an emblem of God's ministers) to look to him, to whom he gave twopence to take care of him; and said, "Whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee." (Lu. x.) Here is a true emblem of a real backslider. But what sympathy, what compassion there is in the Lord Jesus Christ! He will take care that none of his people shall ever perish, however untoward and determined they may have been to have their own way. He will make them sick of it, and then heal them.

My text also says, "A good man shall be satisfied from himself." Now it is only good men and good women that will ever be saved. We read, "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Ps. xiv. 2, 3.) Then, what is it to be a good man? I will tell you. We read in the Word of God that the tree is to be made good and then the fruit will be good; for men do not gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. It is contrary to nature. So, in regeneration, the Lord, by his Spirit, takes possession of a sinner's heart that is as vile as hell itself, and implants an incorruptible seed that liveth and abideth for ever; and forms a new man that is created in righteousness and true holiness, after the image of him that created him; and this makes the man a good man; for the heart of such is a temple for the Holy Ghost to dwell in, and it must be a good person that has the Holy Ghost and all his graces in his soul; as we read: "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things." (Matt. xii. 35.) O what humble and honest confessions of sin there are as the effect of being made good, and what cries for mercy, as prompted by God's good Spirit. What earnest desires after holiness and after God and a knowledge of interest in Christ! The Lord putting his fear in the heart, which is a fountain of life, manifests the good man, who out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth these good things. O what a love there is to holiness, hatred to sin, and desires to know the Lord Jesus Christ,—desires which all the world cannot satisfy. The tree is good, and the fruit is good, because it comes from the Holy Spirit in the soul.

"A good man shall be satisfied from himself." Now, my friends, it is evident from my text that this good man is not satisfied. If I were to say to one of my children, "Are you satisfied with what I mean to give you?" They would reply, "We can take your word for it, but we shall not be satisfied until we have it." Now the Word says, "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." But the Lord's people want to feel satisfied. Say they, "O if I did but know that Christ died for me. If I did but know

that my sins were forgiven by an application of the blood of Jesus to my conscience! I certainly have had some intimations of mercy, some humbling sensations; but I want a clearer testimony. Sometimes when I feel ill it comes over me that I may die; and how can I die with only what I have as yet had? I want to be satisfied, and assured by God's Spirit bearing witness with my spirit that I am a child of God. I want the Lord to say, 'I am thy salvation.' I cry and beseech of the Lord to appear for me, but cannot get what I want; yet I sometimes get so near that I think sometimes I may be about to be fully satisfied, but down I sink again lower than before, and am like Paul on his voyage, when 'neither sun nor stars for many days appeared.' The enemy tells me my beginning was not right and so the end will not be right; and I am tempted to believe I never was rightly convinced of sin; and, if I have some little helps, as soon as I lose them, I am more dissatisfied than ever, and what the end will be I cannot tell." My dear friend, the Lord would not say, "A good man shall be satisfied," if he did not mean that he should; but he says, speaking of his people, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." (Ps. xxxvi. 8.)

The Lord has a set time to favour Zion, and the poor soul has to wait and wait, and gets very dissatisfied and does not know where to go nor what to do. If all the good men upon earth were to say to him, "I am quite satisfied about you; for if I cannot believe for myself, I can for you," he would reply, "Ah! Real religion is a personal thing; and there must be something wrought in my soul by God the Eternal Spirit to bring me to solid satisfaction, and to enable me to say with Thomas, My Lord and my God." The Lord never brings a poor soul to have some sweet helps, some humbling sensations, some springings up and buddings of faith and hope, so that his heart is melted into contrition, and then forsake the work of his own hands. When David fled from Saul into the cave, all that were distressed; or in debt, or discontented posted away to him, and he became a captain over them.

Now, my dear friends, the generality of people are well satisfied with their religion, and know no more of vital godliness than I know about what is going on in India. They think if they have done their duty, and especially if they have lived a moral life, all is right. Not so with the child of God. He knows heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people, and that "he that believeth hath the witness in himself." But I can tell thee, poor sinner, the Lord will never bring thee to have holy longings, breathings, holy pantings after him and to be satisfied from himself, and then deceive thee; for "he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." If he has made thee dissatisfied and in distress, he will surely in his own time satisfy thy longing heart. David, who was a type of the Lord Jesus

Christ, was captain over the distressed band, and the Lord is the Captain of thy salvation, and he will, sooner or later, satisfy thee. The soul, perhaps, is ready to give all up, the devil telling him it is no use to pray, for he has sinned away his day of grace, and that there never was a soul just like him that God saved. Then the enemy comes in with, "You have sinned against the Holy Ghost, for at one time, when a little favoured, you said positively you thought you would be satisfied before you died, and now, instead of getting more satisfied, the longer you live the more dissatisfied you are, and you cannot move one step to help yourself."

All the world cannot satisfy this poor soul. He may have everything that heart could wish outwardly; but that is not what he wants;—he wants a full manifestation by God's Spirit of the pardon of his sins, and to feel that he is washed in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, and for the Lord to say, "I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." Says the poor sinner, "O that would indeed satisfy me; but to hear of others being satisfied while I am not satisfied only sinks me lower, because daily experience tells me that, though I would try to wash myself with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean, yet would he plunge me in the ditch again. I know it is only for the Lord to speak, and it would be done. If he would but say, 'Daughter, go in peace,' or 'Son, thy sins are forgiven thee;' or say, 'Though thou hast brought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices; but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins' (Isa. xliii. 24, 25); if the Lord would but speak this with power to my soul, it would indeed satisfy me, and I could then say with the Psalmist, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies.' O how I long to be thus satisfied!" Well, the Lord satisfied the Psalmist, and made him say feelingly, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." (Ps. lxxxix. 15, 16.)

But in another place David said, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." As if he should say, "Though I cannot live without helps, I shall never be fully satisfied till I get home. I am in an enemy's land, and cannot tell what may take place day by day; but then shall I be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." What a mercy it is that there is everything in Christ that will satisfy the soul; and the Lord's people shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of his house, but never

till they get home will they be fully satisfied, for the more they have while here below, the more they want. Nothing short of the sweet enjoyment of the Lord Jesus Christ will fill the aching void in our hearts. O what blessings are in store for the children of God! How enviable their case! No Canaanite, no Jebusite, no Kenite will there be to annoy them when they reach that happy land where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest."

The Lord grant that you and I may never rest fully satisfied till we are at home with him,—safely home, securely home, where "the inhabitant shall no more say, I am sick; for the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." There shall we ever be with the Lord.

GOODWIN UPON THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

THE curse was not only that Adam should die, but he was to return to his dust. (Gen. iii. 19.) And therefore you shall find that they are made two things by the Psalmist. In Ps. cxlvi. 4, speaking of man, he saith, "His breath goeth forth," there is the act of dying, "and he returneth to his earth." Every man is not buried, but the common sepulchre of all mankind is the earth, though a man lieth on the top of it. Now, our Saviour Christ was in a state of death, not only dying, but he remained in a state of death. It is a strange speech in Acts xiii. 34, where, speaking of our Saviour Christ, saith he, "He raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption." Why, did our Saviour ever see corruption? No, the text expresseth the contrary, in the thirty-fifth verse, "Thou wilt not suffer thy Holy One to see corruption." Why doth the apostle then say, "He raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption?" His meaning is plainly this: Though indeed his body was not corrupted; for as his body was free from sickness while he lived, so it was free from corruption when he died, it became not his honour, it was exempted from sicknesses and infirmities,—yet, saith he, take that state of the dead which tendeth to corruption, and he was under it. He was raised from the dead, no more to return to corruption; not that he corrupted before, but that he remained in a state in which men's bodies used to be corrupted. Our Saviour Christ was not only to get a victory over death, but over the grave, over a state of death. Now corruption is the state of death, and that the apostle meaneth by corruption, when he saith to return no more to corruption; yet actual putrefaction, that he meaneth afterward, when he saith, "He will not suffer his Holy One to see corruption."

To exemplify this unto you thus: If Jesus Christ presently after he had died, if his soul had come into his body again, he had died indeed, but he had not risen from the dead; he had been quickened indeed, as the Scripture sometimes speaks, but he had

not been raised from the dead; therefore that he might be raised from the dead, he must continue in a state of death. As if he had come off the cross before he had died, it might be said he had been crucified, but it could not be said that he died; so if his soul had come to him again when it went first out of his body, it might have been said he had been quickened indeed, but it could not have been said he was raised from the dead, for that implieth a lying under a state of death.

You shall find therefore that death is said to have dominion over him, as over his prisoner. It is the phrase in Rom. vi. 9, "Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him," which implieth that death not only killeth him, but it had dominion over him, had him in his power, he was in the state of death, he was death's prisoner. You must know that death had him in his power, dominion it had a while over him; but, saith he, it was impossible that he could be holden by it. Therefore in 1 Cor. xv. 20, he is said to be "the first-fruits of them that sleep." Why of them that sleep? Because he did not only die, but he slept, he took a nap, he was a while under the state of death; therefore it is said he was raised from the dead.

And herein, my brethren, lay the last of the humiliation of Christ. It lay not simply in his being buried; there was an honourableness in that, for he had an honourable funeral, he was embalmed with sweet odours and spices, which the Jews used to call a burial; not only so, but he was and continued in the state of death. Therein lieth the bottom and the last of his humiliation. It is said in Eph. iv. 9, that he descended into the lower parts of the earth before he ascended. The lower parts of the earth is not meant his grave; for the truth is, his grave was not in the lower parts or in the bottom of the earth, for it was above the earth, it being their manner then to make their tombs in rocks; but it implieth a state of death that our Saviour Christ was in. He did return to dust, to a state of death, to his earth, which was the curse; he was a while dead, death's prisoner, death had dominion over him; therefore he is here said to be raised from the dead.

My brethren, Christ did run through all estates with us; he was not only born into the world, but he lived in it as we do; he might have been born into it and gone out again, but he lived in it three-and-thirty years. When he came to die, he might have died and taken his soul up again presently. No, but he would remain in death. Look, what befalleth us did befall him, setting aside what was dishonourable to his Person, as corruption would have been. The same state our soul shall be after death, his soul was in; it went to paradise, so likewise do our souls; therefore you read of paradise as well as the third heavens. (2 Cor. xii.) Look, what state our bodies were in, that state was his body in too; and God did it, that, as we might see he should be conformed to us and we to him, so that we might be satisfied he was dead indeed.

THE ROD AND THE KISS.

My dear Friend,—It will not be in my power to be at Lakenheath more than one Lord's day, as I am limited to four weeks, and cannot transgress without being disobedient to the law of love, which is the sweetest and most powerful incentive to all acceptable obedience. Happy hearts and happy world could everyone love God perfectly and at all times, and each love his neighbour as himself. But, alas! Ever since the fall love to God is lost and love to self reigns; but blessed be God, his love knows no change, for it is an eternal perfection of his nature, and with him is no variableness nor shadow of turning. Every believing view of interest in that love and every experience of its precious fruits and effects warm the heart and produce admiration, love, and gratitude; but every consideration of our love to him causes shame and confusion of face. Our love is so fickle, feeble, and yields so little fruit; but our little love to him is a Scriptural proof that we share in his great love to us, which indeed passeth all knowledge. This is the effect of our faith; but faith must be tried.

The manifestation of this love and the communications of its precious fruits may and do vary. The rod and the kiss proceed from the same love, but are very different in our feelings and apprehensions; yet He that makes darkness light, crooked things straight, and rough places plain, often makes both to evidence the love which he hath toward us in Christ Jesus. It is a sure proof of there being some good thing in us toward the Lord God of Israel when we can heartily join the sweet Psalmist of Israel and say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; for before I was afflicted I went astray." The heart must be bent upon the King's highway that can experimentally repeat those words. Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; but O the proneness of our hearts to depart from the good old path!

Blindness of the understanding, carnality of mind, legality of spirit, perverseness of will, and unbelief of heart are all against us, and the enemy of souls embraces every opportunity to strengthen these in their opposition to loyalty of heart, freedom of spirit, and to precious faith, humility, and love; but "it is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;" and as Moses truly and sweetly says, "He is the Rock, his work is perfect." (Deut. xxxii. 4.) None but enemies to him and his would charge him with letting souls be lost that he came on purpose to save. The infinitely wise and gracious God has laid help upon one that is mighty, and, as our poet saith,

"His love is as large as his power,
And knows neither measure nor end."

Blessed be his name for ever, he hath engaged to make his power perfect in weakness, and the consequence most assuredly is and will be that "the feeblest shall be as David." Dear man of God,

he had many foes and many fears; but now he is out of the reach of them all. I was thinking the other day what a difference there is between his state and conclusions when he uttered the words: "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" and when he said in his heart, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul." Thanks be to the Lord for inspiring holy men of God of old to leave such changes upon record, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope; and blessed be God for leaving this on record also: "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Mal. iii. 6.)

May the God of peace be with you and bless you and yours, and all that fear his name, both small and great.

Yours affectionately,

Sunderland, May 22nd, 1846.

SAMUEL TURNER.

SANCTIFIED AFFLICTION.

Dear Miss Hudson,—Our little chapel begins to look quite beautiful, and if the Lord's hand be really in this matter what a miracle it will appear! I am sure he is with me in preaching and the people grow in understanding. Mr. M. is building a cottage for me adjoining the chapel, but when I consider my age it all looks like beginning where most end; but the Lord comforts me with a watchful spirit, and I am kept looking at what he is doing with and for me at the eleventh hour.

The people at Aldridge *gain* upon me, and I feel once a month too seldom. I want to go once a fortnight, but the friends cannot spare the costs, and the journey is cold and tedious. In a few weeks we shall be able to lend them our benches, and we hear there is a great hearkening to the word. I hope the Lord will be found amongst us, for Satan is standing at our right hand to resist us, in sending some people to preach who call themselves "latter day saints." This brings an evil report, and the Lord counteracts it by secretly working a divine power in the word, which I perceive hath a constraining power upon several.

I really believe the Lord attended my Sunday's discourse with much power and sweetness to many. My subject was Numb. xvii. 5. "It shall come to pass that the man's rod, whom I shall choose shall blossom." I find much said in various ways in the Word of God upon this rod. In Leviticus we read, "Whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord," that is sanctified affliction, which shall, by the power of God, subdue the dominion of sin, and the tenth is godly sorrow and repentance unto life, humility, self-abasement, a sweet acknowledgment of the righteous judgments of God in all his dispensations, and a sweet sense of Christ's pardoning love which causes all the graces above-mentioned to flow out. We read that all the rods, or

profession of people, shall be brought before the Lord and before the church of God, and their rods shall be looked upon; and the Lord says while this is going on, "I will meet with you," and they were murmuring rebels who were unfruitful. Many whom God has made tender will cry out and say, "How unfruitful I am! I fear I shall be the rod that will neither bud nor blossom." To such the Lord says, "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me." (Isa. xxvii. 5.) "He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root; Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit," that is, the fruit shall be such as will face the world and all its smiles and frowns, and glorify God in the midst of all. All this is not done by being drawn by love as many vain professors talk about; but "As I live, saith the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you; and I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered," as you and I were, and by sanctified afflictions have been gathered and brought into the wilderness, discovering to us our danger; and we have felt God pleaded with us face to face, and showed us that except we were born again, we could not see the kingdom of God. None know what this pleading face to face is except those who have felt it. What awe, what fear, what dismay it produces; and the Lord says, "I will plead with you as I pleaded with your fathers, when they came out of Egypt." (Ezek. xx.) We are not drawn by love in the way that fools describe it.

No sooner had the children of Israel left Egypt than they found themselves between Pharaoh's army and the Red sea. The Lord says, "I will cause you to pass under the rod." O sweet word—*pass!* Not be kept under it or destroyed; for "the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous." (Ps. cxxv. 3.) Neither the sea nor the army stopped the progress of the children of Israel. So you and I have found it. The Lord makes the rod fruitful many ways, especially in stopping all glorying in the flesh, and in making us to know that we can neither remove it nor make it fruitful: "From me is thy fruit found." The rod when sanctified brings about that sweet advantage taken by the Holy Ghost in helping our infirmities and persuading us that the Saviour delights in broken hearts and contrite spirits, and in this way brings us into the bond of the covenant and purges out that rebel, *unbelief*, and all other vanities that transgress against him. However painful the way may appear, yet the Lord declares that if we have no rod there will be no fruit. (Heb. xii. 11.)

There are many who sow the wind of error, and the Lord says they shall reap the whirlwind, that is, *trouble* from all quarters without relief. Their bud shall yield no meal of which the bread of eternal life is made. They shall be as vessels wherein is no pleasure,—vessels of wrath. We also read of blossoms which at

first look fair, but the Lord says there is a rod that blossoms pride and violence, and he says the pestilence shall devour them. (Ps. xci.) Yet the Lord has promised that a few shall escape and shall be on the mountains of Israel, or the true church of God, like doves of the valley, meek and lowly, and mourning at their discovery of unfruitfulness, and acknowledging the wonderful condescension and patience of the Lord and his tender mercies overtopping all their miseries.

Thus I have endeavoured to show you a very little of the things in which we are occupied. I have cause to be deeply humbled for the rich mercy our God displayed in the preaching of this discourse. In the midst of all my weakness there was certainly a divine power felt by many.

Yours affectionately,

Sutton Coldfield, Feb. 15th, 1848.

JAMES BOURNE.

THE SAVOUR OF HIS NAME.

My dear Friend,—You seemed in a low key yesterday, and I found when you were gone you had left a burden on me. I do not know whether you yourself were any the lighter for it. Jesus, our Lord and Master, has left us an example that we should follow in his steps, but I know I go but a very little way in them. One is, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." It is true no one can ever fulfil that until Christ Jesus himself forms that law in the heart, and he has said, "I will put my law into their hearts." Until deliverance is in some measure sweetly known such have enough to do to bear their own burden, and indeed a good deal more than they can do. It is a heavy burden when Jesus becomes precious to a soul, if he does not draw near to it and remove all suspicions and cruel jealousies; and such can say, "If you find my Beloved, tell him that I am sick of love." When we have a sight of what dwells within it seems impossible Jesus should ever enter in and take up his abode with us; but it is with such he dwells, even such as are broken and contrite in heart; for he says, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." (Isa. lxvi. 2.) You see Jesus answers to his name, "*A Saviour.*" My friend, has he not begun to pour out a little of the ointment which a right knowledge of his name produces? The virgins can say, "Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth; therefore we love thee." The benefits of Christ are all freely bestowed.

The Lord pours in as well. Yes, oil and wine,—the one to soften and meeken, and the other to cheer and enliven. When any encouragement is felt in the soul in seeking God, the promise of pouring out the spirit of grace and supplication on such is experienced. We not only pour out our hearts at times to him, but receive of him beyond what we can ask or think. The virtue of his blood is as ointment to the wounded conscience.

"Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no Physician there?" Yes, and such a balm it is as effectually cures the dreadful effect of sin and wrath meeting in the conscience, which, without finding, how many have gone into the gulph of despair. Many a soul has waited long from only getting a scent of this ointment, and been enabled to go in pursuit after it. The Psalmist says, "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia." Christ said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; but a stranger will they not follow." Something draws them which is communicated powerfully to their souls. The spouse said, "My Beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him. I rose up to open to my Beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock." (Song of Sol. v. 4. 5) What precious ointments to take such effect and to drive back the bar of unbelief, and cause the soul to arise to open to entertain her Lord! But he did not as yet go in, but withdrew himself, yet brought such savour, coming near to the heart and touching it with his power, as she never forgot. His name being known in part by such a favour as this creates more keen and longing desires after him. Well might the apostle Peter say, "Remission of sins shall be preached in his name," and "his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong" (Acts iii. 16), and Simon declared how God did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name. "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." (Heb. xiii. 15.) I believe this precious name, even the name of Jesus, conveys all thou needest, of which may the Lord grant thee a clear knowledge, is the prayer of

Thine in the Lord,

Brighton, May 24th, 1825.

WILLIAM SHARP.

THE BUSH NOT CONSUMED.

My dear Brother, Companion, and Fellow-Traveler in the Wilderness,—As pilgrims and strangers we are journeying homewards, and although we often meet with many hindrances in our way, from fightings without, and fears within; yet now and then a gleam of light shines upon our path and a drop of comfort distils upon our souls, to give us a little reviving in our bondage; and thus, though faint, we are still kept pursuing. O my dear brother, if it in any way depended on my strength or wisdom to persevere, I should never arrive at the goal, for I am weaker than a bruised reed; and help I must have received, or I should not have continued unto this day.

What but the arm of the Lord could have supported you and me so long, and kept us from despair, or final apostasy, seeing we have had so much to contend with from the world, the flesh, and the devil? The poor dry little bush must have been con-

sumed long ago, but for the good will of Him that dwelt therein.

The dear Lord has preserved us through the cares, toils, and perplexities of another year. What lies before us in the year that we have just entered upon we cannot tell. May the Lord increase our faith, that his promise may be our stay: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." The importance of eternal things seems to be more weighty on my mind than ever. I want to feel and enjoy more sensible communion with Jesus. O what a poor, dying, empty thing the world appears; yet I feel a clinging to it, like a prisoner hugging his chains. Nature is nature, and grace alone can raise us above it. I have known times when this has been the case, but I find David's words true: "They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble." (Ps. cvii. 26.) But blessed be God, I have ever found him a very present help in *real* trouble. In God's eternal act of predestination all our times both of sorrow and of joy were settled. Therefore cheer up, fellow-traveller, in the wilderness. It is not far to Canaan's heavenly land. Though the black river without a bridge lies between, yet the promise secures a safe passage: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

I often think, "How is my brother B. going on? Is he in the valley, or on the mount; under the cloud, or in the sunshine?" O how good it is for our eyes to behold the Sun? O that it would pierce the clouds once more, that I might feel its cheering rays warming this cold heart of mine! With Job I often say, "When shall I arise, and the night be gone?" (Job vii. 4.)

I often fear the Lord has left me, or is about to leave me, and, like Job, I fear that "mine eye shall no more see good." I oftentimes cry and groan, but cannot find that cries or prayers are heard; yet by some means I am upheld. The words of the Psalmist have been somewhat sweet to me of late: "When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O Lord, held me up." (Ps. xciv. 18.) Never did I feel more the need of faith than I do now,—that faith that stands in the power of God. Some tell us it is our duty to believe, as though the power to believe was our own; but they might as well tell me to say to the sea, "Be dry," and it will obey; or to the sun, "Stand thou still." When the Lord hides his face the beasts of the forest bestir themselves, worldly cares and sorrows weigh heavy, unbelief says, "All these things are against me," and the devil harasses the mind with his accusations and temptations, insinuating that the Lord has forsaken us, death and eternity will soon overtake us, and that perhaps we shall die in despair, and have our portion with hypocrites.

These, and a thousand others things, he distresses the mind with at times, and when in these deep waters and in these floods of the enemy nothing will do but the Spirit raising up a Standard in our hearts, even Jesus.

Your affectionate Brother in the Bonds of Christian Love,
Sutton Benger, March 11th, 1858. JAMES HUGGINS.

INQUIRY AND ANSWER.

Dear Mr. Editor,—As we have been told that Adam in his first creation was neither a holy man nor a spiritual man, would you kindly state in what image he was created?

A FEW INQUIRERS.

ANSWER.

We have several times given our views upon this subject, especially in our Answer to an Inquiry in the "G. S." for Feb., 1886, page 82; and having nothing new to say upon it, and as the late Mr. Philpot was a man of excellent and clear discernment and his testimony both valuable and decisive, we will give some extracts from a letter of his on *Moral Obligation* in the "G. S." for May, 1861, in which he speaks of Adam and in what image he was first created. He says:

"Two things are stated of our first parent in the Word of truth, which I think we must take into account if we would fully understand the foundation on which moral obligation rests: 1. That he was created after God's image, by which I understand that he possessed both a mental and a moral likeness to his Creator. I do not believe that Adam was a spiritual man, that is, that he possessed those spiritual gifts and graces which are now bestowed upon the elect of God, for these are new covenant blessings in which he had no share, at least in his original creation. But as endowed with intellect and reason, and possessed of perfect purity, uprightness, innocency, and absolute freedom from sin, he was created in the image and after the likeness of God.

"2. The second thing recorded of him is, that after his creation he was put into the garden of Eden, and there placed under law—that is, under expressed permission and expressed prohibition: 'And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' (Gen. ii. 16, 17.) View our first parent, then, as standing before God as our natural covenant head, and observe him in the possession of three things: 1. As possessed of the highest, clearest intellect, and gifted not only with thought, but with the faculty of expression, which he manifested in at once knowing and giving names to every living creature, he could apprehend and call upon his divine Maker; 2. As endowed with conscience, he could serve and obey God with the mind and heart; and 3. As being presented with a positive declaration of his Maker's will, and thus put under law, he had a rule laid before him upon which both his intellect and his conscience might act. As I wish to show the broad basis upon which moral obligation stands, I have thus minutely traced it up to its foundation, for without a clear view of this fundamental basis we cannot form a right conception either of its nature or of its divine sanction. . . . I showed in my last letter

how the gospel, as a law of liberty and love, fulfilled and absorbed the law of Moses, and thus became the believer's rule of life; and I have also pointed out in this the foundation of moral obligation in the creation of Adam in the image of God. Now, see on what higher grounds spiritual obligation rests as binding on believers than even that of our first parent. Adam had a natural knowledge of God; believers have a spiritual knowledge of him. (Jno. xvii. 3.) Adam had a natural conscience; believers have a spiritual conscience. Adam was created after the mental and moral likeness of God; believers are renewed in the spirit of their mind, and thus recreated after the spiritual image of Christ, for 'he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit.' Adam could therefore lose the image of God, in which he was created, for it was but a mental and moral likeness, and not a spiritual image. But believers cannot lose their new creation after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness, for they are 'predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God' (Rom. viii. 29); and this predestination secures their never losing it."

We entirely concur in what Mr. Philpot says on this subject, for he very clearly expresses our own views.

Obituary.

JOHN PURSE.—On Oct. 24th, 1834, in the 77th year of his age, John Purse, of Laxfield, Suffolk.

In the early part of his life he was a very wicked young man, and has often told me he believed himself to be the most wicked young man in the parish; but God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, was pleased to convince him of his lost and ruined state as a sinner when about twenty years of age, and gave him such a hatred to sin that he could not live any longer as he had done. To use his own language, he said, "The Lord turned me, and I was turned." He felt great trouble of mind on account of his sins, and earnestly sought for mercy; but could not believe that he had found it till within two months of his death, which was a period of fifty-seven years, when the Lord gave him an assurance of his love. All through his long pilgrimage his moral conduct was such that no one could bring anything against him, and he appeared always the same; for what changes he had were inward ones.

He was no great talker, therefore few besides himself knew anything about the exercises of his mind. He was a constant and attentive hearer of the word, and a lover of the New Testament. I have heard many people who are entire strangers to real religion say if there was a good man in Laxfield they believed it was John Purse; but he had very different thoughts about himself, and was almost always full of doubts and fears.

The apostle speaks of some who were all their lifetime subject to bondage through the fear of death; but this was not the case with John, for he was not afraid of death, nor yet so much of hell, but was afraid he was not a Christian, and feared the Lord had not called him by his grace. He would say, "If I am not born again I know I cannot go to heaven." He was afraid he had never prayed aright, never heard aright, and knew nothing aright.

He would say, "The invitations in the Word are very good, but if I am not invited, of what use are they to me?" The same with the promises. He would say, "They are very good, but if I am not a Christian they do not belong to me." I said, "John, I believe you are a Christian." All the answer I could get was, "I suppose you think I am, but you do not know what a bad heart I have. I hope the Lord will be merciful to me. I cannot leave off praying, though I fear sometimes mine is not prayer." His views of divine truth were clear, and he loved the Word, the ways, and the people of God, though he had but very little enjoyment in them. About twelve months ago he felt a desire to join the church, and I believe would have been gladly received, for no one doubted his religion, but he was afraid it would be wrong for him to do so, and said, "I dare not join the church. I feel to be one by myself." Notwithstanding all this, he was a pattern of believers, for his feet plainly declared the sincerity of his heart.

About two months before his death the Lord manifested himself to him and gave him an assurance of his love, removing all his doubts and fears, and they never returned again. When I visited him tears of joy burst from his eyes, and his poor old face plainly showed the gladness of his heart. He said, "O sir, who would have thought that such a poor old sinner as I am would have been so happy in my last days! What a mercy it is that I can say my last days are my best days." I remarked, "Why, John, have you now no doubts and fears?" He replied, "No, no. I have no doubts and fears now. Blessed be God they are all gone. I have had plenty of them during my life, but I am happy now, and hope to go home soon." Calling upon him a few days after I said, "Well, John, so you are not gone home yet." He replied, "No, I am not. I was in hopes I should have been taken before now, but I am willing to wait the Lord's time. I believe his time will soon arrive, and I shall be glad when it does come. I have a favour to beg of you, and if you would grant it I should be very glad. I have a passage of Scripture on my mind that I should like you to preach from when I am gone. It is this: 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'" (Jno. iii. 16.) I asked him how he came to make choice of that text for a funeral sermon. He said, "I know that God loved me, and gave his Son for me; for if he had not, I should never have loved him."

He turned and gave me a solemn but cheerful look, and said, "That is enough for me; it is all I want." I preached from the text on Nov. 1st to a large and attentive congregation.

Thus he peacefully passed away, after having for the long space of fifty-seven years laboured under great darkness of mind in reference to his personal interest in Christ. J. T.

MARGARET THOMPSON.—On Feb. 12th, 1889, aged 66, Margaret Thompson, a member at Vauxhall Road Chapel, Preston.

She, with ten others, was baptized by the late Mr. M'Kenzie in the river Ribble. It was a snowy morning, but I have many times heard her speak of the peace of mind and the comforts of the Holy Ghost which were then made known in her heart, and she often said she would not mind the snow, nor would she mind being baptized again could she enjoy what she did that morning. She was received into the church by Mr. M'Kenzie, but was not long favoured to sit under his ministry; for having received a call from the church at Liverpool he preached his farewell sermon at Vauxhall on Jan. 28th, 1849, and commenced his labours at Liverpool on Feb. 4th, 1849, and was called to his eternal rest on Aug. 12th, of the same year, in the 40th year of his age.

By what means our departed sister was brought to a knowledge of her lost and ruined state through sin I cannot say, but she felt the burden of her sin and guilt very heavy and her distress of mind was great; so much so that she has told me that sometimes in going home from chapel the trouble of her mind has been such that she has been compelled to rest herself against the wall to prevent falling in the street. How long she continued in this distress I cannot say, but when the Spirit revealed to her soul a precious Christ in his sufferings, blood-shedding, and death, and witnessed with her spirit of her interest in the Lord Jesus, sealing home pardon upon her heart through his death, her joys rose as high as her sorrows had before sunk her low, so that at times she scarcely knew whether she was in the body or out of the body.

From the time I first became acquainted with her I perceived she was a spiritual hearer, and from that time until she was called home a spiritual union existed between us. She suffered from heart-disease, and other ailments, but it had to be something very serious to keep her from filling up her place in the sanctuary; so much so that I have many times been surprised when the weather has been rough to see her at chapel; but her heart was there, and she could say with Watts:

"There my best friends, my kindred dwell,

There God my Saviour reigns."

The last time I visited her, which was not long before her death, though I did not then think her end was so near, she exclaimed, "The Lord is so good to me. I have been favoured to chew some of the old corn of the kingdom. Promises that were given me many years since have been brought to my remembrance,

and they are very sweet to me, and I have felt a confidence of my interest in and union to Christ, and that it is a lasting union which death cannot dissolve. I hope I am not wrong in feeling so confident; but I have a sweet assurance of being brought home safe to glory at last." I said, "Be thankful for it. The Lord brought past deliverances to David's mind and wrought such confidence in his soul that He who had delivered him from the lion and the bear would deliver him out of the hand of the uncircumcised Philistine." I also reminded her of the confidence the Lord the Spirit wrought in the apostle when he said, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The Lord was preparing her for her removal, though at the time we were not aware of it.

On Feb. 10th it was a very snowy morning. Mr. Moxon was occupying my pulpit, and our friend was in her accustomed seat in the house of God, but was not able to get out in the after-part of the day. She lived by herself. The neighbours saw her about the house on the following day, but on the Tuesday morning the blinds were not drawn up as usual, therefore a neighbour got in at the window, and found her lying partly dressed on the bedroom floor in a fit. She appeared to have been getting up at the time she was taken ill. She lay unconscious until about four o'clock in the afternoon, and then quietly passed away, thus sweetly falling asleep in Jesus. The Lord granted her her desire, for she had often said if it were the Lord's will she hoped she should not be laid on a bed of affliction, as she dreaded giving people trouble. Thus, after a space of about forty-one years from the time she was baptized, she experienced the faithfulness of Him who had called her by his grace; as Christ said: "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (Jno. xiv. 3.)

D. KEEVILL.

HANNAH HAIZELDEN.—On Jan. 10th, 1889, aged 23, Hannah Haizelden, of Wandsworth, Surrey.

She was born at East Hoathly, Sussex, on Aug. 27th, 1866. She was very delicate from her birth, and several times when young the doctor said she would not live to grow up. She had a severe illness when five years of age and another when fourteen. After the latter illness her parents sent her to the convalescent home at Brighton for a change of air, hoping that it might prove beneficial to her. She was there two months, and during that time had to attend church with the other inmates, which was uncongenial to her, as we gather from a letter she wrote to a friend at that time, in which she says,

"I feel how much I should like to go to chapel. O that I could feel that I am one of Christ's flock! Sometimes I have a hope, but to-day it seems all gone. I seem unable to read my Bible and cannot pray. I sometimes think I would not mind

what I had to go through if I could only know I was a child of God. I should like to feel ready to leave this world whenever it should please God to take me. Sometimes I am ready to give all up, and then again I feel a little encouraged. I go to church with a heavy heart."

She returned home better in health, and soon after went to Eastbourne for a short time. One evening while there she remarked to her sister that hymn 905 (Gad.'s) expressed what she felt. When about to leave Eastbourne she said, "I am sorry to leave Grove Road Chapel, for I do like to hear Mr. B." Her sister had noticed how eagerly she listened to the Word.

Not long after this she went to live at Barham, near her home, and while there one evening she went home quite unexpectedly, and it was evident she was in great distress of mind. She said, "O mother, what shall I do? I am such a sinner. I do not know what to do." Her mother endeavoured to comfort her, but felt sure the Holy Spirit had given the wound and he alone could heal it. It was while living in this place that I became acquainted with her.

In the summer of 1885 she went to a situation at Croydon, and attended Providence Chapel, West Street, where she felt quite at home, and on several occasions the word was greatly blessed to her. She was generally reserved on spiritual things, but was one that "thought upon his name." We were married on Dec. 13th, 1887, and settled at Wandsworth. It proved a particularly happy union, and she often said she had every temporal blessing she could desire; but the Lord was pleased to show her that this was not to be her rest.

On Friday, Jan. 4th, she gave birth to a son. Shortly after bronchitis and inflammation set in, and she seemed to think she would not recover. Her mother was with her, for which she was most thankful. She earnestly begged for mercy and pardon. On the Monday previous to her death she repeated hymns 905 and 938, and told a Christian friend, who was her nurse, that she had many times heard well at Croydon, and had gone home and on her knees enjoyed a sweet time at the throne of grace. She was in great distress on the Tuesday morning previous to her death, and said, "O nurse, I feel to be such a black and vile sinner. Will the Lord pardon me? I want to hear his still small voice." She then said, "O come, dear Lord! Surely I am not deceived. Surely I have heard thy voice; but I want to hear it again. O if the Lord would but come I should long to go." Her mother said, "You want the Lord to say to your soul, I am thy salvation." She replied, "That is just what I do want. If I could but fall into his arms and be at rest. There is nothing here to live for." She then asked to see her babe, and wished her mother to take care of him if she should be taken away.

She then called me into her room and said, "I do trust I know the Lord and that I am one of his children. There have

been many times when I have heard his word with gladness, both at East Hoathly and West Street, Croydon. At the latter place the word at times has been so blessed to me, that when I have come out of chapel I have been so full of the Lord's presence that I have scarcely known what I have been doing; but for a long time past I have been in a barren state. I have gone to chapel Sunday after Sunday, and returned as I went, for there was nothing for me." She then said, "You know I have made too much of you, and our God is a jealous God, and will have our first love or none."

She then prayed most earnestly for the Lord to come, and shortly after commenced to sing, but we could not catch the words. She appeared to be quite happy after this until her death. During her illness she was very deaf, so that it was very difficult to converse with her. I believe, although she was not a great talker, she often sought the Lord in secret, for, on my return home, I have frequently found her in tears. Since her death I have found a little verse in my desk in her own handwriting, which reads as follows:

*"Secret prayer, O ne'er neglect,
If you God's favour prize;
This is the way, the happy way,
That leadeth to the skies."*

She passed away, without a struggle or a groan. Truly we can say of her that her end was peace. She was interred at East Hoathly on Jan. 14th, when Mr. Vine, of the Dicker, gave a very solemn address, and her favourite hymn (934) was sung.
J. H.

THE providence of God is one straight line drawn from the point of his decree. A straight line it is in itself, however crooked it may appear through a false medium. God will do whatsoever he pleases; and what pleases him ought to please us. It is above nature and contrary to nature to make a full surrender of ourselves to his sovereign and absolute will. Grace alone can enable us to say from the heart, "Thy will be done."—*Winter*.

GOD'S people are never in a more thriving state of soul than when they are carrying the cross. It is the delight of the Holy Spirit to pull down the pride of self and to build up the glory of free grace. The lightest feather of affliction that can be laid on the back of our patience will break us down if God's Spirit is not by to support us. Christ's righteousness is the only worthiness of a sinner. I hope it will be my prayer when I come to die (and I am sure it will if I am then in my senses), "God be merciful to me, a sinner."—*Romaine*.

SURELY never was there such a pang since the foundations of the earth were laid as that which rent and tore the soul of the Redeemer when the last drop of agony was poured into the already overflowing cup, and he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Yet thus was redemption's work accomplished, sin atoned for and blotted out, the wrath of God appeased, everlasting righteousness brought in, and the church for ever reconciled and saved.—*Philpot*.

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GOSPEL STANDARD.

JUNE, 1889.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

MEDITATIONS ON PSALM XXV.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from page 197.)

As we progress in the narrow way and approach nearer the end of our days, we shall have a deeper sense of our helplessness to do one good thing towards saving ourselves; and this brings us to know and feel that we have lost all power to do good, and that we have no power to believe, mourn, repent, or serve God. Then for the Lord to come again and renew and replenish our souls, giving us some fresh token of his love, mercy, and faithfulness, bringing up our life from the dead, as he did Jonah's, this makes salvation by grace a blessed reality, and the soul is enabled to praise and glorify Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and say with Jonah, "Salvation is of the Lord."

Sin, that venomous, devilish, God-dishonouring principle, is ever present with the children of God, and they feel that their loins are filled with a loathsome disease, and there is no soundness in their flesh. They know from inward teaching that from the head even unto the foot they are full of wounds, bruises, and putrifying sores, and they have the full assurance of faith that unless God saves them freely and fully, and perfects that which concerns them, they never can be saved, and yet they long for salvation and hope in all that God has promised. These are the characters of whom Christ speaks, saying, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

But bondage through sin, the fear of death, the temptations of the devil, the unbelief of the heart, and an increasing knowledge of the vileness and deceitfulness of flesh and blood, the old man, the law in the members, and the body of death at times so oppress a real saint that he has to cry out, "Save me, O God, for the waters are come in unto my soul." This short prayer shows that such a character has the assurance not only that he needs a perfect and free salvation, but he also has the assurance that God is able to save him; and the sense he has of his vileness is so overruled by God that out of necessity he is constrained to call upon the Great High Priest of our profession, who is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him; as we read: "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from

their sins," not only in dying for them, but in putting forth his power and working salvation in their hearts; so that the children of God will feel their need of salvation all the days of their life, and live in hope of attaining to every blessing that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit have provided and promised; for saith the apostle, "We are saved by hope."

This twenty-fifth Psalm has often been a great comfort and encouragement to the writer. Once in particular, after a time of weakness, great dearth of soul, and the hidings of God's countenance, this fifth verse was applied with such power, peace, joy, and comfort, that darkness, bondage, misery, fear, unbelief, and death all fled before the word of our King; for "where the word of a King is there is power." This made his heart overflow with gratitude, his eyes with tears, and his soul and tongue to bless and praise God for such undeserved mercy in time of need; for he then wanted no exhortations to praise and serve the living God. The sweetness and power of this abode on his spirit more or less for many a long day, and the blessed effects of this visitation brought him on his knees for a considerable time, not only to bless and praise God on his own account, but it enlarged his heart to ask the Blessed Spirit to extend the same mercy, grace, and salvation to the Lord's dear people in general and to some in particular.

Under these sweet revelations of Christ the soul is led to see how the three Persons in the Trinity are all engaged in the salvation of the church, and in the salvation of every poor coming sinner, though he be but a babe in grace, though he be but a bruised reed, though he be the least in all his Father's house, a poor prodigal, a poor beggar at the door of mercy; though he be only a seeker after God, yet is the love of the Father fixed immovably upon him, he has loved him with an everlasting love, and he will draw him through Christ to heaven; for "it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." (Matt. xviii. 14.) He is also loved by God the Son, redeemed with his precious blood, the debt which he owed to God has been paid by his Surety, Jesus Christ; and though he is yet a vile sinner, plagued and tried, yet does Christ love to see him coming unto him, and even invites him and draws him, saying, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." (Isa. xlv. 22.) He is one taught by the Holy Ghost, his soul has been quickened, he is not in the darkness of this world, which is gross darkness; and though he has much death, he is not dead in sin, though he is plagued with unbelief he is not an unbeliever, though he is sick at heart, his sickness is not unto death, though he is wounded for his transgressions, it is not the wound of an enemy, though he is lost he is found, though he is a hell-deserving wretch he is out of hell, though he confesses his vileness and blackness, and thinks there is not one so vile and so black as he, yet the Lord speaks to him, being a feeble member of his body, as much as he speaks to those who

have the strongest assurance of interest in Christ, saying, "Thou art all fair, my love," and the Holy Ghost who has begun to teach him, will in due time give him to prove the sweetness and blessedness of the promise, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Rom. x. 13.)

God drew the plan of salvation from before the foundation of the world, his own dear Son was appointed to be the Saviour of sinners, the Holy Ghost in the covenant of grace undertook to quicken, regenerate, and raise up all the sons and daughters of God, for all was prearranged by infinite wisdom, and must and will be executed by almighty power, nor will one elect vessel of mercy die without knowing the spirit and substance of the gospel of God, which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. God makes known this salvation to whom he will, nor can all the angels in heaven, nor all the men on earth, make a real saint. We cannot give grace and salvation to the nearest and dearest friends that we have, not even to our own flesh and blood. How truly the man of God who penned this Psalm was brought to see this when he said, "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) In the covenant there is treasured up grace and mercy to save the people of God from their sins down to their latest breath, and the Blessed Spirit will so humble them and convince them of their sins, wickedness, poverty, and wretchedness, that he will keep up the cry in their hearts, possibly to the day of their death, "I am poor and sorrowful; let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high." (Ps. lxi. 29.)

Whilst on the earth all the saints of God sigh and cry for salvation, but when they get to heaven they will sing of it, and in a unanimous, unbroken chorus they will sing, "Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." (Rev. vii. 10.) Will it not, dear brethren, be a wonder of wonders if such poor, unworthy, worthless sinners, who know not sufficiently how to abase or condemn ourselves, if we are permitted to join that celestial throng, to behold through the sweetest of all faces the glory of God, even through his crucified, exalted Son Christ Jesus?

But the man of God proceeds to say, "On thee do I wait all the day." By this we see that though he was assured that God was his salvation, he was looking up to him for some fresh token of his favour. In other parts of the Word he tells us for what he was waiting: "Quicken me after thy lovingkindness." This he knew would strengthen his soul and be better to him than life itself; for he says, "Thy lovingkindness is better than life," and he earnestly entreated the Lord, saying, "Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord." As a man in deep need he much desired mercy, and he was waiting for the

Lord to lift up upon him the light of his countenance, and crying, "Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; save me for thy mercies' sake." He wanted the Lord to come again and solace his soul; therefore he cried out, "O when wilt thou come unto me?" and again: "When wilt thou comfort me?" He was waiting to realize the comfort of Christ's righteousness to his soul; as he says: "Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape;" and the apostle tells us this was his own experience and the experience of the church of God where he says, "We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith" (Gal. v. 5), which shows he had not then got the comfort of it.

These are a few of the things for which David waited; but the fact of him saying, "On thee do I wait *all the day*" proves that though he prayed so earnestly, yet for a time the mercies he sought after were withheld from him; for God for wise ends and purposes kept them back. This was to give fresh life to prayer, that he might go on importuning, crying, and seeking for what he needed; for the promise is: "He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy." (Ps. lxxii. 13.) Through necessity he was constrained to cleave unto the God of his salvation, knowing that all that he desired was treasured up in him. Are not we also constrained to wait upon God for the blessings of salvation which we see are treasured up in a precious Christ, believing that he is able to bestow upon us all that our hearts can desire, and it is said for our spiritual comfort, "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."

Truly the people of God know what it is to wait upon him, and say, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth." "Grant me thy lovingkindness." "Feed me with the Bread of eternal life." "Clothe me with thy righteousness." "Wash me in thy precious blood, and give me unmistakable evidence and an indisputable assurance that I am thine and that thou art mine." "Tell me, Lord, that thou hast loved me, that thou hast died for my sins, and that thou hast redeemed my soul to God by thy precious blood." "Assure me of my union to and interest in thee, and that I shall some day be with thee and see thee as thou art." These are a few of the petitions of those who are the subjects of Christ's kingdom, nor is there one man or woman living who is born again of the Spirit that does not wait upon God for these things, or that are strangers to these breathings and this language; for the Word is very plain upon this matter where it says respecting the children of God, "The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." (Ps. cxlv. 15, 16.) These are not the ways nor the desires of hypocrites; but they are the prayers and desires of those who from the teaching of the Blessed Spirit are enabled to choose Christ as the One thing needful, and in the strength of

his own grace to say, "He also shall be my salvation; for a hypocrite shall not come before him." (Job xiii. 16.)

Whilst we are kept praying for these mercies our souls, though they may not be filled with comfort, yet are they in a healthy state, and there is but one step between prayer and praise, between seeking and realizing the blessing, even as there is but a moment's space between the soul of the redeemed sinner being confined in the body and being in eternal glory; as Paul says: "Absent from the body, present with the Lord." To encourage those who seek these immortal blessings and have not yet realized them, God himself has spoken, saying, "The vision is yet for an appointed time; though it tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not tarry." So, poor tried children of God, if you realize by the way some little of what you are seeking after, and at the last enter into all the fulness of God's blessing, you will not say you have waited one moment too long, that your pathway has been too rough and thorny, that you have had one trial too many, one sorrow too bitter, nor one cross too heavy. The Psalmist, in seeking after the comfort of these things for himself, speaks the language of all the redeemed family of God when he says, "I wait for the Lord; my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope."

In the fifth verse of this Psalm he says, "On thee do I wait all the day." Some of God's people know what he here means by *all the day*; for when they have been earnest in asking the Lord to undertake for them they have kept on groaning, sighing, and looking up to the Lord with desire that he would appear for them, and many times in a day when they have been in trouble have they asked him to undertake; a groan at one time and a desire at another going up to the mercy seat and throne of grace. Similar language is expressed in different parts of the Word; as when David says: "I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long." (Ps. xxxviii. 6.) On the other hand he found his enemies to be vigilant, that is, constantly opposing him and contriving means for his overthrow. So he says, "They that seek after my life lay snares for me; and they that seek my hurt, speak mischievous things and imagine deceits all the day long."

In the sixth verse of this Psalm he lifts up his soul again to his God, saying, "Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving kindnesses; for they have been ever of old." The Psalmist, like many of God's people, was blessed with temporal mercies—various and many, new every morning and renewed every evening; yet in them he found no satisfaction for his soul, which wanted something greater and of a different nature to all temporal mercies. God had made David a great man in the earth, and a great king; he gave him a large kingdom and everything that flesh and blood could desire to make him happy as it regards temporal things; but when God has touched a man's soul by the finger of his power, when he has made him a new

creature, when he has once given him to taste that he is gracious and made himself known as the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely, temporal mercies, though good and highly to be prized in their place, can never afford the solace, consolation, and happiness which a child of God loves to feel; therefore he cries for something greater than earth and all the skies, even for the tender mercies and lovingkindness of God.

First, his *tender mercies*. These tender mercies are the blessings of the new and everlasting covenant which God has treasured up for them that fear him, and which a man in a state of nature never discerns, never covets, and never desires. He neither knows their sweetness nor their value, being an utter stranger to spiritual things; for "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.) Tender mercies, as they are here termed, are in the New Testament by the great apostle Paul called "spiritual blessings," in which the whole of the church of God has been interested from everlasting and to whom they are made known in time by the Blessed Spirit bringing them from heaven into the hearts of his people at the time and after they are called out of darkness into God's marvellous light. So the apostle says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." (Eph. i. 3, 4.) These tender mercies, then, are spiritual life, saving grace, peace through Christ's atonement, pardon through his precious blood, the fear of the Lord deeply implanted in the soul, communion with God the Father through the Son of his love, the pardon of sin through the blood of the Lamb, and a felt union to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Head of his body, the church. All this God had promised in the Person of his Son Jesus Christ to all who are called by grace and whose ears are spiritually inclined, and who are inwardly constrained to come to Christ, which is what the soul, when under the influence of divine grace, delights to do; as we read in Isa. lv. 3: "Incline your ear and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."

The Psalmist, when addressing the Lord, had his understanding enlightened and his eye made single; so that his whole body, as Christ says, was full of light; for where his heart was, there he found his treasure to be, that is, Christ and his tender mercies, for what God discovers to a living, gracious, Spirit-taught person, that their soul is led to desire and pray for, and when they realize a little of it in their poor souls, they have riches, comforts, mercies, and happiness far more valuable than all the vast earthly riches and blessings which God bestowed upon Solomon, who was the greatest temporal king that ever reigned and so specially renowned for wisdom and understanding.

These tender mercies, these saving mercies, these mercies which will endure for ever and ever, which are the greatest things that a holy and infinite God can bestow upon poor mean, low, debased, and worthless sinners,—these are what the children of God, one and all of them, more or less partake of here below and with those they wish to have their souls filled to the brim, knowing that they are earnestly to the inheritance of the saints in light, and that those who receive God's grace and tender mercies here in small measure will enjoy the fulness of them in heaven with Christ for ever and ever.

But the Psalmist here says, "Remember, O Lord," as if God had forgotten; as if the Lord had left off to do him good; as if he had been withholding the sweet communications of his favour so long that the man of God, in his feelings was in a perishing condition, like a hungry man seeking food, a thirsty man seeking water, a naked man seeking clothing, a sick man desiring medicine, or a poor, disconsolate creature seeking consolation from the only source whence these tender mercies flow. God's children know what it is to do as the Psalmist did here, that is, to put the Lord in mind of his promises and invitations; for though he never did and never can forget his own beloved people, yet he will be honoured by their prayers and have his bowels of compassion excited by their importunities; as we may see in reading Jer. xxxi., where he says, "Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord." In all their affliction he is afflicted, and by prayer and supplication in the Spirit the Lord is moved to show his pity and kindness to poor returning transgressors, and even to speak to them, saying, "Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me." (Song of Sol. vi. 5.) Yet into such straits are the Lord's people brought, so low do they sink, so far off does God appear, so shut up are they in their feelings, so barren, unfruitful, and deathlike, that they are like the desolate heath and the barren wilderness, and they sometimes think they shall never realize another sweet visit, another time of blessed communion with their Father in heaven and with the Lord Jesus Christ who is their Hope.

In this state the Psalmist was when he cried out, "Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" (Ps. lxxvii. 7-9.) We see what it was he wanted; it was the tender mercy of God, and he asked his soul the question whether God had in anger and displeasure shut up his tender mercies. He did not think his tender mercies were perished, only that God had shut them up, and neither given him bread, nor water, nor any comfort; so that he was left to greatly mourn an absent God. The Lord's people, to their sorrow, know what these times of desolation are; for they can

look back upon them even after they have been visited again and again with his grace, and say, "In those days I was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled." (Dan. x. 2, 3.) The Lord has his way of exercising his people, and they have to prove their sinfulness, weakness, numberless infirmities and manifold sins until sometimes their poor souls are almost ready to conclude they are out of the secret and that they must be deceived, that a pure and holy God cannot be their God, that Jesus cannot be their Redeemer, and that heaven and unmolested happiness and holiness they shall never realize. These are the sinners to whom God, in tender mercy, pity, and compassion, speaks, saying, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. i. 18.)

The Psalmist here not only speaks of God's tender mercies, but of his lovingkindnesses. He had known, as all God's people know in their measure, something of the blessedness, preciousness, and strength of the lovingkindness of God, for by his lovingkindness the Lord draws his people to himself; as he says: "With lovingkindness have I drawn thee." He convinces them of their sins, and draws them as poor guilty sinners to his feet in prayer and supplication; he draws them to his mercy-seat, his throne of grace; he draws them out of the world and draws them into his church, and blessed for ever and ever be his holy name, he draws them into or quickens them into his dear Son Jesus Christ and makes them members of his mystical body, flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone; and being thus engrafted by lovingkindness into Christ they become one with him, and can no more perish than Christ himself can perish or fall from his throne; for saith the dear Redeemer, "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." (Jno. xxii. 23.)

God has loved the church even as he has loved Christ. Christ, the beloved Son of God, is no more loved by the Father than is his bride to whom he is betrothed, and whom he has taken into wedlock to be his wife, his spouse. Hence he says, "Thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me; and thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." O what height, what depths, what lengths, and breadths there are in the love of God! Truly it passeth knowledge. How often does it appear when we get a clear view of the safety of the church, the great love wherewith God has loved it, how she is united to Christ and will be exalted with Christ in heaven, when there shall be no more sorrow or crying or any such thing,—how often does it appear to the souls of the Lord's children when they have these views, that such things are too great, too grand, and too glorious for them to be really and truly interested in or ever attain unto! Beloved brethren, this is the very way in which God will show his love, this is the way in which he will exercise his lovingkindness in

rescuing, in delivering, in renewing, in reviving, in pardoning and forgiving transgression and sin, and in saving poor sinners who a thousand times over have deserved hell, and at last exalt them to inherit the throne of his glory, being made even like unto Christ, and to be one with him for ever and ever in that place where God himself has said, "Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." (Isa. lx. 20.)

But O how often here by the way like David, the man after God's own heart, do we need God to renew his lovingkindness; for the Psalmist here speaks not only of one kindness, but puts it in the plural,—*kindnesses*. Isaiah, towards the end of his prophecy, seemed to have a sweet and very enlarged view of the favours which God had bestowed upon his spiritual Israel in all ages of the world where he speaks, saying, "I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed upon us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses." (Isa. lxiii. 7.) Who can tell the number of lovingkindnesses that God from the beginning of the world has bestowed upon one poor guilty sinner and another, and often upon the very basest of men, rescuing one here and another there, and then, in his sovereignty,—O solemn thought! leaving thousands upon thousands to perish! Snatching one as a brand from the burning and casting others into hell, where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched! Raising up one here and another there out of the depths of the fall and passing by thousands, leaving them to perish in their miseries and in their sins; for "in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same; but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them." (Ps. lxxv. 8.)

It ever was and is now that God doeth as he will, not consulting either angels or men, good or bad, but performing the thoughts of his own heart; as the apostle says: "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" (Rom. ix. 21.) He endures with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and makes known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory; for there are vessels of wrath and vessels of mercy. If vessels of mercy, then his lovingkindness, his mercy, his grace, his fear, and his Spirit will be poured into these vessels, for they are not made to remain empty, but prepared to hold these rich treasures. These lovingkindnesses David says "have been ever of old." Yes, long before man had tasted them, long before man had sinned to really need them, long before the foundations of this world were laid, for of old they were when God the Father, God

the Son, and God the Holy Ghost dwelt alone, for alone they did dwell, having mutual fellowship one with another before angels were created, the world established, before time was set in motion, or man had his being. Hence his love is called an everlasting love, his mercy, everlasting mercy, his light, everlasting light, his life, everlasting life, his consolation, everlasting consolation, his kingdom, an everlasting kingdom, and his gospel an everlasting gospel.

(To be continued.)

PRAYER is the breath of a regenerate man.—*Gill.*

“GOD be merciful to me, a sinner,” are fit to be the last dying words of the greatest saint that lives.

To be a seeker is to be of the best sect next to a finder; and such a one shall every faithful, humble seeker be at the end. Happy seeker, happy finder! Who ever tasted that the Lord is gracious without some sense of self, vanity, and badness? Who ever tasted that graciousness of his, and could become less in desire than pressing after full enjoyment?—*Oliver Cromwell.*

It is a blessed thing to die daily; for what is there in this world to be accounted of? The best men according to the flesh and things, are lighter than vanity. I find this only good, to love the Lord and his poor despised people, to do for them, and to be ready to suffer with them; and he that is found worthy of this hath obtained great favour from the Lord.—*Oliver Cromwell.*

WHAT heart can conceive or tongue express what must have been the feelings of the Redeemer's soul when he, the beloved Son of God, when he who had lain in the bosom of the Father from all eternity, he whose whole joy was in their mutual love and friendship, whose ineffable bliss it was to be ever “by him as one brought up with him, and to be daily his delight, rejoicing always before him,” when he, the Father's only-begotten Son, was as if put away from his bosom as, by imputation, a sinner? In proportion to his love to the Father were his distress and agony at his displeasure; in proportion to his intense holiness was his grief at being treated as a transgressor. What must have been the grief of spirit felt by the Son of God when his Father, his own Father, hid his face from him? This brought into his bosom the pangs of hell; for let us ever bear in mind that there was a solemn and dreadful reality in the wrath of God as felt in the heart of Jesus. Was not the bodily suffering of the cross real? Did not the nails really pierce the tender hands and feet, whilst every nerve of the agonized body was wrought up to the most exquisite and excruciating height of pain? No less real, and far more severe, were the agonies of his soul, for the wrath of God in the Redeemer's heart was as real as the nails that pierced his hands and feet. What is bodily pain compared with mental anguish? Under the heaviest bodily pain martyrs have rejoiced in the flames; but a wounded spirit who can bear? Of all trouble soul-trouble is the heaviest; and of all soul-trouble, what is to be compared with a sense of God's wrath drinking up the very spirit, and burning in the conscience to the lowest hell? Yet the depths of this trouble—depths in which he himself as man could not have stood, but from the sustaining energy of his own indwelling Deity and the gracious support of the eternal Spirit, Jesus sustained when he bare our sins in his own body on the tree.—*Philpot.*

THE HIDINGS OF GOD'S FACE.

BY RUSK.

(Continued from page 209.)

How cruelly did Sanballat and Tobiash confront Nehemiah whom God raised up to build the second temple. They laboured hard to weaken his hands and discourage him in the work; but they could not succeed, although their opposition seemed to be a great mountain in his way; but what is all human and devilish power when against the Almighty God? "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain. . . . The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it." (Zech. iv. 7, 9.) All these mountains shall be removed, and for this very reason, because the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it, and that is enough. Hear what Isaiah, the prophet, says: "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed." (Isa. xl. 4.) Observe here that the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and Paul tells us that it is revealed in Christ Jesus: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. iv. 6.) So every mountain shall be removed. But how is this done? I answer, By the Lord's presence: "O that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence!" (Isa. lxiv. 1.)

It is very often the case in the experience of God's family that before he is pleased to manifest himself fully to their souls, he lets things get to the worst pitch. So in the chapter in which the verse just quoted, we read of "terrible things which they looked not for." I have often found it so in my own experience. Thus, when we are delivered from Mount Sinai by believing that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to us, when we are delivered from the mount of corruption by believing that our old man was crucified with him, when we are delivered from justice, or righteousness, which is a great mountain before us, by believing that mercy and truth met together, righteousness and peace kissed each other in Christ, when we can make our calling and election sure, so that we can see that the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places and that we have a goodly heritage, then the mountain of election is made low and we are delivered from the fear of reprobation, for every oppressor is made to fly; so that although they appear a great mountain, yet we feel that we are saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; for "no weapon formed against us can prosper." All this proves that we have the smiles of God and that his face is toward us.

It is the Lord's presence which removes a hard and impenitent spirit and gives a contrite heart in which he himself condescends to dwell: "Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at

the presence of the God of Jacob; which turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters." (Ps. cxiv. 7, 8.) I have often found my heart like Pharaoh's, and have concluded I was the same; for my heart has been like a rock or a flint, and it has continued so for a long time; and before this hardness is removed there have generally been some "terrible things," as before observed; so that I have trembled at his presence as considered in the law, being conscious of my just deserts. But when the Lord is pleased to visit us with his presence as he is to us in Christ Jesus, this removes all the hardness of our hearts; so that the rock is turned into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters, and true repentance flows out, for God is manifestly known and his love enjoyed. Peter, after his fall, when the Lord looked on him, he went out and wept bitterly. How different was that from the hardness he felt when he cursed and swore that he never knew Christ.

The Lord's presence, and nothing short of it, will destroy all idols, that is, while we are under the influence of it. To fully describe the many idols we have is impossible, for they are so numerous, and I have observed that after I have enjoyed the sweet presence of the Lord for a time, and finding the life and vigour of it to abate, then Satan has presented his baits, and whatever we are naturally fond of, that he will ply us with; and the reason he gains such ground is because of the old man, or his image still remaining in us, although we have been called by grace; and here he tempts, lays baits, snares, and traps to entangle our feet. Idolatry is not confined, as some think, to worshipping idols made of gold, silver, wood, or stone; but it is having the heart and affection set upon something short of God, which real believers are often in danger of, and this is the cause of much chastisement. God is a jealous God and will have our hearts; for he says: "My son, give me thine heart;" but if the heart is divided, then we shall be found faulty.

I will mention a few of the many things that are snares to the Lord's people and by which they often fall, either by the world, the flesh, or the devil, many times secretly, but sometimes openly; and O the distress it is sure to bring on the soul when God is pleased to put fresh life in our convictions, and to show us that it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against the Lord!

Perhaps a man naturally likes *worldly pleasure*, that is, to keep company with worldly people who are only professors of the gospel. I remember when I first sought the Lord I was working with one that I looked up to as my guide, and one night he went to the theatre, which staggered me, and when I spoke to him about it he said it was to see something acted of the works of creation, such as the sun, moon, and stars, in which he could see no harm; but we are told to come out from among them, and be separate, and to abstain from the very appearance of evil; so that we cannot be too particular. If the Lord is pleased to bestow on his people, as he does on some, a good share of this

world's goods, the danger lies in having the heart carried away with them. After Hezekiah was recovered from his sickness, Merodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah, "for he had heard that he had been sick and was recovered, and Hezekiah was glad of them." Mark that! "He was glad of them." O how our foolish hearts are carried away after vain things! "and Hezekiah showed them the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures; there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not" (Isa. xxxix. 2); and God sent the prophet Isaiah to reprove him, and he told him that all that was in his house, and that which his fathers had laid up in store should be carried to Babylon, and that his sons should be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. How easily are we drawn away from God by worldly prosperity, pleasures, or profit, which is idolatry, inasmuch as it draws the heart away from God. Hence you read of some that they were "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God;" and as this is a reigning principle where there is no grace; so it will often prevail with a real saint and cause him to backslide from God.

Again. If a man is naturally *covetous after money*, if God contends with him much and reduces him to beggary, if he is a good man and taught of the Lord, he may think he is quite altered and shall never feel that covetous spirit work so strong again; but let God turn his outward captivity and give him this world's goods, and he will at times find his old spirit work strong and the old man as vigorous as ever; and the more men have the less they are satisfied. Paul says, "The love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows;" and he warned Timothy, saying, "But thou, O man of God, flee these things." (1 Tim. vi. 10, 11.) Ephraim backslid from the Lord through covetousness; and David prayed, "Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not unto covetousness."

Again. *Unclean desires after forbidden objects*, this is idolatry, and draws the heart from God; and O how rampantly does Satan work in this way with God's children, both sleeping and waking, to hold them fast in captivity to these secret lusts; so that it appears clear to them that sin has the dominion and that they never had any real grace; and the more they secretly slip the more they will; for "the backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways." The best of men have been drawn aside in this way. David, the man after God's own heart, and Solomon, the beloved of the Lord, Samson, and the incestuous man, all these openly backslid. O what power Satan has, and nothing but omnipotent power from God put forth can conquer him. Now this is corrupt affection, and a member of the old man that causes the heart to wander from God; but the Lord's children, and they

only, shall be chastened for these things; as the Lord says: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." (Amos iii. 2.)

Once more. *Self-love*. This swallows up all the rest, for of all the idols *self* is the first and foremost. Jesus Christ, in the days of his flesh, tells us that the way to follow him in reality is to deny self and take up the cross. Satan knows this, and therefore works upon self and tempts us to gratify it. Self will work in all directions, and every day of our lives will call upon us to gratify it; and as far as we fall in with it we forsake the Lord instead of following him. Self-will, self-righteousness, self-sufficiency, and self-applause, these will all work in us. Although, strictly speaking, that text, "Lovers of their own selves" does not belong to believers; yet, carrying about this body of death, none feel it but them, and they sorely feel and groan under it; but God's presence conquers all these idols, and ten thousand more, because when he visits the soul he dethrones them all. Hence Asaph says, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." Abraham loved Isaac greatly, but the Lord's presence made him give him up as a sacrifice at God's command. Paul tells us he was ready to die at Jerusalem for the sake of the Lord Jesus. These, with many more, are Scripture testimonies of God's presence enabling men to forsake father, mother, houses, lands, and even hating their own life for the truth's sake; so that we see no idol can live under this powerful influence.

I remember being greatly ensnared with a temptation for about two years, and then delivered wholly from it. Then again, a temptation for three months of the same kind, and delivered from it; and after these temptations I felt my heart and affections wholly set upon the Lord: "The burden of Egypt. Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt; and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it." (Isa. xix. 1.) Under what influence is this most manifest? I answer, when our whole heart and affections are wholly set upon him in real love; so that we can appeal to him as Peter did, saying, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." Satan is ever labouring to set up one idol after another as rivals to the Lord Jesus Christ. When the Lord visits our souls, we then feel and know that we have his smiles and approbation.

If you are a person of experience, you will find many changes in your soul's feelings as you travel on in the divine life. You will sometimes feel so dry, parched, and withered, that you will fear you will wither quite away, and at such times you will try the means of grace, and it is very right you should, for in this way a change of soul often takes place; but God will let you know that all means are empty in and of themselves; and indeed it is not a very easy thing to use the means and not trust in them, such as reading the Bible, good books, hearing the word

preached by ministers of the Spirit, calling upon the Lord, meditation, Christian conversation, &c.; but you may try all these things, and yet not have the Lord's presence, his time not being fully come. God will let us know that he is a Sovereign, and he knows best how to time his mercies and when they will be the most cordially received by us; and his general way is to let us feel our need of his favours a good while before he grants them to us. When we have had a continuance of hot weather and no rain, how chapt the earth becomes, and all vegetation appears withered; but when there comes a gradual rain and it penetrates into the earth, and after this the sun again shines out, then the face of the earth is renewed. Just so we often find it in our experience. Temptations from Satan are called fiery darts, the lusts of the flesh are called burning lusts, God's Word condemning us for our backslidings is called fire, and his law is called a fiery law; and we often feel much of these things.

Again. *Persecution and reproach, dark providences, and family and bodily afflictions, together with many other things, will so dry us up that we are sometimes ready to conclude that we never had spiritual and divine life at all; and thus we are at a low ebb. I have been here many a time. David said, "My heart is smitten and withered like grass, so that I forget to eat my bread;" but we shall not always go on so, for, as Peter says, the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. When this takes place what a sweet change is felt. We then read the Word and feel life in it, and can say with David, "Our delight is in the law of the Lord." Prayer is then a privilege and not a task, hearing the word and meeting with the saints is delightful; in short, everything is altered, and we are not like the same people, all of which is the fulfilment of God's promise: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground;" "The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes." (Isa. xxxv. 7.)*

The Lord's presence heals all our backslidings. I have before now been in such a state as it is impossible fully to relate through many secret slips and falls, until at last I have secretly concluded that God has given me up to a perpetual backsliding and that I should certainly go from bad to worse. Such texts as the following have sorely distressed me: "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone;" "I gave them up unto their own hearts' lusts." (Ps. lxxxii. 12.) "They promise them liberty, while they themselves are the servants of corruption." Such texts as these have made me greatly to fear; but O the superaboundings of the grace of God in again visiting my poor soul! Sins against light and love formerly enjoyed are of the most aggravating nature, and are like mountains pointing to heaven, and I am sure I never could have believed, had I not experienced it, that ever I could have gone into things with open eyes as I have, when, at the same time, I have known what I had suffered in times past through

such base backslidings from God. Indeed there are but very few things but what it is possible for a child of God, if left, to fall into; for we are weakness itself; but, bless God, we can never finally fall; for "he that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps." Safety is of the Lord, and he is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. To whom be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. I daresay you have often wondered at this, and if you have not I have, that after such base backslidings, sins of omission and sins of commission against light and love, which have brought on such bondage, slavish fear, hardness of heart, shame and confusion of face, that it all should be effectually removed for the time being by the Lord's presence. At such times you look within, and you are not like the same person. Bless God I know what I am writing about.

The Lord's presence excludes all fleshly boasting and enables us from the heart to glorify God; and indeed this is why the Lord takes such pains with us, for he is a jealous God and will not give his glory to another. But we are long learning this lesson, and God is not much glorified in this our day, either by preachers or professors in the way that the anointing from above has taught me. Paul tells us that whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God. Say some, "This means asking a blessing on our meals." I grant it, if heart and mouth go together; but it does not stop here; for it says, "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Depend upon it, a person who lives much to God's glory is one that is kept from looking to self, and such feel themselves vile, weak, poor and needy, and can say with Paul, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God."

When we are young in the way we think that we can do many things of ourselves, and the Lord will let us go on for a time, but we shall, sooner or later, find that he will hedge up our way with thorns; and all this is to teach us that we cannot move one step aright only as he leads us. Many will acknowledge this with the mouth that do not really feel it. Say you, "What is it to feel it?" I will answer you from my own painful experience. It is to feel a host of spiritual enemies against us—principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places, as well as flesh and blood to wrestle with, and the fleshly lusts which war against the soul. Added to this Satan's fiery darts, accusations, condemnation, and cruel suggestions, like a voice whispering in our ears, and we are surrounded with innumerable fears, and everything threatening our destruction. At such times we view everybody as our enemy, and have hard and blasphemous thoughts of God; for the Scriptures appear quite against us, and we are terrified. There are many watching for our halting, who lay snares and traps, and

rejoice when we are bowed down with grief and sorrow. Also the common troubles of life add greatly to all this; for we must be with the people of the world to get our bread. Added to this unruly, wicked children, cross providences, and family afflictions; yet all this is little enough to crucify us to the world, to keep us in any measure within bound, to keep down vain boasting, and to enable us from our very hearts to glorify God, which we do every step we take in faith, that is in the steps of our father Abraham, and to be strong in faith is to glorify God.

I well know what I am writing about, and find the path rough indeed; but were it not so, why should there be so many promises made to the needy, such as, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye;" "He shall be a Leader and Commander to the people," &c? As the Scriptures abound with such promises; so our need of the fulfilment of them will abound also, and we shall have to watch and wait upon the Lord and trust him for the same; for we cannot get on as some professors say they do. In all these trials we shall prove our God to be a faithful God, however long the promise may be delayed. I find very few that are acquainted with these things. The Lord's presence destroys all fleshly glory. Paul tells us what we are to glory in: "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (1 Cor. i. 30, 31.)

If you look at what is going on in the present day amongst the great bulk of professors, it is not such a religion as this; for they glory in what they think they are doing for God, but God tells us to glory in what *he* does—that he exercises loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. Say you, "What will keep a soul up to this?" I answer, constant furnace work, stripping, purging, and self-emptying, or else we shall, like Job, get into self.

The Lord's presence destroys all false worship. The devil, foul and black as he is and the fountain of all iniquity, yet he has invented innumerable ways and modes of fleshly religion on purpose to deceive the children of men. To describe all of them would be impossible, but this is a great truth that building upon the sand or fleshly works is the foundation of them all. The church-going man, with his book of prayers and no heart for God, trusts in his regular round of duties, and the general Dissenter he goes another track, and talks about Christ notionally, but never having been stripped by a law-work, he sets the law before believers as their rule of life and calls their opponents by the name of Antinomians. Now, whether you believe me or not, let men preach or profess what they may, if they are destitute of the Spirit or presence of God in their hearts, it is all false worship, and though they may hate the name of a Roman Catholic, yet in heart they are all one, and God declares that the time will come when all false wor-

shippers shall worship the beast, for their names were not written in the Lamb's Book of Life from the foundation of the world.

Read wherever you will in God's Word you will find that as soon as the Lord manifests and makes himself known by his spiritual presence, such a man directly wages war with all false worship, as far as he sees it as such; and, as the light increases, so he aims to destroy it. As a proof of this read 2 Chron. xxxiv. 1-4. Josiah was only eight years old when he began to reign, but he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of David his father. Then, in the twelfth year of his reign, "he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images; and they break down the altars of Baalim in his presence, &c." Say you, "Do you not think he was too hasty, and that he did all this in an angry, bigoted spirit?" No; God forbid that I should for one moment entertain such a blasphemous thought. Say you, "But does not Paul say, 'Let your moderation be known unto all men?'" Yes; but he means our moderation in the use of temporal things, not moderation in hanging back when God's truth is at stake, or in seeking friendship at the expense of truth and a good conscience. We are told to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and to buy the truth and sell it not; so that it is no easy thing to be upright and valiant for God's truth, which we shall find as we go on; for both the flatteries and frowns of men will try us to the quick; but we are told to be faithful unto death; and if we are, we must, like Paul, obtain mercy to be faithful; and what is mercy but regeneration and renewing? Hence the apostle says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." (Titus iii. 5, 6.)

How can you and I stand against these cunning, crafty, false worshippers without the Lord's presence? It is impossible; and therefore we find that when we backslide from him either secretly or openly, we hang back and are ashamed to advocate that cause in which we were before valiant; and the reason is that sin has separated between us and our God, and caused him to hide his face; for we have grieved the Holy Spirit. I well know that when I have enjoyed the Lord's presence I have felt such trust and confidence in him that I could have sacrificed everything for the truth's sake; but if the Lord withdraws and leaves us for a time we feel as though we certainly shall turn back after all.

False worship is spoken of in the Word of God under the name of bodily exercise, the talk of the lip, a name to live, drawing nigh to God with the mouth and honouring him with the lip. A man may have a very clear understanding of the truth; for Paul tells us "he may understand all mysteries," &c, and yet be nothing.

(To be continued.)

HEIRS OF GOD, AND JOINT-HEIRS WITH CHRIST.

NOTES OF A SERMON PREACHED BY MR. PRINCE, AT TUNBRIDGE, ON
JANUARY 5TH, 1887.

“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”—Rom. viii. 17.

WHAT a mercy it will be to get to heaven! The longer I live the more I feel that it will be a great mercy if the Lord brings me honourably through. How many of you have this feeling? Do you feel it will be a great favour if you get there? If we had what we deserve we should all be in the pit. There is a people who will get to heaven,—a multitude beyond the calculation of man, for no man can number them, but God has numbered them, and he knows who they are. The Lord’s children will all get to heaven, for not one of them will be missing there.

What a lie it is to say, as they do in the Church of England, that children are born again in baptism. I myself received the mark of the beast when I was signed with the sign of the cross, and they thanked God for regenerating me; but I was not then regenerated.

The “children” spoken of in my text ever were children. They lay from everlasting in the bosom of God’s love. If we did not lie there from everlasting we never shall lie there, for no mortal ever can be there who did not lie there from everlasting. The Lord will pour out all his riches upon these “children.” He is determined to make them at times happy in this world and for ever in heaven. He will enrich all on whom the affections of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were fixed from all eternity. God ever loved his people, and they shall praise him in endless bliss when he has brought them home to glory. This is the end of his predestination. O to be one of these people!

God made the world for these people. This world is the place in which the glorious work of redemption is to be made known. God has pledged himself to bless: “I will bless them,” and all the rest will be cast into the pit. Perhaps some may say, “I do not like that.” There was a time when I quarrelled with God about it; but the Lord made me believe it. Some say they will not believe such a doctrine, but they do not know what they are talking about. The curse is upon the head of the sinner, and if God does not take it away, none else can. The Lord’s people are they in whom he will be glorified. I know these are hard doctrines. I myself did not receive them easily. They are contrary to human nature, and I wonder how some who profess them got into them. I found it hard to learn them and I was slow to believe. O what a mercy it is not to be fighting against them! “Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?” (Rom. ix. 21.)

All upon whom are fixed God’s fond affections shall go to heaven,—not one more, not one less: “Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of

God." (Jno. i. 13.) "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." We come into the world as ignorant of God as a beast, and there is no room in our hearts for Christ. We are enemies to God in our minds. This is manifested by the wicked speeches which we utter against Christ. Every man is born an enemy to God. We are born in the image of Satan, which is pride. Man is altogether gone out of the way. The elect as well as the non-elect all deserve eternal death, and thus "we all are even." The prince of the power of the air is he whom we serve well. If you do not believe this you are a very ignorant person. We need not look abroad for popery; there is plenty of it in everybody. Man, by nature, would usurp God's throne. The devil said to the woman, "Ye shall be as gods." That is your aim,—to be the biggest, and to have everyone tow down to you. If you do not know this much of your heart you may know it before you get to heaven. There is that in us that looks upon the religion of Christ as contemptible. Pride will be a plague to a child of God all his life.

We all need to be humbled, and that is why we have to tread in a path of tribulation. Is not your nature always seeking great things? I feel my nature to be full of devilish pride and devilish spite; as saith the apostle, "earthly, sensual, and devilish." I did not believe this at first, for I have been thirty-nine years learning these things. God will teach all his people to know themselves and to know what salvation by grace is. The Blessed Spirit breathes life into the sons and daughters of God, not asking whether they will have it or not, or whether they are willing to give their hearts to God. The Lord does not consult them at all. He is determined to do with them as he pleases. These are the only people that will ever get to heaven,—that will be enabled to venture on Christ, and that will show forth the praise of God now and get to heaven at last. The great point is, Has the Blessed Spirit breathed life into our souls? The Word says, "Ye must be born again." There is no salvation without the new birth. Without holiness no man can desire or have communion with the Lord.

It is quite right to insist upon your children going to chapel and to be master of your own house. God said of Abraham, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him." (Gen. xviii. 19.) But though you may do all this and set before them right and wrong, there is the enmity of the heart against what is right. When the Blessed Spirit quickens a soul there is instantly light and life, and the power of the devil and sin is put down, so that sin cannot reign, nor can the soul again live in sin. Where there is life there is feeling. Now this is the secret of religion. O for the beginning to be right! If the beginning is right the end will be right. This is a matter of life or death, and it will divide this congregation. I say again,

where there is life there is feeling. A man never has any feeling until he has life. Put a ton weight upon a corpse and it will not feel. When God quickens a man's soul he begins to feel that sin is that hateful thing that will damn his soul.

My text says, "And if children." No heaven without the new birth. "They shall be all taught of God." When the soul is quickened the travail begins. All who are quickened of God are brought to be in labour. Who ever heard of such a thing as bringing forth before there was labour? If you do not know anything of soul-labour I would not encourage you for all the world. Sin is the cause of the trouble that the quickened soul feels. It is the day of Jacob's trouble. The man is brought to feel it a solemn thing to have an immortal soul. The devil can never dispute me out of this one thing, that God has done something for my soul. When the Lord quickened my soul I felt I was a sinner and that there was a God. The "children" must all be taught of God, and labour must and does attend every new birth. Where no labour is professors are bastards; and under the curse they live, die, and are damned. If you know nothing of this labour you are a bastard and not a son.

All the Lord's children pass under the rod. The Psalmist said, "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law." (Ps. xciv. 12.) God will burn the truth into you that you are a sinner deserving hell and that you must perish unless mercy through blood reaches your case. This will bring you into secret places. This is heart-work,—a religion that stands between God and your own soul. You will feel to be a solitary creature, for you have "another spirit." I do not take much notice of the talk of the lip; it is the spirit we must look after. The "children" differ from all other people, and they love retirement. Do you know what it is to be obliged to go into some secret place to cry to God? "That I do," say you. Why did you not do so years before? If you were a dead Calvinist it would not be so with you now. You are in labour. Say you, "I feel tried because I am more in earnest at one time than another." That is just how it is with natural labour. If it were incessant the poor creature would sink. There are breathing times; but even during these breathing times there is a solemn conviction that you have not what you want, though there may not be the intense feeling that you have at other times. O with what weight do you sometimes feel the things of eternity, and the earnest cry of your heart is, "Lord, do save me! O pity my case! Do have compassion upon me." These are desires squeezed out when the pressure is upon you, and when the Spirit lays his hand heavier and heavier upon you.

"If children." Bastards never know this labour. It is a way that the vulture's eye hath not seen. The redeemed know that they must perish without Christ. They pass under Moses' tuition. They will not be once a day hearers. Where is the right religion to be found now-a-days? I heard a minister should

say, and it grieved me very much, that we were not to expect great things now because we have Sunday schools. But the same power must be put forth now as in days of old, which power stopped Saul of Tarsus. Persons creep into a profession without knowing anything of soul-labour. People make the Sunday school the nursing place for the church and the stepping stone to the pulpit, and teach their children to talk like parrots, and when ministers speak as I am now doing, they take offence. When the Spirit of truth is come, he will convince of sin and bring the man in guilty. We must be wounded before we can be healed. That blessed woman, Hannah, said, "The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up." (1 Sam. ii. 6, 7.) I feel as I go about how very few people have a right religion. There is plenty of fleshly religion, but as for vital things, they are but little known.

If you are children of God there must have been a time when you felt the things of this life wither. A death has come on your pleasures; and if you have been brought up under the sound of the gospel, there was a time when God in judgment began with you. There must be a *case* for the Lord. Where I can see souls in this state how it gladdens my heart, and when I find a poor sinner in labour my soul twines round him. Look at the thief on the cross. The work was done in him in a very short time. He was convinced, convicted, brought in guilty, brought to receive the Christ of God, and to say, "Lord;" and "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." There is a kindred feeling runs through the whole family, and these "children" soon find out those who have been taught as they themselves have been taught. Every mouth is to be stopped that all the world may become guilty before God. God brings all his people to the place of stopping of mouths; and that is the effect of a law-work,—to be convinced in your conscience that God would be just if he sent you to hell. The Lord turns man to destruction, and says, "Return, ye children of men." One said, "I was dumb; I opened not my mouth because thou didst it."

Then the Blessed Spirit raises up in these children that nourishing grace, *hope*, for they, and only they, have a *good* hope. God has fastened on them the conviction that they deserve to go to hell, and there they feel they *must* go unless mercy through Christ reaches their souls. We will notice how the Spirit raises up hope in these "children," in order that you may see whether your hope is a right one. You may have felt your heart drawn out to God in prayer, so that you were obliged to pour out your heart to God, and that with much tenderness of feeling, and you have found a door of access, so that you could make a clean breast. You came away relieved, and a hope was

raised in your soul that God would not destroy you, that he had had mercy and would be gracious; or it may be that a line of a hymn dropped with sweet power, so that your heart was melted, and you could look up, and hope God would have mercy and that you would one day be able to say, "Come, and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." Hope was raised up by something from God communicated to your soul. This always breaks the heart, and softens and humbles the sinner at the Lord's feet; so that he feels a springing up toward God and is assured there is a reality in religion. If you have hope in any other way than this it is a delusion; but such a hope as I have described is a good hope and will keep you in expectation till the day arrives when you will be able to say, "Jesus is mine, and I am his;" and you will never be satisfied until you can say that. You may be all your life subject to bondage through fear of death; but the Spirit will bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God. You may have had many sweet feelings, but you feel you come short of what you desire; for you long to say, Abba, Father. The fulness of time has not come for the Lord to be revealed.

We must not set up a standard; but this I do say, if I never speak to you again, that there will be travail of soul in every poor sinner called of God; for he passes under the rod before he is brought into the bond of the covenant. God may be a month, or he may be two years or five years teaching you, but the time of love will come, even the time of the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of sins. "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know (by feeling) what is the hope of his calling." If I were to ask you if you have known what salvation is by the remission of sins, perhaps some of you might say, "We have never attained to that. We cannot say, 'My Lord;' but we can say we hope the Lord has had mercy on us, and nothing less than being able to use the language of full assurance will satisfy us." If you can say that, give me your hand; you are a son or daughter of the Lord, and God has pledged his holiness to bless you. He has blessed you with eternal life, with desires after him, with longings after him, and blessed you by bringing upon you the pains of labour for Jesus to be formed in your heart, and given you a sweet hope that you will one day see him in glory. I have had this expectation from the day I received him into my affections. This is no metaphor, but a blessed, solid substance.

The Person of Christ was received into my affections with the sweetest confidence that he loved me, and I have an expectation that I shall see in glory that Christ whom I have never seen with my bodily eyes. You that have not yet attained to this, God can bring you to it. If you can be satisfied with anything less than Christ revealed to you, God forbid I should encourage you; but if you are following after Christ, he will let you overtake him some time. The Psalmist said his soul

followed hard after God. Blessed souls that are following after him and that see a beauty in him. *Blessed soul!* Thou art a *child*, and an *heir* of *glory*. Compared with this what would it be to be heir to the throne of England? He is an heir of glory who has felt his bosom glow with love. No man ever loved Christ and hated the brethren. We love them because we see in them the image of Christ, and we welcome them to our homes. These are the people with whom I hope to be in heaven. We shall then sing one song. Well may we say, "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." (1 Pet. i. 3.) Ye children of God, ye are heirs to an inheritance. What is it? God. I would rather have this religion than possess all the world. The world would procure me friends and the admiration of mortals, but would not keep me out of hell. If your heart was ever touched with the love of God, it was the Spirit bearing witness with your spirit. He never humbles the heart of any bastard.

"*Heir!*" Of what? God. I confess the thought is staggering to faith. Who can find out God? Who can comprehend the blessedness of God? We are *heirs* of this God and all he has, and of all his blessed attributes,—of all the fulness of God, of the power, wisdom, love, mercy, and pity of God. God has made himself over to his children as their Portion. "In blessing I will bless" with all the blessedness of myself, bless them in life, in death, and for ever; and this is known to them from time to time by tasting; so that if you have known this for five minutes you are an heir of God. Those in the pit never had a longing in their souls for the mercy of God, or for Christ.

"*Heirs of God.*" Look at it. This inheritance is reserved for the children of God to come into the enjoyment of; and they are preserved on earth, so that they can never sin it away. God has given it to them. They have a right to it by eternal predestination. "Because ye are sons God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father;" and to "as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God." The bliss of it is from time to time made known to us by tasting. Is it not the best time in all your life when you can feel the love of God shed abroad in your heart and feel your affections ascend to God in the heavens? This would be happiness in the midst of poverty, or with sore backs in the dungeon. It came so powerfully into the souls of Paul and Silas that they sang praises. Here is true happiness. The sweetest moments are when King Jesus rules the heart and makes you a little child. Anything can be done with such little children as these. O what spiritual affections they have for God and the things and people of God! That poor woman who cast the two mites into the treasury let her all go, as if she should say, "God will provide. He will give me food and clothes." Under this feeling you could

let out your blood for Christ. There are some places in this world that are consecrated to me. "In blessing I will bless;"—not once or twice; but, having tasted, you will want to taste again. You will always be dissatisfied till you get it again, and when you have it, it will make you rejoice in tribulation and in hope of the glory of God. My soul says, "Lord, give me a continual earnest." You try to hold it when you get it, but you cannot, and then you begin to drop your head. But, if you have ever had it, you will one day be in heaven. It never comes into the hearts of any but sons and daughters. *Heirs of God must be with God, and ultimately be swallowed up in God.*

"And joint-heirs with Christ," as God-man,—one with Christ. "Thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me." Christ said, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." Christ and the children are bound together by the same Spirit; joined to the Lord by one Spirit.

"If so be that we suffer with him." If you have this religion you will be cast out. "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." If your religion has not brought upon you the contempt of the world you may stand in doubt of it. Real religion will interfere with everything, and those that have it will be speckled birds. You will have to speak as you feel sometimes. Our forefathers had to suffer, and they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. I am satisfied of one thing, and that is that all sects of General Dissenters would join with the Pope to burn these people. This is the religion that stirs up the devil and shakes the very empire of hell. It will make the viper hiss. In the Church of England they set up their crucifixes; and the Dissenters will follow in the rear in the worship of the beast. And what is free-will but popery? What I have been preaching to you is the truth, and it will stand, and land those who possess it in bliss. All other religion is a lie. I care not who the man is who preaches it.

"If so be that we suffer with him." Tribulation must attend a right religion. Evil things will be said by professors and profane: There is a filling up of the measure of the sufferings of Christ. Sufferings will test your religion. Winds blow up trees that have stood long. Trials drive some away from their profession; but they drive God's people nearer to him. If you know these things by divine teaching you will want to go with the Lord's saints. Christ said, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." Christ was poor, and most of his people are poor; but my text says, "If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." The end will come; and then what awaits us? To be glorified with the blessed Christ of God,—to see him in our nature glorified beyond all conception. We shall see him as he is, and sing, "Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

TOPLADY ON THE VARIOUS FEARS TO WHICH
GOD'S PEOPLE ARE LIABLE.

“Within were fears.”—2 Cor. vii. 5.

FEAR is, properly speaking, that uneasiness of mind which arises from the apprehension of some impending evil.

Spiritually taken, fear, as it respects God for its object, is of two kinds,—legal and evangelical. Legal fear is a horror occasioned by the mere expectation of punishment without any mixture of love to the punisher. Such is the fear of the apostate angels; and such the fear which agitates reprobate souls, when conscience is let loose, and when the thunderings and lightnings of God's fiery law set themselves in array against the haters of Christ.

On the contrary, evangelical fear is peculiar to God's regenerate people, and consists in a melting humiliation for sin, accompanied at times, especially in secret prayer, with gracious groanings which cannot be uttered; with a degree of self-abhorrence and of self-renunciation; with a longing for the favour, the resemblance, and the presence of God in the soul. It is easy to observe that here is a strong mixture of love toward all the Persons in the Trinity; and it is by this love (though perhaps small as a grain of mustard seed) that evangelical fear is chiefly distinguished from legal. The latter is the unaffectionate awe of an indignant slave who is forced to submit against his will, who hates the hand that strikes, who loves nothing but ease and dreads nothing but the lash. While the sinner who experiences the fear which is evangelical, abhors sin for its own sake, as contrary to the nature and command of the blessed God; and abhors himself on account of sin and because he is the subject of that detested principle which sets him at so great a distance from the moral likeness of God. Concerning legal fear we read that “there is no fear (of this kind) in love; for perfect love casteth out fear;” meaning that the sense of God's love is no sooner shed abroad with full lustre and efficacy in the soul, than legal fear vanishes away. Concerning evangelical fear we read, “Happy is the man that feareth alway” (Prov. xxviii. 14), that is, who is tenderly solicitous to avoid anything and everything which may render him spiritually unlike that holy, glorious, and gracious Being whom he ardently wishes to resemble and hold communion with.

But besides this filial, salutary fear which is one grand mark of regeneration, a believer, while he sojourns upon earth, is liable to fears of a mixed kind, which seem to be partly legal and partly evangelical. To this head may be referred anxious doubtings, painful misgivings, and unbelief. These are permitted by God, who has decreed that perfect happiness must be waited for till we get home to heaven. In the meanwhile it is needful for the Christian traveller to be exercised with a thorn in the flesh, and to be at times in such a state as may convince him that earth

is not his rest, or a mount whereon to pitch tabernacles of continuance; that he must carry his cross before he receives his crown; that he must combat before he conquers; and sow in tears antecedently to his reaping in joy. I believe from Scripture, from observation, and from experience, that all God's people do occasionally pass under the cloud, and are baptized unto Christ in the cloud and in the sea of spiritual darkness and distress. Jesus himself, though he had no sin, was thus baptized. "All thy waves and thy billows," said David, in the Person of the Messiah, and addressing himself to God the Father, "are gone over me." No wonder, then, that the members should be sprinkled with those waters which were poured in torrents on the mystic Head. And let the suffering members of Christ's elect body remember to their great and endless comfort that even tormenting fears are perfectly consistent with the reality of grace. This was the Psalmist's experience when he said, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee." (Ps. lvi. 3.)

Hence it is evident that faith and this kind of fear, though not good friends, are, sometimes, very near neighbours, and lodge in one and the same heart. Indeed, they seldom appear together; for when the one walks abroad, the other usually keeps close within doors. When faith is alert and active, this fear hangs its head and pines. When this fear is lively, faith languishes. So strong is the antipathy of the two principles that the sickness of one is the health of the other. They are perpetually quarrelling and skirmishing. And though this fear, which is not evangelical fear, now and then gives faith a home thrust, faith will most certainly get the better at last and survive her adversary. The soul in which faith dwells being severed from the body and taken up to heaven, faith will be swallowed up under the meridian blaze of sight.

As to this fear, though she may, in some believers, keep pace with faith and even outrun faith during the greater part of the earthly race, yet the waters of death, if she die not before, will kill her effectually and finally. The mere prospect of that stream may perhaps give her fresh strength; but no sooner does she begin actually to touch that water than she expires; and the renewed soul, which had been, through her means, all its lifetime subject to bondage, passes the river with courage, serenity, and joy.

"Within are fears." This fear, which is the fruit of unbelief, can transform into a multiplicity of shapes. Sometimes she assumes the mantle of pretended humility, and whispers that we must not give absolute credit to God's covenant and promises, nor aspire to the comfort and enjoyment of them for fear of being presumptuous. At another time this fear accosts us in the garb of affected holiness. "You must bring," she says, "a price in your hand to God the Father, or Christ's redemption will profit you nothing. You must do good works in order to be accepted, and fulfil a string of terms and conditions, that you may be saved

for your works." But thou, O believer in Christ, flee these abominable doctrines. Harken not to them, as you value the glory of God, the freeness of grace, the riches of Christ, and your own happiness. Remember that the conditions of fallen man's salvation are two, and no more; namely, perfect atonement for sin, and perfect obedience to the law. Both these conditions Christ has completely fulfilled in the stead and for the infallible salvation of every soul that is led to the blood of Jesus for cleansing and to his righteousness for clothing. To what end, then, serves faith? To let thee into the knowledge, possession, and enjoyment of this free and finished redemption. And to what end serve good works? Not to entitle us to God's favour, or even to pave, much less to pay our way to his kingdom; but to glorify his name, adorn his gospel, and evidence our adoption.

This fear very frequently mimics the voice of prudence, and advises us, as a friend, not to bring odium and inconveniences upon ourselves by too strict a moral walk and by a too resolute assertion of the doctrines of Christ. How bitterly did poor Peter weep and what rending agonies of heart did he feel after the arrow of recovering grace, shot from Christ, had pierced his inmost soul.

This fear is sometimes apt to beset the ministers of God's Word. There are seasons of personal dryness and darkness, when fear, like an armed man, assaults the faith of God's ambassadors. They are, perhaps, at a loss even for a subject to preach from. All resources seem to be shut up. They flit in their own minds from text to text and for a long time can fix on none. They cry in secret, "Lord, how can we spread the table for the people, except thou bring the venison to our hands?" or, with the disciples of old, "Whence shall we have bread for the multitude here in the wilderness?" It is kind and wise in the Holy Spirit to make us feel that we are nothing and that the excellency of the power is of him and not of us. The lesson of dependance upon his arm of grace alone is profitable, though not always palatable to our proud, deceitful hearts. To the glory of the divine faithfulness I say it, that, for my own part, some of my happiest times in the pulpit have been when I have gone up the stairs with trembling knees and a dejected spirit. These are not desirable trials; but they redound to the praise of Him who has said, "Without me ye can do nothing," and whose almighty love can elicit light out of darkness, even out of darkness that may be felt. No man appears to have been more subject to fears and cares than David, though he had been enabled to vanquish a lion and to slay a giant. What course did he take for relief in his hours of distress? He prayed to him that is Mighty to save and his success was answerable: "I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." (Ps. xxxiv. 4.)

Weak believers are apt to be afraid that they are not in the number of God's elect. They can indeed say, with David,

“Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee,” but they are not clearly satisfied that this blessedness is theirs. For my own part I look upon it as one of the best proofs of being in a regenerate state when a person is ardently desirous to know his election of God. It is an inquiry which the generality of mankind never trouble themselves about and which none but a true believer is concerned for in earnest. We read of some in the Acts of the Apostles who had never heard of such a Person as the Holy Ghost; and I fear there are too many who have hardly ever heard whether there be such a thing as eternal, gracious, Personal, and immutable election. Of those who have, too many set themselves to oppose it; and labour, though, blessed be God, they labour in vain, to remove the very foundation of salvation. Very different are the ideas of Christ's humbled, awakened people. When a ray of God's everlasting love shines in upon their hearts they cry out with the Psalmist, “How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand.” The Lord has some, yea, many names, even in our Sardis, who not only profess to believe the Scriptures of truth, but also make good their calling by believing and practically adorning the truths of the Scriptures. Such persons will ever be desirous not barely to admit those truths, in a mere doctrinal way alone, but to experience the efficacy of them and to be feelingly interested in the blessings themselves.

Granting, however, that thousands of converted people have not attained to those heights of exalted consolation as to be able to say with an unflinching tongue, “Thou hast chosen me, and not cast me away;” yet is there some secret comfort even in waiting upon God for the joy of his salvation, in seeking the light of his countenance, and in crediting the truths and promises of the gospel at large. To those who are by grace led thus far, I would beg leave to propound the following questions without presuming to wade more deeply into the sacred profound of those decrees which lie hid in God than his written Word permits:

Art thou desirous of choosing God in Christ to be thy Father, thy Portion, and thy covenant God here and ever? If you are, it is one happy proof that God has chosen thee to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. You could not choose him if he had not first chosen you.

Is love to God in any measure kindled in thy heart? Or, if you are in any doubt as to this, do you wish to love him? Would you be glad to receive him, to embrace him, and to hold him fast as your chief and only good?

Is the law of God written on thy mind? That is, can you say with the apostle, that “to will is present with you,” and that you “delight in the law of God after the inner man?” Would it make you easy and happy, and would you have the supreme desire of your heart were you to be holy as God is holy and pure

as Christ is pure? Then you may add, as the apostle does, "I thank God through Jesus Christ." The Lord would not have written his law upon thy heart, if the pen of his own free grace had not first written thy name in the Book of life. This is a blessed consideration, and as sure as it is blessed. Yet, stop not here; but pray for the witness of the Holy Spirit to bear unclouded testimony to thy spirit that thou art a child of God. Say, as the Psalmist did, "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 thine inheritance." (Ps. cvi. 4, 5.) Wait the appointed time, and God will set that promise as a seal upon thy heart: "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine."

Saints are subject to another fear, namely, that they are not truly converted and that their spot is not the spot of God's children. Nor do I wonder that, when grace is not in lively exercise, they are liable to apprehensions of this kind, when I consider man's absolute unworthiness, even in his best estate, and that astonishing mixture of good and evil which is more or less visible in saints below.

Though I am by no means an advocate for doubting, yet I am of opinion that, even doubts and fears, though not desirable in themselves, are made subservient to the advantage of God's chosen; just as in the material world not a thorn is without its use and every bramble has its value.

Spiritual distresses and misgivings have a tendency, through grace, to keep us sensible of our sinfulness and helplessness, just as Paul's temptations clipt the wings of his pride, and restrained him from being exalted above measure. They conduce to make us watchful and circumspect; to make us feel the pulse of our souls by frequent and severe self-examination; to kindle longing aspirations after God and communion with him; to lay us low at the footstool of Jehovah's sovereignty; to endear Christ's blood, righteousness, and intercession; and put us upon looking up to the Holy Spirit in prayer for the support of his presence and for the unction of his comforts, which alone are able to enlighten and chase away the darkness of our minds.

There is likewise another particular which ought to encourage the mourners in Zion, namely, that it is impossible for any who have not been spiritually quickened from above to pant for God as a thirsty land, to grieve, evangelically, from a heart-felt sense of sin, and to be pained after a godly sort. Can a dead person feel? Can a dead man complain? A believer may lament his deadness, but he cannot lament his death without his lips refuting themselves. There must be spiritual life, or there could be no spiritual sensibility, no spiritual motion, no spiritual breathings. If the Lord had not drawn you, you would not follow hard after him; nor could you say, "The desire of my

soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee," unless God's Spirit had awakened that desire in your heart. If you were not truly converted, you would not be so anxious about the truth of your conversion. However, though a weeping state is a safe one and not without its advantages, yet there is still a more excellent way. Tho' diffident should be encouraged, but diffidence itself should not. Covet earnestly the best gifts, and, as far as enabled, aspire to the choicest attainments and pray for unclouded manifestations.

Believers are sometimes prone to fear that they have no real, covenant interest in Christ, or that they are not in a state of pardon and justification. Says the doubting Christian, "O if I could but know that I have redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of my sins; that Christ undertook for me in the eternal covenant of grace, and that he is the Lord my Righteousness; then I should be happy indeed. But, alas! Such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me; I cannot attain unto it." Be it so, that you cannot attain to it! God is not the less able to give it. He can, as the apostle says, fill you "with the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him." Therefore, if you want assurance, may you be led to ask it at the throne of grace. Assurances are the brightest bridal jewels of a soul that is married to Christ; but the Bridegroom himself is better than the jewels he gives, nor does he in general allow his bride to shine in them every day. He keeps them under his own key, and lets her wear them when he pleases.

The Lord's people are frequently harassed with a fear that the work of sanctification in their souls is either not begun or at a dead stand; that they do not increase with the increase of God. If any fear may be called a good fear, this may, supposing it do not flow from a principle of legality. It is a blessed sign when we mourn under a sense of our shortcomings, and burn with intense desire to rise and shine brighter in the likeness of God. For this also seek unto him. He is able to accomplish in you all the good pleasure of his will and the work of faith with power.

The fear of temptation keeps many of God's people in bondage, and happy are we if we so fly from it as to shut our eyes and ears and hearts against it. We know not what we are, nor what we are capable of if left to ourselves. A believer cannot trust in himself too little; and blessed be God, he cannot trust too much in the allsufficiency of divine grace. If therefore you are cast down by a sense of your liability to temptations, and of your proneness to fall by them, may God help you to bring your temptations and your weakness to him, and beseech him to get himself the victory in you, over you, and for you. God is faithful, and will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able to bear. He will either hide you in his pavilion and keep you from the fiery trial, or if he bring you into the field, he will save you from being overpowered. The archers may sorely

grieve you and shoot at you; yet shall your bow abide in strength, and the arms of your hands be made strong by the mighty God of Jacob. But, should the enemy of souls be even permitted to gain some advantage over you for a season, yet, cast not away your confidence, but may you be enabled to look to the hills of covenant love, whence cometh your help. Christ will deliver you as at the first, and restore you as at the beginning. What was prophesied concerning Gad shall be spiritually fulfilled in you;—a troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last.

Another fear occasions no small uneasiness to weak believers; namely, a fear lest they should not be faithful unto death nor hold on in grace to the end; but if God has given thee good evidences of thy being truly regenerated and of thy being his child through faith in Christ Jesus, thy final perseverance is as certain as if thy warfare was actually accomplished and the crown of glory set upon thy head. The invisible, or elect church consists of only one and the same innumerable family, part of which is in heaven and part on earth. (Eph. iii. 15.) Every individual member of this family, whether militant below or triumphant above is equally safe in the hands of Christ. Saints in glory are indeed happier than saints on earth; but the salvation of saints on earth is no less secure than saints in glory. The spirits of just men made perfect might as soon fall from their state of heavenly blessedness as a sanctified person here fall from a state of grace. The names of both are in the Book of Life. They are alike interested in God's everlasting and unalterable covenant. What the Father's love has given to the glorified will be also given to them that are yet behind; for to this end Christ died and rose again, that he might gather together in one the children of God that are scattered abroad (Jno. ii. 52); and by the single offering of himself he has perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Saints are not their own keepers; and it is well for them that they are not; they would be sorrowfully kept if they were. Adam was his own keeper, and what did he get by it? God's chosen are not left in the hand of their own counsel nor trusted to their own management. We read, "All his saints are in thy hand," that is, the hand of Christ, whence none can pluck them, which general promise of the perseverance of God's elect taken as a collective body, ensures the perseverance of each believer in particular; for the whole necessarily includes every part. Those who belong to Christ are kept and will be kept by his power through faith unto salvation, and may sing with him who was caught up into the third heavens, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Neither life nor death, nor things present nor things to come shall ever be able to do it. There is no being disinherited of the blessings entailed by God's covenant and bequeathed in Christ's last will and testament, signed with his own blood, and sealed by his own Spirit. Saving grace is the good part which shall not be taken away. Whatever you lose, it is

impossible to lose that. It is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God, and hid with Christ in him, and when Christ who is your life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

I shall mention one other fear common to many of God's redeemed, namely, the fear of death. Some true believers are apt to cry out, as the human nature of Christ himself did, "Father, save me from this hour." Why are you so dismayed at the prospect of getting home? Are you afraid of dying, or of what you may suffer in your last conflict? The Lord will deal bountifully with you, and be better to you than your fears. None return from the grave to tell us what it is to die. Some believers have indeed sung in their last moments, "O death, where is thy sting?" And very probably the passage is both sweeter and smoother than living imagination is apt to suppose. You tremble perhaps at the thought of laying aside your weak, sinful, mortal body; but you will receive it again, not such as it is now, frail, defiled, and perishable; but bright with the glory and perfect in the image of God. Are you loth to bid a long adieu to your Christian friends? They will soon follow to the place of rest, and in the meantime you will be with Christ and with all the saints who have been gathered home before you. Your prayers may not be answered immediately, but they are in God's remembrance, and shall be answered after many days.

"IT IS THE VOICE OF MY BELOVED."

O LET me catch each syllable divine,
 And know that each most gracious word is thine,
 Spoken to me and for my comfort sent;
 This, this alone can make my heart relent.
 Spirit of truth and grace, thy word apply,
 Vouchsafe the feeling heart, the seeing eye;
 Open my ear, my wretched heart unclose,
 And beat down every foe that would oppose
 Thy sovereign grace, and conquest of my soul.
 My guilty fears and unbelief control,
 Reveal thy grace and pardoning love to me,
 Heal all my wounds and set the captive free.
 O bring me to the feet of my dear Lord,
 And let me live upon his faithful word;
 No comeliness have I but what I have in thee,
 Who thus hath loved me with a love so free.
 The Olive thou, the Plant of old renown'd,
 The living Vine from which my fruit is found;
 Sweet Lily of the vale, most pure, most white,
 Most fragrant and most lovely to my sight.
 Ruddy, of crimson hue, as Sharon's rose,
 Or blush of dawn, or evening's fairest close;
 Pearl of inestimable worth to me,
 Riches unsearchable are found in thee.

J. BURSTON.

TO OUR READERS.

As we understand rumours are being circulated to the effect that we have decided to resign the Editorship of the "G. S.," and some persons think that the June number will be the last issued under our management, we feel it right to give a word of explanation. At the time we commenced our Editorial labours we were in a very unsatisfactory state of health, and therefore made it a condition (as stated in our Address Aug., 1884) that if at any time we found the work too heavy, we should be permitted quietly to resign our position. Three years ago we were seriously ill and in great physical prostration, so much so that many friends feared we should not recover, and we had to go to Buxton for the benefit of our health. We were then led seriously to think that the labour attending the management of this magazine was too much for our strength; but in answer to the prayers of many of God's children, and especially of the people over whom we are the stated Pastor, we were, in measure, restored, and have been helped and strengthened for the work until the present time.

At the end of 1887 we were much exercised whether we should continue our labours or resign our office; but after much prayer and supplication to the Lord we decided to go on through last year. On Jan. 8th of the present year, we addressed a few lines to the Committee of the "G. S." Aid and Poor-Relief Societies informing them that we thought of resigning our Editorship in June, assigning as the cause that we found the work and other things connected with it a heavy and continual strain upon our little strength, and that it occupied a very great part of our time, which, together with a large and increasing church, made it appear desirable that we should be relieved from the burden of our labours in connection with the "G. S." Two meetings were held,—one by the Trustees and the other by the Committee, at which Resolutions were passed unanimously requesting us to continue our Editorship. After receiving copies of these Resolutions and private letters from some of the Committee, together with many encouraging testimonies from friends, we decided to continue our labours a little longer, and a few days before the Annual Meeting in last April took place we made known this our decision to the Committee, when they unanimously expressed their great pleasure that we had acceded to their wishes and were willing to continue our labours for the present.

It was not for worldly gain (for the pecuniary remuneration is a mere trifle), but it was in hope that we might in some little measure serve and benefit the church of God that we were induced at first to take the office of Editor, and since that time it has been our aim and desire to bring before our readers such matter of a pure doctrinal and experimental nature as we hoped and believed God would make as savoury meat to their souls, and many of the old and gracious readers of this magazine have

testified to the blessing they have received through reading the pieces we have from time to time inserted; which testimonies have been a means of strengthening our weak hands and confirming our feeble knees; for there is much to discourage and much to contend with of which our readers are altogether ignorant.

We have experimentally learnt the truth of God, both with pain and pleasure, and have bought it too dearly to countenance errors in any shape or form; and therefore would not under any circumstances knowingly admit anything erroneous or God-dishonouring into our pages which would grieve the Holy Spirit and the lovers of pure doctrinal and experimental truth. Therefore if at any time fault-finders, with their mixture of Arminianism, Brethrenism, and Calvinism endeavour to raise reports that serious errors have crept into the "G. S.," we would advise our readers to peruse more carefully what our pages contain, that they may not be led away by the prejudice of those who would raise reports and say, "Aha, so would we have it."

Rest assured, beloved brethren, that we have not knowingly in the past, and with God's help we will not in the future admit into our pages one sentence that is contrary to the revealed will of God and the mind of the blessed and infallible Teacher, the Holy Ghost. But if at any time you should discover a dead fly in the apothecaries' ointment, do not despise the ointment on that account nor break the box that contains it, but cast away the dead fly which may cause a stinking savour, and conclude that it was an oversight of the poor Editor's.

It is no easy matter month after month to prepare pieces for this magazine and letters suitable and profitable for gracious and spiritual readers who have their senses exercised to discern between good and evil. In the days of the late beloved Editor, Mr. Philpot, the periodical was much smaller in size than it is now. At that time it was made up of about thirty pages; now it averages about forty-six; consequently we have to provide for our spiritual readers fifteen or sixteen extra pages of matter every month. This, of course, is an extra work attended with increased exercise; but the many testimonies that we receive of our labours being made a blessing outweigh every other consideration. Within the last few years we have heard of some whose eyes the Lord has opened and whom he has called by his grace through reading this despised book. Others have testified that their souls have been brought into the liberty of the gospel and blessed with the Spirit of adoption; whilst very many have written to us to say how they have been comforted, edified, built up, and established on their most holy faith through reading the pages of the "G. S." In all this we would take the lowest place and abase ourselves in the dust that ever God should have chosen us and made us useful both in preaching his word and by the use of our pen; and under the influence of his grace and Spirit we can heartily join the Psalmist and say, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for

thy truth's sake." If anything good, gracious, and spiritual has been wrought through our instrumentality, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost deserve and shall have all the praise; for if we differ from the vilest of the vile we are bound, from heart-feeling, to say, with the apostle Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

Having given in these few words a statement of our present position, we will conclude by wishing for all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, and worship God in the Spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh, much of his gracious presence and holy anointings in their souls, and earnestly entreat them, as Paul did the Thessalonians, in the words, "Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified."

THE EDITOR.

PROFITABLE LESSONS.

My dear Friend,—Grace, mercy, and peace be with thee and thine. I was sorry to hear of your affliction, but I trust the Lord, who hath sent it, will make it a means of much good to your soul. We are apt to conclude when our hopes blossom that there will be an abundance of fine fruit very pleasing to the flesh; but I have found and still find the most painful places to the flesh are the most profitable to the spirit, and sometimes they are the sweetest. We must remember that one great end our dear Master has in view is to fit us for the kingdom above; therefore we must suffer with him that we also may be glorified together. Paul reckoned the sufferings of this present life not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Afflictions teach us many useful lessons, for by them we learn our dependence upon the Lord for health, strength, and success in business, also for all our hopes and joys now and for eternal glory at last. We also learn to set lightly by this present evil world, and to set our affection on things above. Afflictions are to the soul what the plough is to the ground, that is, it prepares and makes room for the seed. Times of affliction are times when the Lord often draws very near to the soul, and besides all this, they mark us for his own; for we read, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Solomon said, "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart." (Eccles. vii. 2.) I have always found if I have had any idol which was engrossing my affections or taking up too much of my thoughts the Lord has put a check upon it and removed it from me. He is a jealous God, and says, "My son, give me thy heart," and in order that we may do this he sometime takes away the object upon which our affection is too much fixed and draws our heart up to himself.

My dear friend, if you closely inspect the conduct of our heavenly Father you will find the greatest expressions of his love

are folded up in mystery. It is a wonderful mercy to have the heart well broken, and sure I am God must break it, and I am also sure that he will heal it too. You are now learning some profitable lessons by which the Lord will produce in you a meek and quiet, submissive spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price. May the Lord help you much at a throne of grace. I shall be glad to hear of you.

Yours affectionately in the Lord Jesus,
Flitwick, Amptill, Feb. 11th, 1861. GEORGE MUSKETT.

A FATHER'S PITY.

My dear Friend,—I am very much obliged to you for your kind and friendly letter, but feel unworthy of your good opinion and of your kind and encouraging remarks respecting the work of the ministry. I am driven through necessity to take a very low place at times. My vileness, guilt, and unbelieving heart compel me to question whether I have a well-grounded hope in the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. It seems presumption in me to say I am a saint, and more particularly so to say I am a minister of Christ; and I find that after your many years' profession, and although you have had many blessed testimonies of God's love and mercy to your soul, both temporally and spiritually, you, nevertheless, are driven to your wits' end to make out that you have a real work of grace in your heart; and when this is the case with you your mouth is stopped from boasting, and you understand what Mr. Hart means when he says,

"To trust to Christ alone,
By thousand dangers scared,
And righteousness have none,
Is something very hard."

The feeling sense you experience of your helplessness, your backwardness in reading the Bible, or doing anything that is good, and the backslidings of heart that you are guilty of make you slow to reject a minister's testimony if he cannot always say that he has grace in his soul. It is very trying to pride, and flesh and blood to make honest confessions of what we feel and what we are, when we are sinking in the miry places as if we were cut off for our part from all well-grounded hope in Jesus, particularly to those who are at ease and settled on their lees. It is now as it was in Job's days, "He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease." (Job xii. 5.)

It is better to be harassed, plagued, and troubled, than to be settled comfortably on a false foundation. The Lord trieth the righteous, and many are their afflictions, and through much tribulation must they enter into glory. As that is the case, if we are true pilgrims can we expect to escape all Satan's fiery darts and all the stirrings-up of inbred corruptions through the revival of sin and the persecutions shown by professors and the

profane towards the elect? If we experience a warfare with such various enemies,—internal, external, and infernal, we shall have cause to fear whether we shall endure unto the end, even if we are not honest enough to confess it. Mr. Hart knew what it was to be cast-down in this warfare when he had to say,

“How shall a heart that doubts like mine,
Dismayed at every breath,
Pretend to live the life divine,
Or fight the fight of faith?”

If such warriors as Hart are driven into such straits, I can hardly expect to keep the enemy at the sword's point, as some tell of. It is a very great mercy to be in Christ's army at all, even if we are wounded with the baggage waggons.

We live in a day when we have cause to ask God to keep us from being ensnared into a dead assurance or a false peace. A little knowledge of the deceitfulness of our own hearts and the subtlety of Satan teaches us that it is no easy matter to make out what we know in the letter and what in the spirit. I can believe better for you than I can for myself. You have had a long warfare, and the Lord has been better unto you than all your fears. Probably you will say that I do not know all. What a mercy it is that the Lord hates putting away, and that those he once loves, he loves unto the end, and pities his own dear children with a Father's pity.

I have to lament and mourn a barren and lean soul, and am often tried because the Lord does not favour me with more manifestations of his love. I scarcely ever get more than a sip by the way, and not often that. There was a time when I enjoyed religion more in my soul, but I am tried whether it was real enjoyment under the Lord's sweet anointings. I am tried if I am at ease and I am tried if I am blessed; for my hopes and fears alternate rise.

I find the work of the ministry a trying work. I feel so unfit for it, and feel a want of experience and also knowledge of the mysteries of God's Word and many other qualifications. Who is sufficient for these things? And yet through mercy I have continued to this day, and have not fainted, though I have often been ready to halt and sorrow has filled my heart; yet I have cause to bless God that he has encouraged me with signs following my labours, both at home and abroad, to the establishing of my soul and to the confusion of my enemies, who are watching for my halting. Paul said, “A great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries” (1 Cor. xvi. 9); and when the Lord opens a door and blesses the word with power, we can then say, “Let them curse, but bless thou.” I have had many enemies and slanderers, but I dread no enemy so much as that enemy, *self*. He is the Saul I dread. Whatever anyone says it makes me neither better nor worse; but if self prevail and rule it is then bitter work. We need restraining grace as well

as saving grace; and it seems that you in your old age do not find all the Canaanites dead in the land.

When you used to be favoured with blessed testimonies of the Lord's lovingkindness to your soul under the ministry of that highly-favoured servant of the Lord, William Huntington, between thirty and forty years ago, you did not then think you would have gone down into such dark places and sunk so low in your old age. Your springs are in God and he will confirm *that* truth in your soul to the very last day of your life. What a mercy to be made humble and to be kept so. Humility is a great blessing, but it is bought at a high price by flesh and blood; for if we are to be humble we must experience some heavy trials and crosses to effect it.

You had not the least need for making any apology respecting your want of kindness and friendliness towards me. I have some cause to apologize in being so slow to answer your kind letters.

Remember me very kindly to Mrs H., Mr. and Mrs. W., and any inquiring friends.

Yours Sincerely and affectionately,
Abingdon, May 4th, 1842. WILLIAM TIPTAFT.

A FLAME OF LOVE.

My dear Friend, —I was pleased to receive your letter and to find the Lord had inclined your heart to visit us (D.V.) for a Lord's day in 1889. You have had and are having the best education possible, being taught in the Lord's school. How few amongst the great and wise of this world could say as much as you say in yours, namely, "that you often feel a soft heart for all God's goodness to such a vile sinner." I hope and trust I can say that I have felt and do feel the same at times, but not so often as I could wish, and certainly not so often as there is cause for it; for, notwithstanding all I am the subject of and all I feel, the many wanderings of heart and affection from a good and gracious God, yet in his love, mercy, and compassion he comes again and again and restores my poor soul by granting me the visits of his face, and proves to me once more that his love is unchangeable and eternal. His promise is that all his children shall be taught of him, and we are sure they will never be led astray with such a Teacher. He makes us wise by letting us see what fools we are; teaches us where our strength is by letting us feel we have none of our own, and drives us out of every false refuge to find shelter alone in his wounded side.

As we go on in the narrow way, how much there is that has to be broken down, pulled to pieces, and scattered to the winds, and how little that is real there seems at times left. Scarcely enough to prove that we have a proper title to any of the blessings and favours of God's covenant people. All our own supposed stock is gradually reduced to nothing, to make us see and feel there is a reality in true religion which fires cannot burn nor

floods drown. O what a mercy to find at times that there are a few grains of gold among all the dross and rubbish that nothing can destroy, even the life of God in the soul made manifest by the precious faith of God's elect, which

“Though but a spark 'tis heavenly fire;
May dwindle oft, but ne'er expire.”

However low at times it may sink, as regards our experience of it, it will burn up again within, like the hearts of those two disciples when Jesus talked with them by the way, for they said one to another, “Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?” (Lu. xxiv. 32.) When the Lord draws near to us, and we are favoured to muse and meditate a little on this blessed One, and he opens our understanding to understand the Scriptures, then the smoke and flame of love, earnest desires and longings of affection go out after him, and we want then to get nearer to him, to live nearer to him, and to know more of him, because we feel and know that nothing short of Christ can ever satisfy our needy souls.

May the Lord abundantly bless you, and make you a blessing to others, is the desire of

Yours in the Bonds of the Gospel,
Saffron Walden, May 9th, 1888. R. HEFFER.

A TRUE DISCIPLE OF CHRIST.

My dear Sir,—I beg leave to acquaint you that last Tuesday morning I went down to Deptford for the purpose of seeing Mr. Burgess, and reached his house at eleven o'clock. On my arrival I found him in bed, where he had been confined the last five days, and by reason of extreme weakness was unable at present to stand. On being introduced into the room, he stretched out his hand with a smiling countenance, and said, “What! Is that my dear brother John? I am very glad you have come to see me. I thought it long ere you came.” I then sat down in a chair by the bed-side, and had more than half an hour's converse with him, much to my satisfaction. He was exceedingly weak, but very cheerful and savoury in his conversation. It was to me a very interesting scene. The poor sufferer appeared almost reduced to a skeleton, but at the same time peaceful, humble in spirit, and, in my view, a true disciple of Him who was meek and lowly in heart, and as a little child at his feet.

Upon the subject of the late difference he spake in a tender manner, saying, he was very sorry if he had, in speaking or writing, caused trouble or grief to any of the children of God. He took it unkind of Mr. Lock that he had not visited him in his affliction.

In speaking of the present felicity of his mind, he told me that about fourteen days ago it pleased the Lord to grant him a most gracious visitation and manifestation of his love, and from that

period he had not found one hard thought in his mind against any one; but that under his present feelings and in the present happy state of his soul, he thought nothing could arise that would disturb the peace of his mind. From every observation I was enabled to make, I cannot say that "this sickness is *not* unto death," but I feel a persuasion in my mind that God will be glorified in the issue of this affliction, whether it terminate in life or in death. How blessed is the state of that soul that is enabled in such circumstances to lie passive in the hand of the Divine Potter, resigned to his sovereign will, and favoured with a humble confidence that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Surely it is a soul-cheering consolation to see or hear of such evidences in another, but how much more to be in such a case when heart and flesh both fail, and to see in the vision of faith, when every sublunary object is receding from our view, the bright rays of celestial glory beaming with immortal brightness through the valley of the shadow of death! Well may the departing saint, in such a happy state, adopt the language of Asaph: "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." (Ps. lxxiii. 26.)

May the good Lord grant unto us, my dear friend, that when we come to the verge of time our prospects may be bright, our evidences clear, and our calling and election made sure, "that so an entrance may be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

The last request of Mr. Burgess on my leaving the room was to present his kind love to Mr. Bensley, Mr. Goulden, Mr. Lock, Mr. Eedes, Mr. Over, and all the vestry friends.

Most respectfully and affectionately yours,

To Mr. Bensley. March 19th, 1824.

J. KEET.

THE RAINBOW OF GOD'S COVENANT.

To my friend Betty, greeting, — This cold weather has been attended with continued rheumatic pains in my old tabernacle; but, blessed be the Lord God, he does not forget the seed of his dear Son, nor the rainbow of his covenant. His promise of life is fulfilled in us, and his bow remains a faithful witness in the heavens that he will no more deluge the world nor drown his children in destruction and perdition. Both these promises are confirmed by oath, and this oath is to put an end to all strife between us and carnal reason, and between faith and unbelief, that the heirs of promise may have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope God has set before us. Blessed be God for evermore for such rich and noble security, which makes the promise of life sure to all the seed.

How are we encompassed with the benignity and divine provision of our God! God the Father loving us, and enabling us to love and believe in his dear Son; Christ in the holy place, ever living to make intercession for us; and the Holy Spirit in us, helping our infirmities, and making intercession also for us, according to the will of God. And, for my part, I know not which is the greatest wonder of these three,—the Father's everlasting love to us, his choice of us, and goodwill of purpose and promise in Christ; the incarnation of Christ and his finished salvation for us; or the inhabitation of the Holy Ghost and his regenerating and renewing work in us. These are most wonderful things to me, and were settled and ordained before the world unto our glory. But the last of these is the nearest to us besides, the former two are already completed, immutably fixed: sure and steadfast for ever. But our concern lies chiefly with the Spirit's work; we must make our calling sure. Election and redemption are as sure as heaven can make them; nor can the logic or cavils of Satan gain any credit with us against these. But against the Holy Spirit and his work in us; against our sonship, faith, and interest in these things, he labours with all his might.

Besides, in heaven, Satan has no allies; but he has a large party of the disaffected in our hearts,—I mean darkness, enmity, evil concupiscence, and unbelief. Hence the need of attention to the Spirit's work, especially to him as the Spirit of adoption. He makes our sonship manifest by our believing; as the Word says: "We are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." He cries, "Abba, Father" in us, when his cry and our faith agree. He bears his witness to our adoption, and makes conscience bear the same testimony. He seals us with the fullest assurance, and anoints us with a joy that springs from love. Go on therefore; for there is nothing that can stand before us, if we have the Lord for our trust, our confidence, and refuge.

Great things has my God done for thee, and thou shalt see greater things yet; for if we follow on to know him, we shall know that his "goings forth are prepared as the morning," and he will come to us as the early and latter rain, softening, refreshing, and reviving our souls and our hope with the genial showers of his humbling grace. "He shall come down as rain upon the mown grass, and as showers that water the earth." Nothing feeds and strengthens faith like prayer and watching the hand of God and his dealings with us. Many deliverances does he work out for us; many suitable words does he send in due season, and many tokens for good appear on our behalf by the comfortable prospects he gives us, and the momentary sensations of joy and peace that often flow in and spring up, and then vanish away. But we may call them Gad, for there is a troop more behind. God bless thee!

March 1st, 1809.

Ever thine,

W. HUNTINGTON.

Obituary.

JANE TIMMINS.—On March 7th, 1889, aged 71, Jane Timmins of Birmingham.

She was a native of what is termed the "black country," and lived for many years at Dudley Port, near Dudley. The following is a short account of her experience as she related it to me.

"I lost a little daughter, and grieved very much over her. An old woman who was a Wesleyan came to see me, and said, 'Ah, she can never come to you, but you can go to her.' I sighed, and felt there must be a great work wrought in me ere I was fit to go to her; but how this work was to be done I did not know, for I was very ignorant, although forty years of age. One day an old man called at my door. He had a van, and went about the country selling mats, &c. We fell into conversation, and he found out that I was discontented. As he was leaving he said, 'The next time I come I will bring you a book that will suit you.' It was some time before he came again, but when he did come he brought me two copies of the 'Gospel Standard.' I have them now." Here she wept and said, "O those books! For some time I could never sit down to my breakfast without them, which made my husband very angry, and he would say, 'Put them away.' I was often afraid for him to see them; so would take them upstairs and sit on the floor and read them. At another time when the old man came he brought me some of the late Mr. Philpot's sermons, and more 'Gospel Standards.' He told me of Mr. Tiptaft and how he loved him, and of his death, and how much he mourned his loss. He said a book of his life would be published, and he hoped he should have one; so when it came out I bought the Memoir of Mr. Tiptaft and gave it to him. O how I felt my heart drawn to the old man! His name was George Westbrook.

"I could not do with the religion around me. I longed to know if the Lord loved me. I wanted him to bless me. One day two men who were Primitive Methodists came to see my husband. I do not know how it was, but I quoted or sung a verse that I had seen in the books. It was this:

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

The men flew at me in such a rage, and said, 'Heirs! Heirs! O no; we will not have it so. We must work for salvation.' They would not have it 'Heirs' although that is how it reads in the Word of God. O what I have suffered for these things! How I have been despised and hated! But I cannot give it up. There was a sermon of Mr. Isbell's published, entitled 'The Gold of Sheba,' also one of Mr. Philpot's called 'The Wilderness Wanderer,' and I have seen myself in those. And now I see the things, and the blessedness of the godly, but I cannot take hold.

I often cry, 'Lord, help me.' I read God's Word, but I want his power. I want his light to shine upon it. O, am I one of his people? I never heard a gospel sermon in my life. I came to Birmingham hoping to hear Mr. Dennett, but my affliction increased and it seemed impossible."

I have many times thought her case very remarkable, for it was a most striking instance of the "Gospel Standard" being made a blessing in opening the blind eyes of a sinner. It was most interesting to me when I first visited her to hear her speak of the different writers and various accounts she had read. I was astonished to see her pile of "Gospel Standards" and how she valued them. One day, when she was lamenting the hardness of her heart and her wretched unbelief, I said, "You remind me of someone of whom I have read who used to say, 'O to believe! O could I but believe!'" She instantly replied, "That was Isabella, Mr. Philpot's cook," referring to the account of Isabella Prentice in the "G.S." for Oct., Nov., and Dec., 1869.

I mostly felt a particular pleasure in going to see her, for with all her wretchedness, the Lord did not entirely withhold little tokens of his love. She was not left to sink down into a state of indifference, for the cry was kept up in her soul and her hunger for spiritual things increased. Nothing would satisfy her but the Lord himself. Her daughter-in-law said she often stood on the stairs to hear her pray. She would say, "Lord have mercy. O Lord, have mercy!" She much regretted not being able to get to the house of God to hear Mr. Dennett preach, and especially as she had so much enjoyed reading his pieces in the "G.S.," particularly those written by him on the book of Ruth. Her main desire in moving to Birmingham was to be able to hear the preached word, but the Lord was not pleased to grant her her desire. How often I saw the great loss it was to one in her case not to hear the gospel.

Being paralysed and unable to attend the ministry of Mr. Dennett, she much desired to see him, and he has given the following account of his visits to her at different times.

"I found her in great distress about her soul. She was assured of the truth of God's Word, and that he had a special people, that he loved them, and that he heard and answered their prayers and would save them; but, in great distress and with bitter weeping, she said, 'I am not one of his people. He *don't* speak to me. He won't answer my prayers. O if he would but speak to my soul! Is there any hope for me?' She had been reduced in circumstances and her property had gone out of her hands. Her son, who was present, commenced talking about her temporal position. She immediately said, 'H., do not talk about those things. O what will become of my soul! What will become of my soul! That is the great question with me. Never mind other things.' She had had trouble of mind for many years past, but within the last twelve or eighteen months she had fallen into such soul-distress as one seldom witnesses. In subsequent visits I

found her in much the same state of mind, often speaking of some sweetness she had felt from the Word of God, but still under the temptation that she was not one of the Lord's people. On the two last occasions that I visited her, she had evidently been much relieved in her soul, and the last time I saw her she said what a sweet time she had had, and how the love of God had flowed into her heart, and what peace and happiness she felt; but said, 'I am not satisfied. I want more. I want to be filled with his presence. I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with his likeness.' I left her, assured that she was a child of God and that it would be well with her in death, which proved to be the case."

One day she broke out, saying, "Believe me, it is the one desire of my soul to be found right at last. I don't want to deceive you or anyone. The loss of my property and my affliction, heavy as it is, does not trouble me. O if the Lord will but come and bless me as he blesses his own people! When I was being carried upstairs I thought of Jonah, and I inwardly said, 'The Lord loved Jonah, but I fear he don't love me.'" Constant and continual was her cry night and day to know if the Lord loved her. Soon after this I said to her, "You are still on this side Jordan. Do you fear death?" She replied, "O no; but where am I going? How will it be with me? On which side shall I stand?" Another time, when reading to her a few verses in Rom. x., she stopped at verse 9 and said, "I firmly believe in the Godhead of Christ. Satan has not been permitted to move me from that; but am I his? Did he die for me?" She would weep much and say, "Can it be that I am one? I don't want to be deceived. Fully do I believe in his power."

Another time she said, "I have been thinking about Lot and how the Lord sent his angels and drew him out of Sodom. How sure I feel he could send and fetch me." Then she would say, "But will he? It is the one desire of my soul to know that I am his."

Thus she went on until within a fortnight of her decease when she had some little helps, and would say, "The Lord just came, but was gone again." One evening she said, "I have been thinking about Saul of Tarsus and how the Lord spoke to him, saying, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me.' Look at the love of his heart! O the love of his heart! But the great thing is to get into it." On Feb. 27th I went again, when she said with tears of joy, "O I have had such a feast! It was so sweet. I have been meditating upon Naomi and Boaz. Boaz is a blessed type of Christ; and these words came, 'I will come into him, and sup with him.' I feared to move, lest the Lord should go. I have a brighter hope now. I see now how he has guided me all the way. O I did have such a feast last night!" When leaving her I said, "What shall I tell Mr. Dennett and the friends?" She replied, "Tell them I have not had enough of him (meaning the Lord) yet. No; I have not had enough of him yet." After this she scarcely spoke: Her sight failed and she was perfectly helpless and unconscious. Thus she sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.—E. W.

ANN SALTER.—On December 21st, 1888, aged 64, while on a visit to her children in London, after a painful illness of nine weeks, Ann Salter, the beloved wife of Peter Salter, of Sherstone, Wilts.

She was brought to know the Lord at the early age of eighteen. Her happy departure was indeed a blessed victory over the last enemy, *death*. Her end was so bright that many Christian friends who frequently visited her, always felt a reluctance in leaving her. She would lie for hours and hold sweet communion with her God. At such times some blessed portions of Scripture were repeated by her with much fervour. She would say, "Glory! Glory! Alleluia! I am saved through the blood of the Lamb. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. O how precious is grace! Jesus, my All, to heaven is gone. Great High Priest! Mighty King of Zion!" Many portions of Scripture were very much blessed to her. Very rarely did an expression of doubt escape her lips, and then only to be followed by another bright token.

A day or two before her death she was much distressed. Satan had been telling her that God was not her Father, and that she had no right to call him, "Abba, Father." Then, as light broke in again upon her soul, she seemed endued with a supernatural power, and, raising herself in bed, exclaimed, "My Lord and my God! Thou art indeed my Father;" and quoted the following lines:

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

Then she said, "I am saved through the blood of the Lamb. Thy precious grace will sustain me. My God is all-sufficient." The day before she died she desired that the hymn commencing,

"All hail the power of Jesu's name"

might be sung. The wish not being gratified, for our mouths were closed, she smiled and said, "What! Have I not a child that can praise the Lord?" and then, in a singularly sweet voice, she sang it herself. Afterwards she exclaimed, "What shall I render unto thee, my God, for keeping my children from open wickedness?" Then, after a short pause, she said, "But bring them to thyself, blessed God."

She was never satisfied without father by her bedside, and he was her constant attendant. They had lived a most devoted life together, and although the separation is so keen, our dear father knows that the parting is only a brief one. During the whole of her illness Rom. viii was very precious to her, as she often said that it contained the whole of her experience.

Our dear mother was buried in Fulham cemetery, London, on December 27th.

P. J. SALTER.

✓BROWN bread with the gospel is good fare.—Dodd.

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—“Shoreham, Sussex, 7, New Road, January 4, 1889. Mrs. C. Hodges.—Please send two Boxes of Ointment by return of Post, as I have a friend requires one at once. I have just read two accounts where it has quite cured bad legs, and oblige, yours truly, Mrs. Richards.” Cure for Bad Legs, Ulcers, Carbuncles, Broken Breasts, Quinsy, Sore Throats, Sore Lips, Scalds, Boils, Burns, Bruises, Cuts, Abscesses, Whitlows, Piles, Poison Wounds, Skin Eruptions, Chapped Hands, Tender Feet, Corns, Bunions, Sprains, Cold on the Chest, Sore Eyes, Ringworm, Vaccination Eruptions, Tumours, &c. Cancers greatly relieved. Try one Box. To be obtained of all Patent Medicine Vendors, or from the maker direct, post free, 1s. 4d., 2s. 9d., 4s. 9d.—C. HODGES, 14, Belgrave Road, Tunbridge Wells.

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“10, St. Peter's Street, Tunbridge Wells, May 9th, 1888.

“To Mrs. Chivers.—Dear Madam,—Please send me another packet of your Corn Remedy. The last I had was for a woman with very bad feet. She could hardly walk. In fact, she was very unwell through them. The morning after she had used it, she came up to my house and said how much better her feet were. She now walks about as nimbly as a young girl, is very well in health, and says how thankful she is for your remedy.”

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The following Cases are selected from the TWENTY-NINTH SERIES now Publishing in the Weekly Journals:

CASE OF MR. AARON SMITH, OF RAMSGATE.

The patient, who is a Primitive Methodist minister, came to me first between three and four years ago. He had been ailing for several years with cough and shortness of breath, which had grown upon him, and loss of flesh was now apparent, with other symptoms of general decline. He was then located at Halifax. The cough had now become chronic, and there was extreme weakness of the lungs. Undoubtedly if he had not then commenced my treatment his disease would have developed into Consumption, as other means had failed to relieve.

He saw me again in the summer, when there was a marked improvement manifest. Correspondence continued at intervals. He entirely recovered his health and strength. He is now minister at Ramsgate.

And writing me from 5, Arthur-terrace, Ramsgate, Jan. 21st of this year, he says: "I have much grateful pleasure in informing you that through your means my health has been so benefited that I am now fairly well. I have been recommending others to use it, to their special advantage."

CONSUMPTION, WITH COMPLICATIONS OF OTHER DISEASE—CASE OF MISS A. E. BARNES.

This patient, then at Brede, Sussex, applied to me first about three years ago. (She had been recommended to me by Mr. S. S. TAYLOR, of St. Leonards, whose daughter had received much benefit.) Consumption had been in the family. Six years before this she had rheumatic fever; had also suffered from chronic indigestion, which brought her to a weak, low state. Then cough came on, with bad expectoration, palpitations, unhealthy secretions, swelling of the legs, hectic fever, with loss of flesh, and gradually increasing weakness. Her doctor then pronounced her case Consumption, with complication of other disease, which was the sequence of the rheumatic fever.

In one month from commencing my treatment there was manifest improvement, after which she varied much, but on the whole progressed. Her recovery was slow. (It will always be so where there is any complication of disease, and this is sometimes obscure and difficult to diagnose.)

The last letter I received from her is dated Jan. 5th of this year. With grateful heart she writes me from 5, Highland Gardens, St. Leonards-on-Sea (her home is Windmill Cottage, Brede). She says: "I have to thank you for your skill in treating me, and by the blessing of God saving my life. I believe if I had not heard of you I should have been gone from this world long ago. Everyone thought I should not last the summer though. I have now been twelve months without your treatment. Use my case as you please. Yours gratefully, ANNIE E. BARNES."

••• DAYS OF CONSULTATION at COOMBE LODGE—TUESDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY Mornings only. Free Consultations to private patients only, who must be supplied with medicine at the time of consultation. (See the Book.)

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JULY, 1889.

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

MEDITATIONS ON PSALM XXV.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from page 240.)

IN the seventh verse this good and gracious man prays that God will not remember that which he has promised to forget. This may seem strange to unexercised and unregenerated professors, because the Lord has positively declared respecting all his people that "their sins and their iniquities he will remember no more;" but the Spirit of God who convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment brings our sins to remembrance. This was the effect of God's word by his servant Elijah on the widow woman when she cried, "What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?" (1 Kings xvii. 18); by which it would appear that the Lord brought things to her remembrance which she would have forgotten and buried.

The children of God, who are conscious of many secret sins as well as open transgressions, fear lest the Lord should, after all, bring them into judgment against them; and therefore they cry as David does in this verse, "Remember not my sins;" and on the other hand, what the Lord has promised he will never forget but surely perform and grant to his own elect people,—these are the things which they pray the Lord to remember. This shows how the Blessed Spirit exercises and stirs up the hearts of his children in prayer and supplication for these two things,—first, that God would remember them and grant them his tender mercies and his lovingkindnesses; and, secondly, that he will not remember their sins against them.

In this seventh verse the Psalmist is made conscious of sins committed at a certain period of his life;—they were the *sins of his youth*. There is nothing recorded in Scripture to show the exact time when the Lord began a work of grace in the soul of David; but it must have been in very early life. What these sins of his youth were was a secret with himself and the Lord. This is the case with many of the Lord's children who are made to remember the sins of their early life,—secret sins which God and themselves alone know. Often are they remembered with shame, and many transgressions there are which we wish we had

never committed; but God does not bring them to our remembrance to destroy us, but to convince us of the evil of our doings, for this is the Spirit's work. Natural conscience may work and guilt may be felt when sin has been committed, but in time that, in great measure, passes away; but it is the Spirit's work to bring the sins of our youth to remembrance to make us hate them and loathe ourselves on account of them. The devil will sometimes accuse us of our sins to cause us to despair of mercy, and conscience joins with him to own the truth of his accusations; but if this were all it would never lead us to prayer and supplication to the Lord that he would not remember our sins against us in anger and wrath.

Job greatly feared the Lord; he was a very upright man, he eschewed evil, and there was none like him in the earth, for this was God's own testimony of him; so that one would have thought he had not sinned like many others, and possibly he had not in some respects; but when the Lord came to deepen his work and chasten him according to his lovingkindness, he had to cry out, "Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth." (Job xiii. 26.) It is a mercy to have our sins brought to remembrance that we may be chastened for them here and not be condemned with the world, seeing that the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God.

That David was not an openly profane youth is clear. We read that he was a poor shepherd boy, and at what age the Holy Ghost began a work of grace in his soul, or when the Spirit first implanted life in his heart is not revealed. This being withheld from us and no account given of any fixed month or week or day or hour when he was regenerated or born again of the Spirit is for the encouragement of many of God's children who are unable to tell the exact time when life divine first entered their souls; for if their entrance into heaven or acceptance with God depended on this, they would be rejected and lost; but as it was with David after he was regenerated; so it is with the Lord's children,—he began to feel after the Lord who instructed him gradually yet truly and savingly into the things of salvation. Hence he says, "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth; and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works" (Ps. lxxi. 17); and in looking back upon the way in which God had led him, fed him, clothed him, and exalted him, he saw that from the moment of his entrance into this world God had been his Helper, Defender, and Guide; for he says: "By thee have I been holden up from the womb; thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels; my praise shall be continually of thee."

But though there is no exact time given when David was called by grace, yet it is evident this work was accomplished when he was very young; for when he went forth to fight against Goliath of Gath, Saul said to him, "Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." David replied,

“Thy servant kept his father’s sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock; and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth; and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.” (1 Sam. xvii. 34–37.) The work of grace was evidently begun in David’s soul before he slew the giant, for it was doubtless by faith that he slew the lion and the bear, and rescued the lamb out of the mouth of the lion.

In many cases in early life, even from childhood, the Holy Spirit begins to chasten and reprove the sons and daughters of God, so that they cannot do as others do without remorse and condemnation for evil, and frequently some portion of Scripture is impressed upon their mind producing awe of the living God, and a fear attends the soul that death and judgment will overtake them and that for their sins God will cast them into hell. In addition to this very frequently they are scared with visions and terrified through dreams, and conclude that they shall be consumed by the wrath of an angry and righteous God.

That the Lord begins to work in the hearts of many of his own, even in childhood and youth is most certain from the Scriptures. Paul said of Timothy, “From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (2 Tim. iii. 15.) In the child of Jeroboam, who died when young, God had implanted his secret which is with them that fear him, for some good thing was found in him toward the Lord God of Israel, and when he died, though only a child, all Israel mourned for him, and his soul as surely went to heaven as did the body and soul of Elijah who was taken to glory with chariots of fire and horsemen. King Josiah at the age of sixteen was filled with such spiritual zeal for the honour and glory of God that he broke down the altars of Baalim, cut down the groves, and brake the molten images and made dust of them, and strewed it upon the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them. This he did, though so young in years, under the influence of the Holy Ghost. But when he was twenty-six years of age the Lord evidently deepened his work in his soul; for when Hilkiah the priest found the book of the law and brought it to the king, and Shaphan the scribe read it in his presence, the holiness and spirituality of that law with all its requirements came home with convincing power and authority to the soul of the young king, and he cried out, “Great is the wrath of the Lord that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the Lord, to do after all that is written in this book.” (2 Chron. xxxiv. 21.) Under this apprehension of God’s wrath he made an inquiry of a woman named

Huldah, the prophetess, who was to the king as the mouth of God, and he received this answer to his great comfort and joy: "Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the Lord. Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same." (2 Chron. xxxiv. 27, 28.)

In the soul of Jacob's favourite son Joseph God began his work when he was very young in years. The fear of God was implanted in his soul, but at what particular age is not revealed. At the age of seventeen he was feeding the flock with some of his brethren, that is, his father's sons by the handmaids which Leah and Rachel gave unto him, and he brought unto his father their evil report. This shows that he possessed a tender conscience and the fear of God. Opposition and persecution immediately ensued, for his brethren hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him. This is often the case when God, in his distinguishing grace, separates one from the rest of the family. Those who have the coat of many colours must be marked, and those who depart from evil cannot be embraced by the world. "Marvel not," said Christ, "if the world hate you." And again, he said, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." But see how wonderfully God took care of Joseph in his youth, how he preserved him, and was with him wherever he went,—in the pit, in the prison, and on the throne; and how all his trials worked for his advancement and for the humiliation of all his brethren who hated him, despised him, sold him, and conspired to murder him.

It is very probable that a work of grace was begun in the soul of Enoch when very young, for he was translated from earth to heaven at the age of three hundred and sixty-five years, and at the time of the birth of his son Methusaleh he had walked with God three hundred years. How long he had walked in fellowship with God before Methusaleh was born we do not know, but it is clear that God wrought in him a saving work of grace in early life, especially when we consider the age to which men lived in those days.

We have reason to believe that Adam, the first man, the first sinner, and the first saint that ever lived was called by divine grace soon after he had transgressed the law of God, brought himself into condemnation, and thereby ruined all his future race; for he could not have lived long when the Lord came to him in the garden and gave the promise respecting the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ into the world to save sinners; for, in the hearing of Adam and his bride, he said to Satan, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his

heel." This was to them the good news of salvation, or the first report that God made to the sons of men of the coming of Christ in the flesh, and they realized the fulfilment of the Scripture: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. xi. 1.) This blessed report which God brought from heaven and sealed on the hearts of our first parents was made known through them to their son Abel, the first man that was born a sinner and by grace made a saint, for he is one of the elders who obtained a good report, which report was that God would send his only-begotten Son into the world, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life; and this report was kept up by the prophets, as we see in Isaiah, where he speaks of the coming of Christ, and says, "So shall he sprinkle many nations," and cries out, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (Isa. liii. 1.) Therefore Abel, under the assurance of this, offered the firstling of his flock unto God, which was a more excellent sacrifice than Cain's, for it typified God's First-born, even Christ who was to be sacrificed as an offering for his people's sins.

It is a wonderful mercy for those who are called by grace to know the Lord when young, and on whose hearts the Lord with power and life stamps his Word, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." It may have been observed by many of the Lord's servants and people that the Holy Ghost, for the most part, calls the sons and daughters of the Almighty out of darkness into his marvellous light before they arrive at the age of thirty. This is a great mercy; but in point of time it seems a greater mercy when God has suffered a man or a woman to live forty years in sin and transgression, and then to touch their hearts, regenerate their souls, and bring them down to his feet as poor suppliants confessing their sins and crying for mercy. But it is a greater mercy still and a very unusual occurrence to see a person called by grace divine when they have attained the age of sixty. To live sixty years in sin and to have nearly spent out all physical strength in enmity against God and to have lived strangers to the work of his Spirit,—then to be called is not only a wonderful mercy, but we may add, a wonderful miracle, for these cases are more rare than those who are called at the age of forty. Occasionally God is pleased to allow some of his elect to live without hope and without God until they have attained the age of threescore years and ten, and it may be even fourscore years. Then, because he will not suffer his faithfulness to fail nor let one of his own chosen people die in sin, he plucks them out of Satan's kingdom, delivers them from the curse of his fiery law, and holds them up as the spared monuments of his mercy and the miracles of his grace, saying, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

But whether called in youth, in more advanced years, or late in life, what cause have we all to lift up our hearts to God and bless him that he ever remembered us in our low estate; for it

is because his mercy endureth for ever; and all will have to cry, "Remember not the sins of my youth, the sins of my manhood, and the transgressions of my whole life; for they are many, they are black, they are aggravated, they are enough to damn my soul, and, if possible, sufficient, O God, to have changed thy mind and provoked thee to say, 'Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'" (Matt. xxii. 13.) But to such God's will is otherwise, for mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

The Psalmist, after praying that his sins and transgressions may not be remembered, entreats the Lord to remember him according to his mercy: "According to thy mercy remember thou me, for thy goodness' sake, O Lord." He had experienced mercy many times from the Lord, but he still cries for some further manifestation of it, as all God's children are made to do, for this is their prayer all their journey through. The Lord's people who are born again of the Spirit have realized converting mercy, which has once and for ever brought them out of their natural state. They are not merely reformed, as may be a drunkard or swearer, a thief or a liar; but their hearts are changed,—indeed, they have a new heart given to them, a new spirit put within them. They are made by conversion or regeneration new creatures, and from that moment united to the Lord Jesus Christ. Then again, they realize sooner or later pardoning mercy, when the burden and guilt of their sins is removed from their conscience, and love, grace, and pardon flow into their souls, which is always attended with inexpressible joy and produces such a spring of gratitude, thanksgiving, praise, and love to God that they speak with their tongue and say, "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 lovingkindness and tender mercies." Then again, after seasons of desertion, temptation, and trial, the Lord's people are from time to time renewed according to the mercy of God. This we may call the Lord's reviving mercy; for it brings them out of a felt state of experimental death again to bless God for his reviving mercy. There is also the Lord's preserving mercy, which we need every day, every hour, and every moment of our life, whether it be by night or by day. This the Psalmist felt when he said, "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High; to show forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night." (Ps. xcii. 1, 2.)

In looking back upon our past life, which is but as a span, and our days but as a handbreadth, has there been one moment, even when we were living in sin and wickedness and knew not God, when in some way or other his preserving care and mercy were not round about us, and our lives, when in the midst of wickedness, in the world and in the service of Satan, were preserved

from destruction? But notwithstanding all these past mercies, there is a cry still goes out of the heart to the Lord for his keeping mercy, his upholding mercy, his supplying mercy, and that mercy may follow us all the days of our life, swallow up our sins, and that when we come upon our death-bed mercy may crown our journey's end, and that mercy and power may join to carry our souls into an endless eternity, there to realize to our full satisfaction and God's eternal glory the text which says, "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him." (Ps. ciii. 17.)

But there is a fountain from which all these mercies flow; as the Psalmist here says: "For thy goodness' sake, O Lord." The goodness of God is a never-failing source from which all the blessings of salvation have flowed into the hearts of God's people from the foundation of the world. Then, there is the goodness of God in his providence, which he makes known to all his creatures; but his superlative goodness in grace, which is far above all his temporal kindness, he makes known to his own people in the Person of his Son Christ Jesus, and this goodness of God when set over against our badness and wickedness is as opposite as the poles, and differs as much as light differs from darkness, grace from sin, holiness from transgression, and purity from corruption. Indeed, the goodness of God spiritually considered is salvation, which the Lord exercises towards the sons of men in his sovereignty, giving it to whom he will and withholding it from whom he will, neither allowing it to be of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of himself who showeth mercy.

When Moses prayed for the Lord's national people and entreated that he might behold his glory, God answered him and said, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." (Exod. xxxiii. 19.) When Moses received the law the second time the language of it differed much from that which God gave him the first time; for on the second occasion the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." When Moses heard these words respecting mercy, grace, long-suffering, goodness, and truth, and that there was mercy for thousands, iniquity being forgiven, transgression and sin being covered, and that the guilty should by no means be cleared, and the iniquity of the fathers should be visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation, he, feeling the promises of grace and mercy sweet to his soul, and having a blessed assurance that he was amongst the number whose sins God would not remember, it brought a

sweet submissiveness to the will of God in his sovereignty, both respecting those who were to be saved and those who were to be damned; for we read: "And Moses *made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.*" All the children of God are brought to bless and praise his holy name for his great kindness in gathering them out of the lands, from the east, the west, the north, and the south, and each one is enabled to enter into the language of the redeemed and say, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever."

We will now pass on to the eighth verse in which the Psalmist says, "Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way." *Good and upright!* Here is a sweet view of the character of God, of his nature, and of what he is in himself;—he is *good*; he is *upright*. The very nature of God is *good*, and all his ways are in *uprightness*. It is an amazing wonder, considering the dreadful state into which sin has plunged the whole human race, that God should bear with us and show us any kindness and mercy at all; but it is the good pleasure of his will so to do and not because any human being ever merited anything from him either temporal or spiritual. God is good and by nature and practice we are bad; he is just and we are unjust; he is holy and we are unholy; he cannot sin nor lie, and we by nature can do nothing but sin. He shows himself specially good to his people in making himself known to them as a God of grace. How wonderful it is that we who by nature are haters of God, "hateful and hating one another," as Paul says, should be brought to know the love of God! God is love, and having loved his own he makes himself known to them. God is light, and he shines into the hearts of his people: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. iv. 6.) God, or Christ is life: "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." (Jno. i. 4.)

But the Psalmist says, notwithstanding all this, the Lord "will teach sinners in the way." This need of teaching shows how ignorant we are, how blinded to God's purposes, and that we know nothing as we hope to know; that "we have gone astray," as Isaiah says, "we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." This teaching is by the Holy Ghost. He comes to make us sensible that we are sinners, to convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; he causes us to feel the guilt of our sins, and makes us know in some measure the value of our souls. He makes known to us the spirituality of God's holy law, and causes us to feel that under it we are lost and ruined and can never keep one of its precepts. But he also leads all the sons and daughters of God to see that there is a way of life and a place of safety; and "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." He turns their eyes to Christ, testifies of Christ, shows Christ as the sinner's Friend, Christ as the end of the law for

righteousness, makes known the virtue and value of Christ's precious blood, works faith in his righteousness, and reveals Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life; as it is written: "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." (Jno. xvi. 13.)

The Psalmist says here the Lord *will teach sinners in the way*, that is, in the way of regeneration. Christ calls it the narrow way which leadeth unto life. It is called by Isaiah *a way*, and *a highway*, because it leads to eternal happiness. It is called *the way everlasting*, and in Ps. cvii. it is declared of the Lord's redeemed, that, "he led them forth by a *right way*, that they might go to a city of habitation." Powerfully does the Holy Ghost teach sinners that this is the only way of escape from sin and death and eternal punishment. Therefore what need we have to be crying, "Teach me thy way, O Lord; lead me in a plain path because of mine enemies."

All who are in the narrow way to heaven know that they are sinners, and are made to feel their bruise, their wounds, their sicknesses and sores,—to experience the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and find such abominations working in their hearts which make them cry out, "Can ever God dwell here?" so that at times they are ready to conclude that they must be deceived. This is no uncommon experience to the people of God. David, Jeremiah, the prophet Micah, and many other Old Testament saints found themselves wretched sinners after grace had entered their souls and after they had been led for many, many years in the way of uprightness; therefore we are not to think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try us. If we are saved by grace, and have an interest in Christ's obedience, bloodshedding, and death, we must certainly know something of what we are saved from and what we hope to be saved to, in order that the Lord Jesus Christ may be our All in all. The great multitude spoken of in Rev. vii. are said to have come out of great tribulation; and all tribulation arises from sin and transgression.

Though we are vile, base, and black as sin and hell can make us, yet it is the mercy of every coming, crying, humble soul that the Lord takes pleasure in teaching sinners in the way, and thus securing the praise and honour and glory to himself, and bringing the people of God to unite in saying, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory; for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." But though we are black and sinful *within* the grace of God gives us no licence to commit *outward* sins. If people talk about grace and boast that they are going to heaven, and we see them living in transgression, we may well question the reality of their religion; for the Saviour has said: "By their fruits ye shall know them." (Matt. vii. 20.) Where the life of God is implanted in the heart, that will influence our outward walk and distinguish us from the world lying in wickedness; as saith the Scripture: "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light." (Eph. v. 8.)

(To be continued.)

THE FAITH AND PRAYER OF A GODLY MAN WHEN IN TROUBLE.

A SERMON PREACHED AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, WEST STREET, CROYDON,
BY MR. HEMINGTON, ON WEDNESDAY EVENING, MAY 15TH, 1889.

“And Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power; help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.”—2 CHRON. xiv. 11.

THIS chapter begins in the following way: “So Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David; and Asa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years.”

How wonderfully characteristic this first verse is of human life: “Abijah slept with his fathers;” for one dies and another is raised up in his place. Solomon said, “One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth for ever.” (Eccles. i. 4.) All who die go into an eternal world;—the righteous go into heaven and the wicked go down to hell. How solemn! It is enough to make us all tremble; and it is enough to cause the children of God to bless and praise him for the hope he has given them in his eternal mercy.

What is our life, friends, and what are we ourselves? What are you and what am I? Are we doing that which is good and right in the eyes of the Lord? Has God opened our eyes? Has he set our feet in the path of spiritual life? Is he really teaching us by his Spirit? Are we really being influenced from day to day by his fear? Do we know spiritually and savingly his truth? Do we from our *very hearts* know it? Are we making a consistent profession of it? Are we carrying out our religion daily in our practice? Are we practically denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts? Are we really living spiritually and righteously in this present evil world? Because, if it is so, we are doing that which is right in the eyes of the Lord, and we are doing all that it is possible to do; but yet after all we shall have to say that we are unprofitable servants. The real child of God always desires to do that which is good and right in the sight of the Lord; but he abhors the very thought of meriting salvation by what he does. God saves his people by his grace before they can do that which is good and right, spiritually considered, in his eyes; and therefore what God's people do that is good and right, it is only that service which they render to him through Jesus Christ; and in all such service they continually confess before God that they are unprofitable servants.

Abijah was one of the good kings of Judah, and like Hezekiah he set himself to the work of purging his kingdom of idolatry, priestcraft, superstition, and mock-worship. What a mercy it would be for our beloved country were God to raise up some instruments,—some men of might, power, and influence, who should

be *godly* men as well as legislators, and what a mercy it would be were he to use them as he used good men in days that are past and gone for the purpose of purging our Protestant country of the awful amount of priestcraft, Jesuitism, empty forms of worship, and mock-religion with which we are becoming more and more overrun, to the dishonour of God and to our own disgrace as a nation in England.

Abijah set himself to the work of maintaining the pure worship of God; and depend upon this the more we serve God truly the more we shall be opposed. There is no serving God in this world with godly zeal, integrity, and uprightness, no cleaving to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and bearing an outspoken testimony in defence of the doctrines of grace, and carrying out, as I said before, our religion into practice, without the enemies of God being certain to rise up against us. Besides which, trial, temptation, persecution, and being brought into great straits and made to cry unto God in these straits, has always been God's way of trying the faith of his people.

In this chapter it is said of Asa that "he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves; and commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images; and the kingdom was quiet before him. And he built fenced cities in Judah; for the land had rest, and he had no war in those years; because the Lord had given him rest."

In speaking from these historical parts of the Word I am aware that you as children of God want something more than the letter. You would not be at all satisfied this evening were I to do nothing more than just mention in your hearing the mere historical facts as recorded by the Spirit of God in this fourteenth chapter of the second book of Chronicles about Abijah and Asa; neither can I myself ever be satisfied with these mere *historical facts*; but when my mind leads me in the ministry of the word to these historical parts of Scripture, I want the Lord to help me to get at something spiritual, and when I speak to the people from these parts I want to speak something that will do their souls good.

Observe, then, in the first place, that the Lord gave to this good king of Judah a *time of rest*, and "there was no war in those years." So the Lord gives to his living children times of spiritual rest and quiet, when Satan, indwelling sin, and the turbulent evils of our nature are brought, yes, at times *blessedly so* through the power of God, under subjection, and circumstances without are suffered of God for a time,—mark what I say, *for a time* to flow on with a much smoother surface, and the secret communications of God to our souls, such as giving us more peace and quiet through believing, constitute for the time being our experience; and I believe these times are about the

best times that God's living children ever know anything about through the whole course of their pilgrimage in this world.

Abijah, when in his great prosperity, little thought how soon a dark cloud would arise up from the horizon and spread itself over the whole sky of his life. He little thought how very soon the sweet-flowing, tranquil stream of his natural prosperity would become hedged up, and that the unlooked-for storm of adversity would burst upon his kingdom and put him into the greatest straits, thereby causing him in deepest anxiety and distress to cry unto God. "Therefore he said unto Judah, Let us build these cities, and make about them walls and towers, gates and bars, while the land is yet before us; because we have sought the Lord our God, we have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every side. So they built and prospered." Now, has it not been the same with you? Sure I am it has with myself; and I find that as sure as ever God makes it a good time, which I trust he sometimes does with my soul by giving me more peace, more quiet, and by permitting things in one's mind to be more pleasant and more agreeable, very soon have I found this to be all reversed (and I suppose you find it the same), and I have been brought into fresh trials, fresh conflicts, and fresh worrying circumstances have taken place; so that, as I say, we are brought into fresh straits; and there is a needs-be for this; as Peter says: "Though now for a season *if need be* ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations." Mark those words: "*If need be.*" We are not brought into this heaviness unless there be a necessity for it; that is, as God looks at the matter. But it often does come upon us. Do not some of you know what this heaviness is? What I have just quoted is a very expressive verse of Scripture: "Though now for a season *if need be* ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations." What is it for? What is God's purpose in it? Why, he sends this *heaviness* upon his people for the trial of their faith which is much more precious than of gold that perisheth, and in order that it may not be found at last to be a spurious thing.

What numbers there are whose faith will at the last turn out to be a spurious thing! What numbers there are who make a profession of religion, and who have faith enough to believe such things as I am talking about this evening, and yet their faith is not a divine and saving faith! God will not let his people come to his door with anything in their hand; he will not let them traffic with heaven with counterfeit coin in their hand, but with current coin,—that coin which bears the King's image, even with a living faith; therefore says Peter, "Though now for a season *if need be* ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations. That the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." Look at it! O that my faith may be found at last unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ! O that your faith, my dear brother or sister, may be

found on a dying bed and when you stand before God unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ!

Ah, my friends, prosperity—spiritual prosperity and temporal prosperity, more peace than usual, more quietness at home than usual, more tranquillity of mind than usual, more comfort of soul than usual, more nearness to God in prayer than usual, more enjoyment of his Word when you sit down to read it than usual, more receiving of his truth in the moisture, power, unction, and dew of it into your hearts than usual,—let me tell you all this constitutes dangerous, very dangerous ground, unless we use our mercies and prosperity aright; and we never use our spiritual prosperity and our mercies aright unless we are helped to lay them down at the Lord's feet, and make more of the Lord than our mercies. God help you to take that thought away with you. I believe in nineteen cases out of twenty we make more of our mercies than of the God of our mercies, and the consequence is that our trust and faith in God often become weaker and weaker; so that the least trial we have within or without greatly casts us down. Therefore the Lord takes care to bring his people time after time into fresh trials, fresh conflicts, and into fresh straits, in order that they may be made to honour him, exalt him, trust in him, look to him, and in order that he himself may be more to them than his gifts.

Who am I speaking to here this evening, who with a good conscience can affirm there have been times with him, and are times with him now, when he can say, "God is more to me than his gifts; Christ is more to me than what he bestows upon me?" It is a blessed thing to be brought by the Spirit of God to feel this,—to feel that great as God's salvation is, much as we love spiritual comfort, much as we love a soft heart, much as we love any spiritual blessing that the Lord may see fit to bestow upon us, yet it is a good thing to have the mind led out by the Spirit,—sometimes at least; I do not say it is always so with the child of God; but it is a blessed thing to have the mind at times led out by the Blessed Spirit, more to Christ, more to God himself than to the things he bestows upon us. God is a jealous God, and "will not give his glory to another, neither his praise to graven images." He will be acknowledged and exalted; therefore he brings us into trials in which we cannot do without him on purpose that he may be exalted. God brought this good man, Asa, into great straits and difficulties on purpose to make him cry more earnestly unto him; as we read: "And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with a host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto Mareshah. Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. And Asa cried unto the Lord his God." Ah, he cried as a good man, he cried in faith, he cried from his heart, and he cried unto the Lord *his God*. I like those words: "*His God*." That is where I want to be brought. I want to cry to the Lord. I want

to cry from my heart. I want to cry by faith, and I want, conscientiously so, to cry unto him as *my God*. There are thousands of professors of religion who have no God. God is the Creator of all men. He is a God to all his creatures; but as the God of salvation he is the God of none but those who stand in his covenant and are brought to know him as Abijah did, and as Asa was brought to know him.

When natural men come into very great distresses and very great troubles, when the judgments of God come down upon them, they do not know what to do nor where to go, nor do they know where to look for relief and help. O what contrivances, policies, shifts, and subterfuges natural men are constantly resorting unto in difficulties and troubles in order to obtain relief. And why? Because they have no God to go to. And so it is with numbers who make a profession of religion, but whose religion is only notion; for they are just like Baal's worshippers. There were a number of people in those days who made a great profession of religion, and they had their God, but not the true God, and there was also God's prophet Elijah, his own servant.

Now there came a very memorable moment in the life of Elijah, and in the life of those blind worshippers,—those superstitious idolaters. Their confidence was in their false god, but Elijah's confidence was in the God of heaven. Elijah challenged them and said, "Now, to bring matters to the test, you prepare your sacrifice and I will prepare mine; you build your altar and I will build mine, you call upon your God and I will call upon mine, and the God that answers by fire, the God that comes down and licks up the water in the trenches and consumes the sacrifice, let him be the true God." The people answered, "Well said; that is very fair. We will accept your challenge." Said Elijah, "Now begin. Come, slay the bullock, and build the altar." They did so, and cried from morning until evening, "O Baal, hear us!" That is just what mock worshippers do in the present day. Not that they use the word Baal, but they use the words "God" and "Christ" and the "Holy Spirit," and say, "God be merciful unto us, miserable sinners," "O Lord, have mercy upon us," and all that kind of thing which amounts to no more than, "O Baal, hear us!" because they have no knowledge of the true God. But there was no voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded the cries of these people. Then Elijah said, "Cry aloud; for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked." Therefore they cried aloud, and cut themselves with lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them; but there was still no answer.

Then Elijah built an altar in the name of the Lord, made a trench about the altar, and put the wood in order, cut the bullock in pieces, laid him on the wood, poured water on the sacrifice, and filled the trench also with water. Then the prophet of the Lord came near and said, "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel; let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and

that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word." Then down came the fire from heaven and the sacrifice was consumed and the water in the trench was licked up. See the vast difference between the worshippers of the true God, and mere nominal professors.

Numbers of professors followed Christ in the days of his flesh for a time, but when he preached to them very closely, as we read in the gospel of John, and proclaimed in their ears discriminating truth, and told them no man could come to him except the Father which had sent him draw him, then they were offended. Also when he told them of the case of the poor widow, and that God's prophet Elijah was only sent to that one poor woman, then the people took offence, and turned back from following him.

But with God's living children, not only do they pray to him as their God, but they pray, as Paul says, when the Lord is with them, with the heart and with the understanding also, and the Lord hears their cry; as he has said: "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him." (Ps. xii. 5.) O what a mercy it is to be a true worshipper of the true and living God!

My text says, "And Asa cried unto the Lord his God." I insist upon this one thing, for I always make a point of it, not only now but at all times, that a *good man knows his God*. Poor doubting, fearing child of God, and there may be many such here this evening, were I to say to you privately to-morrow, "My friend, do you not know your God?" The poor doubting soul might say, "Well, Sir, I am afraid to say, 'Yes, I do.'" But if I were to ask such to relate to me a little of God's dealings with them, and give me a reason of the hope that is in them with meekness and fear, I should soon find that they knew God for themselves, and I should say, "This person knows his God. This young woman knows her God. She is afraid she does not, but she does." Or, "I had a little conversation with that young man, and when I put some questions to him his countenance dropped directly, and he was perfectly silent and gave me no answer; but I feel persuaded he knows his God, though he is afraid he does not know him."

Every good man knows his God, and this puts more or less of divine sweetness into the bitterest trials that may come upon God's people. I believe in their greatest and most poignant trials, in their very deepest sorrows there is a comfort, a consolation, and a joy so peculiar in their nature and so secretly sustaining to the mind of a child of God, that it is a consolation and a joy not to be found at other times, and not to be found anywhere else but in the furnace of affliction. I do not say you will not find spiritual joy, peace, and consolation anywhere else but in the furnace of affliction; that is not my meaning; but I mean this,—there is a joy, a consolation, a secret sustaining

power to the mind, so peculiar in their nature, which is felt in time of deep sorrow and trial, which is not to be known and found unless we come into these deep trials. I myself have found it so.

“And Asa cried unto the Lord his God.” Asa, in his very cry in the deep anxiety of his heart, when all this great host came out against him, and the painful uncertainty hanging over him as to the issue of events, yet his mind found a sweet stay in this one thing, that *the Lord was his God*.

It was the same with Habakkuk. He saw that God’s judgments were coming thicker and thicker upon the nation because of their national sins, and God now was threatening the nation in such a way that this discerning man of God understood the signs of the times, and feared the very worst was coming, and said, “Supposing the Lord does so and so, supposing the fig-tree does not blossom at all next spring, and supposing the agriculturists find that the fields yield no meat, and supposing the flock should be cut off from the fold, and there should be no herd in the stalls,—supposing everything should be cut off;” yet said the prophet, “I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.” As if he should say, “There will be something for me to fall back upon even then.” Yes, a good man will always find a stay for his mind in the midst of his troubles, and that stay will be that the Lord is *his God*.

“Asa cried unto the Lord his God.” I said to a person to-day, “I would to God that I could see in myself as well as in other people more concern about how matters stand between the Lord and our own souls; because I am no better than other people; I am as foolish as other children of God; I feel it, and am condemned often because of my foolishness in this particular way; for go where I may, and preach in whatever pulpit I may, whether it be at Croydon, Bath, Gower Street, or anywhere else, having to stop in the town for a few days I find people all very free in expressing themselves upon what is taking place, and upon what Mr. So-and-so has said and done, and upon this and that and the other, and as I said to one to day if we were just to interrogate people, and, as in the presence of God, ask them some such questions as these: “Now friend, never mind what Mr. So-and-so has been doing. Never mind what has been taking place in such and such a church; but let me ask you this question, Have you during the past week or month experienced any times when you and God have been brought together? What transactions have taken place between you and God? What do you know about going to God for yourself? What do you know about the effect of God’s truth upon your own heart in various ways, in reprov-ing you, condemning you, and in making you go on your knees before God? Now don’t talk about Mr. So-and-so’s failings, for we are all faulty together; but may you be enabled to go to God on the ground of your own faults and failings, and feeling what a sinner you are and that nothing less than the blood of Christ sprinkled upon you can make you clean.” This is what is needed amongst the people of God in this day.

“Asa cried unto the Lord his God.” He was now in a very peculiar predicament, in a very great strait. He was very much oppressed, and the circumstances were of that character that he saw it was a vain thing to look to the hills, to look to military prowess, to look to mortals, to lean on human courage or any human prop. Therefore he cried unto the Lord his God, and said, “Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power.” What blessed faith he had in God. How blessed to take this course spiritually, as the Lord has sometimes helped me to do with regard to my spiritual enemies. Yes, this is very blessed; and I hope and trust it has sometimes been a great help to me so to do. I have sometimes said, “Lord, it is impossible for any man to feel himself to be a worse sinner than I feel myself to be. What I feel to this day of the workings of sin within makes me sometimes feel almost as though I was like Mary Magdalene, in whom dwelt seven devils. But Lord, I have implicit confidence in thy omnipotence; I have unbroken confidence in thy almighty power, and I feel it is nothing with thee to help a poor sinner, whether his sins are many or few; whether they are the most abominable sins, or whether, according to the judgment of mortals, they be not quite so abominable, for they are all alike abominable in thy sight. Lord, it is nothing with thee to save a sinner so immersed and saturated with filth, pollution, and abomination in his wretched, wicked, lustful, deceitful heart. Lord, all this is nothing with thee. Thou canst help them that have no power.” Whether your sins be many or few, it is nothing with God to help. Whether the poor child of God has ninety-nine devils in him or only one, it is nothing with God to help. Whether the poor servants of God have five hundred against them or only a few, it is nothing with God to help.

Here in my text we have the pleadings of real faith: “Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power.” I should like to ask you this question. What power has anybody, yea, what power has the devil against God?” Say you, “He has mighty power against me.” True; but what power has he against God? What power has hell against God? What power has your unbelief against God? What power have your fears against God? What power have mortals and all the confederacies and combinations of men against God? They all have no power whatever against God. Let that thought comfort you, poor child of God. The devil may roar, your sins may terrify you, but let this, by the help of God, be thy plea, “Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power; help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee.” Can you say that?—“*We rest on thee.*” As the poet says,

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

“O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.”

I have not time to fully enter into the subject as I rather wished to do. but look at your leisure into the two following chapters to the one from which my text is taken, and you will find that notwithstanding all these confessions, all this pleading with God, all this acknowledgment that it was nothing with God to help whether with many or with few, that the Lord's Spirit came upon Azariah the son of Obed, and that good man went to Asa and said blessed words to him, and told him, saying, "The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you;" yet you will find in reading through the chapter Asa again got into straits and difficulties, and what did he do? Why, he went and made an abominable league with the king of Syria, and brought out the silver and gold from the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the vessels which were dedicated and to be used exclusively in the worship of God,—Asa brought them out as a sort of temptation in order to offer them as a present to the king of Syria and bring about a league with him. Ah! What is man!

May God in his infinite mercy teach us and lead us by his Blessed Spirit, and bring us to cry in the words of Asa: "Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power; help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee."

SIN has brought many a believer into suffering; and suffering has kept many a believer from sinning.

GOD may sometimes communicate less of his assisting strength, that he may show the more of his supporting strength in upholding weak grace.—*Gurnall*.

I NEVER so feelingly wonder at my own depravity, nor so deeply abhor myself, as when the fire of divine love warms my heart, and the outpourings of God's Spirit enliven my soul.—*Toplady*.

WHEN Abraham's knife was at Isaac's throat, God provided a ram for a burnt offering. And in all trouble, the Lord will either provide deliverance for his people, or provide strength for them to bear it.—*Dr. Gifford*.

TRULY I find that the Lord giveth springs in a dry, barren wilderness where no water is. I live in Meshech, which signifies *prolonging*; in Kedar, which signifies *blackness*; yet the Lord forsaketh me not. Though he does prolong, yet he will I trust bring me to his tabernacle, to his resting-place.—*Oliver Cromwell*.

AMID my many seasons and long intervals of barrenness and want of joy, God sometimes makes me glad with the light of his countenance; and then I can through grace say,

"A moment's intercourse with thee
Is worth a year's delay."

Surely, O God, I could not long after thy presence if I did not know the sweetness of it and love thee in some measure; and I could not know that but by the revelation of thy Spirit in my heart, nor love thee at all, if thou hadst not first loved me.—*Toplady*.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF THE LATE MR. THOMAS HARDY.

MR. T. HARDY was born on July 22nd, 1790, at a house on the road leading to Kirby-Muxloe, four miles from Leicester, with a twin sister, bearing a striking likeness to each other, not only in features, but in other respects; for the names of both were enrolled in the Book of Life, and they were brought to seek salvation from deep necessity about the same time. The Lord has also snatched from the ruins of the fall several others of the same family. The order of election is according to God's sovereign will. He loved Jacob and hated Esau. (Mal. i. 2, 3.) But in this case he loved both, and consequently called both by his grace, and one to also be an able minister of Jesus Christ, as will be seen hereafter. How sovereign and discriminating is the grace of our God! "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." (Rom. ix. 16.)

One thing I cannot forbear noticing, being so closely connected with this narrative. When the twin sister saw evidently that the Lord had called her brother, she was seized with the most awful apprehensions about her own state, and feared she was the Esau that was hated and rejected of God. Her thoughts of God were such as no language can well describe. This trial lasted a considerable time; but it pleased the God of all grace to at length shine with sweet mercy into her soul, and she then could love him, bless him, and praise him.

At a very early age Mr. H. manifested a great thirst for knowledge, and whenever his father went from home he requested him to bring him a book on his return, which was seldom forgotten. When very young, he was always the first at church. At this period his practice was to read the Bible through once, and afterwards twice in the year, besides other books. During the short time he was at school he made great progress, being always intent on learning.

He was brought up to be a stocking-maker; but by close attention to his business in the day and frequently studying the whole night, while the family were at rest, it brought on him a nervous complaint, which, indeed, was partly hereditary. By close application he obtained a considerable knowledge of both the Hebrew and Greek language. In after years, when reading some books on divinity, he would exclaim, "O these muddy, muddy Doctors! How contrary to the Word of God!" He was very zealous in all the forms and duties of religion, and all he did was done in sincerity, but in spiritual darkness.

At this time the "Whole Duty of Man" was his favourite book; but at length he was obliged to quarrel with it, not being able to come up to its demands. It was by reading Boston's "Fourfold State" that the Lord first convinced him of his true condition as a fallen, undone sinner, which he told me himself;

but he did not say that the same book was made instrumental in leading him into the liberty of the sons of God, but his friends inform me this was the case, and that he gained much instruction from Boston, as well as much comfort and soul-establishment, after labouring under distress and sore anguish of soul for a long time. Bunyan's "Law and Grace" was also made very useful to him in giving him clearer views and leading him to distinguish between the two covenants. But before this period he had gone many miles with his twin sister and had attended many sects and parties in search after truth; but all in vain.

The exact time of Mr. H.'s first convictions cannot be given, nor do I lay any stress or importance upon that. It would seem that the Lord began with him at a very tender age. He laboured under clouds of darkness and sensible bondage, but knew not the cause until the Lord, who is never at a loss for means, granted him his special grace and the light of his Holy Spirit to guide him into the knowledge of the Lord Jesus. But before faith came, he was shut up as in a prison-house. At one time, such was the deep distress of his mind, that he seemed without a gleam of hope and wished to know the worst; and that he might hasten the time, he visited some of the most malignant cases of fever, hoping to take the infection and die; but infinite Wisdom ordained better things for him and for the church through his instrumentality. The Lord often suffers his children to grope in darkness, and by sorrow of heart the spirit is broken; but he will fulfil his promise unto them: "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove, covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold." (Ps. lxxviii. 13.) Before the Lord appears and turns the "shadow of death into the morning," he suffers his children to try their strength, to prove to them their entire helplessness; yea, sometimes suffers them to lie, in their own apprehension, near the brink of black despair, especially such as he intends to make useful in his church and to his afflicted family, which was the case with Mr. H. By the deep discoveries of the depravity of human nature, and by the rich manifestations he had of sovereign love in raising him up from the horrible pit, he was well qualified to debase the sinner and exalt the Saviour in all the riches of his grace, which appears very conspicuously in his letters, as it also did in the whole of his ministry.

Mr. H. began to preach that gospel which he had received and in which he was sweetly established, about the year 1815, to a few poor people at a house at Leicester; but the numbers increasing the people found it necessary to get a larger place, and procured a piece of land near the same spot and built a chapel in the year 1818. Mr. H. advised that the place should be built so as to be capable at a small expense of being converted into dwelling-houses, for he thought he should soon be obliged to give up the work of the ministry. However, his fears were

groundless; for in a few years the chapel was too small and it was found necessary to double the size of it; and at length a gallery had to be added. Great things are often seen to arise from small beginnings.

When Mr. H. first began to preach many of his brethren were much displeas'd with him, which was no little trial to him. But neither the opposition of enemies nor the jealousy of mistaken friends can frustrate the counsel of God, for that shall stand; and God will make opposition to his servants the blessed means of their instruction. I met with similar trials at the beginning of my ministry; but this portion of Scripture stay'd my mind: "Neither did his brethren believe on him." (Jno. vii. 5.) The Lord much blessed his ministry in calling some out of spiritual darkness and death, and by building up and establishing others in the faith and knowledge of Christ.

I first heard him preach about the year 1818, and I have heard him almost every year since that period up to almost his last sermon in London. It has often struck me when hearing him preach that Luther himself (of blessed memory) never excelled Mr. H. in the two great and leading points in divinity—the law and the gospel. He showed the nature, demands, extent, and operation of the law most clearly; what it could do, and what it could not do;—that it could and did condemn the sinner in everything and for everything he thought or did; but brought no cordials for his fainting heart, held out no promises of grace, and never cast a ray of light upon his path; but its one and invariable sound is, "This do and thou shalt live." I never heard any man so strip and debase *Saul the Pharisee*, showing that all his piety, devotion, and zeal for God were his greatest abominations; nor have I ever been favoured to hear a man more magnify the glorious, unsearchable riches of Christ in bringing the once proud Pharisee to fall down before God and bless him that salvation is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that showeth mercy. Indeed, the Holy Ghost specially favoured Mr. H. with clear and spiritual views of the sinner's acceptance and everlasting completeness in the Beloved.

When in the pulpit and in the heart of his subject he scarcely seemed like the same man he was an hour before. He indeed might well say in one of his letters, "Preaching is my best medicine; the Lord does indeed favour me in the pulpit."

While Mr. H. delighted to dwell on the deep things of God, he was no less concerned in enforcing, on Scriptural grounds, the wise and holy counsels of Zion's King, which are so plainly set forth in the Word of God, that the saints might walk worthy of their high and holy calling; not for their justification before God, but "to show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light."

Mr. H. had the gift of conveying more matter in a few words than most ministers of Christ. His knowledge of the Word of God was very extensive. Knowing the deceit of his

own heart, he knew much of all men, and could not feed upon the applause of mortals, nor preach so as to please men by flattering them or nursing their fleshly idols. He was any man's servant to render him a service in any way he possibly could; but would not have any master on earth to dictate to him in spiritual matters. Here the best friend he had was to him the same as the most avowed enemy. He was a man mighty in prayer; and the deepest sense of humility and self-abasement was manifested in his addresses to the Lord. He had indeed, at times, blessed nearness to the Lord, and he spoke like one who was addressing his Maker and Redeemer, and who felt himself a poor, needy, worthless sinner.

Mr. H. was a close observer of the providence of God, and had more opportunities than many of the servants of God; for his salary was very small at Leicester. The most he received from his church in one year was *fifteen pounds*; but his extensive field of labour and his numerous friends in various quarters supplied their lack of service. I think it right, however, to observe that his salary might have been much larger at Leicester, had he confined himself always at home; but that was out of the question. His constitutional infirmities and the evident calls of divine providence directed his steps to a variety of places, and it is evident that he had God's approbation in his undertakings. For many years he found at the close but very little variation, though, for the greater part, it came in a way without previous arrangement. He travelled several thousand miles in a year and preached more times than most ministers do or can do.

He was charitable to his poor and needy brethren to the astonishment of many; and some of his friends thought imprudently so, considering his limited means; but his living was very plain and simple, and in his dress he was quite as plain. It is evident from his letters that his whole life was made up of fiery trials, but he was upheld, and often comforted and blessed by the sweet presence of the Lord Jesus. No doubt Satan took many advantages of his shattered nerves, if possible, to drive him to black despair, for that is the devil's master-piece; but the Lord will keep the feet of his saints, and not anyone that trusts in him shall be confounded; and he proved the truth of the Lord's promise to the last.

I will now give some little account of the last few months of Mr. H.'s life. He was first taken with giddiness in his head at Deal, about the 29th of May, 1832, but, through ignorance of his complaint, "he worked on," as he says, until he got home. He left Leicester about May 7th for his last journey into Kent and Sussex, and returned to Leicester about the 24th of June. He had visited Deal twice in the year for more than fourteen years, and Sussex about five years; but his last journey thither was perhaps the most laborious he ever took, and he seemed as if he was determined to die in the work for the honour of the Lord and the comfort of his people. He could not have preached

much less than fifty times during that journey, and his expounding and sermon was generally two hours. Mr. H. was obliged to be bled at Dunstable before he got home, but he gradually became worse; but continued to preach as long as strength would allow. I have heard some of his friends say that in some of his last discourses he seemed as if he had been in the third heavens, and his enjoyments, when speaking of the saints' glorious immortality, was almost too much for his feeble frame to bear. Christ in the heart the hope of glory does indeed make a poor sinner full of joy when heart and flesh fails.

During his long illness he was generally very much favoured of the Lord. When laid aside from the ministry, a work in which his whole soul delighted, he had at times some very keen sensations; but was graciously helped to cast that and all other concerns on his covenant God with humble submission. That his mind was much occupied during his illness with spiritual and heavenly things, was evident to all near him; to whom he would often speak of the future glory with holy pleasure.

In Sept. 1832, he thus wrote to us: "Oh how different must the saints in light be from our miserable imprisonment! The Word says, 'Rejoice in the Lord alway;' and what hinders, but carnal reason, this sinful carcase, and the tempting devil? The Lord sanctify our clogs and crosses, that they may make his love-tokens more precious." On the subject of preaching he said in a letter to me in December, "I am willing and desirous; but must learn to halt, as well as march. The Lord is gracious, his truths are precious, and all beside is chaff. The Lord bless my poor barren heart with his power and blessing; and bless and guide you, and feed you with the finest of the wheat."

In the same month he thus wrote to me: "The Lord deals very gently with me in all things. Satan often harasses and plagues my heart; but Christ and his cross are indeed my precious hope. I pray the Lord ever to make and keep my weak and wicked heart right in his sight. I have not strength to write much; but my love to you and yours, and all the brethren with you."

In general, during his illness, when any friends expressed their fears that he would not recover, he would check them, and say, "Many have been brought lower than myself, and have been raised up again;" and I believe it was only on one occasion that he expressed himself as expecting he should not recover, and that was but a short time before his death to a friend when he was on a visit for a change of air, and left on May 6th for Stamford.

On the journey Mrs. H. perceived an alteration in his countenance, and asked him if he would return; but he only said, "Go forward." He arrived at Stamford, and was immediately put to bed; and early in the morning of the 7th he breathed his last. He died of a fit of apoplexy, which, no doubt, had seized him soon after he left the friend before-mentioned. He had no

children, but left a widow and numerous attached friends to sorrow, but not as those without hope, knowing that "them that sleep in Jesus God will bring with him."

Thus I have gathered up a few particulars concerning my much-esteemed brother and fellow-labourer, Mr. Hardy; and, without wishing to disparage others of God's dear servants, I must say I know of *no man like-minded*. But he is now at the Fountain-Head; and "blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

H. FOWLER.

A HYMN OF PRAISE.

O THOU who art good, all-wise,
 Most merciful and kind,
 By whom whole nations fall or rise;
 In whom true bliss we find!
 Thou great Physician of the soul,
 Who hast healing in thy wings.
 Disease and death are at thy control;
 Thy touch life to us brings.
 How sweet thy words of comfort are
 Unto the bleeding breast!
 Thy love and thy Parental care
 Give hope and joy and rest.
 Thy afflicted poor to thee commit
 Their way, their griefs, and pain.
 Thou dost as a Refiner sit;
 Thy grace their hearts sustain.
 Thy chastening given for their good
 Doth work their lasting weal;
 Thy hand supplies their clothing,—food;
 Thy smiles their sorrows heal.

G. H. M. READ.

IF God had not chosen thee in his Son, he would not have called thee by his Spirit; and he that called thee by his Spirit will preserve thee to his kingdom.—*Toplady*.

SOMETIMES the breathings and desires of the soul are only expressed by sighs and groans; yet these are signs of spiritual life. If a man groans it is plain he is alive.

I LIVED in and loved darkness, and hated the light; I was the chief of sinners. I hated godliness, yet God had mercy on me. O the riches of his mercy! Praise him for me, and pray for me, that he who hath begun a good work would perfect it in the day of Christ.—*Oliver Cromwell*.

THE sweetest seasons on this side heaven are when the soul sinks as into nothing before the face of God, and is absorbed in the sight of Christ and the love of the Spirit; when we feel the presence of Deity, and silently wait on him at the foot of the cross, with weeping eyes, melting affections, and bleeding hearts.—*Toplady*.

THE HIDINGS OF GOD'S FACE.

BY RUSK.

(Continued from page 248.)

EVERY real believer's heart is set upon having the approbation of God continually in all he does. The time was when he could run here and there like the rest of the world, being wholly led either by his own carnal heart or else by others. He never thought of God or what was right in the Lord's sight, for he had no knowledge of him. But things are now altered, and he finds a jealousy over himself, and is in continual fear lest he should take a wrong step. He cannot remove from one dwelling to another without seeking God's direction and desiring to know his will. It is the same if he looks out for work, or whatever step he may be about to take, he cannot be satisfied without he feels God's approbation. Say you, "Has God promised all this so minutely as you state?" Yes, and far more so; for he says: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye." (Ps. xxxiii. 8.) "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers." (Jno. x. 4, 5.) Say you, "Then, are we to be like the Quakers, and not move only as the Spirit of God guides us?" If you suppose that they do this you are very wrong. It is right that we should use all lawful means and seek to find God in all we do. We read, "A man's heart deviseth his way." Will he rest there? No; he wants to find *the Lord directing his steps*, and without this he is wretched, however fair things may look. If you read God's Word you will find how very earnest the Lord's family have been after this. Moses said, "If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence." David also desired the Lord to direct him. Hence when Ziklag was taken we read that David enquired of the Lord whether he should pursue after the troop, or not; and on another occasion when Saul was secretly practising mischief against him, and was come to Keilah, David inquired of the Lord, saying, "Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? Will Saul come down as thy servant hath heard? O Lord God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. And the Lord said, He will come down." (1 Sam. xxiii. 11.) What sweet work it is for a child of God when, by the Spirit's help, he is enabled to go to his heavenly Father and, in simplicity, entreat of him to direct him in all his steps; and the way this is known is by the Lord's presence being felt and enjoyed. David said, "Hear the right, O Lord, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips. Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal." (Ps. xvii. 1, 2.)

If we have God's presence every enemy will at times be made

to fly; for they are all conquered *for* us by Christ and *in* us by his Spirit, although for the trial of our faith they are such sad plagues to us now. I will mention some of them, and then show that God's presence makes them flee for the time being. These enemies are the world, the flesh, the devil, sin, conscience, the law, ungodly men, and death. When you and I were wholly in the world these things were no trouble to us, but O how very different is it now! What hard conflicts do we experience; so that with Paul we may say we really stand in jeopardy every hour.

By the *world* I do not understand the visible world, which is the workmanship of God, for all his works are good, and so he pronounced them in Gen. i.; but after the fall of man he cursed the ground for man's sake; and now it is full of snares, traps, gins, and nets to entangle men and women. John tells us, "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world," and Peter speaks of "the corruption that is in the world through lust." This is an enemy, but it is compelled to flee before the presence of God. Hence Asaph says, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth that I desire beside thee." We read that "the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." (Matt. xiii. 44.) And again: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man; seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." We read of forsaking father, mother, houses, lands, and a man's own life for the sake of Christ; and in the Hebrews we read of some who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance. This knowledge they had was by the Lord's presence being with them, which is better than life itself. It was this made Paul glory in the cross of Christ, and he declared that the world was crucified unto him, and he unto the world.

The *flesh* is another enemy, and by this I understand all those lustings that work so powerfully in the heart, and which, by nature, we like; but the Lord's presence removes all these every time he renews us. The Psalmist said, "O visit us early with thy mercy," which mercy Paul calls regeneration and renewing. The devil is our great enemy, for he goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; but he flies before faith, for when faith is in exercise he quits his hold. James says, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you," and Peter tells us to "resist him steadfast in the faith," but this we can only do by the Lord's help. When you and I have God's comfortable presence we always find faith in lively act and exercise, but when he withdraws unbelief makes head. Hence when Asaph found it he said, "God is the strength of my heart, and my Portion for ever."

Then again, *sin* is our great enemy, and this includes all kinds of evil,—original sin, actual sin, and heart sin, from all which we must be purged, for “if we die in our sins, where Christ is we can never come;” but Jesus Christ has made an end of sin for all his elect; for he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and every time he paid a visit to his disciples he said, “Peace be unto you;” but there is no peace where sin is not pardoned.

Conscience is an enemy also. What hard fightings many have with their own conscience. What is it that keeps the Arminians and Roman Catholics on the move but a legal conscience, and even God’s own family when convinced of sin, how hard do they struggle and some of them for a length of time with a legal conscience which is never satisfied do what we will, and the harder we labour the faster are we bound; but the inward witness of God’s Spirit fully delivers us from all this; for “the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.”

The *law* is also a sad enemy to us, because it curseth everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them, and we feel exposed to this curse. Job felt all this when he said, “Thou writest bitter things against me.” There are no bitter things written but in the law; but when God turned Job’s captivity and he felt his presence, we hear no more of this handwriting which he felt was against him. To have God the Father smiling upon us in Christ Jesus and accepting us in the Beloved, this is heaven upon earth; for all contention then ceases.

Then again. The Lord’s presence delivers us from the fear of *ungodly men*. Hence David says, “The Lord is my light, and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.” (Ps. xxvii. 1–3.)

Lastly. *Death* is an enemy that we all fear and the last enemy that is to be destroyed; and what will help us to triumph in death? I answer, God’s presence. Hence David says, “Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;” and then he assigns the cause: “For thou art with me.” Why is it called a shadow? Because it has no sting. A guilty conscience through sin is the sting of death, and when that sting is removed, death is only a shadow, and we all know that a shadow cannot hurt anyone. But how is all this brought about? By the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul says, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin;” and Christ, who know no sin, was made sin for us; yea, he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and, as Daniel foretold, “made an end of sins, and made reconciliation for iniquity.” “The strength of sin is the law,” but Christ magnified the law and made it honourable; for “he

is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." Then says Paul, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

But although this is such a great work, yet remember, it is not universal for all the human race. This is a truth whether you hate it or love it. Therefore God by the prophet Hosea says, "I will ransom *them* (not all men) from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death;" and Christ gave his life a ransom for many; but *many* does not mean *all*. Christ said, "I pray not for the world."

When we have the Lord's presence we are enabled to praise and glorify his holy name. A man may very easily praise God with the lip, and this is very common among men. Christ said of the Pharisees, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me; but in vain they do worship me." (Matt. xv. 8, 9.) This is solemn mockery and detestable in God's sight; for he will have the whole heart, and therefore says, "My son, give me thy heart." All such characters as I have described know nothing about the presence of the Lord.

Say some, "But what praise can such poor creatures as we are give, or what can we speak about the great and glorious God?" It is very true that our praises at the best are but weak and feeble, and God is great and high, and exalted above all blessing and praise; yet still he is pleased to accept of our simple praises when they come from the heart, and ascend to him through his dearly-beloved Son; and this all flows from the enjoyment of his presence. But there is a preparatory work done in us in order to our praising God aright, which is wrought by the Holy Spirit, for God declares that he will form a people for himself to show forth his praise. This is done in various ways. Hezekiah must be sick and apparently near unto his end, God having sent this message by the prophet to him, "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live;" and then he drew the worst conclusions, saying, "I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living; I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world." One would not have thought that this was God's way in which he forms people for himself to praise him, but so it was; for when the Lord manifested himself to him, he broke out with a heart full of praise, and said, "The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day." Does he mean by this that every man that has natural life shall praise God? O no; but such as have spiritual life. He praised the Lord for the forgiveness of all his sins, saying, "Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." (Isa. xxxviii. 17.) Micah says, "Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea," that is the sea of atoning blood and everlasting love; and when sought for, they shall not be found. This, feelingly enjoyed, made king David praise the Lord, and

it all comes from the enjoyment of the Lord's presence; for "in the light of the King's countenance is life;" so that when he visits the soul life is sweetly felt and enjoyed; and it is the living, the living that praise him.

David was a man that had enjoyed much of the Lord's presence, but he was sometimes shut up, as you and I often are, which was in order that he might afterwards be brought to praise the Lord. We read in the book of Proverbs that "as the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; so is a man to his praise" (Prov. xxvii. 21); that is, as the fining pot and furnace literally are to purify gold and silver, so is a man purified by various trials and afflictions in order to God's praise, agreeable to which is the following text: "I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." (Zech. xiii. 9.)

David was well acquainted with this work, and was at times shut up (spiritually), as we sometimes are, in prison. Say you, "What do you mean by that?" Why, it is to have corruption working within in such a powerful way that we are in constant fear that sin has dominion over us; for it is not as if sin and corruption worked and we hated it, but we feel a love to many things that are wrong; so that at times "bread of deceit" seems sweet to us, but afterwards we find indeed that our mouths are filled with gravel. Then again; at times there is much horror and despair felt, because God's Word cuts us and terrible threatenings in the Scriptures wound and distress us, so that our souls are bowed down greatly; and having to be with ungodly men, as we are sometimes compelled to, adds greatly to all this. David said, "Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy law." (Ps. cxix. 53.) The Psalmist calls this a horrible pit, and indeed it is. In this pit there is neither bread nor water. Christ is the living Bread and the comforts of the Holy Ghost are living water; and although we may in times past have enjoyed much of these things, yet, if we get again into this prison or pit, we find it a truth that our feet are fast in the stocks. Then the captive exile is afraid he shall die in the pit, and that his bread will fail (Isa. li. 14.); but this never can be, seeing that the Lord declares that the prey shall be taken from the mighty and the lawful captive delivered. (Isa. xlix. 24, 25.) As there is no bread, so also there is no water in this pit; but we read in Zech. ix. 11, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water;" and although this is felt before our first deliverance, yet it is not confined to that time, as I myself can witness, and to this you must agree, unless you are like those inexperienced people who say that when God delivers his people they never after get into bondage. Read Huntington's "Child of Liberty Walking in Darkness," and you will find that

from God's Word he proves such an assertion as that to be false.

The devil has much work to do when we are thus walking in darkness, for he glories in distressing our souls. Hence we read in Rev. ii. 9. 10, "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." These are the two grand things to encourage us in all this,—first, that Satan's bounds are limited, as you may see in the case of Job; and secondly, that however great the trial, yet it is only for a certain time, which in the text before quoted is called "ten days." This is the way in which God's people are formed for himself to show forth his praise, and it is the comfortable enjoyment of his presence that brings us out of this prison or pit, and when we are brought out we do from our hearts praise his blessed name. Thus we see that every enemy must fly before the Lord when he again visits our souls, and then we are enabled to praise him aright. Praise from the heart is well pleasing indeed, for "praise is comely for the upright," and it well becometh the just to be thankful.

I will now show that however highly-favoured any of the Lord's family may be through him thus visiting their souls, yet if they live any time in this world and are not taken directly home to their Father's kingdom, they shall find it a truth that God will at times hide his face from them; for our text says: "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour!" Sometimes God takes his children home in their first love. I believe this was the case with the thief on the cross; and this is called finishing the work, and cutting it short in righteousness. When the Lord hid his face from Job and brought heavy trials upon him, he wished that he had died in this way. Hence he says, "Because I was not cut off before the darkness, neither hath he covered the darkness from my face."

(To be continued.)

HEAVEN is promised to those who love God, and hell is to be the portion of those that hate him.—*Goodwin.*

I WOULD rather utter one of those groans the apostle speaks of in Rom. viii. 26, than shed Esau's tears, have Balaam's prophetic spirit, or the joy of the stony-ground hearer.—*Boston.*

BEWARE of a religion that is most taken up about public matters. The sum of the gospel is Christ crucified. Seek where this is purely preached; and beware of an itch after pulpit debates.—*Halyburton.*

BE careful, not only in reading the Word—you may soon tire of that; but cry for the Spirit of the Lord to quicken it, and then you will be with it as the child that cannot live without the breast.—*Halyburton.*

FATHERLY CHASTISEMENT.

Companions in Tribulation,—I am informed that our covenant God, who is the sovereign Disposer of all events, has been pleased to afflict you in your little ones and that you are distressed in spirit under that and other trials. It is no wonder that we should feel the trials with which we are exercised, and indeed it is not desirable that we should be insensible under them or unaffected by them. When the Lord lays his rod upon us he designs that we should feel it. We are told in Scripture not to despise the chastening of the Lord; and this is one evil to which we are prone. On the other hand we are told not to faint when we are rebuked of him, and our gracious Father has provided innumerable cordials to preserve us from fainting and to revive us when we do faint. He has assured us that his favour is invariable and that his corrections all flow from his love; so that the apparent severity of his chastisements is not inconsistent with his unalterable love, but the whole is intended to display that love, though we cannot at the time see how it will do so. Again. He has declared that he will be with us in trouble, and though his gracious presence is not always realized, yet the faithful God is certainly with his people according to his promise, and he has also engaged to give us strength according to our days, and his everlasting arms are all-sufficient to sustain under the heaviest load that he ever lays upon us. Above all he has given us to *know* that all things shall work together for our good, and therefore we may conclude that present trials, with all the circumstances connected therewith, shall issue in the promotion of our real and everlasting benefit.

It is true we cannot see how this is to be effected, but the Lord can. His wisdom is infinite, his plans are well arranged, and his counsels are unerring. He has always had our good in view, and has so arranged his complicated purposes that the result of the full execution of those purposes will be the everlasting glory of his chosen, redeemed, and sanctified flock. There is a mystery in divine dispensations which we cannot unravel, and when that mystery is finished we shall behold the beauty and harmony of God's scheme in providence and grace. Till then we are directed to wait, and the Word says, "Be still, and know that I am God." In the meantime the Lord has told us that our present transitory trials are working for us a glory that will be eternal in duration and inconceivably great in degree. All the Lord's family have travelled to glory in the same path in which we are led, and when John had a vision of the innumerable company of ransomed sinners that surround the throne he was told that they came out of great tribulation. Why then should we shrink from participating in their sorrow, since we are led by the same divine hand that guided them through this world and have the same promise to rest upon and the same ground to expect future glory

that they had? May we be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Are you saying that the burdens you have to bear are causing you to sink? The Lord has provided for this, and the apostle says, "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." What a blessed declaration! May you be helped to meditate upon it and to form some conception of what God's *care* is, for it expresses his interest in his people, his concern for them, his incessant attention to them, his wise and gracious management of all their affairs, and his merciful communication of all needful supplies to them. The Word says, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." (Isa. xxvi. 3.) Are you sometimes thinking that the penal effects of transgression are inflicted on you when under God's chastening rod? May you be led to look to Calvary and your mistake will then be corrected. The Father so smote Jesus for his people's offences that he has no penal strokes to lay upon them. Peace, everlasting peace was made by the blood of the cross, and when the Lord corrects us he is still the God of peace. This consideration will much tend to lighten your load and to make you joyful under it. May you be enabled to drink abundantly of the streams that make glad the city of God. I remain,

Yours in the Lord,

Saffron Walden, July, 1840.

J. D. PLAYER.

A BROTHER BORN FOR ADVERSITY.

My dear Friend,—Thank you very much for your last letter. I can sympathize with you in the loss of Christian society, which, with the preached gospel, I much esteem, as it is next to joining that glorious, undefiled company who now see the King in his beauty. O my friend, my soul anticipates the day when I shall "bow the chief of sinners there." But we sojourn below in a waste-howling wilderness, full of scorpion-like foes, and hungry and thirsty our souls faint within us. Yet, alas! We go to earthly wells, where we find no water, and like Job we have to exclaim, "O that it were with me as in days that are past!" God fashioneth the hearts of his people alike; therefore I know I am not writing to you in a strange language. We are led to the same throne of grace weary and heavy laden; the same blessed, adorable ears are open to our sighs, and the same blessed voice says to us even now, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." To the Saviour of sinners am I, through necessity, constrained to go, for the world cannot sympathize with me, friends keep aloof and do not understand my case, and with Christians very little fellowship is to be found; but our God and Lord is a Friend who loveth at all times, and is a Brother born for adversity. Though it is in much sorrow that I am constrained to seek his face; yet, praise

his name, I have ever found him a present help in every time of trouble.

You tell me that our thoughts are one. This is indeed a precious evidence that we are taught by the Holy Spirit, for he would not teach you one truth and teach me the contrary; and how inestimably precious is the assurance that he is an all-sufficient Teacher; as the Word says: "Ye have no need that any man teach you." With his holy anointing unction and sealing we must outride every storm and at last reach the haven of eternal peace and safety. These thoughts are full of comfort, and, as Peter says, "By patience and comfort of the Scriptures we have hope," that as all now before the throne washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and this is the only Fountain in which we desire to wash away our sins and obtain salvation, so we hope we shall not be disappointed, for God is faithful, and heaven and earth shall pass away before one of his promises can fail.

I felt from your last note that you were still in the path of tribulation, but I doubt not you can add: "Cast down, but not destroyed." One of my most besetting sins all through life has been *taking thought for the morrow*, and although I have seen so much of the Lord's goodness, love, and mercy in the years that are past, yet I am as bad as ever, which fully verifies the text: "Though thou shouldst bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him." (Prov. xxvii. 22.) We know not what shall be on the morrow, for "our life is even as a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away;" and yet I am tied and bound with the chains of unbelief, fearing and dreading the future, as if my precious Saviour was a hard Master and would lay upon me more than I could bear and deny me what I needed, and as if he had transferred all the government from his own shoulders to those of Satan's. This is indeed my foolishness, but like David I would add, "Yet I will remember the years of the Most High." What God has been to all the redeemed, that he will be to us, for he is "Jesus Christ; the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." My long and tedious illness of last winter fills me with gloomy forebodings, not for myself so much as for others.

I have heard my dear old Pastor, Mr. D. Fenner, of Hastings, say repeatedly that if Popery became the Established religion, Dissenters would go over by shoals. The ceremonies of Chiselhurst were most idolatrous, yet who witnessed them? As a nation, we must come to grief. The foundations are being destroyed, but the righteous are safe come what may.

May the Lord keep you and lift upon you the light of his countenance to cheer you on your way, and

Believe me to be,

Your Sincere Fellow-Pilgrim,

ANN HENNAH.

Torquay, Aug. 7th, 1879.

LONGING FOR THE LORD'S RETURN.

My very dear Brother,—I have been thinking very much of you of late, and have purposed writing to you, but I seemed to possess no power whatever to do so, being for the most part very far off from those blessed and glorious things of which you speak in your last. I would give the world, if I had it, to enjoy them now as once I was favoured to do. However, I felt your testimony a very powerful one, and it melted my hard heart. In reading your letter again this morning, I felt my affections so drawn out toward you that I cannot express how dear I felt you to be to me, and I am assured that your body is the temple of the living God.

O that the Lord would condescend to put me sensibly into the cleft of the Rock, as he did Moses, and make all his goodness pass before me, and proclaim to me his name, his wonderful name! Instead of which I am lying among the pots, and am like a bottle in the smoke. Sometimes I roar like a bear, and at other times mourn sore like a dove. My inward enemy hath persecuted my soul until he hath smitten my life down to the ground. I wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but I walk in darkness. (Isa. lix. 9.) The ungodly lusts of my nature often boil like a pot, the horrid filth and scum of which sickens all my soul, and I wonder where the scene will end. The following words of Mr. Hart seemed to do me good this morning:

“’Tis to feel the fight against us,
Yet the victory hope to gain,” &c.

Also the Scripture which says, “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” (Jno. iii. 14, 15.) This morning the following words came into my mind and with them I commenced family prayer: “O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them.” (Ps. xvii. 7.) But O, I am such an unclean thing! I wonder how the Lord can look upon one so exceedingly vile; and yet this morning when I went into a secret place with my heart melting under a sense of my unspeakable loathsomeness these words would come into my mind: “Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee,” and though I tried to put them from me, yet they left a sweet savour on my spirit. I felt last Tuesday that it was as possible to make a new world with my own hands as for me ever to preach again, except I had immediate help from the Lord, and yet I did preach, and with more solemnity, power, and comfort than usual, and it was very evident that a blessing was in it, and the people seemed to run away with it; for when I left off there was not a single crumb of it left for poor me. Yet there have been times when I could feelingly say, “The Lord is good; his mercy endureth for ever.” The other morning the

Lord melted my heart with his goodness, and I then felt that there was no top nor bottom, beginning nor end to his goodness, and that no tongue could utter it; for it passeth knowledge.

I have been a beggar at mercy's door for about thirty-three years, and see no reason to regret it, for it is the best of all employment; nor do I think that any of the princes and nobles in the household of faith will say that this assertion is a mark against me. What say you, my brother? Is it not still a truth that the Lord "raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, that he may set them among princes?" Prayer prevails when all other means fail. Had the church in days of old gone to Herod with their petition, they would no doubt have failed; but they went to God, and entreated him to bring Peter out of prison, and he granted them their petition. The devil tries his utmost to keep poor sinners from a throne of grace, and puts every obstacle he possibly can in the way of a poor needy, seeking soul in his attempts to reach Immanuel's feet. Sins as black and foul as hell itself will be set before him, if possible, to stop the mouth of prayer; but this can never be.

I have written you a sorry ditty, but I cannot help it. I am sure I love you more than ever I did in my life, and to hear of your happiness is a pleasure to me. The Lord bless you more and more, and fulfil in you all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power.

Remember me very kindly to your dear wife, and to all the brethren.

Yours in the Truth,

London, March 7th, 1844.

J. SHORTER.

A NIGHT MUCH TO BE OBSERVED.

My dear Friend,— I was glad to receive your kind letter and to hear of the Lord's goodness and mercy to you, and my desire is that it may follow you all the days of your life.

You will be glad to hear of the Lord's great mercy and goodness towards me. I have had a sweet manifestation of God's love and mercy to my soul before ever I deserved it, but not before I needed it. You know and I well know what low places I have been kept in, and how I have had to cry, "My leanness! My leanness!" As we are about forming a church here I have been much tried, exercised, and cast-down through manifold trials and temptations, and have often felt faint, and yet have been kept pursuing. On Lord's day I preached twice and baptized twice, and the second time of speaking I felt some sweet liberty.

At night when I went to bed my heart began to feel soft and to melt, and my eyes began to fill with tears, for the Lord sweetly manifested himself to my soul. These words came

sweetly: "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs" (Isa. xxvi. 19); and again and again did the words come: "Them that honour me, I will honour;" and: "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud thy sins." My tears flowed fast from joy and under a sweet sense of God's love. I scarcely knew what it all meant, and I said, "Lord, is it real?" And then fresh promises came, such as: "Mercy shall be built up for ever," &c. I had such debasing views of myself and such blessed views of Christ, and had communion and fellowship with him in his sufferings for such vile sinners as I am, that I had but little sleep. I lay praising and blessing the Lord and crying for joy. I could scarcely refrain from crying so loud as would have disturbed the inmates of the house. It is a night much to be observed by me. I never had such a blessed manifestation to my soul before, and the savour and dew of it has rested on my spirit ever since, and at times sweet, refreshing promises come home to my soul with power. You know what bondage and darkness I have had, with but few sips of mercy; but now my cup runneth over.

Last night how blessed was Psalm cxvi to me, and this morning Ps. cxxvi. It is I believe the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in my eyes. I have had the yoke a long time before it was broken with this sweet anointing. I am afraid of going back to my old chains and bonds again. All riches and honours seem baubles in my eyes compared to this sweet blessing. The Lord's blessing maketh rich.

If the Lord spare us to meet I can tell you more about it.

Your affectionate Brother,

Abingdon, Feb. 1st, 1843.

WILLIAM TIPTAFT.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

My dear Brother in the Lord of Life and Glory,—I hope you will pardon my boldness in troubling you with these few lines as I am unable to come to the house of God to hear you preach the glorious gospel of a precious Christ. You very kindly came to see me when you were last in Manchester and the Lord was pleased to make your visit a blessing to my soul; so that I feel a strong desire to see you again in the flesh, though at the same time I know and inwardly feel that I am unworthy of such kindness; but I have proved many times that when the Lord's people have visited me the presence of a gracious God has been with us to bless, comfort, and cheer my sorrowful and weary soul; so that it makes me long for the communion of saints.

Blessed be the Lord, I have proved him to be a sweet Refuge in many times of deep trouble, both spiritual and temporal, since I last saw you; for many are the trials and afflictions that I am called to pass through, both of body and mind; but I still find the Lord faithful to his promise that "as our day, so shall our

strength be." To the joy of my heart I sometimes prove that the Lord can turn the water of affliction into the wine of consolation. O to feel that a Father's loving hand prepares the cup! This more than makes up for all our sufferings, however great they may be.

I have at times been much tried and exercised whether it was right for me to have many little things that have been ordered for the support of my weak and suffering body; for the thought has come, "Could you not do without this? The Lord Jesus when on earth had not where to lay his head, and often hungered and thirsted; and yet he was Lord of heaven and earth." A few words that you once spoke to me were the means of delivering me from my distressing fears on this subject. You told me of a friend in London receiving every mercy as from the hand of the Lord himself, and while you were speaking these words came sweetly into my mind with much light and power, "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." O how precious they were to me, and the following portion has since been applied to my soul: "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." I have had a sweet view of the almighty power of God, who has heaven and earth at his command, and can do all things according to his own will. My soul now is filled with wonder and love at the goodness and mercy of the Lord, and I can do nothing but bless and praise his dear name for all the way he has led me, feeling sure it has been a right way, although so painful to the flesh.

I often pray that a door of utterance may be given to you that you may open your mouth boldly to make known the mysteries of the gospel, and that the word spoken by you may be blessed to the comforting of poor mourning souls and to the quickening of God's dead elect; so that you may be encouraged and the Lord glorified. I should indeed be thankful to be able to come to the house of God to hear you preach the precious gospel of Christ. It is now many years since I was able to do so, and I shall never be able to hear it again unless it is brought to me; but though in body I am absent, my heart is present with you, and I trust you may be enabled to remember me at a throne of grace, that the Lord would be with me, and give me day by day a solemn submission to his righteous will in all things. I shall be thankful to receive a letter from you at any time.

Yours in the Bonds of the Gospel,

Oldham, May 24th, 1871.

E. BROWN.

IF I might not have both, I would rather have grace without learning, than learning without grace.—*Toplady*.

WHAT a sad visitation is that, where the black horse of death goeth before, and the red horse of wrath followeth after.—*Goodwin*.

IF evil had never been permitted, the wisdom of God could not have appeared in overruling it, nor his justice in punishing it, nor his mercy in forgiving it, nor his power in subduing it.—*Dr. Gillford*.

Obituary.

JOHN HEATON.—On March 13th, 1889, aged 70, John Heaton, minister of the gospel.

When about twenty-two years of age the Lord convinced him of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and he was held in fetters under the sentence of a broken law for about three years. One day, as he was pondering over his gloomy state, the Lord was pleased in mercy to bring these words to his mind with much sweetness:

“Do not ponder o’er thy meanness,
But to Calvary repair;
There’s a fountain for uncleanness,
And the worst are welcome there.”

He was then like a bird that had escaped from the snare of the fowler, and, as Bunyan says, “his burden fell from his back.” When referring to this time he would say, “I felt as if I was in a new world. Old things had passed away, and all things had become new.”

Up to the age of twenty-two he attended a place of worship where Arminian doctrines were advocated, but when the Lord opened the eyes of his understanding to see that salvation was by grace, he could no longer attend that place of worship. He then joined a sect called the “Christian Brethren,” and there he first began to preach, but his preaching did not suit their taste, and so he was compelled to leave that body of people. After this he joined the Plymouth Brethren, and while among them he was baptized by immersion; but he soon discovered that their religion was “a bed too short and a covering too narrow.” (Isa. xxviii. 20.) For a time his soul had to starve among these people, for he could not live upon the husks that the swine did eat. He used to say *their religion was like a rope of sand*, meaning it was partly of works and partly of grace; therefore his preaching was not acceptable among them, and finally he had to leave them; for “two cannot walk together, except they are agreed.” (Amos iii. 3.)

Some time after these things had taken place he was invited by the late Mr. John Brook to preach in a room at Dewsbury, where a few of the Lord’s people met for worship, and it was there that he found rest to his soul and was assured that they were the real people of God. He then began to preach among them, and joined their church, of which he remained an honourable and consistent member as long as he lived. He was a man of a meek and quiet spirit, and was one who would rather suffer wrong than do wrong. He would make any reasonable and personal sacrifice for peace in the church, and would use every lawful means for its welfare and prosperity. The Word of God says, “Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.” He was truly a peacemaker, and “loved the

gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob." He knew the plague of his own heart, and that made him bear with the infirmities of others. He was a man of prayer. He loved the week-evening prayer-meetings, and was always present when an opportunity offered.

As far as the things of this world are concerned, he was a poor man, but God helped him in every time of need by raising up friends to render him assistance; and for these mercies he often thanked God and took courage. I have known him nearly thirty years, and have conversed with him many times about men and things; but I never once heard him speak evil of another or say one word derogatory to the character of a minister of the gospel. He was a "living epistle, known and read of all men." The workpeople at the factory called him "the walking Bible," for he was so well acquainted with its contents that he could almost tell the exact place where any text might be found. In his preaching he would back up every statement he made with one or more passages of Scripture, for "his speech was with grace, seasoned with salt." (Col. iv. 6.) His preaching savoured much of Christ, and was commended to the people of God who heard it. He clearly preached redemption through blood and the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. He preached Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life to every poor, needy sinner. I myself have heard him proclaim the blessed truths of the gospel both profitably and comfortably. This sort of preaching was commended to the souls of the people who knew the joyful sound, and in his death the churches of truth have lost a good supply, which loss none but God can make up. He knew how he came by his religion and what it had done for him.

I will now give some particulars of the last few days of his life. His death was sudden and unexpected, but it was as the Lord would have it. Some of his friends had thought his end was near from his prayers, and they believed that he himself had some intimations that the time of his departure was at hand, for he appeared to be ripe and ready to depart whenever the Lord should call him home. A few friends met at his house a week before he died, when the hymn commencing,

"Pilgrims we are to Canaan bound" (286),

was sung, and after the last verse he remarked, "*That is it. It will only be a few more days, and then we shall have done with all things here on earth.*" His wife has told me that on the evening of that day he prayed solemnly and sincerely for her that God would provide for her after his departure, knowing that she had nothing to depend upon for a living. Before he went to his work on the morning of the day before he died he began to sing the hymn commencing,

"Jesus, Lover of my soul
Let me to thy bosom fly,"

and said, "I shall soon be with him, and see him as he is." He

was very calm and quiet during the day of his death, and said but very little, but in the evening he became unconscious, and remained so until he died.

He preached his last sermon in the Port of Hull on Lord's day, March 10th, 1889, and on the following day he returned home and heard Mr. R. Moxon preach in the evening at Dewsbury. On the Tuesday he went to his work as usual, which proved to be the last time, and on the Wednesday evening he died at about 11 o'clock, and went straight to heaven. He was one of the oldest supplies amongst the Particular Baptist churches in Lancashire and Yorkshire and was a gracious man of God who lived and walked the gospel he professed.

I would just say that it would be well if the poorest of our ministers would subscribe, if only a shilling yearly to the "Gospel Standard" Aid Society, as in case of their death their widows would be entitled to relief from the Society, whereas unless they are subscribers nothing can be done for them. Our departed friend has been a minister of the gospel nearly thirty years, but as he never became a subscriber to the "G. S." Aid Society his widow is left destitute and has no claim upon the Society.

D. SMITH.

JAMES CULVERHOUSE.—On May 1st, 1889, aged 83, James Culverhouse, a member of Providence Chapel, Southwick, near Trowbridge, and minister of the gospel for over 50 years in various parts of Wiltshire.

He was born in the village of Southwick. It pleased the Lord to call him by his grace in his early years, but at what date I do not exactly know. He was led to see that the right way to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper was by immersion in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and was baptized. Some time after this he was greatly exercised about preaching. He was accustomed to meet with a few of the Lord's people and read and expound a little from the Word. It was soon perceived that he had a gift for speaking and many believed that God had called him to preach the gospel.

When about twenty-five years of age he first began to preach. After it was announced that he would preach his first sermon, his house by some means caught fire, and he often said he thought the devil had some hand in the matter in order to prevent him going to preach, but he, being at that time a strong and powerful man, scaled the roof and put the fire out, after which he went and preached, and God blessed the word spoken by him. For fifty-six years he was favoured to supply most of the churches in Wiltshire and the surroundings. He always contended that a man must have a special call from the Lord to preach his word. On one occasion when he was preaching a woman of ill fame came to hear him and the Lord made the word quick and powerful, so that it was the means of a blessing unto life to her soul.

He was by trade a blacksmith, and a few years ago, his sight beginning to fail, he was obliged to wear spectacles, and in striking the iron a piece flew off and broke one of his glasses, which was the means of him losing the sight of one of his eyes; but he bore the affliction without murmuring. He was a man who rejoiced in the peace and prosperity of Zion, and many who did not like his principles were constrained to say that he was a good man.

He continued to preach until within a year of his death. I have occasionally during the last ten years preached in the village of Southwick. One Sabbath afternoon a few weeks before his death I called to see him. He had the Word of God on the table, and said what a beauty he saw in it. He then remarked, "The truths I have so long preached will do to die with," and said, "I think I could preach now." He seemed to have a wish to speak once more in the name of the Lord. The kind friends at Malmsbury where he often supplied had written to him, and he said he should like to see them again, observing, "I love all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth." On my bidding him farewell, little thinking it would be the last time I should see him alive, he said, "You buried my wife, and I should like you to bury me." (I buried his wife on April 4th, 1888.) They had been favoured to live together for fifty-seven years.

He was only ill a few days. On a friend asking him how he felt in his mind, he said, "I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." He was quite conscious to the last, and on his son coming into the room he said, "Tell Mr. West to bury me," which I did in the presence of many of his friends.

A. WEST.

OWEN DRURY.—On March 19th, 1889, aged 64, Owen Drury, for twenty years clerk and deacon of the late Mr. Pert's church at Flimwell.

The following is a brief account of his experience as related by him when he joined the church at Hanover Chapel, Tanbridge Wells, only a short time before his death:

"When a boy I attended the Sunday School, but after I got from under my mother's control I went with other ungodly youths and determined to have my fill of sin. This did not last very long. In the year 1845 I was laid upon a bed of affliction, and I hope the Lord then convinced me of sin. O what anguish of soul I experienced, feeling that hell must be my portion for ever! While in this condition I tried to pray and search the Word of God, but it all seemed to condemn me, until after some time had elapsed I saw with the eye of my mind the dear Saviour crucified, and the words came with power and sweetness: 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.' But this did not last long. I soon sunk in fears and darkness lest I had been

deceived, but was again delivered by the words: 'I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.'

"Some time after this I was tempted to think I had committed the unpardonable sin, and although I was comforted in reading Bunyan's works, and Mr. Philpot's sermon entitled, 'An Heir of Heaven Walking in Darkness,' &c., yet I was not fully delivered until one day I was led to read Mark iii, where it speaks of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and I felt I had not done that. I afterwards fell into a backsliding state, indulging in foolish talk and ridicule, but the Lord restored me after five months' soul-trouble which brought me so low that some said I should die; but one morning I awoke and all my fears were gone.

"In 1850 I joined the church at Pell Green, but not hearing the minister to profit I went to Flimwell where I joined the church, and continued there in peace until Mr. Pert died. Then troubles arose, and having heard Mr. Newton well at Ticehurst I decided to come to Hanover, and while seeking to know the Lord's mind about joining the church here, these words came: 'Go, tell them what great things the Lord has done for thee,' which decided the matter."

The following account of his last days was sent to me by his widow: "He suffered from a long and painful affection of the heart. During the last six weeks of his life he was kept in peace. Hymns 993, 334, and 406 were much blessed to him, especially the third and fourth verses of the last-named. At another time he was much comforted from the words: 'And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly.' (Lu. xxii. 44.) His son Samuel read a few verses of Jno. xiv, and they were very sweet to him. The fourth verse of hymn 920 was often repeated by him during the last few weeks of his life. One morning, seeing him in much suffering, I said, 'Have you any words to comfort you?' He replied, 'I have been thinking of the Shepherd and his sheep. See if you can find it.' I found hymn 122, and when I came to the sixth verse he said, 'That is it. I could not quite remember it.' He then said,

"And can he have taught me to trust in his name,
And thus far have brought me to put me to shame?"

He remarked, 'Surely it must be the work of the Spirit.' One day and night he was much troubled, fearing that some of the sins of his youth had never been pardoned, when the words in Matt. v. 17 were sweetly applied to his soul. On the Wednesday before his death the enemy thrust sore at him. On the Thursday he seemed to be taken for death when the words came: 'Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp; I myself will awake early.' He thought he was about to be taken home. I read Psalm xxiii to him, and when I came to the words: 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil,' he said, '*I fear no evil.*' On the following Monday evening I said to him, 'You will soon praise *him.*' He replied, 'Yes; praise him

with joyful lips.' He departed this life on Tuesday morning, to be for ever with the Lord."

Our departed friend was a godly man and lived a consistent life. He lived twelve miles from Tunbridge Wells.

J. NEWTON.

CHARLOTTE POPE.—On March 3rd, 1889, in the 86th year of her age, Charlotte Pope, of Wootton Rivers, Marlborough, Wilts.

She was born at Wootton Rivers in the year 1803. In the twentieth year of her age she was born again of the Spirit of God. Up to that time she had been a member of the Church of England, but I have heard her say that after her conversion she always attended the Particular Baptist Chapel, and never entered any other place of worship. In her young days she has many times walked eleven or twelve miles to Allington to hear the late Mr. Philpot preach, and his ministry was much blessed to her, also his printed sermons, one of which was especially blessed to her about a year ago. It was from the words: "The eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee, and shall say, Destroy them." (Deut. xxxiii. 27.) She attended the Calne anniversary of Zion chapel for forty-two years in succession, going from her home at Marlborough expressly for that purpose during her married life. She saw her dear husband, as Mr. Tiptaft used to say, "well laid in the grave" in June, 1869, and on March 8th, 1889, we committed her mortal remains to the same tomb in Marlborough cemetery, in sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life.

During her husband's life they were the chief supporters of the Baptist cause at Marlborough. The services were held in a room and the ministers were entertained at their house. She was truly a mother in Israel. She had taken in the "Gospel Standard" from its commencement. The Bible, Hymn-book, and Mr. Philpot's and Mr. Tiptaft's writings, with a few others, comprised her library. In 1872 she again came to reside at Wootton Rivers, and used to drive six miles to Manningford to hear the gospel, the Lord having mercifully provided her with the means to go when able. Often, when wishing the friends at Manningford good-bye she would say, "It may be the last time."

On the 23rd of January last she went with me to give our votes to a candidate for the "County Council," and in turning the carriage round to return home she fell out. She told me that as she was lying on the road she wondered if she had done wrong in going and prayed for forgiveness. Her escape with only a few bruises on her head and face was marvellous. She said she always asked the Lord to preserve her from accident before going out, but that morning she had omitted to do so. The so-called *accident* was evidently the means in the Lord's hand of ripening

her for glory, as from that time we saw a marked change in her. The great anxiety she had formerly felt and expressed relating to the perishing things of this life was taken away. We treated her as an invalid from Jan. 23rd, and she appreciated every little kindness that was shown to her. Her niece who resided with her had been unremitting in her attentions by day and by night for years past. She had always expressed a hope that she should not die from a so-called *accident*, which she did not, for the immediate cause of death was bronchitis and congestion of the lungs.

On Feb. 23rd the doctor was sent for and he pronounced her case hopeless, from which time she rapidly sank. She had often expressed a wish that she might not have a lingering illness, and had often feared how it would be with her at the last. Once, on leaving her, I said, "There is a mansion prepared for you." She emphatically replied, "Yes, there is; and for you too." She told me to give her love to all the Manningford friends, and to all "who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth." She also sent her love to many other friends, mentioning them by name. On a friend going to see her a few days before she died, she said, "Give my love to Miss C., and may she follow on to know the Lord," quoting the words: "As ye have also received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." A friend calling to see her said, "You have a good hope." She replied, "I do not want to have a vain confidence," and then repeated the fifth verse of hymn 28. She was in prayer nearly all one day, begging of the Lord to take her home, as she dreaded the thought of being raised up, and, as she said, "to have it all to go through again."

Her voice became so weak that only broken sentences could be heard, but she retained consciousness and her memory was unimpaired up to the last. A friend said, "The Lord has been very merciful to you." She assented by bowing her head. The last words she was heard to say were: "Dear Lord, I want to exchange places." What a blessed exchange it is for her,—from earth to heaven. On Sunday morning, March 3rd, a friend in London awoke with the words: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints," and believed it referred to Mrs. Pope and that she would die that day, which came to pass, for about four o'clock in the afternoon her happy spirit took its flight, to be for ever with the Lord. Her dear niece and I shall miss her very much. She was well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures. Being too far to drive to Manningford a second time on the Sabbaths we usually spent the evenings together reading a sermon or a piece from the "G. S." She remembered two Jubilees,—the one of George the Third, and the one of our present reigning Sovereign.

P. F. GOODMAN.

God, who feeds the ravens, will not starve his doves.—*Charnock.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

AUGUST, 1889.

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

MEDITATIONS ON PSALM XXV.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from page 285.)

IN the ninth verse the Psalmist says, "The meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way." Here David, being under the instruction of the Almighty, makes this declaration concerning the good pleasure of his will to sinners. The Holy Ghost is here declaring by the mouth of David what he will do for his own name's sake. The thoughts of God's heart are expressed in his Word for the consolation of all such who seek his face and call upon his holy name out of a pure heart; for the Lord has said: "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." Some persons are naturally meek, and very humble, kind, gentle, and tender in their ways; but the meekness here spoken of is a spiritual meekness, such as Jesus named in his great sermon on the mount when he said, "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." Such have been meekened by grace; their high and lofty looks have been brought down, they have been humbled for their pride, they have been convinced of their sins; grace, mercy, and the love of God have produced in their hearts penitence and brokenness of spirit, and on such the Lord's eye is fixed, and we may add, his heart also; for he has said, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." (Isa. lxvi. 2.)

The Psalmist, speaking of such, says, "The meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace" (Ps. xxxvii. 11), that is, peace in and through Christ who has said, "In me ye shall have peace." The more they have of Christ and the peace which he has made by his cross, the more they are humbled, and the more meek do they feel, for they bare his image; and as it was prophesied of Christ that he should grow up as a tender plant; so do those who are meekened by grace and the power of God grow up as tender plants in his house; nor will God tho Father who has planted them ever suffer them to be rooted up, but all others will be rooted up; for saith Christ, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." (Matt. xv 13.)

A person meekened by grace possesses the Spirit of God and longs to know more of the Father and Christ, and God speaks to such, saying, "Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth" (Zeph. ii. 3), which shows he takes pleasure in them, and that their very seekings are in accordance with his holy mind and will, as well as for the profit of their immortal souls. Hence the force of the Scripture: "Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face continually." (1 Chron. xvi. 11.) Moses in many respects was a type of Christ, and of him it is written, "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." (Numb. xii. 3.) Knowing what he was as a sinner, and how unfit he was to be as God's mouth, and feeling that he could not speak he said, "I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant." (Exod. iv. 10.) The work of God in a sinner's soul always makes him feel his unfitness for the service of God and his unworthiness to be called a child of God.

How we see this in the case of the prodigal when grace had humbled his soul, meekened his spirit, and brought him down to repent of his ways; for he said to his father, "I am not worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants." Doubtless Moses felt both his unfitness and his unworthiness,—his unworthiness of being a son of God and his unfitness to be a servant of God and the leader of his people. But why was it? The secret lay here,—God had meekened and humbled his spirit, and made him feel what a poor, weak, guilty sinner he was, even as a bruised reed before the Lord. By this grace in his soul he was qualified to bear with the infirmities of his brethren and to manifest toward them much patience, much longsuffering, and endured for their sakes as well as for God's glory many hardships and trials, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Blessed choice for those who are enabled to make it! In these things Moses, who was meek above all men on the earth, typified the Lord Jesus Christ, who was a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and endured all things for the sake of his people, and laid down his life for their sakes, having accomplished for them an everlasting salvation; and now, as the High Priest of our profession, he speaks to us, saying, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." (Matt. xi. 29.) This rest the meek on the earth seek after and sometimes now, by faith, enter into, and the fulness of it they will realize to all eternity. The broken body and precious blood of Jesus, which are set forth in the sufferings and death of Christ in Ps. xxii., are the food of those who are meekened in spirit and brought to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and to need a precious Jesus for their comfort, their peace, and their joy, and the Lord will give such to taste the preciousness of these things; for he has said: "The meek shall eat and be satis-

fied; they shall praise the Lord that seek him; your heart shall live for ever" (Ps. xxii. 26), in which we see there is eating, praising, seeking, and life everlasting. Hence the force of the Scripture which we have before quoted, "Blessed are the meek." Yes, for ever blessed; for they are united to Christ, they are God's own children, they have passed from death unto life, they possess a new heart and a new spirit, they are redeemed by the blood of Jesus, they are brought nigh to God by that blood, their sins are put away by the sacrifice of Christ, they are members of his body, branches of the true and living Vine, and their names are registered in the Lamb's Book of Life; as Paul says: "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." (Eph. iii. 15.)

It is, then, no small mercy to be amongst those who are meek in spirit, humbled and brought to the cross of Jesus, to find Christ the One thing needful, to feel his preciousness, and like the poor blind man when the Saviour was revealed to him, to fall down and worship him. Here are two promises stand to these meek ones;—first, God will guide them in judgment. The word "judgment" often means wisdom, counsel, and a right understanding of the mind and will of God into which the Holy Ghost guides all the vessels of mercy; for he is to them, as Isaiah says, "a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate." (Isa. xxviii. 6.) He makes them wise of heart and gives them an experimental knowledge of the gospel of Christ, in which all his ways of judgment, mercy, life, peace, and forgiveness of sin are made known, and for which the Lord's people are brought to wait upon him, as saith Isaiah: "In the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee." (Is. xxvi. 8.) Hence that beautiful and sweet promise of Christ when he was about to ascend into heaven and promised his disciples that he would send upon them the Holy Ghost, saying, "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth," that is, into the counsel, mind, and will of God; for "he shall enlarge your understandings, give you a clearer knowledge of the truth and of myself, and of the necessity for my death, resurrection, and exaltation at God's right hand."

"The meek will he guide in judgment;" not leave them to embrace soul-destroying errors, the doctrines of men, nor be satisfied with a ministry, however clear in the letter, which is destitute of life, savour, and power; but he gives them a discernment between the letter and the Spirit, between a mere professor and a real possessor, and to see the difference between having the doctrines in the head and the grace of those doctrines in the heart; between a lip profession and a heart experience. The world do not hold the truth. They preach, hear, and contend for what they love, and that is error of various kinds; but to the truth of God the world is opposed. It ever has been so and ever will be so.

Then again, in the professing church of Christ there are numbers, who, like the foolish virgins, have no vessel in their lamps and no grace, or the Spirit of grace in their hearts. These may profess and do profess to know the truth; they hold the same doctrines, mix amongst the same people, hear the same ministers, and may often flatter them and even speak well of them, and under the ministry of the word may seem to be *almost* Christians, as Agrippa was almost persuaded to be through Paul's words, and yet not have a spark of grace: they know not anything of the teaching of the Holy Ghost, never having passed from death unto life, never having been quickened, humbled, nor their spirits broken in godly sorrow for sin, never having felt repentance unto salvation not to be repented of,—being destitute of all these things they are yet dead in their sins and strangers to the promises of life which the Lord has made in his Word.

"The meek will he guide in judgment." Much more might be said upon this, but we pass on to the second promise: "The meek will he teach his way." The more a sinner is meekened, the more clearly he will see the way of God, and see, too, that it is a blessed way, a living way, an everlasting way, and that it is the way of holiness, and the unclean shall not pass over it; for it is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen. But it is the way of the Lord which is strength to the upright, and God has said, "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." (Prov. iv. 18.) When we as poor ungodly sinners are brought to self-despair, self-abhorrence, to loathe ourselves for our sins and iniquities, and are reduced in our feelings to true poverty of spirit, then the Holy Ghost leads us to look wholly and solely to the Lord Jesus Christ as the Light and Life of our souls; and the eye being at such seasons fixed on Christ alone, the Scripture is fulfilled: "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light," that is, Christ shining into a dark place. Here we find reconciliation, here we realize mercy, here the grace of God abounds over our sins, here we honour the Father, and all these things shine in the face of our Immanuel, God blessed for evermore. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. iv. 6.)

How entirely opposite is this way to the law of works! This way shines transcendently above all the glory that was made known under the law; for Paul says, "By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." (Heb. x. 20.) Here is a way of access unto the Father by which all the elect of God, whether Jew or Gentile, find an entrance; for "through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (Eph. ii. 18.) Hope, which is a grace of the Holy Ghost and is as an anchor unto the soul, enters into that which is within the veil, even into the mercy, grace, and electing kindness of the Father. These things, more or less, are

made known to all those sinners whom God takes in hand to teach, all whom he guides, and all to whom he shows his way; and those who are being led forth by a right way dread being deceived, and often cry out, "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."

This divine and gracious teaching of the meek is very often communicated through the preached gospel; for by the ministry of the word the Lord blesses, instructs, and teaches the meek in spirit. As a servant of God is enabled to testify of the work of the Spirit in the soul, and how he convinces all his children of the truth, and blesses them, shines upon them, forgives them, recovers and reclaims them from their backslidings and evil doings, his way of salvation is thus opened up to their understandings. When the Psalmist, as a backslider, prayed for those great blessings which he names in Ps. li, it was not only for his own comfort he desired them, but it was that he might speak well of the name of the Lord to others. Hence he said, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee." Thus we see his desire was to teach transgressors not his ways, but God's ways, who has said, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. lv. 9.)

None but a God of infinite wisdom could have devised such a plan of salvation, and none but a God of infinite power could make it known and bring it down in mercy and love to sinners' souls. Every other way, however much reason may approve it, must be discarded and cast to the moles and to the bats as of nothing worth. Of all the devices that man sets up to recover himself, we may say, "Get thee hence." God will not own them and therefore we must discard them as being useless to us and dishonouring to him. The Lord speaks, saying, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." (Isa. lv. 7.) God will not save only upon these grounds of mercy and abundance of pardon.

This brings us to the tenth verse of this precious and experimental Psalm in which the man of God, under the inspiration of the Almighty, says, "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies." Here he speaks of the paths of the Lord, many of which if viewed by reason seem to us very perplexing. Reason cannot understand them and sometimes faith seems to stagger and we wonder how things will end. We are at best but poor blind creatures, and can only understand the Lord's intentions as he unfolds them, which he will do in due time; for he has said, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known." (Isa. xlii. 16) Many of the Lord's paths in

which he designs to show salvation and make his wisdom shine are often, for a while at least, quite incomprehensible to us and often misunderstood.

Take the case of the Israelites when God would, in order to fulfil his promise to Abraham, send them into Egypt. Joseph must be hated of his brethren, persecuted for righteousness' sake, cast into the pit, sold to the Ishmaelites, and re-sold to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard, there for a time to be exalted and entrusted with everything that his master possessed; for Potiphar put such confidence in him that he looked not to anything that was under his hand. Thus far Joseph might be greatly encouraged to think that the realization of the promise was close at hand. But no; instead of this temptation and trial awaited him; but he endured temptation, and, through the fear of the Lord, he departed from evil. False accusations were raised against him, and his master, who before confided in him and entrusted all he had to his care, believed the accusation brought by his wife against Joseph, and cast him into prison; but he could not cast out of him the fear of God nor debar him the presence of his heavenly Friend; for "the Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison."

When Joseph was cast into prison it would not appear to reason that this was bringing him a step nearer to his exaltation in Egypt, of which the Lord had assured him; yet so it was; for two men in the court of Egypt had offended Pharaoh their king, and for their transgression were cast into the prison, the place where Joseph was confined. The Word says, "The wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous" (Prov. xxi. 18), and how true in this case! These men who had offended their lord were the very means God used to bring Joseph before Pharaoh, or at least one of them, namely, the chief butler, whose head was lifted up and restored to his butlership. Both these men dreamed a dream, and Joseph interpreted their dreams; and as he interpreted them, so they came to pass. The one who was restored as Joseph had predicted, when he got back into Pharaoh's court he thought more of his restoration than he did of his kind friend Joseph whom he had left in prison; for we read: "Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him." (Gen. xl. 23.)

But Pharaoh must dream, and no one in all his kingdom was able to interpret his dreams. All the magicians and all the wise men were but as fools. Pharaoh called for them and told them his dreams, but there was none that could interpret them. Joseph must now be brought forward. He must now by God's providence step out of prison. Now was the time for God to lift him up. From being a captive in the prison he was to be next to Pharaoh in the throne. O what a wonderful turn in providence for Joseph, and how sweetly in his case was the text fulfilled: "He honoureth them that fear the Lord" (Ps. xv. 4); for we read: "And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and

put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; and he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee; and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." (Gen. xli. 42-44.)

Joseph's trials, afflictions, and finally his exaltation paved the way for all the children of Israel, including Jacob their father, to go down into the land of Egypt, and the dream which he related to his brethren must be fulfilled: "Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me." (Gen. xxxvii. 9.) But not until Joseph was exalted and made lord over all the land of Egypt was he to be made known unto his brethren. They must come to him for bread, they must bow down to him, and God would have his will and his way made known, and Joseph was thus prepared to become to them a saviour, a succourer, and a comforter; and to make known the love of his heart and how freely he forgave them all their iniquities, transgressions, and sins against him, he fell upon their necks and kissed them; as we read: "Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them; and after that his brethren talked with him." Thus we see one of the paths of the Lord to his servants which was full of mercy and truth; for God *in truth* made his promise to Abraham and *in mercy* fulfilled it to his seed.

The apostle Paul was desirous to see Rome, and prayed that at length he might have a prosperous journey by the will of God. (Rom. i. 10.) Now, see how his prayer was answered. When in Cæsarea it was prophesied that if he went to Jerusalem he should be delivered into the hands of the Gentiles; but this did not deter him from going, and the brethren in that large city received him gladly. Whilst there he testified of Christ and of what God had wrought by his ministry amongst the Gentiles, which stirred up the Jews almost to madness, so that they went about to kill him, but God mercifully watched over him and preserved his life; for the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done. He then gave him licence to speak, and on the stairs of the castle he made his defence, and, like David of old, declared what God had done for his soul. He gave a declaration of his faith,—how Christ met with him on his way to Damascus, how the Father had chosen him to be a minister, to know his will, to see that Just One, and to hear his voice. Then arose such a persecution against him that he was brought before the high priest Ananias, then before Felix, then again before Ananias, the high priest, and elders, to be falsely accused by a certain orator named Tertullus, which name signifies *a liar, an impostor*, whose design was to implant in the mind of Felix prejudice against Paul and

his religion. Here Paul was detained for two years, at the end of which time Porcius Festus came into power, to whom the high priest and Jews accused Paul, and desired that he would send for him to Jerusalem, their object being to lay wait in the way to kill him; but Paul proved that "the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, and he turneth it whithersoever he will" (Prov. xxi. 1); for Festus would not consent to their proposition, nor condemn Paul because of their grievous complaints against him. This did not look much like an answer to his prayer that he might have a prosperous journey, and see Rome.

Festus was so far inclined to Paul that he gave him liberty of choice whether he would go to Jerusalem or not to be judged; but Paul, who was under the special guidance of God, who intended that he should realize the fulfilment of his prayer though it was through seas and floods and fires, said, "I stand at Cæsar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged," and under the influence of the Holy Ghost he courageously said, "If I have done anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die;" and Festus, whose heart was in the hand of the Lord, was constrained to favour Paul, and say, "Hast thou appealed unto Cæsar? unto Cæsar shalt thou go." But king Agrippa, unto whom Festus had declared Paul's case, said, "I would also hear the man myself;" and Festus said, "To-morrow thou shalt hear him." God marvellously watched over his dear servant, and gave him favour in the eyes of men who had no grace. Who can tell how much the apostle might have been tried whilst thus imprisoned and brought before one ruler after another.

When before king Agrippa the apostle again related the wondrous work of God on his soul and his marvellous conversion, and how the Lord raised him up to be a minister, that he might preach the gospel at Damascus, Jerusalem, through all the coasts of Judæa, and to the Gentiles; and then, with the power and authority of the Blessed Spirit, he made an appeal to the conscience of king Agrippa, which wrought so powerfully upon him that he cried out, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Thus Paul was brought, as Christ said his servants should be, before magistrates and powers, and the Holy Ghost taught him in the same hour what he should say and what he should speak.

After this it was determined that he should sail into Italy, but O what a perilous journey this proved to be; for a tempestuous wind arose against which the ship could not bear up, and for many days neither sun nor stars appeared, and the tempest still lay upon them. Then down went hope, as if it had perished. This did not seem like an answer to Paul's prayer for a prosperous journey to Rome. How it shows that God tries the righteous, and answers their prayers through storms, adversities, and trials! The Lord mercifully and graciously strengthened Paul, and he said to the mariners, "There stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,

saying, Fear not Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar; and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." In the midst of this peril Paul was again led of the Spirit to say that not a hair of the head of any of them should perish, which came to pass; for although the ship was broken to pieces, they all got safe to land, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship.

Then they were cast upon an island called Melita, which signifies "*affording honey.*" This was a strange way to get at the sweets; but "the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet." The lamb must be eaten with bitter herbs, and tribulation of some sort or other we must have to prepare us for the joy. This is another instance of the mysterious workings of God's providence to accomplish his purposes of grace, and to show how the Lord hears and in the end answers the prayers of his children, and proves the truth of the Scripture: "Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known." (Ps. lxxvii. 19.)

How various are the paths of the Lord in his providence to his people! Take their different positions in life. Some have little or nothing of this world's goods, but are dependent upon the Lord day by day, and much exercised and much tried as to how their temporal needs shall be supplied. This is one of God's paths by which he exercises them and draws out of their souls many prayers and cries by which he is honoured and glorified. Others are more comfortably situated. God in his wisdom and kindness has seen fit to place them in positions where they are more free from the cares and turmoil of the world, and they are blessed with all the comforts of this life which should draw forth gratitude and thankfulness to the God of all their mercies.

Again. The temperaments of God's people vary in a thousand ways; yet each child of God is useful in some way or other, although that usefulness may be much hidden from their own eyes. He who has made us all and placed each one of his children as members in his mystical body is infinite in wisdom, and overrules all their positions, circumstances, temperaments, and dispositions for their eternal good; and as all the paths into which they are led are ordained by infinite wisdom, so also they are executed by omnipotent power; and however diversified the dealings of God with his own family may be, the darkness and the light, his variations in providence and his variations in his dealings in grace are all needful to fulfil the Scripture which says, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. viii. 28.) But it is only by faith that we can reconcile the various dealings of God; for he "putteth down one, and setteth up another." (Ps. lxxv. 7.) He gathereth the wind in his fists, and binds the waters in a garment. (Prov. xxx. 4.) Faith believes what is too high for reason to comprehend. In adversity God

sometimes enables a saint to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

These paths of mercy and truth are only to such as keep God's covenant and his testimonies, upon which we hope to make some remarks when we come to the fourteenth verse.

(To be continued.)

THE HIDINGS OF GOD'S FACE.

BY RUSK.

(Continued from page 306.)

I WILL now endeavour to show, first, why God hides his face from us; and secondly, what the effect of it will be when this takes place. Our blessed Lord very often made use of the word "verily" in the days of his flesh, and it means to affirm anything as a real truth, an absolute fact that is beyond all denial. This word "verily" is doubly repeated three times by the Lord Jesus unto Nicodemus in one chapter: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. . . Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen." (Jno. iii. 8. 5. 11.) In the text it reads, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself;" so it is a fixed thing and never can be altered that God does hide his face. What is meant by this term "hiding his face?" It is that according to our view of things he does not appear well pleased with us in Christ Jesus, and therefore (feelingly) Christ is hid, and God frowns and is displeased. But now for the various causes why God hides his face from us.

I. It is on account of our sin; for although God is pleased to cleanse us from all sin by faith in the precious blood of his dear Son, yet we are not delivered from the inbeing of sin. Hence Jabez cried to the Lord to keep him from evil, and Paul broke out, saying, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The old man of sin with all its members is still left in the best Christian upon the earth. This is evident from what Paul wrote to the church of God at Colosse:—"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry." (Col. iii. 5.) If you read the chapter carefully and God gives you eyes, you will see it abundantly confirmed that the old man is still left in the brightest saint living, and Satan will be constantly trying to work upon this old man and to stir up all the evils of our fallen nature; and then we prove that it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against God; for the Lord hides his face from us on account of these things. Two texts will prove the truth of this assertion;—the one is respecting Ephraim, of whom the

Lord said, "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him; I hid me, and was wroth." (Isa. lvii. 17.) The other text you will find in Isa. lix. 1, 2.

II. A self-righteous spirit will cause the Lord to hide his face from us; for although this appears very well in the eyes of a natural man and to fleshly reason, yet it gives God the lie; for he declares, "There is none righteous; no, not one;" and yet there are men who will come forward and declare that they never at any time transgressed God's commandment. How awfully presumptuous is all this! I have heard that amongst Mr. Wesley's people there are some that will declare that they have arrived at a state of perfection and have lived some twenty, thirty, or more years without sin. How clear it is that such men never were in all their lives convinced of sin by the Holy Ghost! Then again, of what use was the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ if men are righteous and never transgressed; for if perfection is attainable by one or more (viewing man as a free agent), then it is attainable by all; for "as face answereth to face in water; so the heart of man to man?" Thus God is made a liar, and the work of the Saviour falls to the ground by this abominable, self-righteous spirit. But the Lord says of such, "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord; I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hands, to tread my courts?" (Isa. i. 11, 12.) Say you, "But did not God command all this by Moses?" Yes; he did; but they were typical sacrifices, and pointed to the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul says, "Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us." Now if people, blinded by the devil, trust in the type they at once pervert God's meaning and intention; and therefore in the former part of this chapter God says, "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores." If we could offer in sacrifice all the beasts in the world, it never could cleanse the conscience from sin, for there is no access to the Lord on the footing of our obedience; therefore God says, "Bring no more vain oblation; incense is an abomination unto me. . . . And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you."

I would here make a remark to God's family, and that is, Have you not found that at times, through the discovery you have had of your heart and the vileness of it, you have been terrified and feared some judgment would come upon you, and you have been afraid to call upon God; but all of a sudden the scene has been changed and you have found the Lord shine upon your soul? Then at another time, when you have been enabled to walk very circumspectly and you have read a good deal, been very diligent in all the means of God's appointment, visited the sick and been liberal to the poor, and you have gone to the Lord

expecting to find much of his presence; but instead of that he has hid his face and frowned upon you. How is all this to be accounted for? Does God approve of sin and reject a circumspect life? O no; God forbid that we should harbour such a thought. He smiled upon you in Christ Jesus when you were expecting some judgment to come upon you, for you were at that time self-emptied; but the reason why he hid his face and frowned upon you at the other time was because you had got into a self-righteous spirit and were looking at what you had done. Hence God says, "I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." (Hos. vi. 6.)

Another cause why God hides his face from his people is to purge them, while their enemies are ripened for destruction. This you will clearly see set forth in Ezek. xxxviii., and xxxix. There we read of the army and malice of Gog, God's judgments on him, and his burial. Israel, while under all this purging work, were plagued for their sins and God hid his face. As they were a typical people we may compare the Lord's dealings with them with his dealings with us spiritually, and they will both agree. God's people individually must be purged. It is impossible that his people can go on without purging, because we carry about with us a body of sin and death, which is ever calling for correction, and when God does this, he hides his face from us. Christ said, "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (Jno. xv. 2); and he does this by trials and afflictions of various sorts, such as bodily and family afflictions, cross providences, temptations from Satan, oppositions from men, &c.; and while these things are going on all may appear dark. We see not our signs, deadness and barrenness of soul are felt, there is much confusion, the Bible is a sealed book, ordinances are dry breasts, prayer a task, and there appears nothing pleasing in religion as formerly. Job found this to be the case; therefore he said, "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there;" by which I understand that he tried to attain to those enjoyments which he had formerly felt when the secret of God was on his tabernacle, which secret is eternal election; but Job was not at this time feeling sweet faith in fresh exercise, so that he could rejoice in God's election and choice of him, nor was the dew (or doctrine) all night on his branch. Christ speaking comfortably in his Word to the soul is delightful; and he has said: "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew." But now the scene is changed with Job; for he says: "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him." What a plight Job is now in, but all his wants are summed up in one,—he wants to find the Lord's presence. "On the left hand where he doth work (in a way of providence; but all is swept away), and I cannot behold him; he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him;" that is, as an Advocate; for, as David says, "He shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him

from them that condemn his soul;" whereas the Lord renewed his witnesses against Job, which shows that at this time he was not properly brought down in the furnace.

God will purge his people, but it is in order to take away their dross and tin. Peter had to be purged from fleshly confidence which was mixed with his faith. His feet had to be washed. Satan shall sift him as wheat in his sieve for a while, but he, like Job, shall, in the end, come forth as gold. I might mention David, Solomon, the incestuous person, and many others, for they all had to be purged, and I myself also have had this purging work, and I still need it as much as anyone of those I have named, and I would bless God for it; for though it is a painful work and the flesh hates it, yet it is needful.

Then again; as a church we need to be purged, for Satan will ever be trying to bring tares in amongst the wheat; and where the glorious gospel has for a long time flourished and God for a length of time has highly honoured any sent servant of his, when he removes such a one, then in a particular way Satan gains much ground. This may be proved both from Scripture and observation. Hear what the apostle Paul told the church of God at Ephesus when he took his leave of them and was going to Jerusalem. He said, "I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears." (Acts xx. 29-31.) The Galatians and the church at Corinth were both seduced this way when Paul left them for a time. Say you, "But how is this?" Why, it is done by preaching the letter of sound truth, which is very plausible, and young Christians in particular are taken with it; for great gifts and zeal go a great way and ensnare the child of God. This was the case with the Corinthians,—they were zealous of spiritual gifts; but Paul says, "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." (1 Cor. iv. 20.) Such preach the letter of sound truth, and yet Paul says they are "false apostles, and deceitful workers, &c." The Galatians were drawn aside in another way, and that was by false teachers setting the law of Moses before them as their rule of life. Now all this in time will cause the Lord to hide his face from a church, for he will purge his people from all these things; for "he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matt. iii. 12.)

If you read the book of the Revelation you will there find that the Lord brings forth certain things against the different churches, and we do well to examine how far they are applicable unto us. I once heard a minister speak of the declining state of the church until God raised up Wesley and Whitfield, which shocked me to hear; for God will never revive his work by such

a man as Wesley, who was full of errors. Whitfield indeed was a noble champion, and was eminently useful; but the people at the Tabernacle where he used to labour are now resting in a mere form,—a name to live while dead; and it has been so for many years past. Since the death of Mr. Huntington his people are scattered, and some of them are carried away with a party spirit, so that they reject some of those who are sent of God, and do not know what they want.

From what has already been said we find that *sin* is the cause why God hides his face from his people. Say you, "But this is not always the cause; for it was not in the case of Job, of whom it is said that he was perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil, and that Satan had no cause why he should move God against him." I firmly believe that Job was perfect and upright as considered in Christ, and that the fear of God enabled him to depart from evil, so that he was in his walk circumspect; therefore in all this there was no cause that Satan or the world knew of why Job should go into the furnace of affliction for seven years; and I believe this was the Lord's meaning, for it agrees with what he says of David that "he was perfect all his days, save in the matter of Uriah the Hittite." But if you take it in the strictest sense, then how does it agree with what the Holy Ghost says by Solomon: "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not?" (Eccles. vii. 20.) Satan could not find any cause why God should afflict Job, but we all know there is cause enough in ourselves, and God knows all about it. It appears to me that Job had got into a self-righteous spirit and took that glory to himself which only belonged to God, and the Lord says he is a jealous God and will not give his glory to another. This, I believe, was the cause why God hid his face from him.

The Lord intends to teach his children many things when he hides his face from them; such as the spirituality of his law, the unwearied attempts of Satan, to discover pretended friends, the malice of the world, the abominations of the human heart, the vanity of relying on an arm of flesh, and where we should be if God were to give us quite up,—that not one of us could stand alone, that all forms of godliness without the power are of no use, also our extreme weakness and need of momentary support;—these things with a great many more we learn when God hides his face from us for our sins.

But again, as it respects Job. God did not tell Satan that there was no cause in Job why he should hide his face from him, but that there was no cause why he should destroy him body and soul as Satan wished; for Jesus Christ was his Surety, and in God's eternal purpose he had discharged Job's infinite debts; and here it is, and here only that any of us can stand; for "it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, and because his compassions fail not." Now let us ask Job if there was any cause why God hid his face from him. Observe what he says:

“How many are mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin. Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?” (Job xiii. 23, 24.) Look also at Jeremiah and you will find that sin caused the Lord to hide his face from him. Hence he says, putting himself in with the rest, “We have transgressed and have rebelled; thou hast not pardoned. Thou hast covered with anger, and persecuted us; thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied. Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that our prayer should not pass through.” (Lam. iii. 42-44.) Heman also says in Ps. lxxxviii., “Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves. . . . Lord, why castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me?” Therefore we read: “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 transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.” (Ps. lxxxix. 30-32.) All of us who are acquainted with our own hearts well know that *sin* is the procuring cause why God hides his face from us; for God does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.

I will now show what the effect will be of God thus hiding his face from the children of men. Israel of old were God's people by national adoption, but not by special grace, and God often hid his face from them, as you may see in Jer. xxxiii. 5: “They come to fight with the Chaldeans, but it is to fill them with the dead bodies of men, whom I have slain in mine anger and in my fury, and for all whose wickedness I have hid my face from this city.” The effect of God hiding his face and bringing calamity upon a city will be to the wicked that they will get worse and worse, more and more hardened; for neither judgments nor mercies of an outward nature will bring men to confess their sins from their hearts unto the Lord, I mean ungodly, presumptuous, hardened, wicked men, and such Jeremiah had to do with, who mocked God, and after telling the prophet to inquire of the Lord and that all that the Lord said they would abide by, whether for or against them, yet when they found it was against their corrupt desires, they wilfully rejected God's word altogether. If you read Jer. xlii. you will see how they dissembled before God and would go into Egypt contrary to the Lord's command, and he declared they should die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence. Disobedience will ever be the cause of God hiding his face, and the effect upon the ungodly will be their eternal ruin and destruction: “Woe unto them when I depart from them.” (Hos. ix. 12.) This you may see in Saul; for “the Lord left him, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him,” and at last he destroyed himself.

But I will now notice what effect the Lord hiding his face from his own family will have. O it is indeed the worst trial that they can have, for if they enjoy his presence every other cross seems light; but when he hides his face they are troubled.

Hear what David said, "My mountain stands strong; I shall never be moved." Did he mean by this that he should always be happy? No, I do not believe he did. Christ Jesus is called a Mountain, and he could clearly see and feel that he was interested in him. In Dan. ii. 34-45 we read that the Stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which was the Lord Jesus Christ, smote the image and break it all to pieces, and this Stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth, which can be applied to none but God who fills all space and Jesus Christ, this corner-Stone, elect, and precious, is Jehovah. That David meant Christ take the following text to confirm it: "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion which can never be removed." David trusted in him, and therefore in his prosperity he said, "My mountain stands strong," and he said the truth, for what can move God's favour or what can move the Mountain, Christ? Nothing can. Well; but God hid his face. Yes, but that did not alter David's firm standing only in his feelings, and when the Lord visited him again he could say the same. In Ps. lxii. he drops the word "Mountain" and tells us his full meaning: "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. He only is my Rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be moved." But as it was with him, so it is with us. When God hid his face David was troubled, and then it is that we feel troubled.

Inward trouble arises from seeing and feeling the evils that dwell in our hearts, for in God's light we see all the secret lusts, and Satan is permitted to stir them up more and more when the Lord withdraws his comfortable presence. In addition to this Satan accuses, reproaches, censures, and condemns, shoots his fiery darts, and brings texts of Scripture against us; and all this and much more causes slavish fear of God, and our backslidings stare us in the face, and a feeling of despair works in the heart. This is heart-trouble. Hence David said, "The troubles of my heart are enlarged." Then there are outward troubles, such as having our bread to get, working with worldly men, or if we work with good men we shall find them crooked and perverse, and if they are not we shall find that we ourselves are crooked. Added to this we may have family troubles,—crooked, stubborn, perverse children, and this will drive us to our wit's end. Also we may have to carry a poor weak tabernacle. David calls this "walking in the midst of trouble."

(To be continued.)

IN the experiences of the saints there is a universal oneness and yet a beautiful variety.—*Fernie.*

GOD, who enables sinners to thirst after grace, will surely give them the grace they thirst after.—*Arrowsmith.*

THOUGH a gracious soul may not always enjoy sensible communion with God in the ordinances, yet it has always this good sign, that it cannot be easy and satisfied without it.—*Gifford.*

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF
SARAH NUNN, WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE ON
JAN. 29TH, 1889, AGED 80.

THE following is a short account of her call by grace written by herself:

"It has been on my mind for some time past to write down a little of the Lord's dealings with me, both in providence and grace, and I have begged of the Lord to direct me aright in the matter, hoping it may be a comfort to some poor soul.

"I was born at Stotfold in Bedfordshire, on April 13th, 1808. From a child I was always brought up to attend a place of worship. My mother was a member at the General Baptist Chapel, and I went with her. Sometimes free-will was preached and sometimes free-grace. Mr. E. preached free-will and Mr. S. free-grace. I remember the latter once preaching from the words: 'The Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad,' which had a great effect upon my mind, for it was just after the recovery of my brother Richard and myself from fever; and having been compelled to keep away from chapel for a long time I thought the Lord had indeed done great things for us in restoring us, so that we could again attend the house of prayer; but after a time these feelings wore off. I knew there was a heaven and a hell, but no more, and I often tried to work out my own salvation by my good works. I knew I was a sinner, and in my way I used to try and pray; but was quite ignorant of the plan of salvation. After a time I was brought to see that God had an elect people, but dare not speak of it as the Lord's time was not come. My mother often used to talk to me about working out my own salvation. I remember once in particular telling her that I believed the Lord would make me willing in the day of his power, when she remarked, placing her hand upon the table, 'You are trying to make man quite a stone, as if he had no more power than this table,' when I again repeated the words: 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.'

"After this Mr. E. and Mr. S. left the chapel, and a Mr. Stanbridge came, but he also preached free-will. For a time I continued going to hear him, but feeling very barren in soul I thought I would attend the Wesleyan Chapel, as I often used to hear the Wesleyans talk about what the Lord had done for their souls, which used to trouble me, as I could not say so. One day the words: 'Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord' (Ps. xxvii. 14) were very powerfully applied to my mind and I could not get away from them, which caused me to beg of the Lord if I was not right to put me right; for I felt I knew no more of the plan of salvation than a child. I then began to inquire what it was to be born again, and what the *new birth* meant. I well remember the place where this inquiry filled my breast and how I begged of the Lord to put me right and keep me so. I was still attending

the Wesleyan chapel, but could not get on with them as they were continually talking about their doings and always appeared so very pious. I still kept begging to be right.

“Once I went up stairs, and falling down on my knees with my Bible in my hand I opened upon these words: ‘If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.’ (1 Jno. i. 8.) I said, ‘Lord, forbid that I should be deceived.’ Once when coming from Hitchin I rode home with Mrs. R., whose husband was deacon at Rehoboth Chapel, and while in conversation she said, ‘I wonder, Mrs. Nunn, that you do not come to Rehoboth Chapel and hear Mr. Mehew.’ I replied, ‘I dare not go there. I want to go where they will tell me if I am seeking the Lord, and whether I shall find him.’ She said, ‘That is the very reason why you should come to Rehoboth.’ However she could not persuade me, for it was not the Lord’s time; but when his time came he made me willing.

“I shall never forget the day as long as I live when the Lord first brought me to a knowledge of the truth. It was one summer’s morning as I and my little girl were going to the Primitive Methodist Chapel; there being no service at the Wesleyans, it came with such power to my mind: ‘Go to Rehoboth Chapel and hear Mr. Mehew.’ I stood still for a moment hesitating whether I should go or not, but was at last compelled to go, thinking I would stand just inside the door. When I reached the chapel I found a seat near the door where no one could see me, and the deacon was then giving out the first line of a hymn. I am sorry I do not remember what hymn it was, but I had not then one of Gadsby’s hymn-books. I shall never forget the impression it made upon my mind. I thought within myself, ‘Where have I been all my life never to have heard such a hymn before?’ It entered with power into my soul and so melted me down, that I inwardly said, like Ruth, ‘This people shall be my people, and their God my God.’ When the singing was over, Mr. Mehew said in his prayer, ‘Lord, is there a child of thine here that feels what this hymn expresses, and wishes to love a dear Redeemer and to be kept from sin? If so, that child is thine, whether they know it or not;’ and he begged of the Lord, if it were his will, to set that poor child at liberty. He said, ‘There may be one of thy children here for ought I know come out of a *Ranter’s* camp. If so, do, Lord, set that child at liberty.’ It was such a blessed time to me, that I never wished to go to the Wesleyan chapel any more.

“After dinner the devil set in upon me by saying, ‘What will your class-leader say and what will So-and-so say?’ when I quickly replied, ‘I will not pin my faith to any man’s sleeve.’ A short time after I had left the Wesleyans I met my class-leader who said, ‘Mrs. Nunn, I think the devil is making a sad handle of you.’ I replied, ‘The devil has nothing to do with it, for I have been begging of the Lord if I was not right to put me right, and he has directed my steps.’ I was baptized by Mr. Mehew in the year 1848.

“Now I must say a little about the goodness of the Lord to me in providence. I well remember when brought low in body and my mother had gone to America I wondered how I should get through my trouble when hymn 128 (Gad’s) was powerfully applied to my mind, and I said, ‘Bless the Lord, it shall be so,’ and I have found his supporting grace ever since up to this present moment. Then, again, when I lost my dear daughter this promise came sweetly and powerfully to me: ‘My grace is sufficient for thee,’ and bless the Lord I found it so. Also in many other troubles that I have had to pass through I can now see the good hand of the Lord in delivering me out of them; and if I had not had them I should not have such great cause to bless and praise him. All things are ordered by his divine will, and I can say with David, ‘O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.’

“While I am writing my mind is led back to see how the Lord has led me ever since he first brought me to a knowledge of the truth, and O how many promises he has given me, and not one of them has failed. I was asking the Lord this morning to be with me when I come into the swellings of Jordan, and the words came with great power: ‘I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.’ I hope to die shouting, ‘Free-grace and dying love through a precious Redeemer.’ Not unto us, but unto him be all the glory. I know I have not one good work to merit salvation; for had I my just deserts hell must have been my portion. Sometimes when I am speaking of the Lord’s goodness to me, Satan will say, ‘It is all a delusion;’ but he always was a liar and always will be. Had the Lord intended to destroy me he would not have shown me these things. The hymn commencing,

‘Hear, gracious God, a sinner’s cry’

just suits me, and it is a very favorite hymn of mine. Now I must conclude. I hope the Lord will make what I have written a blessing to someone when I shall be no more.”

Our departed friend was a consistent member at Hope Chapel, Stotfold, up to the time of her death and was an ornament to her profession. She was a woman of very few words, but adorned the doctrine of God her Saviour. She was taught by God the Holy Ghost to feel the total depravity of human nature, and knew well what it was to groan, being burdened, having to carry about a body of sin and death. The Lord gave her the following sweet promise: “Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be;” but though tried in the fire, the Lord verified his promise in her experience.

I visited her a day or two before her death and found her in a peaceful state of mind, resting wholly upon the finished work and merits of the Lord Jesus Christ. I felt it good to be with her. She spoke very clearly of the time when the Lord began the work of grace in her soul and how he had carried it on. Her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Richard Nunn, has given me the following particulars respecting her last moments:

“All fear of death was taken away, and her countenance beamed with joy. She said, ‘They that put their trust in the Lord shall never be confounded; and I have put my trust in him; I cannot put it anywhere else. He has brought me safely through, and his promises are Yea and Amen, and never were forfeited yet.’ She then repeated hymn 483. After this she was exhausted and lay very quiet for a time. Then again she broke out saying, ‘O how merciful the Lord has been to me! It is all mercy.’ I said, ‘This side of hell, mother.’ She replied, ‘Yes, that is it. He has led me along these forty years in the wilderness, and has withholden no good thing from me. Bless and praise his dear and holy name.’ She then repeated the following lines:

“I’m blest, I’m blest, for ever blest;
My rags are gone, and I am dress’d
In garments white as snow.’

I said, ‘Mother, you are going home to crown *him* Lord of all.’ She replied, ‘Yes; it is all of free and sovereign grace.’ I read the 71st and 73rd Psalms to her, which she very much enjoyed. She said, ‘I wish I was in heaven.’ I remarked, ‘You must wait the Lord’s time, dear mother.’ ‘O yes,’ she said, ‘I want to wait his time; but I long to praise him.’ I then read hymn 328 to her. After this she bid me good-bye three times saying, ‘May the Lord bless you.’ In the night she said to her son Richard, ‘I am washed in Jesu’s blood and made whiter than snow.’ She gradually sank, and thus sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.”

T. E.

LIVING WATER.

LIVING water from the Rock
Cheers the weary, thirsty flock;
Travelling through the desert waste,
Sweet the streams of love to taste.
Nothing cheers the weary soul,
Who by faith on God doth call,
Like the Saviour’s love and grace,
Arm of strength and smiling face.
Jesus only is the rest
To the soul by foes oppressed;
Safety only is in him;
His dear name’s my constant theme.
May I feel, Lord, day by day,
That thy presence is my stay.
As my Guide, my Guard, my Friend,
Keep me safe unto the end.

S. DEVON.

GOD often displays divine wisdom in ways wherein reason expects destruction.—*Huntington.*

OBSERVATIONS BY A HEARER.

NOT being totally blind to Satan's devices and having been led into them by long observation, I believe there is a good deal of error secretly held by preachers and members of churches covered up by a form of sound words with some show of experience.

It is often said from the pulpit that *Christ united human nature to his Divine nature*. There are variations of structure in the above sentence, as some ministers substitute the words: "Essence," "Godhead," &c., for *Divine nature*.

I believe it to be a purely theological phrase, which conveniently expresses a very solemn and very sweet gospel truth. As I understand it Christ, the Divine Word, who is the Son of God by eternal generation, and is truly and properly the only-begotten Son of the Father,—This glorious *He* described in Jno. i by his eternity, omnipotency, and wisdom in works of creation and providence, this glorious Word who was with God in the beginning and was God, was made flesh and took the low state and condition of human nature, sin excepted. "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness." (1 Tim. iii. 16.) This glorious *He* to whom preachers so often refer and say "He united human nature to his divine nature" was made flesh evermore to be the God-Man, or the Man Christ Jesus. The Lord Jesus Christ who became incarnate, in his Divine Person assumed human nature and united it to his glorious Person, and thus he is the Self-existent, glorious *I AM*, or *I AM THAT I AM*; for "in Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

But when the sentence to which I have referred, so replete with grace, wisdom, power, goodness, and boundless love and condescension is again and again dropped from the lips of preachers in the midst of discourses without a clear connection with what they have before stated or what they may afterwards state, it is left without sufficient explanation, and may prove very confusing to the minds of the hearers.

Every sound Trinitarian believes in the union of the Divine and human nature of the Son of God. When I say *every sound Trinitarian* I do not mean every babe in grace, or child whether old or young, but rather such as the Holy Ghost refers to that are come "in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (Eph. iv. 13.) The sound Trinitarian is one, Scripturally so, who has a spiritual knowledge of God and the Father and of Christ. To be unsound here is to be wrong both in experience and knowledge.

Many hearers of the gospel are possessed of divine life, though weak in faith and not clearly established in the truth, and they seem to hear without examination all and every preacher alike, having but little discernment; but others, or the more established of the elect, are characterized as chewing the cud, parting the

hoof, &c. The late Mr. Covell directed his words against the former when he said, "You would count your gold after me," meaning that they ought to examine what he advanced.

Mr. Huntington said in a letter to Mr. Brooks about six years before he died, "I have stood in the pillory, been laid in the stocks by the heels, and been muzzled in the jaws, when, at the same time, not one in a hundred either saw it or knew it. And if so confused as to contradict myself and to speak unscripturally, and not common sense, so that the people could not understand me, nor make it out, yet they have concluded that 'in the Spirit I had spoken mysteries,' and that I had soared so high in wisdom as that they could not attain to it, for it was too wonderful for them; when at the same time I blushed at my own folly."

When we consider what a choice, discerning, and godly congregation of hearers God by his singular gifts and grace enabled Huntington to gather, feed, instruct, edify, and build up in their most holy faith, and then read that he could when shut up, according to his feelings, speak unscripturally and not common sense, and not one in a hundred see or know it;—when we consider such deep, experimental men as John Rusk, Keyt, G. Goulding, and others, were amongst his hearers,—men who, though they never attempted to preach, nor would Mr. Huntington have sanctioned the attempt if they had made it, yet were they gifted with tongue and pen in life and light far beyond most of our present ministers; when we consider that Huntington could write of his hearers to Mr. Brooks thus, it need hardly surprise us to find hearers in general and members of churches such as we are very dwarfs; for where can we find a preacher of the word so richly endowed with special, ministerial gifts and those gifts continually kept up, fed, and supplied from the only Fountain of light and life as he, or who possesses now that spiritual discernment and authority as he?

The late Mr. Bourne, in his valuable letters, writes of his hearers thus:

"It is a dreadful thing to see, after a long hearing of the word, that men should still be children in understanding, or worse; misleading others instead of instructing. I cannot tell you in my extreme old age how I fear this may be the case here. The Lord is indeed able to take care of his family, yet he is always warning us of those who have a sort of form of godliness and deny the power. He says, 'From such turn away.' They are so odious to the Lord that he closely warns us, saying, "Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside and serve other gods, and worship them." (Deut. xi. 16; 2 Tim. iv. 4.)

The late Mr. Philpot says in his Annual Address in the "G. S.," Jan., 1860, "When God means to sift a church in his sieve, and search Jerusalem as with candles, he brings to light errors and heresies hitherto concealed. A man of God sounds the trumpet through the camp with a clear sound, and proclaims

boldly and plainly the truth in doctrine, experience, or precept, which his own soul has experimentally tasted, felt, and handled. He does not do this in a controversial, angry, bitter spirit, as if for the very purpose of stirring up strife and contention, but as a part of the gospel entrusted to him—the burden of the Lord which lies on his conscience, which he delivers for the glory of God and the profit of his people. The lovers of truth, who have been taught by the same Spirit and known and felt the power of the same vital realities in their own souls, at once respond to the clear notes of the trumpet, and cleave to the certain sound, for it fills their hearts with peace and joy. Being thus blessed, they cannot but speak warmly of the truth and of the instrument who has proclaimed it so faithfully and feelingly. But what response do they meet? The erroneous and the unsound, who have been hugging their errors in secret, are offended by the naked truth as pointed, they think purposely, against their views, and are stirred up to opposition and anger. And now the strife commences; for those who have been blessed under the truth, and know it for themselves by divine teaching and divine testimony, will not, and must not, give way and sacrifice truth and conscience; and even the Lord himself to maintain a false peace."

But to appeal to a higher standard. The Holy Spirit in Paul severely reproves the Hebrew church for being in a state of babyhood as regards Divine knowledge, needing milk when for the time they ought to be teachers, which hindered, weakened, and made little children in knowledge of the Galatians, and from which the Corinthians were not altogether free, as we learn from the General Epistles of Peter and Jude.

The Ephesian church stands prominently before believers as the most commended church by the Lord himself: "Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars." (Rev. ii. 2.) Those they found to be liars were men confident in their knowledge and boldly assuming to be the servants of the Lord Jesus of the very highest order, even apostles. These men must have been received and heard by some of the churches to attain to such an eminent and supreme position as to boldly proclaim before the assembled churches that they were apostles.

We have in the present day such a scarcity of able ministers of the New Testament, that many a church who would be glad of a stated minister cannot find one able and endowed with that special ministerial gift, and that gift continually fed, supported, and supplied from on high with spiritual instruction, holy wisdom, heavenly knowledge, and divine life in their own soul, attended with Divine authority, power, savour, dew, and unction to the souls and consciences of their hearers. The want of such I cannot doubt is largely connected with the low state of the churches, and the confusion and darkness of mind of the generality even of the members of those churches, who if they hear error from an

able speaker, especially if wrapped up in a cloud of words, cannot discern it, and if they hear the truth in the letter and vital experience of it, they see not wherein it differs, though in some measure they may feel a difference.

Yet though the churches are, to speak figuratively, filled with babes and children, yet how many of these, like little children just able to repeat the alphabet in rotation, are puffed up with knowledge and think and say they have a call to the ministry; and their natural promptings to so peculiar and important a work are often aided by suggestions of weak and injudicious friends. Thus at once they are heard and learn to have a bold face and manner, and in due time acquire, it may be, a competent knowledge of the Scriptures, with a show of experience; and thus they preach with the sanction of a church who may not have scarcely a single member able, in a Scriptural sense, to discern right from wrong, and who are without a stated minister. These young ministers spring up, and having the approbation of a few undiscerning persons they think they are called to the work of the ministry, when in reality their proper place is the pew.

May we not conclude by quoting the words: "Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning?" (Eccles. x. 16.)

H. R.

ADAM IN HIS NATURAL STATE.

BY THE LATE MR. PHILPOT.

[In our May No. we inserted a Reply to a Few Inquirers as to the image in which Adam was created. Since inserting our Answer a friend has drawn our attention to the above, which we were not aware had appeared in the "G. S.," and desired it might be re-published.—ED.]

THE blessed Lord did not assume a fallen nature. Two things are necessary to make us partakers of a fallen nature, from both of which Jesus was wholly free: 1, an original standing in Adam as a covenant head; 2, a derivation of nature from him by ordinary generation.

1. Our entire nature was originally in Adam as *our legal head and federal representative*. His sin, therefore, was our sin, and as such is justly imputed to us and charged upon us. The Scripture is express here: "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners;" "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that" ("in whom," *margin*) "all have sinned;" "By one man's offence" ("by one offence," *margin*) "death reigned by one;" "By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." (Rom. v. 12, 16-19.) From these passages it is clear that we all fell in Adam, he being our federal head and legal representative. The whole, then, of our nature, body and soul, being in him (in his loins naturally, and in him as our covenant head representatively), it fell in and with him. But our blessed Lord never was

in Adam as a federal head, nor was his human nature in Adam as his representative, for he was not comprised in the covenant wherein Adam stood. Adam was the head of the human race, but not of Christ; for "the head of Christ is" not Adam, but "God." (1 Cor. xi. 3.) There were two covenant heads, one natural and legal, in whom the whole human race stood, and the other spiritual and gracious, in whom the elect stood, for as "in Adam all die, so in Christ all (the elect) are made alive." But these two heads are distinct; and Christ being set up in the eternal covenant prior to the fall could not possibly be in Adam representatively. And though by lineal descent in a sense "the son of Adam" (Lu. iii. 38), yet the Lord derived his human nature from him only legally from and after the first promise, when Adam ceased to be a common person and a federal head. The human nature, therefore, of the Lord not being in Adam by representation or legal covenant, did not and could not fall in him. And to anticipate our next point by one reflection, just see the consequence had the human nature of the blessed Lord stood in Adam as its representative head. It would have fallen in and with Adam as ours did; and then where would have been recovery or redemption? For a fallen nature could not redeem a fallen nature any more than a sinner could redeem a sinner.

2. But there is another thing necessary to the inheritance of a fallen nature,—it must be transmitted by *natural generation*. "Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image." (Gen. v. 3.) But the human nature of our blessed Lord was not derived from Adam by natural generation, but was a "holy thing" (Lu. i. 35),—a pure and sacred humanity formed in the womb of the Virgin, under the overshadowing operations of the Holy Ghost. Thus, though formed of the substance of the woman—actual flesh and blood, and the flesh and blood too of the children, as having affinity and alliance with them, yet the human nature of the blessed Lord was not a fallen nature, for it had no share in the fall of Adam, nor was it naturally derived from him.

Now see the *necessary consequences*, had it been a fallen nature.

1. As having fallen in Adam, the imputation of original sin would have belonged to it, for had the human nature of Jesus been in Adam as a federal head it would have shared in the common guilt of the first transgression. Christ is a Covenant-Head as God-Man; but if his humanity had been in Adam, half, so to speak, of his complex Person would have been in guilt and ruin. Thus we see that it is an error, and a great one, to assert that the Son of God took a fallen nature into union with his Divine Person. Apart from all arguments, our soul instinctively shrinks from the thought as marring the perfect holiness of the spotless Lamb of God.

Is it not awful to think that the human nature of the blessed Redeemer was guilty of original sin? But this must have been the case if his human nature had been in Adam when he fell.

which has fallen from God, fallen from his likeness and image, in which it was originally created, and thus become sunk into apostacy and alienation from the life of God. As the penalty denounced upon disobedience was death: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. ii. 17),—a fallen nature is a dead nature—the body virtually dead, as having in it the seeds of sickness, dissolution, and corruption; and the soul actually dead, as alienated from the life of God, and utterly unable to recover itself out of this state of spiritual death.

But we will proceed to show, to the best of our ability, *what nature the Lord really did take.*

i. He did not, then, take of the nature of Adam *before* the fall; for the sacred humanity of the blessed Lord differed from the nature which Adam wore before the fall in these several particulars: 1. Adam's nature was a *person*, for he had no personal subsistence out of that nature. But the humanity which Christ took was not a person, but a *nature*, having no personal subsistence in itself, but taken into union with the Divine Person of the Son of God in the very instant of its miraculous conception.

2. The nature of Adam before the fall, as made of the dust of the earth, was *earthly*: "The first man is of the earth, earthy." But the sacred humanity of the blessed Lord is *heavenly*, for it is the image to which our present earthly bodies are hereafter to be conformed, for "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Cor. xv. 47-49.) Thus, among the mysteries of redeeming love, this is not the least nor last, that human nature, in union with the Divine Person of the Son of God, is exalted to a state of glory which it never would have had in Adam had it retained its pristine and primitive purity.

3. The nature which Adam wore before the fall was purely *natural*. There was nothing spiritual in either his body or soul. Body and soul were indeed alike pure, upright, and innocent, for they could not be otherwise as coming from the creative hand and breath of Him who is infinitely pure; but it was the natural purity of a creature, as it came forth from the hands of its Creator. The image of God in which Adam was created was "righteousness," but not "holiness." The restoration of this image in man being after the image of Christ is "in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. ii. 24), which is "the new man," that Adam did not possess, at least not in his primitive creation. The body being formed of the dust of the earth, was pure, but not holy, for sanctification is a new covenant blessing, a heavenly grace, and not comprised in nor connected with the original creation of man or the covenant of works. Similarly, the soul breathed into the nostrils of Adam by the mouth of God was "a living soul," but not spiritual, for it was not sanctified by the special operations and indwelling of the Holy Ghost. But

2. A fallen nature is, as we have already shown, a nature

the sacred humanity of the Son of God was, in a sense, *spiritual* (which the nature of Adam was not, either in body or soul), the body being formed by the miraculous and special operation of the Holy Ghost on the substance of the Virgin, and the soul sanctified and filled by the same eternal Spirit with every heavenly grace from the instant of its union with his Divine Person. When we speak of the humanity of the blessed Lord being "spiritual" and "heavenly," we mean so as to its origin and formation. We are not speaking now of the glorified humanity of Jesus, which in its highest sense is spiritual and heavenly; and we therefore guard our meaning from misunderstanding or misrepresentation by the words, "in a sense."

4. The nature, therefore, which Adam had before the fall was not a *holy* nature, for neither body nor soul was formed or sanctified by the creation, the operation, or the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. But the sacred humanity of the Lord was "*a holy thing*," miraculously formed by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin.

ii. But now it is time to show *what* this human nature of the Lord *really* was; for if it was not the unfallen nature nor the fallen nature of Adam, the question may well be asked, What was it?

It was a body prepared for him by the Father (Heb. x. 5), "fearfully and wonderfully made," for it was "made in secret," from the eyes of all created intelligences, and "curiously (or skilfully) wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." (Ps. cxxxix. 14, 15.) It was, therefore, a nature special and peculiar, allied, indeed, with ours by blood, for it was a portion—*a holy and sanctified portion* of the flesh and blood of the children, but not a fallen nature, as ours is; 1, as having had no representative existence in Adam; and, 2, as formed miraculously by the power of the Holy Ghost overshadowing the Virgin mother. It was, therefore, essentially "*a holy thing*"—a sacred and spotless humanity taken into indissoluble union with the Divine Person of the Son of God at the very instant of its conception, and now worn by him in the courts of bliss. Lift up your eyes, believer in the Son of God, and view that sacred humanity in eternal union with the Deity of Christ, and then ask yourself, "Could such a holy humanity as this have been the nature of Adam before the fall or after the fall?" and let the faith in your breast give the answer. But bear also in mind that the humanity of the Lord was real, not shadowy. It was, therefore, free, not from such incidents of humanity as eating, drinking, sleeping, and suffering, but from all its taint of evil, both in body and soul. It was, therefore, capable of death, but not in itself mortal—dying only by the voluntary act of the Lord of life (Jno. x. 17, 18); capable of suffering, but not of sinning; capable of faith, but not of repentance; capable of every acting of hope, love, patience, humility, and obedience, but not of regeneration; capable of a temporary separation of body and soul, but not of any separation from the Godhead with which it was in union.

And what shall we more say? How weak our conceptions, how feeble our pen, to set forth this heavenly mystery! But this we will say of the sacred humanity of the ever-living Lord, that it is the bond of union and communion between God and men, the delight of the Father, the admiration of angels, the present hope and joy of the saints; and to be hereafter perfectly conformed to it is all their expectation and all their desire.

"I KILL, AND I MAKE ALIVE."

Dear Friend,—I was pleased to have a few lines from you, informing me how well you heard Mr. — on Sunday morning. You say it was a special time to you, and describe the state of your mind previous to going to chapel as being dark and almost at the point of giving all up, being tempted to believe that you were altogether out of the secret and not a right character. I believe these to be blessed marks of divine grace in a child of God, for nothing will bring a man down to be nothing before a heart-searching, holy God, and make him cry out, "My leanness! My leanness!" and at the same time nothing so fits a man for Jesus Christ as these solemn, internal exercises of soul; and did you not prove it so when the Lord so favoured you? You were led to cry for help from whence alone it could be found; and this is how a child of God proves the truth of the Scriptures: "Vain is the help of man;" "Without me ye can do nothing;" "I kill, and I make alive." O what a mercy it is to know these things!

God's people do not learn doctrine in the judgment only; they have to learn it experimentally; as the Word says: "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." (Deut. xxxii. 2.) All knowledge short of this will do us no good. You speak of that sweet hymn: "Rock of Ages, &c." being blessed to your soul. Yes; Christ is a Rock, and his work is perfect. When faith gets a glimpse of him, and when we can in any measure realize our union to him, what perfection and glory shine in a precious Christ. You also say you received a blessing under the sermon. May you be led to praise the Lord for thus condescending to remember you in your low estate.

It is a great privilege and one which we cannot too highly esteem, to have a love for an experimental ministry. I can say that that dear man's ministry and writings have of late been blessed to my soul, and I do desire to bless the Lord that he hath in some measure given me a hearing ear; so that dead-letter preaching, and dry, formal, doctrinal eloquence are as nothing to me; for if there is a lack of savour, sweetness, and power in the ministry, there is nothing for a poor, hungry, thirsty soul to feed upon; and O it is solemn to think that much of the preaching which is listened to in our day and in so-called places of truth, lacks these very things. I am satisfied that it is in consequence

of this that many of God's people are in a low state. They go to the house of God and do not hear their case described, so that there are no stumbling-blocks removed out of their way, but they have not sufficient light to discern the wherefore, and therefore conclude the whole fault is in themselves, and the devil tells them it is so. Then, let such a one come under the sound of the gospel as it falls from the lips of a real, sent servant of God who is led by the Spirit to rightly divide the word of truth, and that soul will, under the blessing of God, be astonished at the wonderful way in which his own case is described and set forth, and how the plan of salvation is opened up; and he will be led sweetly and experimentally to rejoice in it. Thus a union of heart and soul will be felt to the minister, whoever he may be, which I firmly believe will never be forgotten. This is receiving the good seed into a heart afore prepared of the Lord.

I have penned these few lines in haste; therefore please overlook mistakes, and Believe me,

Your sincere Friend,

April 2nd, 1889.

W. LITTLE.

CHEWING THE CUD.

My dear Sister in the Lord,—Grace and peace be multiplied unto you and to your dear sister. I am very sorry to hear of your indisposition. We are but as a shadow, and our life at the best is but as a handbreadth. The Lord is teaching us more and more how frail we are; but have we not many times prayed that the Lord would so teach us? yet as these things are painful to the flesh we shrink from them. In this way we are brought to use the prayer of that man of God, Hezekiah, "O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me;" and we prove that by these things we live, and in all these things is the life of our spirit; so that by these painful lessons of affliction we are taught to profit.

Yesterday I felt to be writing to you in spirit, but there are so many things in this dying world which interfere and intrude upon us, especially when we have enjoyed a little of the Lord's smile and blessing in our souls. My heart was with you both, and that is the best part of us, especially when a little of the precious dew from heaven falls upon it. I have been reading the latter part of Mr. Philpot's "Meditations," and the Lord and my poor heart only know the profit and holy pleasure I have felt in so doing, especially the spirit of the precept. I pictured to myself the dear man now in heaven without his weak chest and bad breathing and no longer obliged to drag his poor body about. I love the letter of the precept, but the spirit of it is more to me than I can tell you with my pen. While I write sweet tears are running down my cheeks at the thought that I shall one day be with Christ for ever. Bless the Lord, O my soul! How sweet are those words of the Saviour: "I will see you again, and your hearts shall rejoice." My dear sisters, if you were with me I am

sure your hearts would be glad. I feel no sorrow now, and my dear Lord has said, "Your joy no man taketh from you." The dear Saviour is with me and he is my joy, and no man can take him from me.

I went down to dear Mrs. Mountfort's last night and told her I wanted to write to you to tell you what a feast I had had in reading what Mr. Philpot has written upon the *Spirit of the Precept*. That hand that now lies still in the grave has been used by the Lord to bring the lighted candle of the gospel through this book into my soul. O magnify the Lord with me; for I can say this morning that the Lord has helped me and lifted off the dead weights of unbelief. He has triumphed gloriously in my heart, and the cud has sweetly and powerfully been chewed. A man came and knocked at my door, and I went to speak to him with the tears running down my face. I do not know what he would think of me; but I thought of what the church of old said, "I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please." O what a dry thing is religion without the life and spirit of the precept! Who could have thought that such an ignorant man as I was when the Lord called me, who if asked could not have said what the law, doctrine, or gospel meant, to think that the Lord should have called such an ignorant thing and made him know the mysteries of his grace! I now feel that "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." Praise the Lord, O my soul!

May the Lord bless and comfort you both is my soul's desire.

Yours in Him,

Walsall, May 19th, 1876.

SIMEON BURNS.

SPIRITUAL FORBEARANCE.

My dear Friends,—Perhaps you may think it strange you have not heard from me before this in answer to your kind letter; but I hope you will take into consideration my position as being in business, with all its attendant anxieties, the father of ten children, with both their temporal and spiritual welfare at heart, a minister of the everlasting gospel to the church of God, with all its solemn, important, and vital consequences, of which my dear brother is well aware, together with myself a poor rebellious, murmuring creature, full of hard thoughts against my best, my true, my only Friend, repining and fretting against the Lord; for although we may not at first see it, yet this is our condition; for if we trace our wretched, untoward conduct through all its various tracts, we shall find it is all against the Lord. So true indeed is it that "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

Well, my dear friends, this is the condition that your correspondent is in, which perhaps may lead you to say, "It is no wonder he has not written before;" and may the Holy Spirit give you that

blessed principle of the gospel that is so little seen amongst the living family of the Redeemer, I mean Christian, spiritual forbearance which is inculcated in that portion of the Divine Word: "Forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. iv. 2, 3.)

What an almighty, loving, faithful, holy Lord God have we to do with, and when we look at ourselves, what a mercy we feel it to be that we are what we are, and that the Lord is what he is and all that he is to us in his dear Son; for he is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever; and he has said in his Word for the comfort of his people in every age of the world, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." (Rev. i. 18.)

You, my dear friends, know from heart-felt experience, under the teaching of the Holy Ghost as he has been pleased to open up to you the depth of iniquity that is within you, together with the daily and hourly consequences arising therefrom,—I say, you know the continual need there is for all that the Lord is to his people. He is pleased in his holy and gracious dealings with his children to bring them into such places that they cannot do without him. He brought Israel of old to the Red sea, and through the sea into the wilderness, and led them through it; Job to the dunghill and from it; Daniel to the lions' den and out of it; the three Hebrew children into the fire and out of it; Paul into prison and out of it; Peter into the water and out of it; and he has brought my dear friends to whom I am writing into both floods and flames and out of them; and last and seemingly least of all, their poor brother, who though so unworthy, has great reason to speak well of the Lord's name; for he hath delivered, he doth deliver, and we trust that he will yet deliver; for having obtained help from him we continue until the present moment.

I am as weak, as poor, and as wretched as ever I was, and in my flesh dwelleth no good thing; so that I well know that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (Jas. i. 17.) O what ground is there for consolation in this gracious truth, that amidst all the changes in men and things, amidst all our changes within and without, Jehovah,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, changes not, nor varies from his promise and oath; but for the comfort and encouragement of his redeemed family has said, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Mal. iii. 6.) From this arises the only sure ground of hope and a gospel expectation, not because of what we are, or because of what we have done or can do, but on the ground of what Christ is and what he has done and is still doing; for he ever lives to intercede for us, and will carry on his own work as long as one of his dear children is in this sinful world, and until all shall have been brought home to himself, when he will see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied and fully recompensed for all his poignant

nant sorrow and bitter agony while here below, when he shall finally have put down "all rule and all authority;" for "he must reign until he has put all enemies beneath his feet," when he shall deliver up the kingdom to his Father, that God may be all in all. To have a hope of interest in such blessings is indeed cheering amidst all the dying things with which we stand connected and in the midst of which we are called to toil on here below. May the Lord be pleased to feed and strengthen the graces he has implanted in our hearts, that we may abound in hope through the love, unction, and power of the Holy Ghost.

And now, my dear brother and sister, let me greet you in the gospel touching the sacred union that binds you together. You belong to a family part of which is on the earth and part in heaven. You are living members of the mystic body, of which Christ is the glorious Head. You are fellow-heirs of the grace of life. In a word, you are fellow-sinners and fellow-saints, and you will finally be fellow-partakers of the same glory for ever, when, through rich mercy and the sacred streams of Calvary's blood, I humbly hope to join with you in the song, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, . . . to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

As to my dear sister, I know her personally, and I trust in the spirit; and as to my dear brother, though almost a stranger to me in the flesh, I humbly hope I know him in the Lord, and, if agreeable, I should like our acquaintance to be enlarged at some future time; but this I wish to leave to the wise disposal of Him who never does wrong. But whether I ever see you in the flesh again or not, I sincerely hope to have a few lines from you in return to tell me how you are. By the Lord's gracious permission I leave home for London to-morrow to proclaim Christ's gospel at Eden Street the two next Sabbaths.

And now, dear friends, farewell. May the God of peace be with you both.

Yours truly,

To Mr. and Mrs. Kershaw,

ROBERT ROFF.

Stow-in-the Wold, Dec. 4th, 1857.

DESIRE TO KNOW MORE OF JESUS.

My Esteemed Pastor,—Last night before the shop was closed I felt such a sweet humbling and softening of spirit steal over me which made me long to be alone, and when the time came to close I was reading in one of the "Gospel Standards" of the vehemence of the love of God towards the objects of his love, even before they had their being, yea, before the foundation of the world. It took my mind and drew my soul after Him who framed the worlds. I felt the greatness of his works, and how very small my capacity was to understand them; and then the bitter thought would come, "What, if I am not an object of his love?" How sure I felt the Lord's people were a holy people separated unto himself, yet how sin has marred everything, and how defiled I

felt to be; and I thought, "Could it be that God set his love upon me before the foundation of the world; and O if he has not, where shall I be at death?" But I felt wherever I was I must love him and adore him with all the powers I had. I could have stayed up all night musing. I desire no other enjoyment.

I had a sweet time last night, but I yielded to nature, and when I awoke this morning it was all gone and I felt disappointed; but I was glad it was the Sabbath and was very glad to go to God's house, and ventured to hope for something whilst there; nor was I disappointed. "Who is a God like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high?" When you spoke of the rest and of the people prepared for the rest, how sure I felt it and how I needed to be prepared. Then when you spoke of David being full of the goodness and mercy of *his* God I thought, "That is just where the secret lies,—*his* God," and I dared to hope he was *my* God. I had been feeling something of his goodness, his mercy, yea, more, his love, and then if David's God may I not hope he is my God? I feel this is the greatest attainment here below.

As you went on my soul enjoyed hearing about his glory in creation, but greater still his glory round the throne, and the adoration paid to his holy Majesty, and how the angels veiled their faces and how they sang. And yet this great God condescended to humble himself to behold the things upon earth, and came down to suffer, bleed, and die. What amazing condescension! What a stoop! And to think that such as I should have hope in and enjoy such things; and when you spoke of his condescending to hold communion with his people by the way, I wondered if what I felt last night was communion. Such times are better felt than told. O to have the least mind for the things of God and for his Word! Sometimes Jesus draws near and talks with us as he did with the disciples of old. (Lu. xxiv. 15.)

The portions you read were unspeakably great, but I had the sweetness I hope when you were speaking. What a great favour! How it helps one along; for some days are very dreary. O that I knew more of Jesus and that he would prepare my heart to receive him! I often feel I know less than anyone, and not long since I was afraid I was not poor enough, and then my heart said, "Lord, make me poorer. O do make me the right character!" My very soul loves the things I have heard this morning, and I would hear and know them more and more.

May the Lord increasingly bless you in your labours, and grant you a rich reward in your own soul. May you see his own Word prosper and yield fruit to his praise. After I had read your last letter I felt again in your debt. Please receive this as an acknowledgment of it. May the Lord incline you to remember me at his throne,—a poor, needy sinner unworthy of the least of all his mercies.

I remain, with grateful love,

Jan. 8th, 1871.

Yours unworthily,
E. WHATMORE.

REVIEW.

Reply to the Review of "Sermons by E. Ashdown" in the "G. S." Feb., 1889. By E. Ashdown.

IN February last we Reviewed the Substance of Twelve Sermons by Mr. Ashdown, in which we pointed out several mistakes, which we did in a good spirit and with the best of motives, and many of Mr. A.'s friends hoped he would have seen and had grace to acknowledge these mistakes; but instead of this he justifies himself in the statements to which we objected and wrote a letter in reply which he wished to appear in the "G. S." Mr. A.'s request was denied because it is most unusual and contrary to rule to admit replies to Reviews into our pages; and as we had neither misunderstood nor misrepresented Mr. Ashdown's Sermons we had the strongest reasons for not departing from this rule. The Press is the mode through which a man should defend himself if he considers he has been at all injured or misrepresented; but the pages of the "G. S." never were and never will be, only under very exceptional circumstances, used for this purpose. However, to meet the wishes of a few friends, we at last consented to insert Mr. A.'s reply, and he was informed of our intention. Yet, with the knowledge of this, he published his reply; consequently we could no longer entertain the idea of inserting it in our pages.

At the last Annual Meeting a suggestion was made that we should meet Mr. Ashdown and a few grey-headed friends to investigate the truth. Having honestly, impartially, and Scripturally Reviewed Mr. Ashdown's Sermons we felt we could not submit to such a suggestion, as there was really nothing to investigate; for if Mr. A. still held to his statements it was useless to meet him, and if he withdrew them there was no necessity for such a meeting. When an Editor has given his decided opinion upon a book sent to him for Review, then for him to meet a few friends to investigate the truth of his opinions would be the height of absurdity. The Sermons had been read and the mistakes noticed before our Review was published, and friends have since told us they were hoping we should express our disapproval of the same if we Reviewed them.

When books are sent to us for Review we review them according to the plain written text of the same, and are not supposed to inquire into any reserved meaning that the Author may have in his mind, but to compare his statements with the unerring Word of God. When Authors have asked us to look over manuscript which they intended to print, and strike out what we considered objectionable, we have occasionally done so; but our readers will see that in printed publications this is impossible. We were not asked to do so in Mr. A.'s case; but the book was sent to us and marked, "For Review."

Mr. A. thinks we should have pointed out his mistakes privately; but this is a course we never take, and were it to fall to our

lot to-morrow to Review another volume of Mr. A.'s Sermons or of any other man's, however intimate we might be with them, we should, as far as lay in our power, candidly Review them, not considering whether we incurred the pleasure or displeasure of any by so doing. There is in the present day too much pandering to a party spirit, and an endeavouring to hold up men and things whether right or wrong, and not searching closely the Scriptures to see if their statements are borne out by the Word of God. We have no wish to interfere with the ministry of any good man, but if books or sermons are sent to us for Review containing statements which we consider erroneous, we will, under no circumstances, commend such books to our readers without condemning what we consider to be unscriptural.

We have never written one word against Mr. Ashdown. We wish him well; but with all due respect to him we decline to swallow down these erroneous statements which he has made in his Sermons. If others can digest them we envy them not their food.

If the time has come when for speaking kindly and honestly a man must be opposed, it only shows the weak state of the church and the shallow judgment of most professors. It is trying to object to the statements of friends, and we have always felt friendly to Mr. A., and do so still; but in Reviewing books that are sent forth to the church of God, honesty and not flattery should be used, although this may give offence for the time being, but afterwards the Scripture may be fulfilled: "He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue." (Prov. xxviii. 23.)

When books are sent for Review it is that we should carefully look through them and be allowed to express our approval or disapproval of their contents; and if Authors do not wish to submit to this they had better keep their books at home; for what Editor would submit to be muzzled in giving his honest opinion of the same? If we did not Review books that are sent to us we might be charged with jealousy, and if we Review them honestly and kindly we may be charged with writing under a bad spirit.

Mr. A. in his Reply comments upon the mistakes which we pointed out in our Review, but we must confess he has not improved his statements, nor can all the explanations he may attempt to give ever alter the expressions in his Sermons.

i. Respecting the *fallen angels*, which Mr. A. in his Sermon said were once *as holy as God is holy*. Mr. A. quotes 1 Pet. i. 15: "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." This really has no bearing whatever on the nature of angels, but refers exclusively to the work of regeneration on the souls of sinners. Is it possible for those who have a living faith in their souls to believe that the devils in hell were once as holy as that gracious and merciful God whom the saints worship, reverence, and adore, and before whom they bow their heads, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was,

and is, and is to come?" Mr. A. says that by the words: "As holy as God is holy" he did not mean to infer that they were equal with God in holiness. With whatever Mr. A. intended or did not intend we have nothing to do. Our duty was simply to reject his plain statement that these *fallen angels were once as holy as God is holy*. But let us come to the unerring standard of God's Word which says: "There is none holy as the Lord." (1 Sam. ii. 2.) Again: "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods?" (Exod. xv. 11.) "Who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?" (Ps. lxxxix. 6. Also Ps. lxxi. 19.) These Scriptures should settle the matter in the judgment of every gracious soul. In Reviewing this part of Mr. Ashdown's Sermons we referred to Job iv. 18, and said the unfallen angels *might have been* moved with pity and hard thoughts at the inflexible justice of God. We only advanced this as a *suggestion* to explain Job iv. 18, and not as a *positive assertion*; but if it is in any way contrary to the Scriptures we hope we have grace enough to express our regret that it appeared in our pages, and we wish now to withdraw it altogether.

ii. Mr. A. in his Reply contends that Adam was created holy, and he quotes Dr. Gill and Boston in support of his view. Whoever may have believed or do still believe that Adam in his primitive state was either a *spiritual man* or a *holy man*, we defy them to find one single Scripture to support such a view. Adam was created in the image of God a pure, upright, intelligent creature, as stated in our May No., page 224; but nowhere in Scripture is it said that he was either holy or spiritual. Neither Moses, who wrote the Pentateuch, nor David, the man after God's own heart, nor any of the prophets, nor the apostles, nor even Christ himself ever dropped one sentence that would lead us to believe that Adam in his primitive state was either spiritual or holy. But the Holy Ghost has given a statement which settles the matter, and those who want to introduce that of which the Spirit is not the Author are only attempting to be wise above what is written. The testimony of the Holy Ghost reads thus: "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was *very good*" (Gen. i. 31); not one word about spirituality or holiness.

iii. Mr. A. states in his Sermons that "*his Majesty lay in the tomb.*" We solemnly believe that there never was any separation between the Manhood and Deity of the Son of God; but it was not his Majesty or Deity that lay in the tomb; although Deity was united to Manhood, Deity never needed rest; but it was the body of Jesus that lay in the tomb and rested in hope. Mr. A. quotes Acts ii. 27: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." The verse preceding it exactly expresses what it was that did lie in the tomb and which rested in hope. It says, "Moreover also *my flesh shall rest in hope.*" The text we have just named, which is taken from Ps. xvi, where Christ himself is the Speaker, refers

exclusively to the dead body of Christ, and when his soul returned from heaven and resumed its sacred tabernacle, the united power of Deity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were put forth in raising that immortal tabernacle again from the dead no more to return to corruption. In this we think possibly Mr. A.'s views and our own are really identical; but it is an unscriptural expression to say that *his Majesty lay in the tomb*, and this is all we pointed out in our Review. In this paragraph Mr. A., to support his view, quotes a number of Scriptures which no gracious person disputes, but which have no bearing on the point in question. In his Reply he speaks of the ark, and the gold and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had taken into Babylon, and says, "God put majesty upon these types and shadows." God put forth his majesty on Dagon, the god of the Philistines, to convince them that they had no right to have the ark in their possession; but the majesty was not on the ark, but manifested against the graven image. There was no majesty on the vessels of silver and gold which Belshazzar used for himself, his princes, his wives, and his concubines; but God showed his majestic power against the king for putting those vessels to such a vile use. It is true the Lord displayed his power through these types, and his glory filled the tabernacle which Moses set up; but we nowhere read in Scripture that there was any majesty on the ark or the vessels which were made according to God's instructions by human hands.

The vessels and the ark, and all the things under the law only represented good things to come. Paul calls the sanctuary a worldly sanctuary, and the ark and the mercy-seat shadows and types, and the ordinances carnal ordinances which were imposed upon the worshippers until the time of reformation; but there was no majesty on these types, which were lifeless, inanimate things. It would have been more consistent to say that majesty was put upon Moses and Aaron, who were holy men of God, holy by regeneration and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost; though majesty, strictly speaking, belongs to God alone.

iv. and v. The fourth and fifth paragraphs we must leave to the judgment of any tried, exercised child of God whether in our Review we did Mr. A. any injustice in showing that his expressions savoured of creature power. All the encouragements that all the ministers in the world may hold forth could never enable a child of God to fulfil Mr. A.'s exhortations to surrender himself by precious faith to be crucified. If he could do this, why not believe, repent, love, sing, praise, fall under reproof and rebuke, and do other works which can only be done at seasons when the Holy Spirit comes and renews, warms, cheers, and strengthens the heart? It is not the encouragement that ministers may give that can enable a poor trembling sinner to fall flat into the hands of the Lord. This only can be accomplished by the gracious, unctuous power of the Holy Ghost coming sweetly upon his soul. Mr. A. quotes Rom. xii. 1, where Paul exhorts the brethren to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable

unto God. We should like to meet with a man that ever fulfilled this exhortation, and to know what his feelings were when his body was holy, a living sacrifice to God, and how he afterwards came to lose this holiness of body. We must confess we have never attained to it. The bodies of the saints are as unholy, sinful, unclean, and vile now as they were before grace entered their souls, and they find themselves altogether unable to fulfil such an exhortation. We never yet heard of any saints who could present their bodies holy before God, and when Mr. A., ourselves, or any other minister has been able to fulfil this exhortation we shall be able to come before the people and tell them not so much about our sinful, vile bodies and about our flesh in which dwelleth no good thing, but that we are clean, pure, and holy, and our bodies are a living sacrifice acceptable to God. The Lord will in his own time make the bodies of the saints holy, and not till then shall we be able to fulfil the exhortation. Paul himself had not attained to this, as may be seen in Rom. vii, and Phil. iii. 12.

We have Reviewed Sermons by Gadsby, Irons, Munns, and Ferris with entire approval, and it was a grief to us to have to make objections to some statements in Mr. A.'s Sermons; but we felt we must use honesty and not flattery. If Mr. A. preaches these things he must expect many of his hearers to inwardly reject them if they do not openly express the same. Should a second edition of the Sermons be required we strongly advise Mr. A. to strike out these objectionable parts; for by so doing the Sermons would be improved and the Author would suffer no injury.

Obituary.

ELIZABETH NICKLIN.—On May 22nd, 1889, aged 75, Elizabeth Nicklin, widow of the late George Nicklin, for many years a deacon at Hall Lane Strict Baptist Chapel, Walsall, and one of its principal supporters.

Our dear sister was ever a lover of God's house, his people, and his ways; and unless prevented by illness she was a constant attendant upon the means of grace. She was not a member of the church, being one of those timid ones who feared to presume, and she said but little during her last illness. She was a lover of Daniel Herbert's Poems and often made quotations from them.

For some time I had seen that she was breaking fast, and often called and read and prayed with her. On one of these occasions after I had closed the book she said, "I wish I could have seen you two hours ago, for then I felt a little helped with the words: 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love.'" I finished the passage for her, but she said she had only the words she had named, and she felt at that time a hope that the Lord had spoken them to her; but remarked, "Now the sweetness is gone, and I have feared they did not come from the Lord because it lasted

such a short time." A few days before she died she repeated to my daughter the following lines:

"Save me from this bewitching world,

That has to death ten thousand hurl'd."

To the last day of her life she had a distinct memory and took interest in the Word of God when read to her, and would respond to the prayer that was put up. The closing night of her life, her children being around her bed, they, not expecting her end so near, took leave of her for the night, when she cast an affectionate look at each as they left the room, her only daughter Mrs. B. and the nurse staying with her during the night. A short time before she died she tried to tell them something, but had not the power to speak so as to be understood. Soon after this with a happy countenance she gradually passed out of time into eternity, we trust to be eternally happy with her Lord.

S. G. SPENCER.

JOHN SMALL.—On Dec. 16th, 1888, in the 65th year of his age, after an illness of six months, John Small, a member of the church at Providence Chapel, Bath.

He was baptized, with six others, by the late Mr. Hunter in the month of November, nearly thirty-six years ago, and joined the church at Providence Chapel, of which he continued a consistent member up to the time of his death. The grace and goodness of God shone very conspicuously in him as many can bear witness, and his prayers at our weekly meetings left a savour behind which will not soon be forgotten by the friends. It pleased the Lord to reveal his dear Son to him while reading Jno. xvii, and the third verse was especially blessed to him: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." This made him so full of joy that he could scarcely contain himself, and was obliged to go and tell a dear fellow-traveller the blessing which he had received. Here sin appeared in all its awful colours, and under a view of the sufferings of the Saviour and having a humble hope of his own interest therein he could say,

"Here it is I find my heaven

While upon the Lamb I gaze;

Love I much, I've much forgiven

I'm a miracle of grace."

This glorious manifestation was never forgotten by him. He would often say,

"I'd creep beside him as a worm,

And see him bleed for me."

Some time ago he was afflicted, and it was feared he had broken a bloodvessel. He was laid aside for a time, but through the goodness of God he got a little better and was able to resume his labour. He was much tried in mind, but the Lord condescended to apply the following words to his soul: "O my God, my soul

is cast down within me; therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar." (Ps. xlii. 6.) He was led to remember when and where the good Lord had blessed him, and he would often use the language of the hymn which says,

"His former visits we recount,
On Mizar's hill and Hermon's mount;
Yet still our soul's desire anew
His sweetest, loveliest face to view."

Indeed, after he had been privileged to behold in a little measure by precious faith that dear Saviour whose visage was more marred than any man's, and his form more than the sons of men, in his prayers his language was again and again: "We thank thee, dear Son of God, that ever thou didst leave the bosom of thy Father and come into this lower world to suffer, bleed, and die the Just for the unjust to bring many sons unto glory." He would often say, "Who can tell what the Saviour endured in the garden of Gethsemane and on the cross, although he himself was harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners?"

This was the glorious theme of his heart. He very much valued the ministry of the gospel. On one occasion he spoke of hearing a minister from the words: "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." (1 Jno. iv. 7.) In the course of the sermon the minister was led to speak of that perfect love which casts out fear that hath torment, mentioning a little of his own experience, and quoting the words of Mr. Hart:

"Sins against a holy God, &c."

The discourse was made a great blessing to him.

At times he was so weak as to be scarcely able to bear the sound of my voice. I would then read a portion of the Word and say a few words in prayer, and though too weak to speak I could often perceive by his sighs and groans how much he felt what was said, and he would often bless me in the name of the Lord. These seasons were precious indeed, and we often parted with our spirits a little refreshed under a feeling sense of the goodness of the Lord.

Before he was too weak to go to chapel, sometimes when hearing the gospel from the lips of our dear friend and Pastor, Mr. Spencer, he would go and tell him at the close of his sermon what a precious gospel it had been to him, and how precious he felt the Saviour to be to his soul while he was endeavouring to set him forth. He much loved Mr. S. for his works' sake, and under these feelings he would say to me,

"Thanks we give and adoration
For the gospel's joyful sound, &c."

Hymn 174 was very precious to him, especially in his declining days. At another time he spoke feelingly of the hymn commencing,

"O my distrustful heart."

After a season of much darkness and temptation from the enemy,

his wife and daughter being in the apartment underneath, thought they heard him singing and went to listen, when they found him repeating hymn 28, which begins,

“Blest Spirit of truth eternal God.”

The second and third verses were made so precious to him that he said he had not received such a blessing for a long time. I saw him in the evening of the same day, when he said, “I have received a great blessing from those lines of Mr. Hart commencing,

“Who comfortest the heavy heart.”

They came with such softness upon his spirit that he wept to the praise of the mercy he had found. He did not sink so low again after this.

On Friday morning, two days before he died, his wife asked him if he could bear a little reading. He said, “Yes; read Ps. ciii.” When she had read a few verses they were both so overcome with the goodness of God that they wept together, and their daughter, who was present, finished reading the Psalm, after which he raised himself up in bed and said a few words in prayer, and, with his weak and faltering voice, he exclaimed, “If I did not speak well of the mercies of the Lord, both in providence and grace, the very stones would cry out.” He also said, “The Lord doth not afflict willingly;” for he had drawn near to him and blessed his soul. On hearing of the death of one of the members of the chapel he said,

“Happy songsters,
When shall I your chorus join!”

The last time I visited him, when I went to his bedside, he took my hand and said feelingly, “My dear brother.” I said, “We have prayed and wept together for many years.” He replied, “Yes, we have.” A little past midnight on the Saturday night his wife and daughter raised him up a little to take some nourishment, when he said, “I feel faint.” They gently laid him back again, when he quietly breathed his last, and they could scarcely tell that he was gone,

“Before his happy spirit took
Its mansion round the throne.”

He was interred in the cemetery by Mr. Ford, of Bath, who spoke very solemnly, and hymn 844 was sung at the grave.

T. SMALL.

ISAAC JEFFERIES.—On August 17th, 1888, aged 76, Isaac Jefferies, of Mountain View, New York.

He was attacked with a fourth stroke of paralysis about twelve days before his death, softening of the brain followed, producing insensibility; there were, therefore, no “last words” to record. He was baptized, together with his wife, in the river Avon, at Malmesbury, in 1840. He always spoke of Mr. Isaac Hanks, of that place, as his father in the faith. (Mr. H. was pastor of the Independent cause of that town. A few years ago, he gave out

his text: "Man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" (Job xiv. 10), and immediately expired in the pulpit.) He used to hear Messrs. Beard, Prior, Wigmore, and others of the neighbourhood. In the Lord's providence he left England for America about 40 years ago.

Mr. Axford, who spoke of him as one of his earliest friends in America, writes:

"The 'G.S.' was the magazine he liked best of all they took in. His sayings were always in accordance with the Word and the 'G.S.' He occasionally came to our meetings in New York City when we had preaching. At one time an old gentleman was preaching for us—who was with us when Mr. Gadsby was here—your uncle attended that day. As was that minister's custom, after his sermon he gave an opportunity for someone else to close with prayer. Your uncle had never heard the man before; I went and asked him to pray. He did so in a very feeling manner, and most blessedly and sweetly. After the service was over, the minister asked me, 'Whoever is that man? While he was praying it was as if my soul went up to heaven.' They had a little conversation after, but never met again in this vale of tears. Yet I trust they are both now in that state of bliss and blessedness where parting will never be again."

His letters "home" always breathed of spiritual life. Mr. A. expressed his regret at having lost one sweet letter he received from him, and I felt the same at one in particular, written upon the occasion of his wife's departure to heaven, some years ago; it was especially solemn and savoury. Perhaps a few extracts from others will speak:

March 22, 1884.—"I don't feel so much of the Lord's presence as I wish to feel. I am a vile monster of iniquity, not worthy of God's notice. My flesh is as corrupt as ever. Human nature has never mended. It is past repairing. It must return to the dust from whence it came. It must be sown in corruption and raised in incorruption to inherit that blessedness which is prepared for a prepared people. I, for one, often feel if Paul had known such an out-of-the-way wretch as myself would have come into the world, he would have said, 'I am the vilest, *except him!*' O, for life, light, and liberty from on high. It can come from nowhere else, and I want it from nowhere else. Honours crown his everlasting head, Amen! I do not know a living soul about here. John Axford, at New York, and S. are the only two I can get near to at present. There was an old lady who lived two miles from here to whom I was united in soul, but she is gone home where there is no sorrow. She was named Webb and was a member of Mr. Warburton's, at Trowbridge. Tell C. he is highly privileged to hear at Gower Street such men as Mr. Hemington and others whose sermons I have read and found good."

July 23, 1884.—"I can't get about much, but it is a mercy I am out of a ten thousand times deserved hell; a monument of God's mercy, and still permitted to call upon his great name,

while thousands neglect him altogether, and say by their conduct, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.' O, what a degraded state to be left in! 'Why was I made to hear his voice!' &c. Honours crown his brow! I do love to praise him when I can; but it must all come from him; as David says: 'All my springs are in thee.' I had my little of money in a savings-bank, which broke a little while ago and it was then supposed all was gone. It melted my heart to think that the Bank of heaven could not fail, and I was led to praise Him. I was led to the Prophet Habakkuk: 'Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, &c.; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.' Better felt than described. We must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground; but God has devised means whereby his banished ones shall not be finally expelled from him. Glory be to his name for that!"

Dec. 30, 1885.—"We shall soon have to exchange worlds; and I would say from my soul: 'Prepare me gracious God,' &c. Nothing short of grace will reach our cases; we are sunk so low and helpless. We feel our helplessness more and more as we get nearer our end. And O, may the dear Lord, if his heavenly will, speak home a 'Fear not' to our souls, that we may feel him precious. Some few nights ago, I was led back in feeling to one time in our lives, at Hawkesbury, Upton, (Mr. Warburton was preaching at the Anniversary,) when Mr. Stinchcomb gave out that blessed hymn:

'Unclean, unclean, and full of sin,
From first to last, O Lord, I've been.'

How wretched was my heart. You were both there and dear S. (the same S. referred to above, a nephew, who, in the Lord's providence, went out many years after and was there called by grace and became his chief companion) was a babe in arms at the time. It came over me in a similar way that it seemed almost like hearing dear S. delivering it. I don't mind sleeplessness under such feelings. I was led on to that blessed hymn of Medley's (his favourite)

'Weary of earth, myself, and sin.'

It is good to feel such seasons. O that it was more so with me. I suppose our correspondence will soon cease! I would say, 'May the dear Lord prepare us for the solemnity of death.' There is a great preparation for the flesh going on in this neighbourhood; a Wesleyan Church holding what they call a Protracting Meeting, and they do, and do; and when they have done all, what an awful doing it is. From all such may the good Lord deliver us."

On account of his increasing weakness he was unable to write much latterly; but we know his soul was kept alive, though famine, so far as it regards outwards means, was all around. At his own request the following words were put on the stone which marks his own and his wife's resting-place: "Here lie two sinners, saved by grace; in tribulation's path they trod, and now they are at rest with God."

C. J.

ANN POUND.—On April 16th, 1889, at Dover, New Hampshire, U. S. A., Ann Pound.

My dear aunt was born at Minety, Wilts, on April 17th, 1818. Her father died when she was very young and her mother when she was only sixteen, at which time she was in service. She being my father's youngest sister occasionally made our house her home, and accompanied my father to Hankerton to hear the late Mr. Beard and others. I remember hearing her say that the late Mr. C. Cowley was the first minister she heard to profit, which must have been when she was quite young. When living in service at Highworth she attended the ministry of a Mr. People, and my father and mother upon one occasion walked all the way to H. to hear him.

A short time before her marriage she with another friend was baptized by Mr. P. and for some years afterwards she lived at Uffington. About five years ago she and her husband went out to America. Being at Highworth on April 19th I was talking over these matters with two aged members who, though between forty and fifty years ago, remembered the event well, and one of them remarked, "Ah, it was at that very baptizing that the Lord found me." We little thought at the time we were speaking of it that she was but the day before laid in her grave. The following is gleaned from a letter sent to Minety by her son:

"My mother died this morning. She had been very ill for over a week. One day as I was sitting by her bedside she spoke of hymn 119, which she had heard given out at the meeting at Highworth many years ago, and beginning at the second verse she repeated it to the end, adding that she thought at the time it was given out she never heard such a hymn in all her life. At her request I read Jno. xvii to her, and she wished me to sing the hymn beginning,

"Yes, I shall soon be landed."

I also read hymn 249 to her. It was a truly solemn occasion. It was wonderful how clear her mind was. She repeated many precious verses of Scripture, such as: 'I am black, but comely,' and then made a few remarks upon them. For some time she had not felt so happy as she wished and had begged of the Lord to appear before her end came. A few days before her departure she said that in answer to her prayer the following words were powerfully applied to her soul: 'I will relieve thee, and that speedily.' She spoke also about having tasted the bitter before the sweet."

She had been for many years a reader of the "G. S." and had no doubt experienced much of what she had read. I may add that her bereaved husband, and also my father, who is now nearly eighty years of age, and the only one left out of eighteen in family, are, through rich grace, travelling in the same pathway.

J. BOLTON.

THE furnace of affliction is not the furnace of eternal fire; therefore there is no cause for a living soul to complain.—*Huntington*.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

SEPTEMBER, 1889.

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

MEDITATIONS ON PSALM XXV.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from page 330.)

IN the eleventh verse the soul of this man of God again breaks out in prayer and supplication. In the eighth, ninth, and tenth verses he had spoken of God's way to sinners and encouraged them to believe that all God's paths were mercy and truth unto his people; but feeling how short he came in believing and honouring the Lord as he would, and how, through numberless infirmities, he could not do the things that he would, and knowing the plague of his own heart and the workings and deceit of the enemy upon his spirit, he, doubtless, felt as Paul did when he said, "The good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." To will was present with him, but how to perform that which was good he found not; so that he came very, very short, as we all do, in believing when in trials, afflictions, and walking in what appears to reason crooked paths, that all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, and he felt how little he honoured God by keeping his covenant and his testimonies.

The discovery of his shortcomings and sins brought him again to call upon the name of the Lord and to plead for forgiveness solely for the Lord's name's sake. He was well grounded in the belief that it was not for anything in him, nor anything he had done, nor anything he could do that the Lord would pardon his iniquity. God's testimony to his people is: "Thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went." (Ezek. xxxvi. 22.) Hence this prayer of David's is but a repetition of the seventh verse where he says, "Remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O Lord." He knew God saved and pardoned because he would pardon, and that he had mercy on whom he would have mercy. Therefore David prayed, as we all do, who have right views of salvation, "Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; O save me for thy mercy's sake!"

When outward and inward enemies assail the Lord's people by saying, "Who will show us any good?" the sinner, knowing what will do him good, cries, "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy

countenance upon us." Under the law, where the people had to offer daily sacrifices for sins and yet were not benefited thereby, their consciences not being cleansed nor their sins purged by all their duties, sacrifices, offerings, and blood-shedding, what a relief it must have been to those who were oppressed with sin when God, through Aaron, manifested his blessing on poor guilty, down-cast souls who felt that with all their offerings there was something greater and better needed, and the words fell upon them, as if from God's own mouth: "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them." (Numb. vi. 24-27.) Through this precious name which is above every name, mercy, grace, peace, and pardon flow down to guilty, rebel man, even through a crucified, risen, exalted, and glorified Christ who is both the Throne of grace and the Mercy-seat. From him the river of life clear as crystal flows, and flows, too, with a mixture of love and blood; as one said:

"Beneath the sacred throne of God
I saw a river rise,
The streams were peace and pard'ning blood,
Descending from the skies."

God will glorify his own name and the name of his Son Jesus Christ in forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin. This Name Peter preached to wounded souls on the day of Pentecost when so many were pricked in their hearts and suddenly cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter soon responded and said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts ii. 38.) Through the Person and in the name of Christ Peter had realized the remission of his own sins, and feeling the witness of the Blessed Spirit in his own soul he earnestly endeavoured to show that all who are born again of the Spirit and brought to know their sin must be saved through Jesus Christ. Hence he said, "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 12.)

Saul of Tarsus, who had never once during the term of his natural life called upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, was constrained as soon as the Spirit reached his heart to seek forgiveness through the very name which he had tried to destroy, and God said, "Behold, he prayeth!" and sent a message unto him to hasten him, as it were, to do the Lord's will by saying, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts xxii. 16.) This was the name of which Paul afterwards so much loved to speak, even the name of the God-Man, Christ Jesus, who was made to him, as he is to all his people, wisdom, righteousness,

sanctification, and redemption. He was well assured by the Holy Ghost that salvation came not by the works of the law, but that it was ministered by God himself in the name of his Son Christ Jesus. It was to this Jesus, the Saviour of sinners, that David addressed these words: "For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great."

All the Lord's people are brought in the same way to plead the same name, to bow at the feet of Jesus, to cry to him for what they feel so much to need, even peace and pardon for his name's sake; for the Scripture ever has been and ever will be fulfilled in the souls of all the elect of God down to the end of time, that "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 10, 11.) To all coming sinners who come to Christ hungry and thirsty and their souls fainting within them, the promise is made: "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered." (Joel ii. 32.)

The Psalmist proceeds with his prayer, saying, "Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great." Evidently he felt the spring of iniquity within, the boilings up of sin, and the deceit of his own heart,—such transgressions and filth that he could not tell to anyone but to his God; but he knew full well that the Lord searcheth the heart and knows all the abominations that are therein. Like the Lord's people now he felt he carried with him a body of death, a deceitful heart, a carnal mind, that he had a wandering eye, and sin was ever present with him and too strong for him; therefore he had to come, just as poor sinners do now when they are convinced of sin, with this short cry: "Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great." This shows that he had faith to believe that God *could* pardon him, and by past experience he had proved that God *did* pardon, and this afforded him a fresh plea and gave him fresh encouragement to believe that the Lord *would yet* pardon.

By faith we believe that God is able to forgive; as Christ said: "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men." (Matt. xii. 31.) Were it not so, we should lie down in despair.

To those who feel their grief and sore and the plague of their wicked and corrupt hearts and nature, the Word of God speaks as to coming sinners who must come in the same way as long as they live, saying, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." (Isa. lv. 7.)

David here speaks of *iniquity* in the singular, as if it were one high hill or one huge mountain of transgression which he knew none could remove or cause to flow down but God himself, and at the same time he felt if the Lord would only send one blessed stream from the river of life, if he would speak a word with

power to his soul, if he would send a little peace through the blood of Jesus into his conscience all his sins and iniquities would depart.

David was not the only man who cried, "Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great." All who are led by the Blessed Spirit to know the seventh chapter of Romans groan out the same prayers, the same desires, the same longings for peace and pardon, love and blood to flow into their souls for Christ's sake, cleansing them from all their sins. The law in the members which wars against the law of our minds is continually bringing us into captivity. It is a constant snare, an evil which we cannot altogether forsake, at least, it will not forsake us, but cleaves to us closer than our skin; for our skin is but the outward covering of the flesh, but sin works in every part of our fallen nature in ten thousand forms day by day until some of the Lord's children in particular fear lest they should be entirely carried away by its mighty stream. Under the knowledge of our sins and iniquities the Blessed Spirit endears the Lord Jesus Christ, his righteousness, merits, and blood, and at times makes him more precious than all in heaven and all on earth, and when the sinner comes again to be humbled, softened, meekened, and brought down to the feet of the Lord Jesus, most truly can he then say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

The Psalmist says *his iniquity is great*. Where is the child of God to be found whom the Lord is leading and teaching in the way of life who can say that his sin is small? Where in the Scriptures can we find godly men declaring that they were little sinners, and that they were not as bad as other men, as wicked as others, and that they had not in them the same abominations as Christ himself has expressed in Matt. xv where he says, "Those things which come out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; these are the things which defile a man!" The longer a child of God lives and the more he is instructed into the depths of the fall of our first parent, the more sensible he is that he increases his transgressions and sins against God, till he sometimes wonders where the scene will end, and whether it is possible for him to be a child of God; for there are times and seasons when he has to return unto the Lord like one of old who said, "I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God, and said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God; for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens." (Ezra ix. 5, 6.)

All the Lord's children know what it is to pray, "Pardon mine iniquity; for it is great." What a mercy it is, great as our iniquity is that it is not the sin against the Holy Ghost whose presence, life, power, and comfort we long to feel; for we love

his sacred visits, his holy influence, his divine breath reviving, strengthening, and encouraging our souls to look again and again, as Jonah did, towards God's holy temple, even the glorified human nature of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, great and numerous as our sins are, they are not too great to be forgiven, nor are they too many to be pardoned; for the Word says: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1. Jno. i. 9.)

Some of the Lord's children think their sins too great to be forgiven. They have to walk in much darkness of soul, much bondage of spirit, temptation, and fear, and as God seems to refuse to give them answers to their prayers, they are ready to conclude that they have sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, for which sin they feel sure there is no forgiveness in this world nor in the world to come. Satan often represents their case as desperate and unparalleled, and out of the bounds of God's forgiving mercy, and that such sinners as they are cannot be saved, and therefore they are given up to hardness of heart, unbelief, and a reprobate mind. But the sin against the Holy Ghost is a sin committed against light, and in spite, malice, and unsubdued opposition and enmity to his operations. This sin is a wilful treading under foot the blood of the Son of God, being assured that it is the blood wherewith Christ sanctified himself when he offered himself a sacrifice and an offering for sin, when he suffered on the cross, and thereby put away all the sins of God's church which were imputed to him, and for which according to his covenant engagement he made an everlasting atonement: This sin can only be committed out of hatred and malice against the Person of Christ, against the blood of Christ, and against the Spirit of Christ; therefore those who commit it are said, first, to have trodden under foot the Son of God; secondly, to have counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing; and so they count it unholy blood; thirdly, they do despite unto the Spirit of grace, which despite is out of pure, unsubdued enmity, hatred, malignity, and malice.

However greatly a child of God may be burdened with his sin, whatever the nature of his sins may be, and however numerous, his soul longs to feel the preciousness of the Person of Christ, for he is assured that he is the Son of God and the Son of Man. He also longs to feel the blood of the covenant, which is Christ's own blood, cleansing him from all his sin, for he is assured that it is not an unholy thing, but the blood of his Maker, the blood of the human nature of God the Son; and he also longs to feel the Spirit, or the Holy Ghost as the Spirit of grace, as the Spirit of life, the Spirit of power, the Spirit of love, and the Spirit of adoption in his soul bearing witness with his spirit that he is a child of God, which is a proof that he has not committed the unpardonable sin, for he longs to realize the comforting presence of the Holy Ghost, which those who have sinned the unpardonable sin hate and fight against. The Lord Jesus himself speaks

most clearly upon the nature of this sin in Matt. xii, when, having by the Spirit cast the devil out of one that was blind and dumb, the Pharisees being moved with enmity and malice ascribed the power to Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. Also in Mark iii where we read that Christ had wrought mighty works, and unclean spirits fell down before him, but the Jews, who witnessed his works, said, "He hath an unclean spirit," which Christ there calls the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost which hath never forgiveness. This was a sin that David dreaded. He felt his errors, he was conscious of secret faults, and prayed to be cleansed from them, and at the same time put up a prayer that he might be kept from unpardonable sins such as we have named when he said, "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me." (Ps. xix. 13.)

In the twelfth verse the Psalmist says, "What man is he that feareth the Lord?" This is the only question that is asked throughout the whole of this Psalm, and a very important question it is. It is respecting the man that feareth the Lord, and what manner of man he is. One that feareth the Lord is a living man; for "the fear of the Lord is a fountain of life" which constrains a sinner to depart from the snares of death. It is called a well of living water, and the man who has it will never taste of eternal death; for he who has the fear of the Lord will be where God is in everlasting life. Corporal death cannot really hurt a child of God, for all those who have this fear are his children, and the Lord has said, "They shall not depart from me." At the last day the righteous will go into life eternal. A man who fears God is a redeemed man, for the Lord Jesus has redeemed him with his precious blood; as Peter says: "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ." (1 Pet. i. 18.) All who have this fear realize, sooner or later, the fulfilment of the Scripture: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." (Eph. i. 7.) Christ has paid the price for every object of his love and will never part with one of them. Hence he says, "I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." (Hos. xiii. 14.) All those mercies spoken of in the 107th Psalm are to the redeemed, and the redeemed are made to feel how much they need these mercies, and when enjoyed for a short time the Word and the God of the Word are precious to the soul.

A man that feareth the Lord is one who possesses a living faith, even the very same faith that was found in Abraham,—a faith that believes in Christ, cleaves to Christ, comes to Christ, a faith that worketh by love, and that knows no Object for salvation but the Incarnate God, the Son of the Father in truth and love. This faith is a covetous faith, for it covets that which God has

promised and which he is pleased to bestow, even the knowledge of the Father and the Son,—the Son equal and eternal with the Father; for faith never comes short in the belief of this, and the Word says, “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God” (1 Jno. v. 1); and if born of God there is knowledge in the soul: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (Jno. xvii. 3.) This faith acknowledges the equality of the Father and the Son: “Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father” (1 Jno. ii. 23), and therefore such have not the faith of God’s elect, but only a spurious faith which is not of God the Holy Ghost.

A man that feareth the Lord is also a praying man, but he knows not how to pray only as God teaches him, and after he has begun to teach him he knows not what to pray for only as the Spirit of God helps him; for “we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” (Rom. viii. 26.) To this end God both made and fulfils that great promise: “I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced.” (Zech. xii. 10.) Thousands of men and thousands of ministers have natural religion, natural prayers, natural faith, and natural convictions; they have fleshly joy as the stony ground hearers had, and a strong confidence; as Solomon says: “The fool rageth, and is confident” (Prov. xiv. 16); they have the lamp, as the foolish virgins had, but neither the vessel nor the oil in their lamps. But all this is very different to the faith which God himself bestows upon his people.

The faith of a child of God is, more or less, always in want. It wants more of God, covets more of his presence, clearer manifestations of his love, and more communion with the living God. Here little faith, as operated upon by the Blessed Spirit, is equal to great faith; for this little faith seeks, cries, and cannot be satisfied until it realizes all that Christ is and all that Christ has to bestow upon poor sinners; nor is there one particle of antichrist in little faith, however small it may be, for it is all for Christ, and nothing else. So a man who fears the Lord is a man who believes in Christ and prays to God and Christ for the things in which he believes. The Holy Spirit lays upon the people of God the burden of their iniquity and the guilt of their sins which are too heavy for them, and then leads them to God and Christ for mercy, peace, and salvation: “Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.” (Isa. xxvi. 16.)

A man that feareth the Lord is a humble man. The fear of God never makes a man proud and haughty, yet it makes him firm and steadfast in the ways and things of God. A man who is humble and fears the Lord, with that man God will dwell; for

“thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite one.” (Isa. lvii. 15.) The Lord’s work in our souls is to rebuke for pride, for haughtiness, for leaning to our own wisdom or our own ways; and this is a lifetime work, for we shall need to be chastened and corrected, humbled and brought low as long as we live. We read, “The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down,” and God has a purpose to answer in this,—“The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.” (Isa. ii. 11.) We need a continual communication of grace from the God of grace that we may abase ourselves before him; as James says: “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.” (Jas. iv. 10.)

A man that feareth the Lord is a man chosen of God, for God has chosen him for his own glory. God chose such because he would choose them. He has mercy because he will have mercy and not for any foreseen goodness in anyone. After the Israelites had grown into a large nation the Lord reminded them that it was not because they merited his love nor because they were a great nation that he had set his love upon them: “The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you.” (Deut. vii. 7.) Had not God chosen and secured his own people in an eternal covenant every man and woman would have been eternally lost; but the Lord would have a people to serve him, a people that were precious to him, a people that he loved and would love for ever, a people that he would not cast off nor destroy, a people that will be nearer to him than the angels in heaven; for “the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his *peculiar treasure*.” (Ps. cxxxv. 4.) When this doctrine is realized it greatly meekens, humbles, and fills the soul with astonishment, so that the Lord’s people say with David, “Is this the manner of man, O Lord God?” We who fear the Lord’s name are now and shall be eternally debtors to the Lord for such an act of condescending mercy and love, for we have no more hand in making ourselves the children of God than the disciples had in making themselves apostles to whom Christ said, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.” (Jno. xv. 16.)

The Lord’s people, most of them at least, are exercised all their days respecting their election of God. Often does the poor sinner with the fear of God in his heart who longs to be found in Christ say, “Lord, am I chosen of thee? Didst thou set thy love upon me before the world was? Is my name in the Lamb’s Book of Life? Am I one that thou didst bless with all spiritual blessings in Christ before the foundation of the world? Can it be possible that a sinner so mean, so low, so vile, so utterly un-

worthy as I am can be a vessel of mercy afore ordained unto glory? Can it be true that I am a member of Christ's mystic body,—that thou art my Father and that I am a child of thine, and that thou hast predestinated me to be conformed to the image of thy Son? Can it be true that I am now a son of God whilst clothed with a body of death, and that when Christ shall appear I shall be like him and see him as he is?" Those who possess the fear of God have their hearts, minds, and affection not only set on these things, but sometimes they are stirred up more vehemently to pursue in hope of attaining to all these joys and everlasting blessings. Paul says, "We are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. viii. 24, 25.) Therefore those who are chosen seek after the blessings which God gives to his chosen and sometimes they enjoy them, and hope to realize all that God has promised in this life and in the life to come. Therefore they are described as blessed characters: "Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways." (Ps. cxxviii. 1.)

Of the man that feareth the Lord it is here said, "Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose." This is a way that none can learn except those who are taught by the Blessed Spirit; as Christ said: "When he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth." (Jno. xvi. 13.) He teaches the right way, leads into the right way, keeps sinners in the way, and preserves them from final falling; as the Word says: "Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way." A man can no more teach himself the things of God than the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth could have taught themselves the song which they sing before the throne. The Lord teaches his people the way of regeneration, for he gives them the new birth that they may see the kingdom and the way to the kingdom; for "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (Jno. iii. 3.) When the Lord has opened the eyes of the blind and unstopped the ears of the deaf and let a little of the water of life into their souls, he shows them through the gospel how they can be saved and that none but those who are born of the Spirit can possibly see, much less enter into the kingdom of heaven; as we read: "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there." (Isa. xxxv. 9.) Nor will the Lord leave off to guide his own people, but will bring them safely to heaven: "He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation. (Ps. cvii. 7.) This way is narrow and few travellers are to be found in it; yet a man with the fear of the Lord in his heart desires to walk in this way which God has chosen for him. Tried and tempted as he is, cast-down as he often is, a stranger and a pilgrim as he is, and obliged to walk separately

from professors and from the profane, finding only here and there one with whom he can have true fellowship and to whom he feels spiritual union; and, with all this, exercised and tried in his soul about his own standing, his own faith, his hope, and the whole of his profession, and frequently tried as to how it will be with him at the last; yet he chooses to walk in this tried pathway rather than to be left to a dead profession or given up to carelessness and indifference of spirit.

But there is another Way—a blessed and glorious Way, and that is the Lord Jesus himself, who for our consolation has declared in a few words what we need to have sounded in our ears and in our hearts every day and every hour of our life, “*I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*” (Jno. xiv. 6.) So there is no access to heaven, no way to God, no entrance into the kingdom, no passing through the gates of paradise, no way of seeing God the Father who is the God of life and love, mercy, grace, and salvation but through Jesus, the true and living Way which God has consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say his flesh.

The longer the children of God live in this world and the more they become exercised, the clearer views have they that there is no other name given under heaven whereby they can be saved, and no other way of approaching God with comfort but through Christ; and thus the path of the just shines brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. It is an infinite mercy to be in the way at all, and to be taught of God, however trying, perplexing, and distressing it may be to flesh and blood; for as the Lord has blessed these people, the beginning, middle, and end of their spiritual pilgrimage must be good; for the Word says: “Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law; that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.” (Ps. xciv. 12, 13.) The man that feareth the Lord, whose character we have briefly sketched, is a sinful man in his own eyes and sees how he needed regenerating, and humbling; and he constantly feels how much he needs repentance and remission of sins, cleansing in the blood of Jesus and clothing in his imputed righteousness.

(*To be continued.*)

O WHAT a poor, helpless, miserable wretch is man, especially when he has a burden to carry, which he can neither bear patiently, nor cast upon the only Burden-bearer! In these seasons the question with me is, not how much grace I have, but have I one grain? For I am very sure I can neither see nor feel one.—*Philpot.*

THE believer knows that he can stand no longer than while the Lord upholds him; if he withdraws his supporting hand he is sure to sink, and when sunk he despairs of all help in his own arm or in his own heart. He knows that nothing can recover him but a propitious look from his dear Lord, or a restoring visit from him, or a fresh discovery by faith of his dying love, attended with the reviving and renewing operations of the Holy Spirit of promise—*Huntington.*

THE HIDINGS OF GOD'S FACE.

BY RUSK.

(Continued from page 336.)

ANOTHER sad effect of God hiding his face is that at such times every trace of the work of God appears hid; for it is in his light that we see light. All appears dark, and we see not our signs, and although while in this state we see many things that no hypocrite ever saw, such as our own hearts, the spirituality of God's law, the cunning craft of Satan and those in alliance with him, and the awful state of the world at large, yet we interpret all this as against ourselves, and really think that after all we are the worst of hypocrites and that God will in time make us manifest. Hence David said, "Be not silent to me; lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit." (Ps. xxviii. 1.)

When God hides his face from us we feel his wrath and anger; but God is never angry with anything but sin; and we find it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against God. Truly we procure it all to ourselves. God will chasten us for our folly, and we have reason to bless his name for it; for we cannot do without it. This wrath and anger Israel of old felt again and again when they had sinned. The Lord says, "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee." God is never wrath with us in his Son, but in the law, for the law worketh wrath, and by the law is the knowledge of sin. Micah when he felt this called it the indignation of the Lord, and said, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord because I have sinned against him;" and again: "Wherefore should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" But remember, however long this may go on and however low we may sink, yet this is not God's vindictive wrath; and therefore the Lord says, "I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wrath." "His anger endureth but for a moment;" "He will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever." Now, all these promises are made to people who think and fear that the Lord will be always wrath, and when God applies a promise it comes to such in due season.

Then again. Affliction and oppression is sorely felt on all hands when God hides his face and appears to cast us off altogether, and then unbelief and carnal reason are sure to work, and it is suggested by Satan, "If you belonged to God you would never be as you are." God's people are a holy people, but you are full of lust, and but for grace you would indulge in it. You are amongst the wicked, and are holden with the cords of your sins. You talk about liberty, but you are an Antinomian, a *servant of corruption*. Remember how the other day you were full of unclean desires and you felt no particular trouble on account of it. If your liberty was the right liberty you would be free indeed, so as not to get into bondage again; for Paul says, "We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear." O how

my soul has sunk under such feelings as these, so that I have at such times thought my destruction was sure. Say you, "And why is all this?" Because of the body of sin and death which we carry about with us. The Psalmist said, "Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression? for our soul is bowed down to the dust; our belly cleaveth unto the earth." (Ps. xlv. 24, 25.) Job said, "Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?" (Job xiii. 24.) At such times God appears to shine upon the counsels of the wicked and to frown upon us in all that we undertake. See Asaph, Job, and many others in God's Word. Hence the church said, "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me;" but, "Judgment shall return unto righteousness, and all the upright in heart shall follow it."

I will now endeavour to show that God is the God of every true Israelite and he is their Saviour, although he hides his face from them. The question naturally arises: What is a true Israelite? I answer, not one according to the flesh, as you may see by Christ's answer to the Jewish scribes and Pharisees who prided themselves upon this, and said they were the seed of Abraham, and were never in bondage to any man; but Christ said, "Ye seek to kill me; and this did not Abraham;" and he told them they were of their father, the devil. Thus he cut them off from their presumptuous claims in calling God their Father, which they did, saying, "We have one Father, even God." To this the apostle Paul agrees where he says, "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." (Rom. ii. 28, 29.) A true Israelite is one of God's elect, chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, predestinated to the adoption of children to eternal life, whether Jew or Gentile after the flesh it matters not. When we read God's Word we need to make a distinction between Israel after the flesh and Israel by eternal election. Israel after the flesh, as a nation, were God's people, but only by national adoption, but those that are his by election are gathered out of all nations, and this will go on to the end of time.

A true Israelite, then, is one that God has made honest and upright in heart, one that declares the truth as he feels it, and one whose testimony agrees with God's Word. God teaches such their true state by the fall, and as far as such have gone in this teaching they will speak, and no further. At times they get a little lift by the way to encourage them and keep them seeking until God is pleased to bring them out of their bondage. The Lord Jesus Christ called Nathaniel an Israelite indeed in whom was no guile, not but what he had a body of death as well as you and I, but Christ was speaking of him as a believer or a Christian who had in him the Spirit of truth.

Again. An Israelite is one who is prevalent with God in prayer, as Jacob was, and it was in wrestling with the Lord that he obtained the name of Israel; for God said, "As a prince thou hast power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." An Israelite is one of God's elect, and will be saved in this world from the reigning power and dominion of sin, and after death from the inbeing of it, for which he earnestly longs. God is the God of every true Israelite although he hides his face. It is a grand and glorious truth that although we experience so many changes, the Lord never changes in his purposes of grace towards us, for "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

As the Lord shall assist me I will now show the security of every real Israelite and how utterly impossible it is for them finally to fall, so as for God to cast them off for ever and not be their God in covenant. All these changes, turnings, and windings,—God hiding his face and appearing to cast them off, his turning them to destruction, delivering them into the hand of the wicked, into Satan's hand for a time, crossing them and trying them to the quick in their circumstances, families, &c., all their secret and open backslidings, all this and a thousand things more never can alter his mind, for he is fixed in all his purposes of grace.

First, then; this security depends upon the oath of God: "Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David (that is Christ). His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me." (Ps. lxxxix. 35, 36.) Paul says, "God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." (Heb. vi. 17, 18.) What a sure basis is this for all such as are tried and tempted, that see and feel themselves one mass of corruption, and very often conclude that their spot is not the spot of God's children; for sin works stronger than ever in them, and they fear that they shall bring an open disgrace upon that blessed cause which they have so long espoused. O what fears, what secret groans, longings, cries, and heart-rendings have I felt, and how I have been led to search the Word to see if there might still be hope for one so filthy, vile, base, and abominable, who has been drawn aside by his own lusts and enticed, so as to sin against light and love! Ah, my fellow-traveller, it is well for us that God is fixed in his purposes of grace, and although he hides his face, yet it is not for ever; for he is still our God in an everlasting covenant.

Secondly. The mercy of God secures our eternal standing and manifests that he is our God in covenant. The common mercies of God all men indiscriminately partake of in the bounties of his providence, his protecting power, in health, strength, and in his long forbearance; but they are ignorant of all this, and sacrifice to their own net and burn incense to

their own drag. These are called in Scripture the *unthankful*, which we all are by nature, birth, and practice. But the *tender mercies* of God flow to us through the life, death, resurrection, and glorious ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. David said, "Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies." This tender mercy every sensible sinner feels his need of, and is led by the Holy Spirit to cry for it. Hence the publican cried, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." How came he to find this out, for some declare that they are not sinners? One said, "Stand by thyself; I am holier than thou;" and another declared that he never at any time transgressed God's commandment. The difference is made by the Holy Ghost, and it is not a mere verbal confession, but it is a deep conviction; and as the person goes on the Spirit of God increasingly shows him his own heart, even every crook and corner of it, until he is brought to confess to the Lord that from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head he is full of wounds, bruises, and putrifying sores. I have heard people confess that they were sinners, but I was sure at the time that they never were convinced of sin by the Spirit of God for their *lightness* proved it. Besides, such people only partly confess that they are sinners. They will say they are wrong in this, that, and the other, but not altogether wrong. Now, such as need mercy are altogether wrong;—"they are altogether as an unclean thing, and all their righteousnesses are as filthy rags." They feel and know that they were born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and can set to their seal that God's Word is true, for they are by nature to every good work reprobate. The people of the world, although they may confess some sins to men, they never with the heart confess to God, neither do they ever in heart forsake sin, which every real Israelite at times is enabled to do, and loathes, hates, and abhors himself on account of it; but the others will boast, notwithstanding all their natural convictions, of what they have done and intend to do for God.

Sensible sinners need mercy, and the first display of it is to them when cast out in the open field (of this world); for the Lord says, "I passed by thee, and said unto thee, Live;" and it is further manifested by putting his fear in our hearts that we may never finally depart from him; for "his mercy is upon them that fear him throughout all generations." This mercy is also made known in washing us; as we read: "Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee." (Ezek. xvi. 9.) Also in clothing us in the imputed righteousness of Christ, and by the holy anointing oil that is poured upon us; for not only did the Lord say, "I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee," but, "I anointed thee with oil." This was figuratively set forth under the Levitical law by the holy anointing oil, as we read in Exod. xxx. 23-25, which was typical of the unction of God's Spirit; and it was to be put on the tabernacle, the ark of the testimony, the table, and all the vessels,

&c. All these things were types of Christ and his church, and this holy oil, or the Holy Spirit, is never put into any other. Say you, "King Saul, Balaam, and others had the Spirit." I answer, Not in their hearts, as the people of God have. Hence Christ told his disciples, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." (Jno. xiv. 16, 17.) John says, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things," that is, all things essential to salvation. The holy anointing oil was not to be put upon the flesh of any man, neither was it to be put upon a stranger, by which I understand that a man that is wholly in the flesh, in his first-born state has nothing to do with this holy anointing oil, and by the stranger I understand such as are strangers both to themselves and to God; for this oil of joy is to the mourners in Zion, and such know the plague of their own hearts and mourn on account of their sin, and they know God in his law and what a heavy yoke that law is; but this yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing. This teaching to know ourselves and God in the law makes our lives bitter, so that we greatly need this holy anointing oil, and those that are ignorant of this teaching do not feel this bitterness. Hence Solomon says, "The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy." (Prov. xiv. 10.)

The Lord gave Moses strict orders that no other oil should be made like this holy anointing oil; and this shows that some will attempt so to do. There is plenty of this sort of work going on among carnal preachers and carnal professors in this our day; but such will be cut off, and their portion will be with unbelievers, notwithstanding all their pretensions to real faith and to having received this unction.

Again. This holy oil is not enjoyed by God's family at all times, but only at particular times. It is given after sharp and cutting convictions for sin, as you may see in the case of the jailor. It is also given to enable a child of God to suffer much loss, as you may see in the Hebrews who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. It also was given to the apostles when they suffered in their bodies being beaten, for it is said they sang praises to God in the prison. It was given to Hannah when long vexed with Penninah. In the hour of death, when many for the truth's sake have lost their lives, they have been highly favoured, and such, like Paul, have finished their course with joy. David, after many humbling lessons, was led to see that he should again be favoured with this. Hence he says, "My horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn; I shall be anointed with fresh oil" (Ps. xcii. 10), which Paul calls a fresh supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Now all this is *special mercy*.

I have heard Mr. Huntington compare the two following texts to show that the Holy Ghost goes by the name of mercies. First;

he is called the covenant, and then the covenant is called mercies: "This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." (Isa. lix. 21.) The other text is this: "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, even the sure mercies of David." David was anointed with oil out of a horn, which signifies power, and God said, "I will never take away my mercy from him as I did from Saul." Saul had this mercy (or Spirit) *upon* him, but David had it *in* him; for we read: "The Spirit of God came upon David from that day forward." Therefore David wrote a whole Psalm upon "His mercy endureth for ever." What a sure basis, then, is every real Israelite upon who has these tender mercies and this holy anointing oil. In Ps. ciii David tells us that God crowned him with lovingkindness and tender mercies. This mercy never had a beginning and never will have an end. Hence we read: "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him," and "Mercy shall be built up for ever."

Again. Not only the holiness of God and his mercy secure our eternal safety, but his word of promise. The apostle tells us that it is impossible for God to lie, and here is very great consolation. Balaam said, "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent." What is the Lord's word of promise as it respects us? It is this: "A seed shall serve him (Christ); it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." (Ps. xxii. 30.) Says some poor tried soul, "O, if I could but know that I was one of that seed; then all would be right." Yes, and so it would; but only while that sweet influence lasted would it manifestly be so to you.

But let us trace this out a little further. The question is, Who are the seed of Christ? Paul opens this up where he says, "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." (Rom. ix. 8.) You may say, "O that I was a child of promise!" But let us go on. There are innumerable promises in God's Word, but the particular promise here meant is this: "This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life." (1 Jno. ii. 25.) Say you, "O that I knew that I had this life and that I had been quickened by the Spirit!" Well, the apostle John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Did you ever feel at any particular time (I will not say at all times, for none ever did) a disinterested love to God's children spring up in your heart because you believed that they had the image of Christ Jesus? Say you, "I really have; but it lasted for so short a time." Well, if this be true that you have felt ever so little of this love, and if it was but of short duration, you are one of Christ's seed, and you are a partaker of the Holy Ghost who

has been pleased to take possession of your heart; for he is only poured upon Christ's seed, and I have proved that those who truly love the brethren are the seed. But how came they by this love? I answer, they are taught of God, and he teaches effectually. The apostle says, "As touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." (1 Thess. iv. 9.) The question may be asked, "If I was taught of God to love his people, should I not always feel this love to them as an abiding principle, whereas I often feel cold to them, and worse than that, for sometimes I feel as if I should like to shun them altogether and am not concerned about their troubles as I should be?" Well, you never will find any good in yourself, for if you could you would admire yourself and Jesus Christ would be lightly esteemed; but in order that you may prize the Saviour, the Holy Spirit will constantly show you your own heart, and this will sometimes terrify you; but every visit the Lord pays you will be very precious, and, for the time being, all the evils of your heart will be kept down.

Say you, "But is there not a new man as well as the old man? and I thought as the new man grew I should get holier and holier, and feel more love than ever to God and his family, not in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth." My dear friend, you are mistaken. You will never find anything good in yourself, but the Holy Spirit will lead us to cry to the Lord to work in us that which is good, and he will testify of Christ, and take of the things of Jesus, and show them unto us; and while we are thus led to look out of ourselves to him we shall find a change wrought in us; and it is well if this sweet feeling lasts even for a short time. God is a Sovereign; and it may last for a long or only for a short season. Christ Jesus is the great Storehouse, and all fulness of grace, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and every blessing of the new covenant, with all our usefulness and fruitfulness are deposited in him. This is the cause why you and I are so often bowed down, because we are looking for something good in ourselves, instead of looking out of self unto the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul tells us how this change is wrought in us: "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. iii. 18.) Thus there will be a change, but no fixed change; so as to be *always* believing, loving, always feeling peace, rest, quietness, and always full of love to God's family and ready to every good work. No; such a change as this never was made in any of the fallen sons of Adam.

(To be continued.)

A MAN may have much knowledge, great acquaintance with the Scriptures, and a sound creed as regards the letter of truth, and yet be utterly destitute of that kingdom of God which is not in word, but in power.—*Philpot.*

THE REFUGE OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

A FUNERAL SERMON PREACHED AT BETHEL CHAPEL, LUTON, BY MR. J. WARBURTON, ON JAN. 2ND, 1889, ON THE OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF MR. J. NEWMAN.

"Be still, and know that I am God."—Ps. xlv. 10.

THE Psalmist, at the commencement of this Psalm, makes a solemn assertion, the truth of which he felt springing up in his heart; for "out of the abundance of his heart his mouth spake." In Ps. xlv he says, "My heart is inditing a good matter; I speak of the things which I have made touching the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer," from which we see that the things he spoke of were the things of God and his kingdom of grace; for he had the life of God in his own soul.

In this Psalm he says, "God is our Refuge and strength." Friends, did you ever see yourselves in danger? Did you ever feel that the manslayer was after you? You will not want a refuge so long as there are no clouds to obscure your Sun and while all things are placid and quiet. Suppose you were out for a walk on a serene summer's evening, you would not want to seek a place of refuge; but if you saw a dark cloud gathering and heard it thunder, you would quickly seek a place of shelter. An awful storm was once felt from mount Sinai, which even shook the soul of Moses; for he said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." If ever that storm beats upon your soul you will begin to inquire earnestly and sincerely for a refuge, and the desire of your soul will be, "O that I may be found in Christ!"

Says the Psalmist, "God is our Refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." He had proved in times of danger and distress that God was his Refuge and Hiding-place; therefore he said, "We will not fear." Others may, but we will not; others may be distressed, but we are not; others may sink, but the Lord will not let us sink; for we have been favoured to hold communion and fellowship with him and have tasted that he is gracious, God having shed abroad his love in our hearts. O I love that little word "we,"—"We will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." Even supposing such wonderful things as these should take place, yet says the Psalmist, speaking for himself and all God's people, "We will not fear."

"There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved." As if the Psalmist should say of the church, "She shall have afflictions, but she shall not be moved; she shall have adversities, but she shall not be moved; she may be distressed, but she shall not be moved; she may have bereavements, but she shall not be moved; she may have darkness and strange circumstances to contend

with, but she shall never be moved." Moved from what? She shall not be moved out of the Lord's hands nor out of his heart; for she is in his heart. "God shall help her, and that right early," or, as the margin reads, "When the morning appeareth."

"The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved." What did the heathen rage about? Because God's truth came forth, and because the Lamb of God was preached and set up as the Standard for his people. "He uttereth his voice, the earth melted." My friends, if you look into your Bibles you will find many wonderful things recorded therein. You will there read about the blessed God-Man Christ Jesus, that he was crucified between two thieves, and that after he had been some hours on the cross, he cried, "I thirst," and they offered him a sponge dipped in vinegar. O what cruel treatment! And when he cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani," some said, "Behold, he calleth Elias; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down." Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, cried with a *loud voice*, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost. Christ had been several hours on the cross, and yet, mark, he cried with a *loud voice*; and when he uttered his voice hell trembled and heaven rejoiced. This caused the earth to melt, while the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the graves were opened, and many of the bodies of the saints which slept arose and came out of their graves after his resurrection, and went into the city and appeared unto many.

The Lord now utters his voice in the blessed gospel. Have you ever heard his voice in the gospel? The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is a gospel of power. The Psalmist here says, "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire." Yes, and the Lord has made peace in our heart; for he has done away long ago with our war instruments with which we fought against him, and brought peace into our heart; and the desire of our soul now is to trust in him.

Now comes the language of our text: "Be still, and know that I am God." Seeing the Lord is a Refuge for his people, and seeing what a blessed peace he at times produces in the hearts of his family, even in the most trying circumstances,— "Be still, and know that I am God."

As the Lord shall assist us, let us take into consideration this blessed and comforting portion of Scripture: "Be still." I think I hear someone say, "Sir, if you were in my position you would find it hard work to be still." Well; let us notice the reason why the Lord calls upon his people to be still,—it is because he is God: "And know that I am God." Say you, "Then I suppose those who have the grace of God in their hearts are altogether without feeling and like a stone." No, it is quite the contrary of that; for the Lord takes away the heart of stone, and the

grace of God produces feeling. Death is removed and life is given; it removes hardness and a sweet softness of feeling is communicated. All God's living people have a heart of flesh, and they have desires and affections for heavenly things; for they are under the reigning power of grace in their consciences. The apostle says concerning the Lord's family, "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price." Peter says, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (1 Pet. i. 18, 19.)

Where grace takes possession of the heart, sin shall not have the dominion; for says the apostle, "Ye are not under the law, but under grace."

"Be still." You must not think that God's people have no feeling under the various circumstances that they meet with; but there are times and seasons when the child of God has no will of his own, for he is resigned and submissive in the hands of God. I know what this blessed feeling is. A good woman who was in affliction, but in the sweet enjoyment of the love of God shed abroad in her heart, when asked what her desire was with regard to her affliction and whether she would like it to be removed, she said, "I have no will about it, and if I could now hear the Lord's sweet voice, saying, What will you choose? I should reply, Dear Father of all my mercies, do thou choose for me, and let my will be swallowed up in thine." Thus, when the poor child of God comes into trying circumstances and afflictive dispensations, when under the sweet influence of the love of God shed abroad in his soul, he is like a vessel in the hands of the potter, and exclaims, "I am the clay, and thou my Potter; and thou hast a right to rule and reign over me; and I know that thou art too wise to err and too good to be unkind. O enable me to yield up my body, my circumstances, my friends, and my all to thee, and do give me the feelings of a little child, so that I may say, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'" Job was brought into trying circumstances; for one trouble after another came upon him, until all that he possessed was swept away, as it were, in a moment, and even his friends turned against him; yet in the midst of it all he said, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither; the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Then, my friends, may you be enabled to commit yourself into the Lord's hands, and beg of him to go before you.

"Be still, and know that I am God." It is very nice when the Lord enables us to believe and rely upon his faithfulness, honour, and power. Things may look very strange and perplexing, but when you are helped to believe in God instead of trying to make that straight which he hath made crooked, then you will feel that you can commit all into his hands. God had promised

Abraham a son, but he delayed to fulfil the promise, though delay was not donial; and then Abraham and Sarah formed a plan, and Abraham was persuaded to take Hagar to wife; but he had to suffer for this; for in the end Abraham had to cast out Hagar and her son. The Lord said, "Let it not be grievous to thee." Ah, my brother, never attempt to put thy hand to God's work. I never knew one yet who attempted to put their hand to God's work, but what they burnt their fingers over it.

We read of another who attempted to manage affairs, and that was Naomi, which name signifies, "My sweet one." She and her husband and two sons went to sojourn in Moab, because of the famine; and there the Lord was pleased to take away her husband and her two sons. Then she had a heavy heart, and no doubt conscience pricked her; so she resolved to go back to her own people, and her two daughters-in-law went a little way with her. By-and-bye she said to them, "Turn again my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me." As if she should say, "I have nothing before me but misery and wretchedness." But Ruth, in spite of all this, said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God," &c. Did you ever in reading Paul's epistles feel such a oneness of heart and affection to him, that you exclaimed, "Ah, Paul, thy God shall be my God?" And did you ever take up a hymn-book and find a hymn that just suited your case, such as that sweet hymn of Cowper's,

"God moves in a mysterious way," &c.

so that you could say of the writer, "Thy God shall be my God?" When Naomi came back again to Bethlehem all the city was moved about them, and they said, "Is this Naomi?" And she said, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me." Naomi brought back with her a poor Gentile, even Ruth, who had the honour of being one of those from whom the dear Redeemer sprang. My friends, do not try to assist God. If he has made aught crooked, leave it with him to make it straight. I myself have sometimes said, "I won't have this, or that;" but I told my wife last night I would sooner be trodden upon than trample upon others. I would sooner have a blow than return one. I can at times fall down before God and say, "O Lord, thou art God, and I desire to leave my concerns in thy hands." May God give you grace to make your requests known unto him, and watch to see his hand put forth on your behalf. May he help you to stand fast in the faith and quit you like men, and to be honest in the things of God and truth, willing to forfeit your life rather than to forfeit the truth. The martyrs were enabled to sacrifice their lives rather than give up the truth. Why was it? Because they had the Spirit of Christ.

"Be still, and know that I am God." The Lord said to Abraham, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest,

and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering." This would appear very mysterious to Abraham that he should be told to offer up his son. But Abraham took the lad and did as God commanded, being still as to how the matter would turn out, although he knew that Christ was promised from the seed of Abraham after the flesh, and he saw that the honour of God was at stake, and that God would have been a liar had he not have fulfilled his promise. Just as Abraham was about to slay his son, God prevented him, saying, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest me." Nothing can frustrate the purposes of God; for the Lord liveth and reigneth God over all.

After the death of my father a man said to me, "What a sad thing for the Trowbridge people is the death of your father." I replied, "But God is not dead; he still reigns, and when one is called home, he can raise up others to publish abroad the wonders of his redeeming love."

"Be still, and *know that I am God,*" that I make and appoint all these things; for, as the poet says:

"He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be."

Ah, friends, the Lord appoints all things. I have sometimes thought I would not read or pray anymore; for I have prayed and prayed, and sought and sought, and have done everything that I could; but the more I prayed and read and thought upon God the more miserable I have got; so that I have thought I would have nothing more to do with it; but when God touches the heart again, he draws the will forth.

When I first went to Southill there were a lot of Hagarenes, and they came around me like wasps. Of course I vindicated myself, and then they said, "See, what a spirit he is of." I said, "It is the spirit of the grace of God, and I must be bold in defending the truth." A friend told me that some thought of giving up their seats who paid a pound a quarter. I said, "Let some more give them up if they like. God has placed me here, and they cannot move me. The Lord has the cattle upon a thousand hills and all the gold and silver in his hands; so that if they do give up, he will provide." That is forty-four years ago, and I am at Southill now. When God settles a man, the devil cannot remove him, but he sets his servants all barking like dogs; but blessed be God the time is coming when not a dog shall move his tongue.

In Ps. xci we read, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." When overwhelmed with sin, temptations, sinkings, and guilt how sweet it is to know Christ as the Door of divine mercy where God is pleased and reconciled; as we read: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." (2 Cor. v. 19.) Christ is to his people a Brother, Friend, Priest, and Comforter, and in him God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings. I don't

know how you feel, but I feel as if I want the Lord to instruct me now I am old as much as I did when I was young; and I want to be delivered from the evil thoughts that will come into my heart. How transitory are all the things of time, and nothing seems sure to us but the Lord himself; but bless his precious name, himself he never takes away.

In a bereavement like this which has come upon our friend, Mrs. N., we see the transitory nature of all things here below. Have you a husband? You may not have a husband a week longer. Have I a wife? She may not be by my side a week longer. Have I a little of this world's goods? I have seen the day when I have not had twopence in my pocket, but I am not brought into just that place now. But everything in this life is uncertain. Last Tuesday week our departed friend and brother was well, and on Wednesday morning he and his wife went out for a walk, and he seemed in his usual health until Thursday when the Lord sent the arrow of death and took him home.

May the Lord enable us to set our affection on things above, not on things on the earth. O what wisdom we need to see God's mercies. Ah, my friends, I want the Lord to take up his abode, and rule and reign in my heart, and my prayer is, "Lord, raise my heart above all the transitory things of this time state." It is well to consider things over before you begin to grumble. Just take a seat in your arm-chair, and consider. "Well, I am stripped of this, that, and the other." But how did you get them? Say you, "Well, it is true the Lord gave them to me." Then, if he gave thee houses and friends, &c., has he not also a right to take them away if he thinks proper to do so? Shall he not do as he will with his own? If you are brought to fall down and say, "Lord, here I am. Nothing is my own. I would yield my body, my soul, and all that I have to thee," if you are brought there in real earnest you will never regret it.

Remember we are only pilgrims and travellers through this wilderness. Our friend Newman has finished his journey, but I have not yet finished mine. I thought my journey would have been ended years ago; but hitherto the Lord hath helped me; and

"He who hath helped us hitherto,
Will help us all our journey through."

As we journey on may God keep us, and give us a spirit of prayer and supplication; for "wrestling prayer can wonders do;" yes, it can even stop the mouth of lions. The apostle Peter was once laid hold of and put into prison; and to make sure that he could not escape they had sixteen soldiers to guard him and keep him fast; but a few of the Lord's people met for prayer to beg of God to protect him; and in answer to their petitions God sent an angel to bring him out of the prison. At first Peter thought it was a vision; but when he had come to himself he said, "Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews." (Acts xii. 11.)

HUMAN NATURE.

THE consideration of this subject is one of great importance at the present time. This is a day in which much is being made of man and many are the attempts to improve his condition, not only socially and intellectually, but also morally and spiritually, by discovering and working upon what have been termed good and redeeming qualities supposed to be possessed by him, however low he may have fallen in sin.

To ameliorate the condition of the oppressed and downtrodden, and to instruct and educate the ignorant are objects deserving of praise and demand the support of all who have at heart the well-being of their fellow-men. But to suppose that there is anything in man which can be influenced by philanthropy to the extent of reforming him permanently and making him good in a positive sense is an error of great magnitude, the result of which is both lasting and disastrous.

If the Bible were really believed by all Christians they would not be, as alas! so many are, led away by the specious sophistry of so-called Humanitarians. God has tried human nature under every possible condition, and the results of those trials are recorded in order that all may see how useless it is to try in any way to mend it, and how impossible it is to get out of it anything of real and lasting worth.

Let us consider the various trials or tests to which man has been put by God, and may we have divine wisdom granted to us to learn the truths he would, by these object lessons impress upon our hearts.

First. We see man innocent in Eden's Paradise. Here he had no experimental knowledge of evil at all. His moral nature was unique, and we, his fallen children, can form no conception of what his experience was under such circumstances. But we can well conceive that the knowledge only of good, the fellowship of God, and the companionship of a helpmate suited to his nature in every respect were blessings of inestimable value. He was a creature and as such under obligation to his Creator. And in order that he might realise his dependence upon God, which to have fully appreciated would have proved his safeguard, he was given a test of obedience. But temptation came and he fell. He saw, he lusted, he rebelled.

When Adam fell death entered into him; for the moment he took of the forbidden fruit the sentence of the death penalty became operative. He fled from God, and his physical decease became but a question of time, for already the seed of corruption had germinated and the body formed of the dust was destined to return thither. Thus ended the trial of man in a condition of innocency. In this state he failed. And supposing that such a condition was again attainable, where would be the safeguard against a repetition of man's awful fall? There would be none.

After the fall the promise was made that at some future time

the destroyer of man's happiness should himself be destroyed. We may also be sure that man was instructed how he might approach to God from the fact that Abel offered a sacrifice involving the shedding of blood and the taking of life. But man became an utter sinner, and God had to declare of him that the imagination of his heart is evil from his youth.

The world was destroyed with the overwhelming judgment of the flood. And even with this evidence of God's judgment against sin man's heart remained the same, for we find him defiant and daring, plotting against God by building a tower which should at the same time be a monument of his own greatness and a defence against a recurrence of God's judgment. The carnal mind of man truly is enmity with God.

The question may be asked, "Is it not possible to keep man in his proper place and make him subject to God by co-ercive legislation?" This question has also been fully answered. A nation was taken up by God and placed under law more perfect than any that human ingenuity could devise. Life also was promised as the reward of perfect obedience. And how did man act when placed under law? He broke it with impunity.

Let the experiment be tried in a school of boys by forbidding certain actions, say the disfiguring of walls or books; and immediately the restrictions are known there will arise the desire to break through them, and efforts will be made to do what has been forbidden.

And if we further consider the circumstances in which God placed his favoured nation we shall see how aggravated was their rebellion against his holy and just law. God brought them into a land which flowed with milk and honey, that is, a land in which everything that could minister to their prosperity and happiness abounded. And here he dwelt amongst them, so that they were absolutely safe and could rest in the most perfect security so long as they obeyed God's law. Every natural and spiritual inducement was set before them to win their obedience and trust. And in spite of it all they hearkened not unto his word, but rebelled against the Most High. They went their own way, thinking their own thoughts, and doing their own will. Could man be tried under more favourable conditions? Impossible.

And yet God did put him to another test. He came himself, and in the Person of his own Son dwelt a Man among men. We do not touch the question of *why* he came, but take the simple fact and we ask, "What was man's attitude toward the Incarnate Son of God, and how did he deal with him? We answer at once, he proved himself a hater of God. His rebellion reached well-nigh its highest height. When the question was asked by Pilate, "Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas (a murderer), or Jesus (Jehovah-Saviour) which is called Christ?" what was the unanimous reply? "Barabbas." And when a further question was asked as to what should be done with Jesus,

they *all* said, "Let him be crucified." He who went about doing good, and upon whose holy life the Father had expressed his delight from the excellent glory was deemed by man to be worthy of an accursed death. O! the depth of man's hatred to God. It is inbred in his very nature.

And yet again has man been tried. One would have thought that after he had proved himself so base, so utterly lost to the influences of Incarnate love, God would have swept him from off his creation with the besom of a devouring judgment. But no; the long-suffering of God waits to be gracious. Again, a dispensation of mercy is brought in by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. Jesus is exalted to the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, and the Holy Ghost is sent to be a witness of his exaltation and to announce the gift of repentance and pardon even to those who had put Christ to death. And how did man receive this gracious ministry? Listen to the words of the apostle Peter. "Ye do alway resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did so do ye." It is so to-day. Except where the distinguishing grace of God prepares the heart to receive the message of his love and mercy man resists the Holy Spirit.

Then how futile must any attempt at improving upon that which has been so thoroughly tested by God prove. It cannot be accomplished, and in participating in such efforts the Christian is doing great dishonour to God.

But is there then no power that can meet the wretched case of unregenerate man? Must he for ever remain an alien to God and be left to perish in his sins? No. The Lord has made provision for those who in the counsels of his grace he purposes to bring into fellowship with himself, by giving a new nature which in its source is spiritual as opposed to the carnal nature of man. Hence our Lord, in speaking to Nicodemus, said, "Ye must be born again." "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (Jno. iii. 5, 6.) This is the truth which is so lightly esteemed by professors in our day, but upon which issues so immense and so far-reaching hang.

May we who know its exceeding preciousness, by the Lord's help cling to it with all the tenacity of our renewed souls, keeping ourselves clear of all associations which in the smallest degree would weaken its testimony against the total depravity of man's nature. "The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every-one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." (2 Tim. ii. 19.)

At one time of our lives we may, perhaps, think that it is very easy to be religious; but when we have been well drilled in the school of temptation then we begin to see that it is the hardest thing in the world, so hard, indeed, that nothing short of a miracle of free grace can work in us that religion which shall save the soul.—*Philpot*.

THE LONGSUFFERING AND FORBEARANCE OF GOD.

Dear Mother,—Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ be multiplied unto you. As it is only through the rich, free, sovereign, unmerited grace and mercy of our covenant Jehovah that worthless, guilty, perishing, ill and hell-deserving sinners can find peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ I thus address you, wishing that the peace of God which passeth all understanding may rule in your heart always and by all means.

Your trials are great, but there is a necessity for them or your heavenly Father would not suffer them to come upon you. He is saying to you by them, "Look unto me. Live upon me for happiness. Arise, and depart; for this is not your rest; it is polluted." May we then be helped to look up to him for a sanctified use of all our trials. I am more and more led to see that there is a needs-be for all these things; for I still feel such a cleaving to the things of earth that were it not for trials I seem as though I should forget God and the things of God; but blessed be his name, though I am often tempted to give all up and follow the corrupt desires of my carnal heart, yet I find I cannot do so, for I am kept by the mighty power of God; and when I consider the goodness and mercy of God which have followed me all the days of my life and the sad returns I am daily making, I am filled with wonder at the longsuffering and forbearance of that God who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. What indeed is it but the tender mercy of God that keeps me out of the pit of destruction?

I am often much cast-down by reason of inward corruption, but blessed be God, salvation does not depend upon our good frames nor our bad ones; for it was all completed by our great covenant Head when he cried out, "It is finished!" O for faith to be enabled to see that he hath finished salvation for us, and to know that it was for us he shed his precious blood!

But I want now to write to you respecting the state of my mind of late; but, alas! I know not what to say nor where to begin. I am now in the most wretched state I ever was in since I have known anything about spiritual things. I do not know whether it is what Bunyan calls "The Valley of the Shadow of Death," or the "Enchanted Ground." I feel to have a corrupt heart in which are all the evils that attend the guilty race of Adam, and floods of guilt, sin, and temptation roll over my soul, so that I am constrained to say, "I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me." My iniquities have gone over my head, as a heavy burden, they are too heavy for me to bear, and darkness spreads itself over my soul, and I am bowed down with the chain of my sins.

"O for some kind, some heavenly ray,
To cheer my gloomy path,

To turn my darkness into day,
 And chase the shades of death.
 "My sin-sick soul in sorrow mourns,
 And Jesus hides his face.
 O when will morning light return,
 And bring me joy and peace!"

Thus is my soul in trouble, and what makes the burden the heavier is that instead of flying to the Strong for strength, my mind seems open to every temptation, my heart a sink of sin and all uncleanness, with inclinations to every evil, and prone to rebel against that God which hath followed me with mercy and goodness all the days of my life. I think I now know something of what is meant by the fiery darts of the devil which are spoken of in the last chapter of Paul's epistle to the Ephesians; but the Word of God tells us that if we are enabled to resist Satan, he will fly from us. But O to be led captive by him at his will is dreadful indeed.

Dear mother, try and pray for a poor worthless, ill and hell-deserving sinner, that I may be brought to the feet of Jesus, humbled on account of my own vileness, and led to receive all the blessings of pardon, peace, and reconciliation to God which flow freely to sinners through the meritorious sacrifice and death of the God-Man Mediator. My heart sometimes feels as hard as an adamant and insensible as steel, and I fear I shall be given up to the power of my own heart's lust and fall a prey to every temptation that the devil throws in my way; and what is worse, I have not a friend to whom I can communicate the sorrows of my mind; for "lover and friend hath he put far from me." Surely I have cause to say with the prophet Jeremiah, "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light. Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand against me all the day." (Lam. iii. 1-3.) I often fear I am a castaway, and that I have never felt any real, godly sorrow for sin, nor any holy mourning for a crucified Saviour, which it is said the Lord's people shall feel, and "shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him."

Let me hear from you as soon as possible.

April 20th, 1828.

Your affectionate Son,

JOHN GARDNER.

DARKNESS AND LIGHT.

My dear Friend,—We were pleased to received your letter a few days ago, and as Mrs. K. cannot very well write to you, I will attempt to do so, trusting it may be welcome, though from me. It seems that you, with ourselves, have some days of darkness in spiritual things. We are told in Scripture that "the days of darkness shall be many;" so with all our darkness we have ground to hope that we are not altogether out of the path

laid down in the Word of God as the path of life; for we have life enough to see and feel our dark state and mourn over it.

What a long night of darkness we were once in before we were quickened and enlightened by the Spirit of God, and while in that state we had no real concern about it. Professors may talk about their light and joy, and despise those who complain of darkness. How is this? Because they compass themselves about with sparks of their own kindling, and walk in the light of their own fire; and never having experienced the true Light, they cannot know the loss of it; therefore, having no changes, they fear not God. The real Christian has no light of his own, but is a poor, dark, ignorant sinner, dependant on the Sun of Righteousness for light and warmth, and also for fruit and vigour; and he lives a life of faith upon the Son of God. But when faith is not in exercise, or the eye of faith is dim, then he walks in darkness and has no light, and cries out, "O when wilt thou come unto me?" and with Job, "O that I were as in months past!" But although we have to experience many days of darkness, yet, blessed be God, it is not all darkness, for the promise runs thus: "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings." (Mal. iv. 2.) When he shines there is light and health combined, and when he withdraws darkness, sickness, bondage, debts, and a multitude of evils and trials overwhelm the soul.

Many of the Lord's people find their latter days more trying than their first days, that is, as regards communion with God and with the saints. They look back upon the time of their espousals and the gladness of their hearts, when they were in their first love and were indulged by the Lord as a child is caressed by its mother, when the communion of saints was sweet and the Lord's house was a Bethel indeed, and they long for a return of those days and wonder why they are not favoured now as then. In this way the Lord trieth the righteous, in order that they may live upon himself rather than upon their own graces or comforts; and in this way faith is made manifest as a grace of the Spirit.

If we would rightly judge of our faith we must do so in a time of darkness and trial; for at other times we have not so much faith and love as we are apt to think we have. These after days,—these days of darkness and desertion are a part of the furnace that purifies the gold. Say you, "I feel more and more impure, earthly, hard, and cold." That may be so of a truth, and on this account you loathe yourself and repent in dust and ashes before God, feeling more and more the need of a full and free salvation that will not only save you from your first sins, but from a body of sin and death, from sins against light and against God's goodness. Here you see the dross shows itself and is remembered by you, while the gold is refined, God is glorified, your soul humbled, and you speak out of the dust. Thus Christ Jesus wears the crown, and we go softly the rest of

our days. The Lord says, "My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." (Isa. xlii. 8.) Thus we find that the days of darkness are not altogether unprofitable days, though we are at such times bereft of comfort.

Besides this we have some times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, little touches of his love which soften the heart and draw out our affection to himself, making him precious to our souls; and one minute's communion with him now is more prized by us than a whole day's rejoicing was formerly. In these latter stages we well know the worth of a smile, and if we did not we should vaunt ourselves and grow too stiff with pride, saying; "Our own hand or merit hath done it." The day of prosperity and the day of adversity are set the one over against the other to the end that man should find nothing after him, but go out of the world a sinner saved by rich, superabounding grace and precious blood. Why should we be favoured thus whilst many have no desire for these things? We may well say with the poet,

"Why was I made to hear his voice,
And enter while there's room?" &c.

One is made to hear his voice and is drawn by his love, being made willing in the day of his power, while another is left to his own wretched choice, having no desire for spiritual food. This shows what nature is if left to itself, and also what God's grace does for his people.

We hope you are improving in health, and that your partner is well. Your letter of this morning does not give a very bright account of the health of our friends near you. May these afflictions be sanctified abundantly to each concerned therein, so that good may come out of them. Wishing you much of the Lord's refreshing presence and support, and with our united Christian love,

I remain,

Yours affectionately in the Truth,

! Biddenden, March 7th, 1889.

J. KEMP.

THE LORD'S DWELLING-PLACE.

Dear Sister in Christ Jesus our Lord,—I wish you and your spouse much of his soul-satisfying presence at this season of the year, and that neither you nor yours, me nor mine, may serve him as the Innkeeper at Bethlehem did,—I mean, lodge him in the stable. To listen attentively to his voice is to have an obedient ear; to covet him earnestly, and to hunger and thirst after him is to have him in our desires, and "the desire of a man is his kindness." To love to speak of his name and his praise is to extol him with one's tongue; to look to him wishfully, earnestly, and to long after him is to captivate him with our looks: "Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me;" "Thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes." To fear offending

him, and to be tender of his honour, is to have him always before our eyes; to fly to him as our Advocate under every accusation of Satan or our own heart, is to have him at our right hand: "He shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul." (Ps. cix. 31.) But to embrace him in love and hearty affection is having him to lie all night betwixt our breasts, or to have him in our heart as "the Chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely." This, my dear sister, is his resting-place for ever. "Here will I dwell," saith he; "for I have desired it;" and, as the spouse speaks, "his desire is toward me."

But where is my poor sister? Her letter is not dated from the hill Mizar. It is neither from mount Tabor nor the valley of Baca. She is neither rejoicing in the banqueting house nor weeping by the waters of Babylon. Mary seems to be in a pet, or under some provocations of anger or jealousy; at least it conveys something of this sort to my feeling. Is she in one of her former fits of unbelief? Is she sick of love? Is she suffering in those fires of jealousy which have a most vehement flame? Or is she under desertion?—"A woman grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God." "Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame; for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood anymore. For thy Maker is thine Husband; and the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called."

I do not know where thou art, nor how it is that my pen runs on like the poor Shunamite's ass when she was riding to Carmel, while death was in possession of her son behind and hope in the prophet before. "Drive on," said she, and so say I, and to Lewes I must go in this little paper vehicle; but whether I shall hit thy case, or find thee out, must be left to him who confirms the word of his servant, and performs the counsel of his messenger; who makes a man know what are his thoughts, and reveals his secrets to his servants the prophets.

My dear God, mine Holy One, my reverend, greatly revered and benign Parent, my everlasting Father, and eternal All in all is a jealous God, jealous of his own praise, honour, and glory, and jealous of the hearts and affections of the darling of his soul; he cannot, will not brook, put up with, nor be put off with a divided heart. He made us, he chose us, he undertook for us, he redeemed us, he called us, he has espoused and betrothed us, he is married to us, and will have us; and from all our filthiness and from all our idols he will cleanse us; and we must have, we shall have no other gods but him.

But does the husband mind the farm while the wife goes to Carmel? Does he stand behind the curtain and toll Mary to write? The direction is master's, the whole contents came from dame. The Lord grant that you may be true yoke-fellows in the furrow

of gospel-obedience unto life, and then the yoke shall be easy and the burden light.

As for me, I labour under the scourge of many tongues. I shall be everything that is bad while alive, and everything that is good when dead; but "none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself," so that I can but finish my course with joy, and the ministry that I have received to testify the gospel of the grace of God. I know in whom I have believed, whom I love, and whom I serve with a pure conscience. My reward is before me, and my work is with my God. He alone called and commissioned me, he sent me and blessed me, and he will keep, save, own, and acknowledge me, and receive me to himself when the building of mercy is completed, and the topstone brought forth with the double shout of "Grace, grace unto it."

I will send a line previous to my coming. My kindest love, best wishes, hearty respects, humble acknowledgments, and many thanks to you both; while I remain, dear friends,

Your willing and affectionate Servant in the Bonds of the Pure, Unadulterated, and Everlasting Gospel of the King of kings, and Lord of lords,

Dec. 29th, 1796.

WILLIAM HUNTINGTON.

THE IRRESISTIBLE TOUCH OF THE SPIRIT.

My dear Nephew and Niece,—I am pleased to tell you that dear B. improves in health, appetite, and spirits. May the Lord bless her with his rich grace which is not hereditary, but is his own free gift in the exercise of his sovereign choice in election and glorious predestination without which none of Adam's race would be saved; for we are surely all *Naamans* by nature, and despise the river of life flowing from Jesus' side, and we go away in a rage from all counsel and advice in the depths of pride and self-righteousness, until the gentle, quiet, soft, effectual, gracious, powerful, and irresistible touch of the Spirit comes and breathes light and life into our dead, dark souls.

Leprous we go down by faith into Jordan and there wash and are made clean in the sea of our precious Christ's atoning blood. Then O what cleansing, power, and victory are felt, and what holy and hallowed rejoicing we are the subjects of! Then we triumph over all hell and the powers of darkness, and sacred humiliation is felt. Who then shall condemn us? Law, justice, conscience, or Satan? O no. It is Christ that died; and this is enough. Let us crown him Lord of all! Let us erect an altar unto the Lord and give him the homage of our hearts.

Soon, very soon I shall see him and be like him, and cast my crown at his dear feet. O blessed thought! Then, farewell old nature, which has been my torment in the house of my pilgrimage. Farewell Satan, who has thrown his fiery darts at me thousands of times. Farewell vain, seducing world. You also

with me shall see the King in his beauty, yea, all the beauty of the only-Begotten of the Father in a glorified humanity.

O that the Lord would be pleased to sanctify all the dispensations of his gracious providence toward us, weaning our hearts from earth, that we might be brought to bow to his gracious will and find by blessed experience Christ to be our heaven, our Resting-place, and our spiritual food day by day.

We all unite in much love to your dear selves, and the body elect amongst you, praying that you might enjoy much communion with a Triune God.

Yours in Love,

Barnstaple, Nov. 11th, 1864.

C. ALEXANDER.

“COME, LORD JESUS, COME QUICKLY.”

My beloved Pastor,—I scarcely know whether to write a few lines to you or not, yet feel a desire to tell you how much the word from your lips was blessed to my soul last evening; and as it is often less difficult for me to express myself in writing than by word of mouth I trust you will forgive me for troubling you with a letter. Truly I can once more set to my seal that the Lord does hear and answer prayer; yes, even the feeble lisplings of the *most* unworthy.

For some time past I have been very low and tried, and although I hope I have at times had some little helps under the word, yet I could not get what I wanted, and was afraid I should never again feel the sweet witness of the Spirit within and be enabled to say, “The Lord is my God.” All last week I was greatly cast-down and ready to conclude that I was altogether out of the secret of true religion, for I thought no child of God ever felt as I did or was the subject of such sins and backslidings of heart as I have to mourn over more or less from day to day.

Last evening before going to chapel I went up into my bedroom, and on my knees tried to beg of the Lord to once more look in mercy upon me and bless me, if it could be that I was one of his children; and I could not help reminding him of what I had felt in times past and which I hoped had been the work of his Spirit in my soul; and I felt assured that as he alone could have brought me at the first to seek his face; so none but himself could keep alive the little spark that trembles in my breast.

As I took my seat in chapel the case of the poor woman came forcibly to my mind, and how she said, “But the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the master’s table.” I inwardly said, “Lord, I feel indeed that I am unworthy of the children’s meat; but do let some crumbs fall for me, *even me.*” I did not get anything from the hymn or the chapter; but while you were in prayer my heart was broken all to pieces, for you so exactly described my case and asked for the things of which I so much stood in need. When you spoke of some who might be passing

through fiery trials and fearing that they should not endure unto the end, I felt that was just where I was; for although not tried so much outwardly as some are, yet the Lord only knows the conflict and struggle that goes on within, and how sometimes I am ready to sink, feeling so much, so *very much* discouraged because of the way. I could not restrain my feelings, but wept under a sense of my vileness and my great need of God's mercy, for which you so earnestly pleaded. Glad was I that it was during the prayer, so that no eye could see me.

My heart was up to the Lord that this might prove a prelude to a blessing under the preached word, in which, blessed be his dear and holy name, I was not disappointed. O that I could always feel as I did last evening! Happy should I be could I for ever retain, as Toplady says, that "heart-transporting Guest," even the Lord Jesus. Once more I proved the truth of the lines that were once so very sweet to me at Zoar Chapel, London, when Mr. Gladwin gave them out after you had been preaching from Ps. xxxiii. 20, which was such a memorable time to me. The lines were these:

"A moment's intercourse with him,
Thy grief will overpay."

When you quoted that sweet text: "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. iv. 15), O what love and grief filled my breast,—love to the Lord Jesus under a feeling sense of his preciousness and that he was to me the Chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely, and grief that I should so sin against him and grieve his Holy Spirit, which at times makes me fear he has departed from me and will no more grant me those sweet visitations which I love to feel.

As you were speaking of the soul that had been once quickened longing to feel the quickenings of the Spirit again, I thought, "That is just what I want and what I have been wrestling for before I left home;" and when you observed that it was impossible for a soul that had been once quickened by the Spirit to go back into the state of death in trespasses and sins in which it formerly was when without hope and without God in the world, although in our feelings we are "in deaths oft," I could say I had proved that to be a truth; for though I have experienced of late so much death and bondage, yet I cannot be satisfied with the things of the world which once charmed me, and with which I was so well content that I remember feeling I did not want to be called by grace because I knew it would spoil me for the things in which I vainly hoped to find pleasure.

Then, towards the end of the sermon, you said with such confidence, "If you know and have felt these things, *you are a child of God*, notwithstanding all your fears; and hear what God has said in his Word: 'For a *small moment* have I forsaken thee; but with *great mercies* will I gather thee. In a

little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with *everlasting kindness* will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee" (Isa. liv. 7-9), and you remarked that that was just what we feared, lest the Lord would be wrath with us and rebuke us. My eyes overflowed with tears and I wished I had been in some secret place where I could have wept to the praise of the mercy I had found; for I felt that, notwithstanding all my sins and unworthiness, there was "hope of mercy e'en for me."

On Sunday week you spoke of setting up way-marks and making high heaps, and I really felt last night that I had another stone to add to my little heap, and could say, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped me." As you were led to dwell upon the latter part of your text,—what we were hoping in and waiting for, I felt they were the very things on which my heart was set, though they seem so great that at times I fear it is presumption for one so vile to hope that I shall ever attain unto them; and yet if it were not for this little hope within my breast I should be of all persons most miserable. If the Lord will but bring me into his kingdom, "there to see his face, and never, never sin," O how willingly shall I cast my crown at his feet and praise him throughout a never-ending eternity! Whilst hearing you preach last evening I felt I could say from my inmost soul, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly;" for I longed to drop this body of sin and death, and see him as he is, and never more grieve him with my sins and base backslidings.

I do well know the truth of one remark you made, which was to the effect that "grace never leads us to *live in sin*, but *grace* makes us to feel that *sin lives in us*," which is my daily plague and trouble, though I am sometimes troubled because I cannot feel that grief and sorrow for sin that I would; but when the Lord again visits me and blesses me with a sense of his love, O how I loathe and abhor myself, and if I could do the things that I would, I would never sin against him again in thought, word, or deed.

Do forgive me for troubling you with this scribble, and may God Almighty bless you, and raise up many more to call you "blessed," as I trust I have done many times when his love has warmed my heart. This is the prayer of

Yours, though Unworthily,

April 22nd, 1889.

M. W.

To see Jesus All in all and to see ourselves nothing at all, is to see and know truth by the Spirit of truth.—*Mason*.

Who can compute the full value of God's love to one redeemed sinner? On earth it surpasseth knowledge; in heaven it surpasseth all returns of praise.—*Romaine*.

REVIEWS.

A Brief Memoir of James Jones, together with various Writings Letters, and Hymns written by Himself.—Wadhurst, Sussex: Miss Betts, Church Street.

THERE are, doubtless, some of the Lord's children scattered about in the earth who are hidden, or very little known to his people generally; and yet there is an indestructible bond of union existing between all the members of Christ's mystical body, for all are chosen and loved in Christ with an everlasting love. Some of the Lord's people are unknown to each other in the flesh, but they will all be gathered into his everlasting kingdom to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Some of the Lord's servants whilst here below are not brought so prominently before the churches of truth as are others, and yet the Lord makes them useful and a blessing to his people in the sphere in which they are called to labour, he having in infinite wisdom fixed the bounds of their habitation and marked out for them their paths for usefulness to his redeemed people.

Joseph of Arimathæa was, during the lifetime of Christ, a secret disciple of his, but at the death of the dear Redeemer his spiritual courage grew bolder, his faith was increased, and his love manifested when he went to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus. Nicodemus also, whose character previous to the death and burial of the Lord had been rather obscure, now came forth and joined the secret disciple, Joseph, in embalming the dead body of the Lord their God. In this act of kindness to the dead proof was given that they had life and faith in their hearts in the Redeemer whilst he lived, and now love flowed out of their hearts which manifested their love to and faith in him who was despised and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Where life, faith, and love exist in the soul, they are generally manifested in some way or other when such persons who possess these graces come in contact with the children of God; and sometimes those who have been least known, and who for a time have lived in partial obscurity, in times of extremity they show the greatest zeal and manifest their love and union to Christ and his people more genuinely and brightly than many who speak great things with their tongue, but whose works deny their words.

The subject of this Memoir, James Jones, was quite unknown to us, and we believe unknown to many of the Lord's servants and also to many of his people. We do not remember that we had heard anything of him as a minister until very recently, and yet he had laboured in the Lord's vineyard for over fifty years, and was the stated minister at Shover's Green for the long period of forty-five years. He has written his experience in verse, in which it seems clear that the Lord began to teach him very early in life, and that he was brought as a guilty sinner to seek refuge in Christ and to find mercy and forgiveness through him.

We would rather he had written his experience in the ordinary way and not in verse, as this is almost invariably the more acceptable to the people of God, many of whom have not much love for poetry; but what he has written commends itself as a reality. We have only one of his preached sermons in the book before us which is clear in doctrine and clear in experience; but the substance of what he preached and loved may be gathered from his letters, which are clear, Scriptural, and experimental, and from one of these we will give the following extract:

"I can hardly understand the cause and motive of the several questions you ask. Your first appears strange: 'Is preaching the gospel to the unregenerate from henceforth to cease, or is it to continue to the end of the world?' To continue, of course, seeing the command is to 'Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.' But if instead of preaching I am to understand that offering is meant, then the sooner it cease the better, as I can find no Scriptural authority for its commencement. That the word *preach* and the word *offer* widely differ, see Neh. vi. 7, and Jonah iii. 2. Put the word *offer* in the place of the word *preach*, and you will see that to *offer* a king is not to *preach* him; so Jonah was not to *offer* the offering God bid him, but to *preach* the preaching he bid him. He had nothing to offer, but a very solemn message to preach or to proclaim to the people. My friend knows that the invitations and promises of the gospel are to characters described in the Word; namely, the 'poor in spirit,' the 'hungry,' the 'thirsty,' and the 'willing,' the 'broken-hearted,' and the 'labouring and heavy laden' sinner. These are marks and evidences of being born of God. Those that know nothing of God in his holy law, nor of their sinfulness under it, are not yet prepared to find mercy and salvation good news to their souls. Who that preaches and knows that salvation is all of grace, wishes to keep from the most abandoned sinner that comes under the sound of his voice the knowledge of the gospel fact that 'whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy?'"

The latter part of the book is made up of poetry on different subjects, which those who have a poetical mind may appreciate. The whole of the book is in accordance with truth, and the Lord is able to make it a blessing to those who may read it and reward the one who has compiled it.

Departed Saints. Poems by the late Sarah Ann Hills, of Mildenhull, Suffolk.—London: F. Kirby, 17, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, E.C.

THIS little book contains poems by one whose writings appeared in the "G. S." some years ago under the signature, "Sarah." Many of these poems are written on the death of gracious persons. The Author of them was for the last sixteen years of her life a cripple. In what part of the Lord's church she was placed we know not; but in the Preface it is stated that her father and brother were both ministers. It is a nice little book, and will,

no doubt, be read with interest, especially by the relatives of those on whose death she has written. It is also very suitable as a present to young persons.

St. Paul on Idols; and The Idols in St. Paul's. Being the Substance of a Lecture by James Ormiston. May be had of the Author, 2, Kensington Place, Clifton, Bristol.

MR. ORMISTON in his Lecture has unflinchingly exposed Ritualistic practices in the Church of England and clearly shown them as idolatrous. It really seems marvellous that in the present enlightened age men of intelligence and education should be turning their faces towards Rome and her idolatrous practices, and be led away by the Ritualistic ministers who, in reality, are Romish priests in disguise, who are gradually ensnaring and seducing men to return to and sanction that which cost our forefathers so much suffering and blood, and through whose sufferings this nation was delivered from the slavery, idolatry, and abominations of that corrupt and corrupting system,—Romanism.

We hope this Pamphlet may be widely circulated, and be made a means of enlightening the eyes of some who by their attendance at St. Paul's Cathedral and other places are being blinded to the real purposes and intentions of these Ritualistic gentlemen, who are servants of the devil in disguise.

Obituary.

JOSEPH HORBURY.—On April 24th, 1889, aged 58, Joseph Horbury.

He was baptized and became a member of the church at Clayton West on the first Lord's day in August, 1872. I loved him dearly, and walked in sweet union with him up to the time of his death. We were like David and Jonathan, knit together in the bonds of spiritual affection. His parents and his sister Eliza were members of the church at Clayton West, and it may truly be said of them that they died in faith. He was brought up to attend the house of God, and was not left to run in the ways of open profanity and ungodliness; but he grew up to manhood a stranger both to himself and to the love and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He was by trade a carpenter, and when out of his apprenticeship he went to work at Chesterfield, and while there, away from his own home and the means of grace, the Lord began to show him that he was neither fit to live nor fit to die, and do what he would, he could not get these thoughts out of his mind, but was more and more convinced that dying in that state he would be sure to go to hell. God appeared to him as holy and righteous, and he felt himself to be vile and unclean. The wrath of God revealed against all unrighteousness made him miserable all the day long. When he had done his work he used to walk the lanes

and fields lamenting his lost and undone state as a sinner, and feared he should soon hear his awful doom from a just and angry God; and often, as he saw the cattle grazing in the pastures, did he wish that he was one of them, for he thought, "After death there will be an end of them, but not so with me, for I have an immortal soul, and it is defiled with sin, and the Word of God says, 'The soul that sinneth it shall die.'" Thus he groaned and wept and was almost in despair, so that his life became a burden to him, and he was obliged to relinquish his work.

One night, as he lay awake in bed bemoaning his sad condition, there came a terrible thunderstorm, and he feared every flash of lightning would strike him dead and that his soul would be in an awful eternity, when these words were sweetly dropped into his soul: "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." (Isa. xliii. 1-3.) This turned his captivity, brought his feet out of the stocks and his shoulders from the yoke; his burdened soul was set at liberty and his darkness turned into light.

Shortly after this he returned to Clayton West, and formed an acquaintance with Esther Mosley, daughter of Mr. Mosley, minister of the gospel. They had not long been married before they removed to Blackburn and for a time sat under the ministry of Mr. Horbury, who was Joseph's uncle, and there it was that his soul was fed with gospel manna and his feet much established upon the Rock of Ages. But after a time a serious illness came upon him and he was laid prostrate for a considerable time. During this affliction he was much reduced in circumstances and all their little savings were gone. One day, as he lay in bed, his wife went upstairs to him, and after a little conversation said, "I wonder what we shall have to do, for one shilling is all the money I have got." He turned over in bed with his face away from his wife that she might not see him weep, and in doing so felt as if he would sink and faint away; but just at that very moment the Lord spake these words to him: "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them" (Isa. xli. 17), and such assurance came with the promise that he felt confident some way would be opened up for their deliverance, which proved to be the case.

As soon as he was able after his recovery he returned to Clayton West, but was never afterwards strong enough to earn a livelihood at his own trade, but was chiefly dependent upon the industry of his wife who toiled hard and successfully as a dress-maker and milliner. This led him eventually into the tailoring and drapery business which he followed up to the time of his death. His house and his heart were, like the house and hearts

of his parents, ever open to receive and entertain the ministers of God, and no company was so welcome to him as the company of the children of God. I have often looked back to the times when Mr. Clough used to visit us and the golden hours we have spent together, and found it very profitable to our souls. Mr. C. was as a father, a friend, and an instructor to us in those days, and as we communed together our doubts and fears were often chased away, and our faith and feet encouraged to run in the ways of God.

I have found but few companions that I could walk and talk with as I did with our departed friend, for we never had the least jar, and his feelings and faintings, his groanings and his sighings, his longings and desires, his hoping and trusting, his joys and deliverances, his foretastes and prospects were always the index of my own heart. His only hope was in the Lord Jesus Christ, his precious death and sacrifice, and his blood and righteousness. Often have we conversed about the Foundation of our hope, and our weakness, sinfulness, and insufficiency to do anything good in the sight of God, and often has he expressed to me his need of the Holy Spirit to enlighten, soften, humble, teach, lead, comfort, and confirm his soul in the things of God, and his great anxiety to be found right at the last. He wanted a religion that would do in a dying hour. As a hearer of the gospel he was very attentive, and very considerate where he could feel that the speaker was a man of truth, but he could not receive everybody. Historical, dry, doctrinal, letter-preachers, duty-faith preachers, and proud, self-confident, unexercised preachers made his heart sad; but the humble, fearful, tried, living ministers of Christ's gospel had a warm place in his affections and a hearty reception at his home. He was very humble, quiet, and retiring, slow to speak and swift to hear. In prayer he was very trembling and backward, but many sweet seasons have we spent together at a throne of grace.

Our own periodicals were his monthly literature, and his library contained many good books; but his choice authors were Huntington, Gadsby, Rusk, and Philpot, and often when I called upon him would he have some particular portion from some of the above for me to read, that had been sweet and profitable to his soul, and many times have we sat reading and talking until midnight, sometimes weeping and sometimes rejoicing at the blessed and wonderful things those dear saints of God had left on record. He was a firm and steadfast adherent to the distinguishing truths of the Word of God, and would have no pandering to error, nor compromise in the things of God. He hated Fullerism as much as Arminianism. Man's absolute and utter ruin by nature he earnestly contended for. God's sovereign choice of his people, special redemption by the Lord Jesus Christ, effectual calling by the Holy Ghost, the final perseverance of the saints to eternal glory, the believer's tribulatory and thorny pathway were all matters of faith and not mere

opinion with him. O that God would raise up others to fill the empty places of those who are gone from Clayton West!

For many years he had a shattered frame, and was often in bed or confined indoors; but his afflictions were borne with patience and frequently attended with the bedewings of the Blessed Spirit. He many times feared he should live to be a trouble to his wife, and on different occasions he has expressed to me his willingness to die, and to be free from all his toil and care, his sins and temptations. He would say, "There is nothing worth living for. The world has no charms for me. I don't mind who has its portion. Let me have Christ and heaven, and I shall be satisfied."

His customers lay far apart, and this necessitated long journeys and late hours, which fatigued his poor body. He sometimes said to me, "You must not be surprised if I am found dead on the road-side," and singular to say, such was in a great measure the case with him. He had been one of his usual rounds, and having an opportunity of riding in a conveyance a distance of eight miles he availed himself of the privilege, but when little more than a mile from his home the vehicle was overthrown and he was pitched violently to the ground, and his head badly bruised and his brain crushed. He was carried to an Inn and afterwards to his home, but was never able to speak. This happened on Saturday, April 20th, and he breathed his last on Wednesday, the 24th. He was interred in the chapel-yard on Friday the 26th. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord," and I am sure our departed friend died in the Lord, and now lives and reigns with him in eternal glory.

R. MOXON.

MARIA TURNER.—On May 28th, 1889, aged 68, Maria Turner.

She was called by grace in early life, and was well taught in the things of salvation. She lost her sight when about fifteen years of age by what is commonly termed an accident, and having laid out for herself a pathway of earthly pleasure, her disappointment was so great that she expected it would end in a Lunatic Asylum. But when it pleased the Lord to begin a work of grace in her soul, she thought it a mercy she was not in hell. She continued in deep soul-trouble for several months, and the first comfort she was favoured with was under a sermon preached by the late Mr. Kershaw, on a Tuesday evening, in Rochdale Road Chapel.

She was much comforted and instructed by the late Mr. Taylor, and built up in the things pertaining to salvation. She was baptized by Mr. Taylor thirty-eight years ago and continued an honourable member up to the time of her death.

She suffered from heart-disease, but the immediate cause of death was inflammation of the bowels. She was much favoured in her sickness. She had some parts of the Scriptures in raised type, and used to read them a great deal; and having a very re-

tentive memory she knew much of some parts of the Word of God. She often spoke of Isaiah xlvi. 10 as applicable to her : "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."

She was interred by Mr. MacKee in Harpurhey Cemetery, Manchester, in the presence of many friends.

L. K.

JAMES CUNLIFF.—On May 13th, 1889, aged 88, James Cunliff, deacon of the church at Haydock.

He was chosen deacon with Thomas Letherland when the church at Haydock was first formed by the late Mr. William Vaughan on Sept. 24th, 1848. The last few years of his life his strength failed him and he was not able to get to the house of God, which was a great grief to him, for he loved to hear a free-grace gospel preached by men whom the Lord had called to speak in his name. I have known him for thirty-nine years and have felt a love to him which continued unto the end. He loved to hear the servants of God speak of the things which the Holy Ghost had taught him in his own soul.

At the age of twenty-one the Lord stopped him in his downward course and made him feel what a sinful wretch he was. He was brought up to attend the Church of England, and when he came out of church could go into the world again and not feel that he was doing wrong; but when the Lord's time came to show him what he was as a sinner in his sight, he felt he could not go into the world as he used to do. The Lord made him to feel that he was a law-breaker, and that by the deeds of the law no flesh living could be justified. He strove to do his best to make things straight, but the more he strove the worse he felt, and it seemed to him as if the Lord would have nothing to do with such a base wretch as he felt himself to be, and that there was no hope for him. He knew well that God would be just if he cut him down as a cumberer of the ground. Such things would rise up in his soul that he knew not what to do or where to go for relief. Many times did he go into some secret place to cry unto the Lord that he would have mercy upon him and save such a vile, sinful wretch.

When he heard of such men as the late Mr. William Gadsby, Kershaw, and others whom the Lord had sent to preach the gospel of a precious Jesus, he went to hear them, and it seemed to him as if they knew all about him, for they spoke of the very things he was passing through in his own soul; but the words would come with weight and power upon his mind: "The soul that sinneth it shall die," which made him tremble, and he felt what a wonderful thing it would be if the Lord would have mercy upon his soul, but feared there was no hope for him; and he knew that God was just in letting him remain in this dark state of mind. While in this deep distress the Lord broke in upon his soul with his love and mercy, and made him to rejoice in his

free and sovereign grace; so that he could say with David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." Then he was assured that the Lord had loved him with an everlasting love and his soul was filled with peace. He went in the strength of this for some time, rejoicing in the love of a precious Jesus, and felt that Christ was more dear to him than all beside.

But he had to prove that he was not to have it all bright and go on singing all his days, for he found that there were days of darkness as well as light. His own wicked heart as well as the devil rose up against him, and he was much tried about the reality of the love which he hoped he had felt to the Lord and his people; so that he was shut up, and like David could not come forth, and had to cry, "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name." He proved the truth of what the Lord says in his Word, namely, that "it is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom." He sensibly felt that he could not keep alive his own soul and that power belongeth unto God. He loved to hear the Lord's people speak of what they knew by the Spirit's teaching in their souls. He loved experimental preaching, and could say when he heard the Lord's servants trace out the footsteps of the flock, "This people shall be my people, and their God my God." I have heard him say many times that the Lord had kept him for over sixty years, and that through grace he still loved the Lord Jesus Christ and his blessed gospel; and though the devil and his own wicked heart tried hard at times to make him believe that God would have nothing to do with such a vile, sinful wretch, and that some day it would be seen that he never knew the Lord aright for himself, yet the Lord would come again and say, "Fear not; I am thy God," and assure him that as his days so should his strength be. Many blessed promises did the Lord seal with power upon his soul.

A day or two before he died he raised both his hands and clasped them together, and from his manner we believed he felt the Lord precious to his soul. Nothing but the Lord Jesus would do for him in life, and when he came to his death-bed he was like a child willing to wait the Lord's time, for he said God knew best when to take him home to join in that sweet and precious song, and crown him Lord of all. It was good to be with him and hear him speak of the goodness of the Lord to him. He would say, "What a mercy it is that God should have had thoughts of love and mercy upon me even when I was dead in trespasses and sins, and that he should have quickened me together with Christ." Yet nothing short of feeling that he was saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation would satisfy him. He wanted to feel the Lord precious to his soul and to be assured that he would be with him in death, which I believe was the case.

Sometimes when I visited him we have felt like the disciples on their way to Emmaus; for though they felt sad and cast down in their souls before the Lord drew near to them, yet when he

talked with them their hearts burned with love, and they wanted him to remain with them. Sometimes on a Lord's day, I have spent a few hours with him and we have read a chapter and spent a short time in prayer, and when we have parted there has been such a feeling between us that he has said, "Thomas, this reminds me of days gone by when we have not had a minister, but a sermon by one of our old friends such as Gadsby, Tiptaft, and others has been read, and I have felt to love them for the truth's sake." He often longed to be with the Lord, whom he felt to be more dear to him than all beside; for he knew whatever he might have in this world it would do him no good in a dying hour. He felt he could not speak well enough of the Lord who had done so much for him, and he did not want the company of any but those who feared God. We may say of him, "Mark the perfect man and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

THOMAS HUNTER.

GEORGE GIDDINGS.—On August 2nd, 1888, aged 65, George Giddings, of Silsoe, Bedfordshire.

My dear husband was a native of Silsoe, and was brought up to attend the Church of England. He was always very moral. He left home to go to a situation, and while there the Lord met with him. I have heard him say he passed through a very deep law-work, and feared he should be lost and that for ever. He was living near Clifton and attended the ministry of the late Mr. Sears.

About this time Mr. Warburton came to Southill to live, and my husband went to hear him, and got on so well that he always attended his ministry when opportunity offered. He said Mr. W. was the first that had ever described his feelings and it seemed as if someone had told him all about his exercises, though he knew it was not so because he had not mentioned them to anyone. Sometime after this the Lord broke in upon his soul with these words: "I have cast all thy sins into the depths of the sea," when he felt his burden gone and exclaimed, "Lord, where are my sins gone?" when the same words were repeated. He then thought, What would become of the sins that he might yet commit? when the words came:

"O my soul with wonder view,
For sins to come there's pardon too."

When he returned home to live he could not again attend the Church of England, but went to Barton, a distance of over three miles, there being a small Strict Baptist chapel in that place.

In the year 1840 or 1841 he went before the church and was received and baptized by Mr. Thackery, he being the settled minister at that time. My husband felt to have the answer of a good conscience, as baptism had been laid with weight upon his mind. He was a consistent member of the church up to the time of his death. He was of a meek and quiet spirit, a lover of a free-grace gospel, and contended earnestly for the truth. He

loved the hymns and said how assured he was that the hymn-writers were gracious men or they could not have written such good, experimental hymns.

Like all the Lord's people he had at times to walk in a path of trial and affliction. One trial I cannot forbear to mention. Upon the last day of April, 1881, owing to death and changes, he, with other men, was discharged from the situation where he had been employed for over thirty-one years. Being in a poor state of health it preyed upon his mind, and some weeks after, being out when it was excessively hot, he had a slight sunstroke which added greatly to his mental affliction. The doctor examined him, and said his heart was diseased. His illness increasing he used to sit and brood over things until, when he could get to chapel, he could not hear to profit and used to come home so wretched that it was grievous to see him. He used to say, "I think I shall find, as one has expressed, that 'my latter stages are the worst,' and shall have to 'travel much by night;'" but the Lord's ways are not our ways, neither are his thoughts our thoughts. He was tempted to take away his own life, but was preserved from doing so; and though he was not left to swear, he has since said he felt these things rise within. Upon Sept. 8th of the same year he was obliged to be taken to Arlsey Asylum, where he remained nearly three years, and we did not think he would ever be able to come home again, but the Lord, in his goodness, raised him up again and he was brought home on August 30th, 1884, "clothed and in his right mind." He said the first portion of Scripture that came to his mind after he began to get better was the following: "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me."

After he reached home he was again employed in the gardens where he had worked for so many years, in which he could see the Lord's hand. The first time the ordinance of the Lord's Supper was administered after he returned home he thought he ought not to sit down, but the minister and deacons told him it was his affliction and nothing else that had kept him away so long; therefore he again sat down with them. We have often wept together when we have been talking of the Lord's great goodness to him. Upon the Sabbath mornings he always read and engaged in prayer before starting for chapel, to which he went in all weathers, and on week-days, although his work called him out early, he always endeavoured to rise early enough to have reading and prayer before starting. Hymn 531 was given out upon one occasion at the chapel and was very much blessed to his soul. Tears ran down his face whilst he was singing it. Hymn 950 was a great favourite of his.

I must now come to his illness, which lasted nine weeks. Just before it came on, when he returned home one evening he said he had had such a nice feeling come over him while at his work, and although there were no words, it was accompanied with much sweetness. The doctor attributed his illness to a cold and the trou-

ble with the affection of his heart. He used to sit and read the Bible, hymn-book, and "Gospel Standard," and the Lord blessed him greatly at times in his soul. One day the clergyman came to see him and asked him if he was on the Lord's side. My husband answered "I shall go to heaven when I die," which he twice repeated. His nights were very restless, but in the morning he would often tell me of some portion which had been applied to his mind during the night season. One was: "O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord!" At another time he had these words: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." Also: "Prepare your stuff for removing."

A friend from Ampthill, a member at Westoning Chapel, came to see him. My husband talked with him more than an hour, telling him how the Lord had blessed him at different times and in certain places. About three weeks before his death dropsy and congestion of the lungs set in. One day I asked him if he felt comfortable, when he said, "Not as I could wish, for my mind will wander." One morning these words were brought to his remembrance:

"Sweet in the confidence of faith,
To trust his firm decrees;
Sweet to lie passive in his hands,
And know no will but his."

Not a murmur escaped his lips. Those who saw him said they felt he was ripening for glory.

The last nine or ten days of his life he could not read or bear anyone to read much to him. He earnestly begged of the Lord to continue to him his reason, which prayer the Lord graciously answered. About this time the friend before mentioned called to see him again, but he could talk but little and the Lord had somewhat withdrawn his sweet presence, although Satan was not permitted to harass him. He seemed to be quietly resting on the Lord Jesus Christ and waiting his appointed time. The day before he died he looked very happy. I said, "You have prayed to the Lord for patience and he has answered you," for not a murmur had escaped his lips all through his illness. He replied, "Patience is a good thing." In the afternoon of the day he died his lips moved as if in prayer. A person who was sitting beside him heard the word, "Jesus," but nothing more could be distinguished. He died about six o'clock in the evening, without a struggle or a groan. My loss is his eternal gain. He was interred, according to his own wish, in Barton Chapel-yard by Mr. Sollis.

S. GIDDINGS.

ERRATUM.—Through the carelessness of one of the compositors engaged in the printer's office, one line on page 346 of last month's issue was misplaced. The last line on the page should have been at the top. This occurred just before going to press and after the No. had passed out of our hands.

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GENUINE TESTIMONIAL. BERRY'S OINTMENT.

—“Shoreham, Sussex, 7, New Road, January 4, 1889. Mrs. C. Hodges,—Please send two Boxes of Ointment by return of Post, as I have a friend requires one at once. I have just read two accounts where it has quite cured bad legs, and oblige, yours truly, Mrs. Richards.” Cure for Bad Legs, Ulcers, Carbuncles, Broken Breasts, Quinsy, Sore Throats, Sore Lips, Scalds, Boils, Burns, Bruises, Cuts, Abscesses, Whitlows, Piles, Poison Wounds, Skin Eruptions, Chapped Hands, Tender Feet, Corns, Bunions, Sprains, Cold on the Chest, Sore Eyes, Ringworm, Vaccination Eruptions, Tumours, &c. Cancers greatly relieved. Try one Box. To be obtained of all Patent Medicine Vendors, or from the maker direct, post free, 1s. 4d., 2s. 9d., 4s. 9d.—C. HODGES, 14, Belgrave Road, Tunbridge Wells.

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A Pamphlet, by G. ELVEN, Baptist Minister, on the Liver, its Offices and Disorders (including Sluggishness and Biliousness); their Causes, Symptoms, and Treatment. Third Edition, of 6,000. To be had of G. Elven, 56, Leatherdale Street, Globe Road, Mile End, London, E. Price 1½d., post free 2d.

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N. B.—THE APPENDIX

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OF MINISTERS.

*The following Cases are selected from the THIRTIETH SERIES now
Publishing in the Weekly Journals:*

CHRONIC PHTHISIS.—CASE of Miss E. CORBITT.

This patient first came to me in May of last year. She had been ailing for four years, but recently had been much worse. She had had hæmorrhage several times. She had been treated at St. Mary's Hospital without benefit, and had been for a change into Herefordshire, and since her return thence had been rapidly failing.

The usual symptoms of cough, expectoration, pains in the lungs, short breathing, failing appetite with slow loss of flesh, and failing of strength, were present.

On examination I found it to be a case of Chronic Consumption—a slowly progressing form of lung disease, but in general a difficult case to deal with, and requiring much steady perseverance. In this case the lungs had been probably touched with disease for nearly four years.

She improved in about six weeks, and came again. At this time a little sore throat and neuralgia required special treatment, which was prescribed by Dr. B. The neuralgia, &c., were relieved, and she went on slowly improving to recovery (as her father reported).

Mr. John Corbitt, writing me February 11th of this year, says: "My daughter quite recovered under your valuable treatment, and has taken a situation. *She is stronger than she has been for many years.* You can use this in any way you think proper.—J. CORBITT, 36, Lancaster Mews, Hyde Park. My daughter's present address is 3, Kingsmead Road, Oxtou, Birkenhead."

CHRONIC BRONCHIAL AFFECTION and CONGESTION OF THE LUNGS. CASE of Miss E. A. W., of TORQUAY.

This patient consulted me last December. Of consumptive family. Had been subject to colds for years, with attacks of inflammation and congestion of the lungs. The cough at this time was exceedingly troublesome, there was heavy expectoration, mingled with blood, and causing much exhaustion, severe pains, paroxysms of short breathing, secretions unhealthy, swelling of the feet and ankles.

Advice with everything needful was sent. The patient gradually improved after the first six weeks. Writing on March 12, she says: "I am thankful I am still improving. The pains are nearly gone. Your liniment much relieves me. My cough and expectoration are less. I am hoping to get quite well." She now asks for advice upon some other matters—spasms in the stomach and faintness after eating, for which a prescription was sent her.

Writing on April 24 last she says: "I cannot thank you enough for the great benefit I have received from your advice &c., &c. I am better and stronger than I have been for years. I thank God for having restored me to health again."

The address of this patient can only be given on private application to me.

* * * DATES OF CONSULTATION at COOMBE LODGE—TUESDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY Mornings only. Free Consultations to private patients only, who must be supplied with medicine at the time of consultation. (See the Book.)

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

OCTOBER, 1889.

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

MEDITATIONS ON PSALM XXV.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Concluded from page 374.)

BUT there is another view which we may take of this Scripture as applying to Christ; for "there is one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus." As Man he possessed the precious grace of holy fear. He never once offended his Father; for he said, "I do always those things that please him." (Jno. viii. 29.) As Man he manifested fear and love, humility and prayer, and every grace of the Spirit, that the Word might be fulfilled: "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord." (Isa. xi. 2, 3.) And especially does Ps. cxxviii speak of the Lord Jesus Christ where it is written: "Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord."

The Psalmist proceeds in the thirteenth verse of this Psalm to say, "His soul shall dwell at ease," which evidently refers to the man that feareth the Lord, "and his seed shall inherit the earth." This must apply to the Lord Jesus, for he feared God above all his brethren, as it was foretold of him in the Scripture referred to above. In the midst of his sufferings and sorrows and in the prospect of death he cried unto God, and was heard in that he feared. The Lord Jesus learnt whilst on earth what it was to be obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; as Paul says: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." (Heb. v. 8.) He could only learn what death was by passing through death, what suffering was by passing through suffering, what reproach was by being reproached, and what temptation was by being tempted. As Man he learnt or was brought to know hunger and thirst, weariness and the need of bodily rest and sleep, and also privation; for "though the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," yet it is written of Christ: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." (Matt. viii. 20.) He learnt what persecutions, oppositions, and insults were, and he learnt what it was to be reviled, to be

smitten on the face, to be blind-folded, to be mocked and sceptically called a king, and, through the malice of men, he was crowned with thorns;—all these things Christ, as the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, endured out of love and the fear of the Lord, for he was filled with sorrow, but he anticipated an everlasting joy at God's right hand; as Paul says: "Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. xii. 2.)

It is here said of Christ that "his soul shall dwell at ease," that is, the sufferings of his soul should end at death. All his sorrows, afflictions, sufferings, and pain terminated when he uttered the words: "It is finished," and gave up the ghost. But his soul again resumed his holy body which never saw corruption, which body for a time rested in hope, but both body and soul are now in heaven filled with all the fulness of Deity; for it has pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell. He poured out his soul unto death, and yet his soul died not. His body died, and was laid in the tomb and rested in hope. Deity was engaged to raise that body from the dead, that the Trinity in Unity,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost might be equally honoured in the resurrection of that body which, now glorified, shines above the brightness of the sun. The sacred humanity or holy body of the Son of God lay in the tomb and rested in hope for three days and three nights; but Deity never needed rest, could not slumber, never knew faintness nor weariness; but the temple of Deity,—the body of the Son of God passed through all these things, and was by the power of Father, Son, and Spirit raised again from the dead and exalted at the right hand of God, neither body nor soul again to know sorrow, grief, pain, nor death.

It is said, "His seed shall inherit the earth." By *his seed* we are to understand the children of God, those that the Father has given to Christ, the "holy seed" as they are called, the seed of the righteous: "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." These are the pillars of the earth, the lights of the world, for whose sake the earth is continued; and as the earth and all things belong to God, and they being his children, his sons and his daughters, they inherit all things from him, whether temporal or spiritual. The world and the things of the world are given to the children of men, but in reality they belong to God, and his children see how all things belong to their heavenly Father and walk about the earth which is his possession, and he supplies their every need and will do as long as they inherit this terrestrial globe; for this *seed* is kept up in every generation and will be continued until the end of time, and in this sense they will inherit the earth till time shall be no longer.

But we pass on to the fourteenth verse which reads thus: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant." Here is

i. A *secret*, and it is called *the secret of the Lord*.

ii. It is said to be *with them that fear him*.

iii. There is a promise made to those who possess this *secret*, and *fear*, even that *God will show them his covenant*.

i. Let us notice this *secret of the Lord*. True religion has always been a secret of which the unregenerate man is ignorant; but this is called the *Lord's secret*. A secret is something known in a person's own mind and hidden from others, and can only be known as the person is pleased to divulge it.

First. This secret of the Lord is nothing less than *his eternal love* which he fixed upon his own people before the world was; for he has loved his people with an everlasting love, and he knows all whom he has loved and beholds them as clearly as if they were already present with him in heaven. This *secret* is hidden from angels and even from the elect of God until the Lord is pleased to call them by his grace and reveal to them his love; as Moses said: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever." (Deut. xxix. 29.) Paul, in his epistle to the Ephesians, speaking of this secret being made known to the Gentiles through the preaching of the gospel, says, "And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." (Eph. iii. 9.) This is God's electing love in choosing some from the race of mankind, whilst others are left in sin to die and be lost for ever. Paul calls this God's "*great love* wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins." But of this electing love the heirs of salvation are entirely ignorant until the Lord is pleased to quicken their souls and call them effectually by his grace. Then it is revealed to their understandings that God has loved his people with an everlasting love, and therefore with lovingkindness has he drawn them. The new heart which God gives to his elect is the Christian's cabinet into which the Lord puts his precious jewels, which are part of the believer's inestimable treasures, and in this heart the secret of the Lord is implanted.

Secondly. The *knowledge of God* arising from the Spirit's teaching in the soul is a very precious secret and very different to the knowledge of God in his law. We must know God before we can worship him, before we can pray to him, before we can really covet his presence, before we can honour him, or serve him aright. Hence the blessed Redeemer, speaking to his elect, says, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (John xvii. 3.) Where this knowledge is given there is a coming to God, a looking up to him,—there is a cry in the soul for his mercy, there is a longing for communion with him, which, when realized, is the sweetest and most precious blessing that we can know on this side heaven; for we are thereby strengthened to

put our trust in God; as David says: "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee; for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee." (Ps. ix. 10.) This is a secret which is hidden from most people in the world, and especially from those who are wise in their own eyes and prudent, as they think, by their works; but the Lord Jesus owns them not; for he has declared, "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." (Matt. xi. 25.)

A right knowledge of God and of Christ springs from the teaching of the Holy Ghost in the heart; but where ignorance and darkness prevail the Word of God is fulfilled: "Ye neither know me, nor my Father." (Jno. viii. 19.) Where wisdom and light are given there is a heavenly, gracious cry goes out of the soul, "That I may know him," and a unity is felt with Paul in his prayer, where he says, "And to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." This is a sanctified, gracious knowledge which the Lord the Spirit creates in the soul of everyone that is loved by the Father and redeemed by God the Son, and it is the fulfilment of that blessed promise in Isa. liv: "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children;" and also of the Scripture which says, "They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." (Jer. xxxii. 34.) So that God is bound by oath to see that none of his children perish for the lack of knowledge.

Thirdly. The *unction of the Holy One* is a secret,—a grand and blessed secret. In the early days of the preaching of the gospel when so many were added to the militant church of Christ, even the apostles themselves were deceived in many who had crept into the churches. They were professed believers in Christ and professed receivers of the gospel of Christ. They professed to have had a spiritual change in their hearts, they professed to be one with the apostles and the true-born sons of God, they professed that they had passed from death unto life when they were yet dead in their sins, and eventually forsook the apostles, left the church of God, and went into the world to preach erroneous doctrines, that their character might be made manifest and that it might be proved beyond all doubt that the secret of the Lord was not with them. These are called false prophets, and false professors, and the apostle exhorted the true brethren and disciples of Christ to beware of such, saying, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 Jno. iv. 1.) These men lacked the secret; they had not the right spirit; therefore said John, after all their profession, "They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." This led the apostle to a clearer discernment of character and a clearer judgment between the living and the dead, between the clean and the unclean, the righteous and the wicked, between true and false brethren, be-

tween true and false prophets, between a feigned and a real experience, between true and false faith, between natural feeling and spiritual and eternal life; for herein lies all the difference between the bad and the good. Said John of God's own children, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." This was the grand secret,—the great, inestimable blessing, that God had given to his own children; and believing that God had begun a good and gracious work in the souls of those who remained steadfast, the apostle encouraged them by saying, "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." (1 Jno. ii. 27.) This anointing is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit who sheds abroad the love of God in the heart.

Many there were in the days of John who crept into the churches who afterwards, by the wickedness of their lives, or by embracing errors, or through a presumptuous spirit made it manifest that they were destitute of the secret of the Lord which is with them that fear him. Jude, writing to the churches, says, "These are spots in your feasts of charity." They *fed* amongst the people of God *without fear*; they were *clouds*, but they had *no water in them*, they were *trees* which bore no fruit to perfection, for their *fruit withered*; so that now they were *without fruit, dead*, not only in trespasses and sins, but also *dead* in a presumptuous profession; so he says, "Twice dead;" *roots* they had, but they were "plucked up by the roots." He compares them to "*foaming waves of the sea*," foaming out their own shame, "*stars*," but not fixed stars, "to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." Jude further describes these characters by saying, "These are murderers," that is finding fault with the ministers of God and with their ministry. In the estimation of such men there is always something in which the servants of God come short; "complainers" they are, not of their own sins and weakness and follies, and loathing themselves on account of their own evils; but complainers of God's servants and of God's people; "walkers" they are, but it is "after their own lusts;" through "their mouth they speak," but it is "with great swelling words;" "men's persons they have in admiration," but it is "because of advantage." What does the Holy Ghost say of these characters? How does he deal with them? Who does he place them amongst? Not amongst the humble, meek, lowly, hungering, thirsting, groaning, sighing people of God, but he emphatically says of them, "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." So they had not this secret unction of the Holy One; for of this they were destitute.

Fourthly. *Spiritual life* communicated from God himself to a sinner's soul is another great secret. The whole human race died in Adam. When Adam transgressed he became dead in trespasses and sins; and as all the human race stood in his loins

when he sinned all became dead in him, and so we all come into the world born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and in this death we remain, and if grace prevent not we live and die in it; for the natural man dead in trespasses and sins has no more power to turn to God, and live, repent, and mourn for his transgressions, he has no more power to fulfil the law of God, and to love God and Christ than he has to create a world greater and more beautiful than the one in which we live. Sin has made man a complete wreck, and nothing but the communication of spiritual life from God himself can alter his state.

Day by day thousands upon thousands are dropping into the pit of eternal misery, and day by day a few into whose souls the Lord has put eternal life are being taken to heaven. The promise of Jesus Christ has always been fulfilled, is now being fulfilled, and will be fulfilled to the end of time in the souls of all God's elect: "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (Jno. x. 28.) Saith John, "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." (1 Jno. v. 11.)

Dead as we are through sin, buried as we are in the graves of sin, lost and destitute as we are by reason of transgression, yet the Lord in his own good time quickens his elect and communicates life everlasting to their souls; as Paul says: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. ii. 1.) O to stand amongst the *you* and the *we* to whom he says, "Even when *we* were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ!" Where this life is given there will be, *must be* a cleaving to the God of life. There will be hungerings and thirstings after the Bread of life; for as the body cannot live without natural food, so the soul that is born again cannot live with any comfort without spiritual food. Hence the Lord draws the line of distinction between the living and the dead by saying, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." This is a secret indeed which is only known in the souls of God's elect, and this is one of those great secrets which God has put into the Christian's cabinet, and which the devil, the world, and all the deceitfulness of sin will never be able to extract. May God help us who have reason to believe that we have been called by his grace to still go on crying for "Life, life, eternal life!"

Fifthly. The *fear of the Lord* is another great secret which God gives to his own people, the preciousness and workings of which none know but those who partake of it. It comes not to us from anything in nature; indeed everything in the world speaks to us to testify that such a blessing cometh not from anything under the sun. The question is asked, "Where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living." (Job xxviii. 12, 13.) It is not in the depth nor in the sea; for gold i cannot be purchased, nor is it weighed out for silver. The onyx,

gold, and crystal cannot equal it, nor is it given in exchange for jewels of fine gold, coral, pearls, the topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal it; for wisdom or the fear of God is above rubies. From whence, then, cometh this precious treasure and who imparts it to man's soul? From heaven it comes; for the gift of filial fear is from God and is bestowed free and unasked for; for he hath said, "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." (Jer. xxxii. 40.) This filial fear is a fear which every manifested son of God possesses and of which every son of the bondwoman is ignorant. Slavish fear was the portion of Ishmael; filial fear was the portion of Isaac. Jacob possessed this sweet grace, this blessed treasure, and Esau lacked it and perished in his sins. Those who have nothing but slavish fear would fain flee out of God's hand; they want him not, they covet not his presence, but say, "Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." Those who have the filial fear of God in their hearts cannot get as near to God as they could wish, they dread being separated from him, they would cleave unto him, they want to be found in him, and as his sons and daughters to dwell with him for ever.

Sixthly. *Faith* is also a precious secret in the soul. This principle Cain lacked, and this principle Abel possessed. It is not hereditary, or Adam might have communicated it to both of his sons, but it was a new covenant blessing from God bestowed upon Adam and his son Abel, upon Abraham and his son Isaac, upon Jacob and his son Joseph, upon Moses and his brother Aaron, upon David and his son Solomon, upon Hezekiah and his son Manasseh, and upon many others. Being possessed of this secret they served God in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter; and whilst the many that surrounded them had only the form, they knew the power. By faith they had the knowledge of God, by faith they believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, by faith they saw his day, and, like Abraham, rejoiced and were glad, by faith they saw the country which was afar off, and by faith they sought the city which hath foundations whose Builder and Maker is God. By faith they endured many trials, contradictions, and oppositions; for, like Moses, they had respect unto the recompense of the reward; for "verily there is a reward for the righteous" (Ps. lviii. 11), and the Holy Ghost has said, "Thine expectation shall not be cut off." By faith they lived on God, his veracity, and his word of promise, and by faith they lived on Christ who gave his flesh and blood for the life of the world. They had the trial of faith as well as the life of faith, and they ultimately knew the blessedness of dying in faith.

The same faith God gives to his people now in these days; it comes from him and it leads to him. There is nothing anti-Christ in faith; it believes what God has said, and, as strengthened from time to time by the Spirit, it seeks after and realizes in some measure the things which God has promised. Faith is born of God and consequently believes in God. It is supported and strengthened

by an invisible power put forth upon it time after time, and those who have the smallest measure of it will ultimately share in the glories of heaven with those who have been favoured with a greater measure, though they may often sink very low and think they shall never attain to it; but the Lord says, "O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?" This faith once put into the soul is always in the Christian's cabinet, and never can perish; for "that wicked one toucheth it not." Mr. Hart has beautifully described it where he says

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

ii. This secret is said to be *with them that fear him*. We see in the Word of God what peculiar straits and difficulties and into what singular places some are brought who fear the Lord. Abraham by faith obeyed the commandment of God and offered up his only-begotten Son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," and through whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ, the promised Redeemer, was to come; but Abraham believed in the power of God to raise Isaac again from the dead, and feared through disobedience to offend; therefore when he took the knife to slay his son, the angel of the Lord called to him and said, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." (Gen. xxii. 12.) This was a peculiar position and a trial to Abraham's faith, but in it he honoured God.

Where this principle of fear is implanted trial invariably attends it. After the death of Moses the children of Israel increased in numbers in the land of Egypt, and Pharaoh thought that in case of war they might rise up and fight against him; so he contrived a plan whereby, as he thought, to prevent the increase of the Israelites, and instructed the midwives to kill every male child that should be born: "But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive." (Exod. i. 17.) These women were placed in a most trying position under a despotic king; for he who made this wicked decree was Pharaoh, whose name signifies, "destroyer," or "avenger;" but Shiphrah, which was the name of one of the midwives and which signified "handsome," or "one that does good,"—she and Puah had in their hearts the fear of the Lord, and by this gracious principle they fell not into the snare which Pharaoh had laid, but realized the truth of the Scripture which says, "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death." (Prov. xiv. 27.) Shiphrah, whose name as we have noticed signifies "handsome," or "one that does good," did good to the Israelites, for which, doubtless, they admired and spoke well of her; for

“A woman that feareth the Lord she shall be praised.” God took notice of the conduct of these women and gave them a good reward; for we read: “And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.” Thus they were honoured and Pharaoh was doomed to perish. How truly in this sense was the Word fulfilled: “Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.” (1 Sam. ii. 30.)

Joseph also had this gracious principle of filial fear in his soul, and it was kept alive whilst in the house of his master Potiphar, for when tempted to evil he said, “How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” Some of the Lord’s people have at times been placed in peculiar circumstances and employed by most ungodly masters, and have been surrounded by those who were strangers to the work of grace and dishonoured God in a false profession of his name.

This was the case with Obadiah, who was governor in the house of Ahab, and of whom it is written: “Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly.” His master and mistress were the most ungodly persons that we read of in the Scriptures; for though surrounded with every luxury and all that heart could wish, they were utter strangers to God and godliness. Yet the leading man in Ahab’s household was one who not only feared the Lord, but feared him *greatly*. The fear of the Lord is a grace which every regenerate child of God possesses, for to all the election of grace the Scripture applies, “I will put my fear into their hearts,” and those who have it and are kept spiritually-minded speak often one to another, for on them the Sun of Righteousness has arisen and on them he will arise again and again with healing in his wings. This fear, when in active operation, enables us to think as highly of the poorest as of the richest of persons who possess it. So David said, “I am a companion of all them that fear thee” (Ps. cxix. 63), and when the Lord at times blessed his soul he wanted God’s Spirit-taught people to know how good the Lord had been to him, and to spread his fame abroad. Hence the Scripture, “Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.” (Ps. lxxvi. 16.) This fear is the beginning of wisdom in the hearts of all the Lord’s children, nor will those who possess it ever be finally overcome by the world, the flesh, or the devil; for “he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.” (Eccles. vii. 18.)

iii. There is a promise made to those who possess this *fear*, even that God *will show them his covenant*, which argues that they must have the things of God revealed to them and be brought to see that there is a covenant between God and his people. This covenant is not the covenant of works, nor the covenant of circumcision. It is not the law which was given by Moses; but it is an everlasting covenant made between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost before the world

was, in which he gave his people an interest with all the blessings, privileges, and mercies that should flow from it. According to this covenant the Father chose and loved a definite number of persons with an everlasting love, and blessed all his sons and daughters with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, and predestinated them unto the adoption of sons unto himself by Jesus Christ; and the Son of God who is equal and co-eternal with the Father in all the properties of Deity undertook to assume human nature, to be Surety and die for the sins and transgressions of his children whom he foreknew would sin, and for whose sakes he would be brought into overwhelming sufferings, be crucified and die the shameful death of the cross; and by the blood of this covenant God sends forth his prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. But the blood of the covenant was shed for God's elect and for no others; as Christ said: "I lay down my life for the sheep;" and by his bloodshedding and death he accomplished, as Paul says, "eternal redemption for us;" and the Holy Ghost, who was a Participant in the transactions of this everlasting covenant and who is God equal with the Father and with the Son, undertook in the fulness of time to quicken, call, and raise up out of the ruins of the fall and bring out of the graves of sin, and out of the hands and service of Satan all whom the Father had loved and given to his Son Jesus Christ. There is therefore a time when the Holy Ghost quickens all the children of God, and they pass under the rod of him that telleth them, and are brought into the bond of the covenant. (Ezek. xx. 37.) In this covenant all spiritual blessings are stored up to come to the children of God in due time; as David says: "He hath given meat unto them that fear him; he will ever be mindful of his covenant." (Ps. cxi. 5.)

This covenant is the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, and therefore is a covenant of life, a covenant of peace, a covenant of mercy, a covenant wherein God shows pardon, and through the fulfilment of it by Christ he can and will not only forgive but also forget the sins of his people; for he has said: "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. x. 16, 17.)

With this present number we conclude our Exposition of this Psalm, and if the Lord has owned and blessed it to the souls of any of his feeble and tried followers, to his holy name be all the praise.

IF JESUS had not said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness" I know not what could keep weak Christians from despair. Many times, all I can do is to complain that I want Jesus and wish to enjoy him. Now this is my stay; he in mercy esteems us, not by having, but desiring also. There never was a soul miscarried with longing after grace. O blessed hunger that always ends in fulness.—*Bishop Hall.*

THE HIDINGS OF GOD'S FACE.

BY RUSK.

(Concluded from page 381.)

God is unchangeable, and this secures our eternal standing. It is a blessed consideration to a child of God, that amidst all his daily infirmities God is of one mind, and none can turn him. When you and I look within, O how awful is the sight! It is called "the mystery of iniquity;" and if it appears so dreadful to us, how must it appear in the eyes of a holy and just God who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity? But what a blessed thought it is that God knew the end from the beginning; for vile as we are he well knew how we should backslide and all of which we should be guilty; and as there was nothing at first that prevented him looking upon us; so there can be nothing now to prevent it: "I am God, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Mal. iii. 6.) I have often found it a blessed consideration that one part of God's covenant name is "longsuffering." O how much we try the Lord, and yet after all, to show that he is of one mind, he still says, "Return, ye backsliding children." As if he should say, "You are still children, though bent to backslide."

Again. The new covenant entered into by the Eternal Three secures our eternal standing. The old covenant was a covenant of works first made with Adam; but he fell, and all the human race with him. Thus we lost all power ever after to obey that covenant. But as God had not lost his power to command he gave it again to his people Israel upon Mount Sinai. Not that the Lord ever supposed they would keep it, but, as Paul says, it was given that the offence might abound, that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. But there is a new covenant established upon better promises; and this covenant engagement took place in eternity from everlasting, before ever sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and it was between the Eternal Three, in which the Lord Jesus Christ engaged to undertake the cause of a number of the human race, and covenanted with God the Father to become responsible for them, that he would become incarnate, and take our nature into union with his Divine Person, fulfil every jot and tittle of the law, and suffer, bleed, and die to satisfy divine justice. Upon this condition God the Father gave all the elect to Christ; as we read: "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." This was the order of the covenant, but not to the exclusion of God the Holy Ghost, who undertook to quicken all the elect that they might see and feel their need of all the blessings that should flow from this great work, and also to bring all the promised blessings home to their hearts.

Again. The love of God for ever secures our eternal safety. This love is of the same date as the mercy of God, and neither of them had a beginning. Hence you read: "I have loved thee

with an everlasting love." Take notice of the word "have" which shows it was from all eternity. The Almighty well know in his eternal mind how fearfully the elect would fall with all the rest of mankind, yet this did not prevent his love, and therefore out of pure love he gave his Son to die for them, and the Son out of pure love gave himself; as Paul says: "Who gave himself for us;" and the love of Jehovah the Spirit was the same. It is but very little that any of us can lisp out of this love, yet there are strong desires in our souls to know more and more of it. Therefore Paul said in his Epistle to the Ephesians, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." O what wonderful love is this,—free, full, and everlasting! We come into the world like the rest of mankind, "children of wrath even as others," but in God's own time, because of this love from everlasting and the finished work of Christ, the Holy Spirit begins and carries on his good work in our hearts by quickening us when dead in trespasses and sins and opening the eyes of our understanding to see and feel our true state through the fall, and to know also the hope of our calling,—first to hope for pardon, and then to hope for glory; and "what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." God's love is a boundless ocean, as the poet says, "without a bottom or a shore," and it is everlasting, because it will never end, but when millions of ages have rolled over, it will be as if it were only beginning. Well might the Psalmist exclaim, "How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." (Ps. xxxvi. 7.) Say you, "I do feel a love to God's children at times, and a love to the Lord Jesus Christ for undertaking such a great work and completing it; but I so often feel as though God was angry with me, for he crosses me and tries me to the quick; so that I am chastened every day, and plagued every morning, and often feel my life a burden, and I loathe it." Well; all you have said is in your favour and clearly proves that you are one of God's elect and one that the Lord Jesus Christ loves. Say you, "If I could but believe that, I would not care what I suffered." Remember if you ever really love the brethren you are passed from death unto life, and if you love Christ, he has said in his Word, "I love them that love me;" and if you are chastened, he says, "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten." I know very well what you want and what you shall have in God's own time, and that is the love of God shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghost, and when this takes place every doubt and fear will, for the time being, be removed, and you will say with Paul, "Who loved me, and gave himself for me."

God is a God of love, and this love can never finally be lost, for "charity never faileth," and we are to be holy and without blame

before God in love to all eternity. Say you, "O what a sad plague is this body of sin and death to me!" I know it is, and so it is to me also; but it was crucified with Christ; as Paul says: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth ye should not serve sin." (Rom. vi. 6.) Say you, "But the world is too much for me, and I fear I shall be overcome by it altogether." I often fear and tremble about this very thing myself, for the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life, and many other things, together with my own weakness, often make me fear; but Christ's word shall stand fast in spite of all our powerful unbelief and carnal reasoning, where he said, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." You will only find victory over the old man of sin and the world by a living faith in Christ wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost, which at times he will draw forth to enable you to lay hold of the victories of the cross; and unless he does this faith will lie dormant in the heart, and your enemies will appear to triumph.

I often feel Satan suggesting vile, blasphemous thoughts against God, his Word, and people, and it is like a voice whispering in my ear, and I often fear I shall speak it all out. He worries and torments me every way, laying snares and traps, and reproaching and accusing me continually, and all this is very trying; but amidst it all I do not forget the promise: "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly," and the cause is this, that "through death (that is, through Christ's death) he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil." What was all this for? The next verse will tell you. "And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." What, deliver them eternally from Satan's power? Yes. Say you, "I do not feel this victory." No, because you are looking within, whereas this victory with all others is in Christ, and the more you are led by the Spirit in faith to the cross, the more you will see and feel this victory. Peter says, "Whom resist steadfast in the faith." The devil will come again and again in some way or other, but when we are enabled by the good Spirit to look again to the finished work of Christ, this will send him off, if he comes a thousand times.

Say you, "I am continually tried with a legal, self-righteous spirit, and cannot see anything like the fruits of righteousness in me, for I seem to get worse and worse; and I think if old things had passed away and all things had become new, I should always delight in God's Word and worship, and should feel bowels of mercies, meekness, and gentleness, and be enabled to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." This is all very well, but you will never find any of it lodged in yourself; it is in Christ Jesus; and if ever these fruits are brought forth by you, it is owing to God's eternal election and choice of you in Christ Jesus. The Word says, "From me is thy fruit found." But as there are winter and summer seasons literally, so there are

spiritually; and therefore one that is blessed of God, is, by virtue of union to Christ, to bring forth his fruit in due season. All other fruits, however fair they may appear in men's eyes, are of no account with God. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." (1 Sam. xvi. 7.)

There is one thing I dread above all others, and that is *death*. Death appears a very formidable enemy, but it is not so in reality to God's children, although they have many fears about it. The difference between them and others is this, the ungodly are in possession of the sting of death, but to all the elect there is no sting in death, for Christ has removed it quite away. Paul says, "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. xv. 56, 57.) The reason that some of God's children are so bowed down about this is because the Holy Spirit has effectually convinced them of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, but as yet they are not delivered from a guilty conscience by having their hearts sprinkled with the blood of Christ. When this is done and the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, this at once removes all fear; so that although death is such a formidable enemy to others, we are at times enabled, through grace, to triumph over it, but only under the immediate influence and operation of the Holy Spirit, who does all this work in our souls; for he it is that takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us. But if he is pleased to suspend his blessed influence, which he often does for the trial of our faith and patience and also on account of our backslidings, then Satan is sure to come and represent everything before our eyes wretchedly miserable, and we shall have very many fears. We read of some "who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Take notice how it is worded. It does not say that they were all their lifetime *in* bondage to the fear of death; but that they were all their lifetime *subject* to this bondage. But after all to a real child of God who has experienced a vital change, death is only called a sleep: "Them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

Say you, "But there is one thing more that I fear, and that is the day of judgment, for it is sometimes set before me in a dreadful manner, and I view myself at the bar of God in that great day, and fear at times I shall not escape, or if I do it will be with the skin of my teeth." Depend upon it this is Satan tormenting, harassing, and perplexing thee; but there is no foundation for it in the Word of God. Peter tells us that the saints are judged in this world: "The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God," and what is God's house, but his chosen people; as Paul says: "But Christ as a Son over his own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast our confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Heb. iii. 6.) Christ tells us he is the Judge: "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (Jno. v.

22); and in that great day he will say to those on his right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;" and they shall go into life eternal. This is the end of the saints' judgment. Jesus Christ bore all the judgment that the elect must have endured to all eternity, and they were then acquitted in him. O glorious truth! O blessed experience! O happy man or woman whose cause he has espoused! The Word says, "Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones" (Zech. xiii. 7), that is, to defeat and protect them. Hence Christ said when apprehended and taken, "If ye seek me, let these go their way." Thus he stood in our law place, and therefore when at Pilate's bar he said nothing because of his standing there in our room and stead. O that you and I could enter more into these blessed things! We shall never find any substantial comfort or happiness in religion until we are fully persuaded that Christ did all this for us individually. The very life of religion is enjoyed by experience. No soul will value the blessings of salvation until they have been stripped of all their supposed righteousness, and when such are led by the Spirit to Jesus, with a "God be merciful to me, a sinner," when all their hopes hang upon his sovereign mercy, and when they cannot tell how it will terminate, then the Lord meets such and freely bestows his own righteousness upon them. O how wonderful is all this to such a poor soul, as I myself can witness; for, as Mr. Hart says: "I looked for hell; he brought me heaven." How different is this to mere head notions!

Say you, "I was once under some concern about these things, but I met with some that make the path easier than you do. They tell us there is no occasion to be troubled. If we have but a desire after these things all is well." Yes, but God's Word tells us not to rest in attainments, much less in our having a desire. It is a blessed thing to have a real desire, but it is the desire accomplished that is sweet to the soul. A soul born from above desires the sincere milk of the word that he may grow thereby; and the Word says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."

I will now treat a little upon the Divinity of the Son of God which is an eternal security to the standing of every real Israelite. My aim is to prove the Lord Jesus Christ equal with the Father in every sense of that incommunicable name, Jehovah. The Scriptures of truth ever will be a stumbling-block to that man or woman that sets up their fleshly reason and learning as a rule, and therefore what they cannot comprehend, they reject; but God's children are taught better. The Lord brings down their spirits to submit to divine revelation, and instead of resisting the Word of God, they are brought to tremble at it, and God says he will look to and dwell with him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at his word, "to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." How

very hard do the Unitarians labour against the truth that I am now going to contend for; and the way that they have gained some ground has been by holding some truth and by a fictitious experience. In this way some years ago I was entangled through reading a blasphemous book, for I can call it by no better name, which threw me into confusion for several weeks; but the Lord in mercy to my soul broke the snare. It was represented to me that this man appeared to have much experience and was a very great preacher, and what he said seemed very reasonable. O reader, beware of such men! This is a part of the false church, and all their aim is levelled at those passengers who are going right on their way.

Every now and then at Mr. Huntington's chapel doors there used to be men placed with bills entitled, "Appeal to the Christian Professing World," and with books written against the Divinity of the Son of God to poison the minds of the Lord's family; but blessed be God he keepeth the feet of his saints and has declared if they do take any deadly thing it shall not (finally) hurt them; for those who erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and those that murmured shall learn doctrine.

Some will say, "We believe that Christ is God, but not in the way that you contend for. We believe he is God by office." To this I answer, So are many of the children of men; as we read: "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the Most High. But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes." (Ps. lxxxii. 6, 7.) If therefore the Christ that you trust in is only a God by office, he himself must perish, and you also with your false trust; for such a saviour is only a creature saviour. Another may say, "I go further in my views of Christ, for I believe, as you say, that he is Jehovah." But let me ask you a little about your faith and how you came by it. Say you, "I was trained up from a child so to believe. My parents sat for many years under the sound of the gospel, and I have read the Scriptures and sound authors; so that I am satisfied about the Godhead of Christ as well as every other truth; and indeed I may say that I always believed." Yes, but do you know that the kingdom of God standeth not in word, but in power? Say you, "Yes; and that power is a consistent life, walk, and conversation, which I can add to my faith; for as Peter exhorts, so I do,—I add to my faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, &c. These are the fruits of my faith." Alas! Poor soul, if thou canst go no further than this, thou art but a deceived man or woman; for God the Holy Spirit opens the eyes and quickens the souls of all God's elect that they may see and feel that they are the chief of sinners. He shows them the spirituality of God's holy law which we have all broken, our fearful state through Adam's fall, and that we are upon the sand, and we feel ourselves sinking lower and lower without hope or help,—the vilest of the vile, and we expect nothing but the wrath of God, and can only take the threatening parts of God's Holy

Word; and if for a short time we feel a little hope, we soon sink again, and our state seems more perilous than ever. Such want a foundation, and a creature-foundation will not do for them.

Head-knowledge about Christ's Divinity and finished work will not hold such a soul up; for dry doctrine, however sound, will not sustain a soul in the day of trial. The Holy Spirit testifies to such a sensible sinner of Christ that he is God and also Man, and leads such to him with all their sin, guilt, and filth; and Christ has said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." This is coming to Christ as God, as Jehovah, and here we try the strength of this Foundation. Hence he is called "a tried Stone, a precious corner Stone, a sure Foundation." (Isa. xxviii. 16.) He was tried with all the sins of God's elect, from the first man Adam to the last elect vessel that shall be born; also with the vindictive wrath of Almighty God and incensed justice, the rage and malice of all the fallen angels called devils, the rage, malice, and cruelty of wicked men, also the hidings of his heavenly Father's face. Ah reader, what would a creature-saviour have done here, and this is but a faint description of the sufferings of Christ; for, as Mr. Hart says,

"Much we talk of Jesus' blood!
But how little's understood!
Of his sufferings so intense,
Angels have no perfect sense."

This Foundation is tried by every chosen vessel experimentally. When we are worn out with struggling and striving to break the power of sin, we come here poor indeed, stripped of all, and in our feelings without hope, full of wounds, bruises, and putrifying sores, over head and ears in debt and have nothing to pay; and in this wretched state we find Christ a sure Foundation.

If you and I belong to God and he has begun his good work in our hearts, sooner or later, in a greater or less degree we shall find the real worth and infinite value of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Eternal Jehovah as we pass through the wilderness of this world to hold us up and to keep us on. Satan is a crafty, subtle, and mighty foe, and the more earnestly we desire to live near to the Lord Jesus Christ, the more he will work against us. He is called "the accuser of the brethren, that accuseth them before God day and night," as he did Job, and this he will make us feel. He will tempt us to blaspheme God, to deny the Being of a God, to deny the Sonship of Christ as it respects his Divinity, to deny the Scriptures of truth, the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, to deny the Godhead of Christ and the Godhead of the Holy Ghost. It is he that tempts men to believe in the pre-existence of the human soul of Christ and to rebel against the higher powers. A volume might be filled of what I am now troating upon; and what could hold us up if Jesus Christ were not God? Hence you read that "the gates of hell shall not

prevail against it," that is, against the Foundation upon which the church is built, namely, the Son of the living God. What, according to his human nature? No, but according to his Divine nature,—Jehovah the Son. I am fully persuaded that the devil drives men into many things in which he himself does not believe, and this is one,—to deny the Deity of Christ. He himself well knows that Jesus Christ is Jehovah. Hence he says, "Wo know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. Art thou come to torment us before the time?"

There is something particular in the expression, "I AM," for it signifies the self-existent and independent God. It is often mentioned in Scripture and only belongs to Jehovah. Jesus said to the Jews in the days of his flesh, "Before Abraham was, I am," and he said, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins;" and when Judas with the soldiers came to apprehend him, Christ said, "Whom seek ye?" They said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered them, "I am," not "I am he;" for the word "he" is in italics and is put in by the translators. In the book of the Revelation we read, "I am Alpha and Omega." If Alpha he was the first, so that the Father could not be before him, and if Omega he must be the last, so that none can be after him, and if Almighty there can be none above him, so that he is the omnipotent God. Christ himself said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matt. xxviii. 18.) The words, "given to me" signify his human nature, and "all power" signifies his Divine nature; but no other way can it be understood than the union of the two natures, because Deity is incommunicable, and none but Deity has all power in heaven and on earth. I am more and more established in the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But again. He is omniscient and knows everything. Hence we read, "And Jesus knowing their *thoughts* said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?" (Matt. ix. 4, 5.) And after the ascension of Christ the disciples put up a prayer to him, saying, "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen." (Acts i. 24.) A creature know the hearts of all men? A creature know man's thoughts? Away with such blasphemy and let us believe the Word of God. Job said, "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." (Job xlii. 2.) But the Lord is also omnipresent. He said in the days of his flesh, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." (Jno. iii. 13.) Now put your brains to work and see what you can make of that text. Here was Jesus Christ upon earth (the Son of Man) and not as yet ascended; how then did he come down from heaven? Was he not born of the Virgin Mary? And yet he came down from heaven, and was at that very time in heaven. The mystery lies in the union of the two natures. Deity was

omnipresent. Hence he told his disciples, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Now do not forget that Deity is incommunicable. There is no such a thing as making gods. God makes all his creatures, but he never Deifies them.

Then again. No one is worthy of Divine worship but Jehovah, and all Divine worship is paid to the Lord Jesus Christ; so that he must be Jehovah; and he is worshipped both by angels and men; as we read: "When he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." (Heb. i. 6.) Jesus said unto the man that he restored to sight, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" And he said, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him." Jesus said, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee." And he said, "Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him." (Jno. ix.) This poor man, with the eye of faith, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, could see that the Son of God was Jehovah, which no natural man, no carnal professor ever did. They can only see Christ the Son of God by human nature. Thus Christ is to be worshipped with Divine worship, and so he is in glory. Hence you read, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." (Rev. v. 12, 13.)

Again. There is no refuge for any convinced sinner but in Jehovah. If you are convinced of sin by the Holy Spirit you will find yourself in a dreadful plight indeed, and you may and will try various ways to escape the wrath of God, but after all your labour you will be in a greater danger, and feel your soul sinking lower and lower. The cause of this dreadful sinking is this,—your faith is strong in the justice of God and that God is unchangeable, and you believe that you are the very character that his Word condemns. He has wounded you, and all the men in the world cannot heal you, neither can you heal yourself. You are full of slavish fear and terror, and if it abates for a time, it will come on again, and you will feel almost in despair. We are all in this dreadful condition by nature, and must perish to all eternity unless we find a refuge in God. All the angels in heaven and all the men on earth can do us no good. You see what an awful state we are in, and the Holy Spirit makes us feel it. But there is a Refuge, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul says, "Who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." The veil was his Godhead, for "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Here is safety and refuge, but nowhere else: "The eternal God is thy Refuge." Say you, "That means the Father." He is a consuming fire out of Christ, and if Christ is

a Refuge he must be the eternal God, equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost; and in order to prove this, may you be helped to go to him with all your sin, guilt, fear, and shame as the Eternal Jehovah that made heaven and earth, and plead his great undertaking and finished work; and sooner or later he will answer you and deliver you, as he has others, and you will glorify his name. A mere assent and consent to the truth of what I have stated will not avail without you have this good hope anchoring in his Godhead. Here and here only is a man safe against all the dreadful storms and tempests.

Again. There never was and never will be any one, from Adam the first to the last that shall be born into this world, but what shall be made publicly to confess it as a grand and glorious truth, whether in mercy or in wrath, that Jesus Christ is the Self-existent and independent Jehovah. Say you, "I never will believe it, nor confess it." You may say so now, being deceived by the devil and your own unbelief and carnal reason; but things will alter when you stand before him as your Judge; for the Lord Jesus Christ will judge the whole world at the last: "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him." (Jno. v. 22, 23.) Paul in his Epistle to the Philippians says, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 9-11.) Thus all Arians, Unitarians, and all others shall bow and confess it at the last, to their eternal shame and confusion.

Thus I have, in a feeble way, got through what I intended, and that was to show that whatever changes God's Israel may pass through in this world, God never changes in his purposes of grace towards them. It is true he is a God that hideth himself, but only in this world; for in glory above he never will hide himself. There we shall see him as he is and be like him. We shall behold his face in righteousness, and be satisfied when we awake with his likeness.

Press on, fellow-traveller, a few more days, weeks, months, or years and you will get above it all and enjoy the Lord's presence for ever and ever when time shall be no more, in that inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

The Lord grant that this may be our happy lot, for his name's sake; and to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be all the glory. Amen.—Finished, May 12th, 1827.

NOTHING can purify the heart but living faith and atoning blood.

THE SOBRIETY AND OBEDIENCE OF GOD'S CHILDREN.

NOTES OF A SERMON PREACHED BY MR. VINE, AT ZOAR CHAPEL, READING,
ON TUESDAY EVENING, JULY 20TH, 1886.

“Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ: as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.”—1 Pet. i. 13—15.

THIS is called the General Epistle of Peter, not *General* in the way we sometimes use the term, that is, lower in doctrine and sentiment than the rest of the Scriptures; for the same standard of truth runs through the whole Bible; but it is *general* in this way that it was written to no one church in particular. Peter wrote this Epistle to the “strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,” in which he includes all the churches of Christ down to the end of time.

This Epistle is for us who are “strangers;” for it is written to those whose religion has made them strange to the world and strange to professors. Others say of these “strangers” that they hold strange doctrine, for they talk about being “less than the least of all saints.” Where the religion of Jesus Christ is experimentally known in the soul it makes that soul strange to the world and to professors. I have no doubt you as a body are branded. Professors say we are strange people, for we believe God saves one and cuts down another. That is true; for we believe what God’s Word says.

The apostle in speaking to these “strangers” gives a further description of them, and says, “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.” That is a very hateful doctrine to most professors in the world, and has been more despised and set at naught than any other doctrine; but it makes no difference. “The Lord knoweth them that are his,” and their names are all written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. Christ will see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. Not one of his elect shall be lost. God’s people are put into Christ’s hands, and none shall ever put them out.

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit.” Another very precious doctrine is the sanctification of the Spirit. The Lord Jesus Christ prayed, saying, “Sanctify them through thy truth.” Sanctification is wrongly understood if we think it means we shall grow better and better in our nature; and that is what is taught in our day. God sanctifies his people through his truth. It is burnt into their hearts, and they so love the truth that they can no longer call evil good and good evil. The sanctified soul feels its vileness day by day, and laments over what is going on inside. How the child of God would be free from sin! A sanctified soul would desire to live holy as God is holy. Sin is his greatest burden and sorrow. If we have not this kind of religion our religion will

not be any good to us when we come to die. The power of God's truth is to work this kind of sanctification in our hearts, and to make us mourn before God.

Then the apostle goes on to say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again." So these "strangers" are born again of the Spirit of God. The world says, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" However strange our religion may seem we are obliged to keep to this one essential thing, namely, that without the new birth we cannot enter the kingdom of God.

"Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." This is another feature of the "strangers." "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations." Have we such a religion as this; so that at times we greatly rejoice? The Lord's people rejoice in what God has done for them. They cry out and shout at times, and say, "The Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad." But they are not always rejoicing; for sometimes they are in heaviness through manifold temptations. You will generally find these "strangers" either rejoicing or in heaviness through manifold temptations; and when you find them in heaviness you cannot comfort them. It is no use what the preacher says to them; they must have a word from the Lord. When you are in heaviness you will want God to assure you that you are one of his children. This is the kind of religion that will stand the test and never fall short; for its possessor will be sure to lay hold of the prize at the end of the journey.

Then the apostle says something more about these "strangers." All the things included in the words "in heaviness through manifold temptations" are for a purpose:—"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." The trial of faith is a very precious thing. Gold is precious, but the trial of faith which is going on in our souls continually is far more precious than gold. Faith, after the trial of faith is over, will land your soul in heaven. God has his furnace in Zion where faith is tried as by fire.

One more feature of these "strangers:" "Whom having not seen ye love." That is the "stranger's" religion. The child of God can unriddle and unfold this mystery. None of us have seen Christ with our mortal eyes, but I trust we have with the eye of faith. Some of us love him, reverence his Word and truth, and hope shortly to see him face to face. What a mercy to be one of the "strangers."

"In whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." That is the kind of religion of which I should like to have more; but heaviness comes

upon us through manifold temptations, and we are made sorrowful through these things; but the Psalmist said, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

I will now come to the words of my text: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ," &c. This is the word of the King to these "strangers." When I have yielded to sin I have experienced the truth of what Mr. Hart says, namely, that "Seldom do we see the snare, before we feel the smart." We go so heedlessly along and at times so prayerlessly that we see not the traps until our souls are caught in them. Then when we are caught we know where we are, for we feel guilt on our conscience, and then we lament that we ran on so heedlessly. The poor repentant sinner, when God gives him repentance, sees his folly. Have we not been left sometimes to get entangled, and then afterwards we have seen the snare? The apostle said, "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth." This is how the loins are to be girded; therefore search the Word of God, for therein you will find most wholesome advice and instruction. We want our minds girded with this precious truth that we might know the truth savingly. When our loins are girt about with God's precious truth and we have on the gospel armour, then we say, "Lord, this is a wicked world. O turn off our eyes from beholding vanity." It is well when we feel a spirit of prayer poured out upon us that we may not be left to fall, but that the Lord would hold us up. Then our loins are girded up and our prayer is, "Preserve me from evil that it may not grieve me." We pray in secret when none but God and our souls can see, and our desire is that the Lord would not suffer us to fall. What a day of falling away is the present! How errors are creeping in here and there! How the gold is become dim! Vital godliness is at a low ebb and our loins are not girded up. If we were only humbled enough the exhortations would suit us. God grant that you and I may be enabled to listen to and walk according to his Word.

The apostle here says, "Be sober." Notice that this exhortation is to the "strangers." He does not mean altogether to keep from intoxicating liquors. Some do not require any at all, and to others the apostle says, "Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities." I understand this to mean more particularly gravity of temperament. Soberness should be stamped upon all our behaviour wherever we are. Nothing is more becoming to the gospel than soberness of mind. There should be soberness of mind where God's name is professed. The truth is a very sober thing. It is all about salvation and damnation. It has to do with God's grace to poor sinners and his justice. The apostle says, "Be sober." If there is not sobriety about our religion it may be questioned whether there

is not something wrong at the root; and if the root is wrong our religion will wither away. Are you not afraid sometimes whether there is not a worm at the root, or whether there is much depth of earth? And there is another cause. If we have not received the seed into good ground we have received it on stony ground, or among thorns, or by the wayside.

“Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end.” What a solemn position for those of us who are near the end of our journey. How long have you been a hoper in the mercy of God? I am a hoper now, and I do beg of God that I may hope to the end. I feel I would not part with my hope for ten thousand worlds, for I have a hope that I shall reach heaven. Sometimes I have hoped against hope, and sometimes I have felt assured that mine was a good hope. Some will say, “Then you have only got as far as hope yet.” The Christian’s hope will never fail him. The Lord’s people do not like to talk about things beyond their own experience. Sometimes they have a good hope that God will appear and deliver them, and they get no further than this good hope. I cannot let go my good hope through grace, and I hope to die with this good hope, and I hope I shall get to heaven at last. What a mercy it is to have a good hope through grace in prospect of death and eternity. There can be no other Foundation than Jesus Christ,—the Foundation which God hath placed in Zion. Christ will present us before the Father without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. Those who have died with this good hope are gone to be with Christ which is far better. It is a hope in the truth of God and a hope to the end. I cannot think a man can perish who has a good hope through grace.

“Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” Every time Christ is revealed to our souls the revelation is accompanied with power and Christ becomes very precious to us. We hope there have been times when Christ has been revealed to us and we hope we are interested in his salvation, and that we are partakers of that glorious grace; and if so, O what grace has come into our souls! But you may say, “Surely if you have had these blessings you are got beyond hope. Have you no more than a hope that you shall see Christ in heaven?” No, and I love to have a fresh feeling of hope. I hope to get deeper and clearer manifestations of the love of Christ revealed to my soul. This is a hope I would not part with, but am hoping to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ. He will come again with his trumpet in his hand, and the dead in Christ will rise first. The children of God will then rise in the image of Christ, yes, all poor hoping sinners. I hope you will never despise a good hope through grace, because it is such a glorious and blessed reality.

“As obedient children.” I should like it to be said of the

“strangers” at Reading that they are obedient to the precepts, to the commandments, and to the ordinances of God’s house. I shall only dwell now on the ordinances of God’s house. God has only two standing ordinances, namely, Believers’ Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, and he says to these “strangers,” “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” We do not want those who have not grace to join the church. Such would be only *cumberers*. How necessary it is, then, that we should be the right characters, and that we should be sober men and women. To such we would say, “Come in, thou blessed of the Lord.” It is a very solemn thing to receive members into a church. If we receive those whom God has not received, what good will it be? Our receiving them would be building them up on a false foundation. They might think, “O the church received me, therefore I must be right.” How very careful we should be to look into the character and experience of the candidates to see if we can find that such persons are fit persons to join the church. There is a right and a proper experience. There must be some teaching of the Holy Spirit.

“As obedient children.” Let these things first be proved and then attend to all the ordinances of God’s house. Then may it be said, “How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince’s daughter!” But without grace what good would baptism be? Some have a very great objection to Believers’ Baptism, and ridicule and mock it; but it is an ordinance that God has greatly owned and honoured, and my soul has been especially blessed in attending to it.

“As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he which has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.” The angels veil their faces and sing, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth.” By “all manner of conversation” I believe the apostle means our conversation in the things of God. A godly man is holy even in the fair, for he takes his principles with him if he wants to buy or sell anything. “Immortal principles forbid the child of God to sin.” But if a child of God has no business to transact in the fair, he will not want to go. A regenerate man is holy when in the market, and sober and honest in all his actions, both in buying and selling. “The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.” (Tit. ii. 11, 12.)

May the Lord grant us the help of his Spirit to enable us to “hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” May the Lord add his blessing. Amen.

NOTHING suits my soul but sovereign, omnipotent, and super-abounding grace. I am no common sinner, and must therefore have no common grace.—*J. C. Philpot.*

“AS THY DAYS, SO SHALL THY STRENGTH BE.”

Deut. xxxiii. 25.

BY THE LATE THOMAS CLOUGH.

It is a doctrine stated by Paul to the Corinthians that “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God,” also that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God,” for profitable purposes to the Lord’s people; and if all Scripture is inspired, then the text must be also.

In these words Moses is the speaker. He was appointed by Jehovah to lead Israel out of Egypt into the land of which he had told them; but he had seen much in the children of Israel to cast him down. The people had been brought out of Egypt by signs and wonders and a mighty hand, and they had been fed with manna in the desert and water from the rock, both of which were miraculous. Their feet swelled not, their garments waxed not old, and yet they had murmured, rebelled, and fretted against the Lord, so much so that God said unto Moses, “Let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them.” (Exod. xxxii. 10.) But when Moses pleaded the Lord’s faithfulness to his covenant made to Abraham, then “the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto them;” and after proving again and again the faithfulness, goodness, and mercy of the Lord during forty years’ journey in a barren desert, Moses comes to die, and amongst the precious words that God, through him, spake to the people the text is none of the meanest, which will appear if we consider, first, that there is appointed to the people of God tribulation or days of trouble. This truth is attested by our Lord, for he has said, “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” Second, their weakness and helplessness. Third, the dreadful enemies they have to contend with. Fourth, the sweet and comfortable assurance: “As thy days, so shall thy strength be.”

We will first notice the day of conviction, and that is a day of trouble, when God brings that law into the conscience which is a schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. He convinces us of sin. Paul said, “I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” It is this righteous and holy law that brings trouble. By nature we are quite at ease; but when the Eternal Spirit quickens us and brings us out of the grave of sin, then we are made to feel our dreadful state of rebellion against God; and just in proportion as Jehovah reveals the purity of his law and our dreadful transgressions of it, just so is our trouble. The operations of the Holy Spirit are very sovereign in this work, for Zion has great soul-travail with some, and with others she has a very easy time; but all these things are appointed according to covenant purpose and according to the counsels of the Eternal Three, who works all things after the counsel of his own will. The jailor at Philippi was brought into great trouble,

also the publican; while Lydia, the seller of purple, had her heart sweetly opened, and at once had peace spoken there.

I know not but some of you may have had great trouble because you have not experienced such a deep law-work as others have; but you ought not to be troubled at that, but rather be thankful that you have had an easier time than some of God's children. The question that should alone trouble you is this, "Am I condemned by the law? Is the vileness of my nature apparent? Am I left totally without hope or help from law-performances?" If so, the schoolmaster has taught you this lesson; but if you think that you can yet do anything or possess anything whereby you can bring peace to your own conscience, you may look for more trouble, either here in this world if you are God's elect or in hell for ever.

There is, secondly, a day of trouble because of backsliding. When God the Holy Ghost has convinced a vessel of mercy and then brought pardon into the soul there is great joy, and it is a good day, a day of gladness, wherein we can say, "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." He brings us from execution to liberty, from sentence of death to the enjoyment of pardon, from a revelation of our poverty and vileness by nature to a knowledge of our wealth in Christ Jesus by grace, from reading our desert in the law to reading our names in the Book of Life and our heirship by grace to God's everlasting favour and eternal life; but instead of looking to our feet and remembering that we are in the wilderness, we are apt to boast of our portion and get proud and high-minded, and sometimes think that many of the long-trying saints of God possess little or no religion at all, for they seem so cold, so dead, and seem to possess so little of that savour with which we are so bountifully supplied. But Ahah's message to Benhadad is very suitable to us under such circumstances: "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off." (1 Kings xx. 11.) Again: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. x. 12.)

One day of trouble is past, but another day comes. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." (Prov. xvi. 18.) Some subtle lust, some cruel devil is watching the infant in grace, but his heavenly Father watches too, and "as his days his strength shall be." Is Mr. High-minded sought after? Then the number of Israel must be taken and God displeased. Do we leave our first love to embrace Madame Wanton and grieve the Holy Spirit? It will be a day of trouble if we sow to the flesh and reap corruption. God the Holy Ghost is grieved and withdraws his sensible presence. I think I may say that every child of God can sometimes look back and see that his dear Lord's sensible presence was not withdrawn until there was offence given by that child to the Holy Spirit. (Hos. v. 15.)

When the day of sifting comes of which our Lord told Peter, saying, "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat," it is a day of trouble.

We have not only to pass under a fiery law, but we have to experience fiery temptations, and our faith has to be subjected to the furnace to make it manifest of what kind it is; and if it be not the precious faith of God's elect, it will be consumed. There are also days of persecution; for it is written, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. iii. 12.) The apostle says, "As then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." (Gal. iv. 29.) It is under the power of these enemies that we are made to feel that we have no strength in ourselves, but are made to cry unto him that is able to save, and experimentally to feel that our Redeemer is strong, the Lord of hosts is his name.

From the time we leave our first love, with the exception of our love-tokens, signs, love-smiles, and firm faith grips, we may be said to experience trouble. The Psalmist said, "Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled." (Ps. civ. 29.) Ah! It is a sad time when God hides his blessed face and our tenderness of conscience departs; when our sweet, godly fear is not in exercise, our peace is marred, our lust works, and Satan tempts us that all our past experience is nothing but the work of imagination; and if he does not overpower us upon that, he comes in like a flood with the hypocrite's portrait (Heb. vi), and charges us with the unpardonable sin, or the sin unto death. If there be any fear of God, if there be any tenderness of conscience, this accusation, accompanied with our knowledge of allowed sin, will cause the belly to tremble, the lips to quiver, and rottenness to enter into the bones. Nevertheless, this is only to sift, not to destroy, only to winnow, not to grind, only to heat, not to consume; for the faithful, unchangeable God hath said, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." We wonder and are astonished to find that still we are preserved with a little life and a little hope; and that God again reveals himself as our God in a small degree, either through his providence or the lattice of his ordinances, and gives a slight cessation from this war.

What complaints have been wrung from great warriors during this war! The Psalmist said, "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar! My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace." (Ps. cxx. 5, 6.) Paul said, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. v. 17), and this made him exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" One smile from his blessed Majesty under these circumstances would give peace; but it is withheld. Christ is known to be touched with the feeling of our infirmities and in all our afflictions to be afflicted, but there is no sensible appearance for our deliverance.

But how are we kept up? Is not faith secretly strengthened? Are we not often brought to our wit's end, and to our final resolution, so that we say, like Jonah of old, "I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple," and with Eather, "If I perish, I perish?" And do we not prove again and again, just as Moses did, that as our days our strength has been? May we not say truly as did the Psalmist, "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us; then they had swallowed us up quick?" (Ps. cxiv. 2, 3.) And are we not sometimes led to exclaim with the poet,

"This God is the God we adore,
Our faithful, unchangeable Friend,
Whose love is as great as his power,
And knows neither measure nor end?"

I know there are many poor souls trembling for fear of the Pope and his devilish priesthood. But beloved, will you look back and show me, either from this blessed Book or from history or from your own experience, where Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost left his people for want of strength, or, in reality, forgot them? Have you been bending your steps to hell, and did he display strength to rescue you? Did you wander far from him, and did he bring you nigh? Have you sometimes been shut up, both in providence and grace, and did his own strength open a way and send you deliverance? Then you have cause to believe that all the days that are to come will bring corresponding strength, and God shall be glorified in your election, in your quickening, calling, justifying, and glorifying; and when before the throne you shall own it was true that as your days your strength has been, to the glory of sovereign grace, which made you accepted in the Beloved. Amen.

THERE is no power below that which raised Christ from the dead and made the world, that can break or turn the heart of a sinner.—*Brooks.*

It is not only our being first brought into such a state as to feel that we need an almighty and an all-sufficient Saviour; but it is the continual, daily discovery thereof that so endears him to us. Where there is spiritual life, there will be more or less of an abiding sense of our need of this never-failing Friend. Fresh circumstances are ever arising in the saints' path of tribulation to bring them to feel their need of Jesus.—*Hobbs.*

O how churlish is my heart at times, much harder than a nother millstone. Anon my heart is broken down with sweet contrition, and then I get such charming sights of grace, such cheering gleams of love, as make me think I no'er shall grumble more. But these visits oft are short. Weary I am of myself, right weary and ashamed. Eleven years at a gospel school, and have not yet half learnt the first lesson of the lowest form, "Take up thy cross." None but Jesus could bear such dunces in his school. 'Tis well for me that he is God as well as Man, else I should weary him out, and his compassion would fail.—*Berridge.*

THE SOUL UPHELD IN LIFE.

It is now more than twelve months since I had any direct communication from my dear friend, which hath been an additional exercise to my already burdened state of mind. Not that I entertain any doubt of your regard for me, but it is my lot frequently to sit solitary and alone, feeling at times full of trouble and ready to complain with one of old, "Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness." (Ps. lxxxviii. 18.) In these dreary seasons I have sometimes sunk so low as almost to forget former prosperity, and have proved by experience that the days of darkness are many, and that the time is come when, according to our Lord's prediction, "Ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and ye shall not see it."

Truly the ways of Zion do mourn, and the Lord hath covered with a cloud the remnant of his people in this part of his heritage where heretofore he hath made the place of his feet glorious. O what a change is this! The prophet Isaiah in his 59th chapter points out some of the causes of these calamities, and in this day of great declension few there are indeed that stand clear of the reproofs therein declared; for "who can say, I have made my heart clean; I am pure from my sin?" Not one; for the plague of leprosy is found and felt in every vessel of mercy more or less, and will never be eradicated until the house is taken down and laid in the dust. How little communion is there to be found even among those who fear the Lord, for what with oppression from without, the suspicions and jealousies too prevalent among those reckoned to be brethren, the devices of the great adversary, and the general depravity of human nature, there is very little to be found in this present evil state but vanity and vexation of spirit; so that "if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." It ill becomes the tried pilgrim to complain, or to ask, "What is the cause that the former days were better than these?" yet of a truth the present face of things wear a very discouraging aspect both in the church and the nation.

What a rich mercy it is in these last days and perilous times to find a sure Dwelling-place and to abide under the shadow of the Almighty;—to find him to be our Shield, under his blessed wings to be enabled to put our trust, and to be preserved from the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and from the destruction that wasteth at noonday, both literal and spiritual. The inspired apostle hath by his testimony assured us that "the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is," and this fiery trial Paul was himself sharply exercised with very soon after his abundant revelation, by some severe, inflaming or fiery darts of Satan; so that Paul and Peter, though the most eminent apostles and signally beloved of God, yet each must learn by experience what the fiery trial was, and that, too, immediately after

such wonderful manifestations of the Lord's divine favour. How invaluable is that promise when we are enabled to mix faith with it and feel it verified in our own experience: "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

We are not altogether strangers to these exercises, nor yet to the blessedness of being "watered every moment;" and hitherto we have been mercifully and marvellously preserved in the midst of the manifold trials we are called to endure. For my own part I frequently feel Asaph's complaints in Ps. lxxiii. are very similar to my own. But I have no desire to fill this sheet with what our dear departed friend in one of his letters calls "the dregs of the old cask," though I have plenty of these bitter herbs in my portion here, and so have you, my dear friend, at Leicester, as I am well aware of and grieved for.

I am continually learning something of the depths of Adam's fall and of the depravity of my own nature, so as to enter into the meaning of Mr. Hart in his 43rd hymn. And on the other hand I have experienced repeated tokens of the Lord's great goodness and preventing mercy, the infinite value of the fountain open for sin and uncleanness in the precious blood of Christ, and have felt the application of it to my own conscience, attended with sweet peace, deep self-abasement, self-loathing, melting and humbling sensations of soul the effects of which are not easily described, for nothing beneath the sun can be compared to them. These merciful applications and gracious instructions of the ever-blessed Spirit of all truth, interspersed with opposite changes have led my mind more into the depths of human depravity and into some of the heights of redeeming grace comprised in that wonderful expression of the apostle John, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." This teaching has effectually convinced me that I am a poor, helpless *nothing*, less than the least of all the Lord's redeemed ones; and yet in the midst of so much weakness my soul is upheld in life, and to this day I am surrounded with every needful, providential mercy; for although I am entirely dependant on God for every supply, hitherto I have lacked nothing, It is true some resources appear like the brook Cherith to be dried up, and others may probably fail; still the fountain of the Almighty's goodness abides the same, and the Word says, "Be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." (Heb. xiii. 5.) This contentment I sometimes enjoy, and at other times my language is, "Lord, increase my faith, and enable me to hold fast thy truth."

My health is wonderful considering my age, though I am so feeble that I can only manage to reach Providence Chapel on the Sunday morning to hear Mr. Lock, and generally abide at home in the evenings, not being able to go long journeys. There seems to be a great stir in town about a certain Jew preacher, but I have never heard him, not being capable of going so far as to Mr.

Cole's, and I find his chapel is still farther. Messrs. Birch, Bensley, Gale, Parr, Gardener, and several others are much taken with him. How these wanderings will terminate I know not, but the remnant left with us are somewhat like the poor outcasts that the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen. (2 Kings xxv. 12.)

It is a grievous matter to me and likewise to many others to be deprived of your visitation this spring. The exact cause I cannot define, though it appears to rest with "Sosthenes," whom Paul called his brother when at Corinth; but I desire to learn submission, and endeavour to solve all into the sovereign will of the Chief Shepherd, who hath promised to seek out and feed his sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they are scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

I hope this will find my dear friend in health, together with Mrs. Chamberlain and the young olive plants. Please to present my love to them and to all the brethren. A few lines from you would be much prized, but taking all circumstances into account, peradventure it may be too much to press for such a favour at the present juncture. Be that as it may, I still remain in sincerity and truth,

Most affectionately yours,

London, May 10th, 1833.

J. KEET.

A SOLID PEACE.

Dear Mother,—I have just received yours of the 12th inst., and am always glad to hear from you, but am truly sorry to hear of the uncomfortable state of mind you are in. I would point you to the finished work of Christ in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and he is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. "He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

In your letter you complain of being smitten in conscience in all you do. Dear mother, pray remember that if guilt is felt in the conscience there is no way of getting it out but by an application of the blood of Christ. His blood cleanses from all sin. I should like you to read what Mr. Romaine says in his "Life of Faith" respecting a legal spirit, and if you are under the spirit of bondage, may you be led to look to the Lord for that liberty wherewith he makes his people free.

You say you long for that which you do not at present enjoy, even the ordinances of God's house, and the enjoyment of the privileges of the gospel. In this matter you and I are both alike. These are invaluable and very desirable blessings; but blessed be God he is not confined to the means of grace. He can manifest himself to us in the closet, in the shop, in the field, or elsewhere as he in wisdom sees fit. He hath said he will dwell in his people, and walk in them, and that he will be their God, and they

shall be his people. O that your desires after him may be satisfied, that you may enjoy fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, through the indwelling of God the Holy Ghost.

You will now expect me to give you some account of myself. You will remember something of my state of mind when I was at home, and when I returned to L. C. my burden seemed heavier than before. In the same state of mind I spent that week and the next, and on Sunday morning got up very miserable and full of anguish of heart. I took up my Bible to read a little, but there seemed to be nothing but curses in the sacred pages for me and I knew not what to do, and wished myself anything but a man that had a never-dying soul. However, I attempted to pray, and blessed be God I found it good to draw near unto him, and was enabled to pour out all my woes at his feet. The words I have before named came sweetly into my mind: "Who is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," and I found a solid peace in the belief that Christ was my righteousness and sanctification, yea, my All and in all. I did not feel in any very rapturous frame of mind, yet, blessed be God, for many days I enjoyed a solid peace of mind which nothing in the world could produce. The strength of Jesus was made perfect in my weakness, and was sufficient to remove all my guilt and subdue my corruptions.

But in this state I did not continue very long, but found, like Paul, a thorn in the flesh, and the corruptions of my deceitful heart again rose up within; and these things often cause me to walk in heaviness; but, blessed be God, he hath said, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. viii. 12.) I must now conclude, wishing you every new-covenant blessing.

Yours in the Best of all Bonds,

Nov. 15th, 1827.

JOHN GARDNER.

GRACE IN THE HEART.

My dear Brother,—I am much obliged to you for your last letter, and am rejoiced to find that you are desirous of knowing more of Christ. You have much to contend with in various ways from the world, the flesh, and the devil. Satan is a very subtle enemy, and never spreads his snare in your sight. I hope you will not be induced to value any knowledge which does not cause you to love Christ more and to live more decidedly as a member of his kingdom. Satan does not care how much knowledge you have in your head, so long as he can keep possession of the citadel of your heart. Consequently, he will change his position a thousand times before he will surrender his hold. But God's grace must and will dethrone him, and set up the kingdom of Christ in your heart, so that you will serve a new Master and for very different wages. All that Satan can boast of or tempt

us with are perishable things of time that will soon vanish away. But though we profess to despise the riches and honours of this life, none but those who have the light of God's countenance shining upon them will view them in their proper light. Satan is the god of this world, and he blinds the minds of them which believe not. If one device will not succeed, he will try another; and every unregenerate man will be led captive by him in some way or other. Many may think they have outwitted him by a knowledge of great truths in the head, whilst their heart is devoid of grace.

You may, perhaps, think these remarks may not be profitable to you; but I believe we think and speak a great deal too seldom of the greatest of all enemies, and I feel this is his most subtle device. Old disciples of Christ can say, "We are not ignorant of his devices;" but young converts will be entangled more or less. Consequently, it becomes ministers of Christ to show forth particularly what little they may know of them, so that the Word of God may be "a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our paths." Though we are not *of* his kingdom, we live *in* his kingdom; and we must pass through it to our eternal rest. We must, therefore, watch and pray that we enter not into temptation. You will find "Take heed" very frequently in the Bible, and as such words are there we may be sure they are necessary. "Exhort one another while it is called to-day;" "Take heed, lest your heart be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Now, no Christian will grow in grace who has not a single eye to God's glory; for if the eye be not single, the body is full of darkness.

It matters little what a man knows if Christ be not to him the Pearl of great price. Is Jesus Christ precious to you? Do you love him so that you would die for him? Do you count all you lose for his sake gain? Are you willing to make great sacrifices sooner than deny him? Untried faith is uncertain faith. When you are cast out, and have many trials and difficulties to contend with, you will rejoice, I trust, that you are counted not only worthy to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake. You will not be persecuted for holding truths in the head, but for having grace in your heart; for the former will not cause you to differ from the world. When the fruits of the Spirit manifest themselves in your life; when you are blind to your own interest in this world; when you are deaf to the advice of the worldly-wise, then it will be said, "Mr.—is a changed man; he is a fool."

Now, my dear brother, be assured of this, as God works in your dark soul, such changes as these will be caused; so that instead of panting after the riches of this world, you will pant after the unsearchable riches of Christ. Human nature cannot and will not make great sacrifices; but as you have a knowledge given to you by the Spirit of the exceeding great and precious promises laid up in Christ for God's chosen few, you will be led

to see the nothingness and vanity of all things here below, and you will with joy cry out, "We have a kingdom which cannot be moved." God, by his Spirit, quickens, and he alone can enable you to separate from your old companions and the world, and so make great sacrifices for Christ's sake, who hath died that you might live; who became poor that you through his poverty might be made rich. Your conscience will become more tender, and you will be better able to discern between good and evil.

At this present time my conscience is not very easy about the Church Establishment. I neither like the system nor the forms and ceremonies, particularly the baptismal service and catechism. God forbid that my conscience should be hardened through a strong inclination of the flesh to cleave to its respectability and riches. I am not fully satisfied what I shall do; but I pray that God may guide me, and that I may not take such an important step hastily and unadvisedly. You will, perhaps, be surprised to hear these objections against an Establishment which is admired so much by the world at large, especially by the rich and great. I was perfectly satisfied with it till the Lord was pleased to open my eyes to discern its inconsistencies. A letter would not, if entirely on the subject, afford me room to say all I could say. In the baptismal service we thank God in the surplice for regenerating children, and then put on the black gown, go into the pulpit, and tell them in plain terms that they were not born again. Our Liturgy makes every baptized person a member of the true church and we have to address them as such when we know to the contrary by their fruits. And the catechism is so full of errors that I am sure no one with a glimmering of light will teach children it.

Philpot is still with me, and a very sincere Christian he is; he will leave shortly. He thinks about leaving the Church, though he would give up his fellowship, and would not be worth a groat. Would not the world call him a great fool? You and I have much to learn. We are very carnal and worldly-minded; we have but little grace. What have we sacrificed for Christ?

Yours in the Bonds of the Everlasting Gospel,

Sutton, March 14th, 1831.

W. TIPTAFT.

NEED OF A LAW-WORK.

Dear Sir,—I have lately felt a strong desire to lay before you a brief account of my experience (if indeed I can truly so call it), and having read a letter in this month's "Gospel Standard" by one who has been in the furnace, which seems to bear upon my case, I have ventured to write to you, and hope you will excuse the intrusion.

When about fourteen years of age I began to feel some concern about eternal things. I attended a chapel in the neighbourhood in which I lived for some time, and there heard a "yea and nay"

gospel. The nature of my feelings at that time I cannot clearly recollect, but most probably they were merely natural or not very deep; yet I well remember entreating the Lord with tears that he would visit me with his salvation. Some extracts from Owen on the work of the Holy Spirit fell in my way at this time, from which I learned a theory of Christian experience. I especially saw my need of a law-work, and earnestly besought the Lord to grant me his Holy Spirit to convince me of sin and lead me into all truth.

Early in 1841, when in my sixteenth year, it pleased the Lord by various circumstances, which, though deeply interesting to me, would be tedious to mention, to lead me to a knowledge of the doctrines of grace which I received with enthusiasm.

I left the above-mentioned chapel and attended the ministry of Mr. Irons of Camberwell. I cannot describe the love I felt towards the joyful sound of salvation by grace. I now experienced more liberty in prayer and felt a hope that I was among the number of God's chosen. This hope, however, was often clouded by the thought that I had never felt the application of the law to my conscience. All my anxiety now centred in this point, and fervently did I pray to be led into a deep law-work, to hear Sinai's thunders and be shaken over the flames of hell. If I could feel this I thought I should be right.

After having attended Grove Chapel about a year I was induced to leave and attend the ministry of Mr. Wells, occasionally visiting Eden Street and Zoar Chapels, especially during your visits to London. I read rather extensively, and attained considerable enlightenment; but still everything tended to convince me that I must be eternally lost without a deeper conviction of sin. The promise, "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him" (Lu. xi. 13) was impressed on my mind, and ever since I have pleaded that promise in asking the Lord to give me his Holy Spirit to convince me of my sin and lead to Jesus' blood.

After some time my zeal, my love, and my feelings altogether began to cool, prayer became a task, hearing and reading wearisome, and I seemed entirely forsaken of God. At last I gave up all attendance on public worship (except once or twice during your visits), and became as though I had never heard God's name. In this awful state I continued well-nigh ten years. I felt that I was entirely helpless and carnal, that I could not even raise the feeblest desire, and that my heart was enmity against God. I had at intervals a few moments of feeble prayer (which was always for God to give me his Holy Spirit, as I mentioned above, and to deliver me from my dead state), but the heavens seemed as brass above my head, and the Lord appeared to shut out my prayer. I had no more feeling than a stone, and those ten years, with very few exceptions, were one continued scene of rebellion, coldness, deadness, and hardness, on which I look back with

horror, and would sooner, if it were the Lord's will, endure any amount of suffering than that cold insensibility.

Towards the close of March in the present year (1855) I experienced a little softening and a few sweet whispers of mercy (if I do not deceive myself), and a hope that the Lord will perfect that which concerneth me. I have renewed my attendance at chapels, and felt a little refreshing, especially during a sermon preached by dear Mr. Kershaw, on Sunday evening, May 6th, from Jno. i. 13.

I have now a deeper sense of my sin than I had before my ten years' carnality, but I cannot remember that the law has come into my conscience as a ministration of condemnation with all the terrors of Sinai. I see that the law is spiritual and I am carnal, that my whole life has been hostile thereto; but I believe many worldlings have felt more dread of hell than I. My anxiety has ever been more whether I have a real, spiritual experience. I have been deeply alarmed about this, but I have not felt so much dread of hell, though I know I must be lost if not led by the Spirit of God.

My constant prayer now is that the Lord would, in mercy, grant me his Holy Spirit to work in me to will and to do of his good pleasure, to lead me to Calvary, and manifest Christ as my Saviour, give me faith and repentance, and lead me in the narrow way that leadeth unto life eternal; and truly a narrow way I find it. I am so surrounded by snares at every step that without the Lord's guidance I must fall. May he, in mercy, deliver me from all delusion; for nothing but his almighty power can deliver me.

And now, dear Sir, allow me to apologize for thus intruding upon you. You are the only person to whom I have ever opened my mind on the subject. Indeed, I scarcely know my object in addressing you, for I wish my faith to stand not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God; and nothing short of a manifestation of Christ as my Saviour can give me real peace. Still, as I have experienced a sweet union to you I thought I would lay my case before you in the hope that you might be able, in a line on the wrapper of the "Standard," to point out where I am, or tell me if you think what I have stated is merely the working of natural feelings. May not the case stand thus:—I have heard a certain line of experience pointed out, and being rather enthusiastic have desired to attain thereto in the same manner that I might wish to excel in an art or a science? God grant that this may not be the case; but "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it?" I have no hope in myself.

It has been my object to write as plainly and concisely as possible. I could have amplified my statement, but I feared to be tiresome, and had I coloured it more highly I might have led you to form an erroneous opinion.

Please accept the expression of my sincere regard and fervent

desire that the Lord may be with you, both as a minister and as Editor, and may you be made increasingly a blessing to the Lord's people.

Yours Sincerely,

To Mr. Philpot, June 5th, 1855.

J. L. B.

JUDGING OURSELVES.

Dear Friend,—I can assure you it is not a common thing to see me so free and lively as you felt I was when at Croydon. Blessed be the Lord who anoints with fresh oil because he is gracious, and can and will show mercy because it flows in a channel of strict justice to us; so that he is righteous, just, and holy in all his ways towards his elect whom he has chosen, saved in the Lord, and sanctifies according to the tenor of that covenant which is so beautifully ordered in all things and sure. "Excellent perfect is his way," as 2 Sam. xxii. 31 may be fairly translated; and therefore may you and I be helped to look into this "perfect law of liberty," as James calls it, until we are changed into the very image of Him who is "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his Person." If we are intent upon this, Satan will be intent on marring our path, entangling our affections, causing a separation between us and the Lord, and then a Brother, as the Lord Jesus most truly is, is offended, and a "brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and their contentions are like the bars of a castle." (Prov. xviii. 19.)

It is our privilege to inquire of the Lord why he has brought us into darkness and not into light, why he turneth his hand against us all the day, why he has made us to err from his ways, and hardened our hearts from his fear. It is good, my dear friend, to judge ourselves, and thus to make straight paths for our feet. Be assured the Lord will not deviate from the rule of his Word; we must bend to him. I know this, for I was inflexible for many a year, but never found rest till I was enabled to comply with his will and way.

You will think I have been a long time answering your letter, and I think so too. But now, having a little leisure, I will try and send you a few lines. I have no doubt that you have made to yourself crooked paths, and if you have you will never know peace till God speaks it, and he will not before there is a hearty confession. Naomi could say that the Lord's hand had gone out against her, but, as good Mr. Huntington once observed, she forgot to say that her feet had previously gone out against the Lord. Mr. H. used to say, "No sin, no rod; no iniquity, no stripes." You are called to endure hardness. If Satan oppresses, remember that when the enemy comes in like a flood, none but the Spirit of the Lord can lift up an effectual standard against him. Feel for you I hope I do. We are to remember that the same afflictions are accomplished in our brethren which are in the

world (1 Pet. v. 9), and we are to be grieved for the afflictions of Joseph (Amos v. 5), and to bear each other's burdens. (Gal. vi. 2.) Remember that the Holy Spirit is a Spirit of faith, a Spirit of grace and of supplications, a Spirit of power to wrestle with God, a Spirit of love to God, his truth and his people, the Spirit of a sound mind, and the Spirit of adoption. May you be helped to pray to him; he can revive the expiring spark.

Christ is Zion's holy flame and Israel's refiner's fire, and you will find both light and heat at this altar. The apostle Paul said to Timothy, "That good thing which was committed to thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us." (2 Tim. i. 14.) In the original it reads, "That good, or noble, or beautiful deposit keep by the Holy Ghost." His beautiful deposit is the Word and Spirit which are according to the tenor of the better covenant given to all the heirs of promise. May you be enabled by the Holy Spirit's help to show the genuineness of your faith by your prevalence in prayer. The apostle John says, "I write unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome (by the prayer of faith) the wicked one." Days of adversity are apparently at hand; therefore may the Lord help us to obey his word where he has said, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." (Isa. xxvi. 20.)

My very kind remembrance to your partner and companion in tribulation, and wishing you both much peace through the blood of the Lamb, which alone cleanses from all sin,

I remain,

Yours very affectionately in Christ Jesus,

Cranbrook, Oct. 9th, 1851.

HENRY BIRCH.

THE BEST OF FRIENDS.

Dear Friend,—The last letter of my son informs me that he was feasting upon fat things, the Lord of the household having abundantly blest the provision and satisfied the poor with bread. Where he is now I know not, but being secured in the covenant, he must be under the blessing. I am often anxious about the welfare of my spiritual children whom God has given me in this world. I, like doting fathers, am over anxious; they cannot leave their children with Providence, nor I with the God of grace. But the covenant is ordered in all things and sure, and that will stand fast for ever, and the seed of our spiritual Jacob must be blessed in it.

If thou art still rejoicing the Lord enable thee still to "go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works." (Eccles. ix. 7.) It is this which knits the soul to him, so that having all our happiness and satisfaction in him we choose, we want no other; for being acquainted with God we are at peace. Though these

seasons usually do not last long, yet are they very sweet, being a foretaste of that eternal rest which remaineth when the troublesome scene of time things shall be no more. Enoch walked with God, and perhaps had no earthly companion to walk with, but he could not have had a better Companion than his heavenly One; and if he had a companion in the flesh God was better to him than all beside.

I daily find that there is nothing better than when I am favoured to have a little intercourse with the Best of Friends and most familiar of all bosom Companions. If we are grieved, he hears our complaints; if we are needy, he will attend to our wants; if we are helpless, he will send relief; if we are happy he will partake of our joy. There is none like our God. The company even of good people is sometimes irksome to me except it be a choice opportunity when God has brought us together to fulfil his promise that where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he will be in the midst of them. There is by far too much gossip under the name of religious intercourse. I find, and you may too, that it is well when these five things occupy much of our time: First, diligence in our lawful business. Second, prayer to God in private. Third, reading and meditating upon his Word. Fourth, waiting upon him as our necessities arise. Fifth, watching his hand to see how he answers our prayers and fulfils the desires of our waiting souls. Stick close, my beloved, to these, and you shall find your advantage in it. When it is well with you, you need no spur to this work, but feel it good to be in this place, and fear to lose the Best of Guests.

But there are times when nothing either draws or drives, and therefore God has appointed us tribulation in this world, that in him we may have peace. The promise is: "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." (Zeph. iii. 12.) Trials, under his hand, drive us to God, beat us off from all human refuge, confidence, or earthly resting-places to seek after him as our only good; and how far preferable is the heaviest suffering attended with this effect, to the most easy state of soul unaccompanied with a sense of God's favour; and how kind it is in the Most High to provide such a variety of ways and means to bring us to seek our happiness and delight in him! If he hides his face, it is only to make himself more precious, desirable, and sweet to us, and if he tries us with enemies, it is to make his Friendship valuable. If he denies us what we ask, it is better we should not have it, and if he grants us the desires of our hearts, it is that we may have no other delight than himself, knowing that every other is vanity and vexation of spirit.

In affliction no other company will do but his. David said, "In my distress I called upon the Lord;" and as soon as he got into a strait he inquired of God, and when he found him he said, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the

earth that I desire beside thee." The apostle James says, "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray," for God has promised to be with his people in trouble. "Is any merry? let him sing psalms." Thus both sides,—adversity and prosperity have God for their end. The Psalmist said, "Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. . . They go from strength to strength, everyone of them in Zion appeareth before God." (Ps. lxxxiv. 5, 7.)

I have had a strong desire for one thing, and that is to have all my (spiritual) children around my table this Christmas time from the north, south, east, and west, and if I could I think I should outnumber Jacob; but this cannot be. If I have them in my heart that is enough. The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the Eunuch saw him no more; nevertheless he went on his way rejoicing and Philip to his labour of love. God bless thee.

Yours ever,

Brighton, Dec., 1808.

W. T. BROOK.

"I STRETCH FORTH MY HANDS UNTO THEE."

Ps. cxliii. 6.

"I STRETCH forth my hands unto God,"

With hope in his covenant love;
His counsels all ages have stood,
Nor will he his purpose remove.

"I stretch forth my hands unto God,"

For I have no strength of my own;
Though chastened at times by his rod,
I trust to his mercy alone.

"I stretch forth my hands unto God,"

He helps me on Christ to rely;
While treading this dark, thorny road,
My affections would mount up on high.

"I stretch forth my hands unto God,"

And thirst for a drop of his love,
When weary and faint with my load,
Not knowing at times how to move.

"I stretch forth my hands unto God,"

When trouble and sorrows attend,
He help in such times doth afford.
O what an unchangeable Friend!

"I stretch forth my hands unto God,"

When comforts from him I receive,
My sorrows I spread all abroad;
Through grace I can all things believe.

Sleaford.

J. HARLICK.

O HOW needful is the furnace, both to discover our dross and to purge it away.—*Berridge*.

Obituary.

ROBERT OSBORNE.—On Dec. 15th, 1888, Robert Osborne, of Kelvedon, Essex.

He was a regular attendant at the chapel at Witham for about thirty years, but never joined the church, though others could plainly see that he was the subject of a work of grace; but this did not satisfy him. He often expressed how he felt his own vileness and his anxious desire to be assured of his interest in Christ, and to be found amongst those who are redeemed in his precious blood. It may truly be said of him that he adorned the doctrine of God both in his walk and conversation. His place was never empty in the house of God, when it was possible for him to get there. On one occasion it had been a very wet week and one of his neighbours said to him, "You will not be able to go to Witham on Sunday." He replied, "I shall; for I will put on a pair of fishing boots," so that he might be able to wade through the water, as it was deep in some parts of the road by which he had to go.

He was by trade a shoemaker, and was at his work on Friday the 14th, but about four o'clock in the afternoon he came home and told his wife he felt very ill. He went to bed, and on the Saturday morning he was thought to be better. His wife went downstairs to attend to something in the house, and on returning in a little while to see how he was, to her surprise she found him dead. The doctor said disease of the heart was the cause of his death. I buried him at Kelvedon on the 21st, and on returning from the grave I was pleased to hear it said of him by his neighbours that if ever there was a Christian, it was Robert Osborne. Thus passed away one of the Lord's little ones from this world of sin and sorrow, to be, we believe, for ever with the Lord. Although he never made an open profession by joining the church, the grace of God shone very brightly in him.

H. HANSON.

JENNET OSBORNE.—On Jan. 10th, 1889, Jennet Osborne, wife of the above.

In twenty-six days from the death of her husband the Lord called her to follow him through the regions of death to those mansions which he has gone to prepare for those who are brought by his Spirit to love and fear him. She was born in the county of Kent, and went to live as servant in London. In relating a little of the work of grace on her soul and how she was convinced of sin by the Spirit of God, she said that while living in London she went to the late Rowland Hill's chapel, and the text spoken from was Ezek. xvi. 1-5. She then saw what a sinner she was, and the hymn sung at the close of the service made a deep impression upon her, the last line of each verse being, "Ye must be born again." One Lord's day evening she went with a cousin of hers to hear a collier preach. His text was: "Hold that fast

which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." (Rev. iii. 11.) She then sunk very low and tried to pray, but could get no relief, and feared she should be lost and go to hell. She continued in this state for about two years, when the words were brought with sweetness and power to her mind: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. i. 18.) She was now filled with joy and peace in believing. A cousin of hers found her out who attended the ministry of Mr. James Wells at the Borough Tabernacle, where she also attended while in London.

When she came into this county she attended the ministry of Mr. Collis at Coggeshall, and was baptized by him; but when he resigned she came to Witham, and hearing the late Mr. Forster with comfort and profit she felt a desire to join the church, and was unanimously received by them on May 17th, 1861, and continued a consistent and honourable member until her death.

She never seemed to recover from the shock of her husband's death, but gradually sank under it. On Jan. 9th she became worse and at about eleven o'clock at night she became unconscious. It was thought desirable to send for her two sons who lived at some distance. On the morning of the 10th she was again conscious, and to one of her sons, who is a deacon at Heybridge, she expressed herself very freely and blessedly. She said it was all right, and that all fear of death was taken away. About four o'clock in the afternoon she quietly and peacefully breathed her last, and her ransomed spirit took its flight to see the Saviour she so much loved and admired. She was buried in the same grave with her husband. Thus in death they were not long divided, and now they sleep together until the resurrection of the just.

H. HANSON.

GEORGE STRUDWICK.—On June 3rd, 1889, aged 61, George Strudwick, of Woking, Surrey.

He was a hearer at Woking chapel for many years, but being naturally reserved, he said very little; but pondered over eternal things and loved the gospel's joyful sound and those who proclaimed it.

Hearing that he was very ill I went to see him, and he then told me a little of the Lord's dealings with his soul. Over thirty years ago, when living in service, he was convinced of his state as a sinner before a heart-searching God, and feared that hell would be his portion. The trouble of mind that he endured brought him so low that he had to keep his bed, and his mother was sent for to come and nurse him; but neither the doctor nor his mother could find out the cause of his illness. When he was left alone he poured out his soul to God aloud begging for mercy, and made many promises for the future. In his last illness he said how unfaithful he had been, and that his cry still was, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," and that he felt himself to be vile

indeed, though none could be more upright in their walk and conduct than he was. He felt unworthy of the notice of God, and when questioned as to the state of his mind, he said he felt much conflict within; but was too weak to converse much. He told me of a dream he had in which he saw the Lord clothed in scarlet, and that he said to him, "Follow me," which he did; and the Lord led him into the heavenly Jerusalem which was paved with gold, and he saw the white-robed throng; and then Christ vanished away, and left him in that beautiful place. He dwelt much on the following passage of Scripture which he believed referred to his dream: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." (Isa. lxiii. 1.) It was truly blessed to be with him. Little did I think it was the last time I should hear his voice. He bore his affliction very patiently and never expressed a wish to recover. He was one that "feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name," and the Lord has said of such, "They shall be mine." He was interred at Ebenezer Chapel, Ripley, Surrey, by Mr. W. Collins.

A. HILL.

GEORGE PRUDDEN WILDERSPIN.—On May 30th, 1889, in the 52nd year of his age, George Prudden Wilderspin.

He was born of godly parents in the village of Somersham, Hunts. Like all the rest of Adam's posterity he was born in sin, and but for the sovereign grace of God he would have lived and died in that state; but being an elect vessel of mercy, in the appointed time divine grace reached his heart and turned his feet to Zion's hill.

I do not know the exact time and way in which the Lord began a work of grace in his soul, but his bereaved widow informs me that she has heard him say he was only sixteen years of age when first brought under concern about his never-dying soul. Soon after this he removed to Cambridge, and attended Eden Chapel, as at that time there was no other chapel in C. where the doctrines of free and sovereign grace were preached. After a time he became engaged to a godfearing young woman, a member of the Baptist Chapel at St. Ives, and at the age of twenty-two he married. He fondly hoped that brighter and more cheerful days were now in store for him; but the Lord was pleased to lay his afflicting hand upon his wife, and after suffering much affliction for ten years she died, leaving a good testimony behind that for her to die was gain. Thus he was left a widower with one child, who was almost an idiot. This cross, together with the exercises of his soul, greatly bowed him down.

About the year 1868 the ordinance of Believers' Baptism was laid with weight upon his mind. He came before the church and related a little of the Lord's dealings with his soul, and was baptized by the late Mr. Marks, who was then the Pastor. In

June 1869 our friend again entered the married state, and was united to her who is now left a widow. Soon after this Mr. M. resigned the Pastorate, and another Pastor was chosen; but he and his wife could not profit under the ministry, therefore they left and came to Hope Chapel, where their souls were often fed, and they were constrained to cast in their lot with the friends at Hope.

The Lord was pleased to deepen the work in the soul of our departed friend, and his mind became greatly exercised upon spiritual things. He found a great lack in the preaching of many who stand up in the pulpit. He contended for an experimental religion, and detested a mixed gospel which is so prevalent in the present day; and when a faithful man of God could not be obtained he preferred to hear a good sermon read, rather than listen to those whose ministry fills poor exercised souls with confusion. Many times have I heard him speak of the Lord's blessing resting upon the sermons read, and, to use his own words, they were food to his soul, whereas the preaching of some starved him; and he often remarked that truth read is better than error preached.

He was for many years a reader of the "G. S.," and I have heard him speak of what a feast he has many times had in reading its pages. Like all the Lord's people he had his own peculiar path to tread, and had a large share of temporal trouble, together with an afflicted body, which greatly depressed him; but when the Lord was pleased to shine into his soul, I have seen him happy and cheerful in the midst of trouble, and he would say, "It is all for the best." He knew well what changes of soul were. Nothing short of the power of the gospel would satisfy him. He wanted to feel the power of the word, and unless he felt it he was not satisfied; and because he would not listen to every "Lo here," and "Lo there," he was stigmatized as being a man of a bad spirit.

All through his life he was harassed with doubts and fears about his personal interest in that everlasting covenant which is ordered in all things and sure. He was assured of the safety of the Lord's people, but would often say, "Am I one of them?" and when the Lord was pleased to favour him with a token for good, soon after he has said, "I fear it was only of the flesh, because it is so soon gone. I fear it was not real."

I will now come to his latter days. In Dec., 1887, he was compelled, through affliction, to give up his work, and his friends feared he would not be able to resume it again. As the summer came round he revived a little, and thinking a change might prove beneficial, he was invited by some relatives to visit them at Lee. While staying there he heard Mr. Prince at Forest Hill, to whom he felt greatly attached. The Lord blessed Mr. P.'s ministry to the comfort of his soul, and he often referred to it during his affliction; indeed, it appeared a hill Mizar to him, and was not out of his sight for long together during the remainder

of his days. He returned home much weaker in body, but evidently strengthened in soul. As he lived but a short distance from the chapel, he was able occasionally to get there. At the prayer-meeting one Lord's day afternoon he seemed like a dying man, but the Lord so favoured him in his soul that it was remarked by the friends present that he appeared to be anointed for his burial. The last time he was at chapel was on Jan. 27th, when, with much feeling, he gave out hymn 322. The last hymn he gave out at the prayer-meeting was the 9th, and when he came to the sixth verse his feelings almost overcame him. All fear of death was taken away, and with tears running down his face,—tears not of sorrow, but of joy, he read the following lines :

“Soon shall I pass the gloomy vale;
 Soon all my mortal powers must fail;
 O may my last expiring breath
 His lovingkindness sing in death!”

Though so weak in body he was able to lead the singing, which he had been accustomed to do for some years. A short time before he died, speaking of his affliction, he told me that during the past three years he had not known what it was to be free from pain one hour. He suffered from a malignant, diseased stomach, but I never heard him murmur or repine. At times he sank very low in his mind, and Satan sorely harassed and perplexed him; but the Lord was pleased to apply the following portion of Scripture with power to his soul, after which he never sank so low again: “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.) With tears running down his wasted cheeks he told me of the goodness of the Lord to him, and said, “What the Lord gives is ours for ever, and we never can finally lose it, though we may lose the comfort of it; as David lost the joy and comfort of God's salvation. Hence he said, ‘Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation.’”

Being laid aside from work so long he and his wife were greatly tried in providence, but he told me it was marvellous how the Lord appeared for them. Often have they had things sent to them, and knew not where they came from, and some of the most bitter enemies to God's truth have ministered to their necessities. He would sometimes say, “I could write a Bank of Faith as Huntington did,” and sometimes I have wished he had been led to do so. He kept about until a few weeks before his death, when he had to take to his bed, and it was evident the time was drawing near when he must die. Mr. Parish, to whom he felt much love and affection, called several times to see him, and was truly glad to find him so sweetly supported in soul. He requested Mr. P. to bury him, which he promised to do. On

Lord's day, May 19th, Mr. Coughtrey was supplying at the chapel and called to see him. He found him in a sweet and blessed frame of mind, and said on coming away, "He is to be envied. Blessed spot to be in."

It was surprising to all how he lingered. He often longed to depart, to be for ever with the Lord; for he felt assured that for him to die would be gain. When speaking of his sufferings, he said, "But what are they compared to the sufferings of my dear Lord? My sufferings will soon be over. How can I murmur or repine at the way when I consider what the Lord suffered and endured for me?" and then he quoted the following lines:

"His way was much rougher and darker than mine;
Did Christ, my Lord, suffer, and shall I repine?"

Though suffering intense pain not a murmur escaped his lips. His wife said to him, "You are only waiting for the Lord to come and fetch you." He replied, "The Lord is here. I feel him precious to me." When his wife and family were gathered around the bed, he was enabled to leave them in the hand of the Lord, as though he was only going a journey.

A short time before he died the Lord mercifully appeared on behalf of his afflicted son, and he was elected an inmate of the Asylum for Idiots at Colchester. It was very touching to see him bid his son farewell. When he came to his dying day he said, "This is my best day, my happiest day. I am going home, to be for ever with my dear Lord." He was perfectly conscious up to the last. His wife said to him, "If you are not able to speak at the last and you feel happy, give us a sign by raising your hand." Just before he departed he raised his hand, as in holy triumph, and so quietly and peacefully did he pass away that we could scarcely perceive when he drew his last breath.

Our departed friend proved by experience that the way to the kingdom is through much tribulation, both from within and from without. All through life he was the subject of many fears as to how it would be with him when he came to die; for truly he was one of those of whom the apostle speaks as being in bondage all their life through the fear of death; but when he came to his dying bed all fear was taken away, and he longed to die; thus proving the truth of the Scripture: "At evening time it shall be light." What an encouragement is this to God's poor timid and fearful people, to trust in Him who has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

Some time before his death he arranged everything in connection with his funeral, and chose four of the friends to carry him to the grave. Mr. Parish, according to his wish, committed his mortal remains to the grave, in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection unto eternal life. As the coffin was lowered into the grave I thought of the late Mr. Tiptaft's oft-repeated remark, "What a mercy to be well laid in the grave," and felt assured it was so in the case of our departed friend.

ELIJAH COE.

COMPLAINING OF UNBELIEF.

O THAT I could but cease from sin
 Against the God I love;
 I fain would keep my conscience clean,
 That it might not reprove.

But the corruptions of my heart,
 How strong they work within;
 I seem possess'd in every part,
 Nor can I make me clean.

What thoughts obscene possess my mind
 My nature to inflame,
 Sometimes when I'm to good inclin'd,
 Which makes me blush with shame.

How quick do angry passions rise
 My mind to discompose;
 Sometimes I fear they'll me surprise
 With hasty, vocal oaths.

What fretting, murmuring, discontent,
 Pride, and unthankfulness,
 With all that Satan can invent,
 My wretched heart possess.

Curst unbelief's the fertile root
 Whence all these evils spring;
 All strong corruptions are the fruit
 This evil tree doth bring.

It makes me doubt the work of grace
 Which I have known and felt,
 When Christ revealed his lovely face
 And made my heart to melt.

Faith overcomes the world and sin
 And Satan and his crew;
 It purifies by blood divine;
 The conscience feels it too.

Saviour, thou Author of this grace,
 Completer of the same,
 Shine thou, my unbelief erase,
 Then I shall praise thy name.

I long to love thee as I would,
 I would my sins were slain;
 Exert thy power, all-conquering God,
 Nor let one lust remain.

I can appeal I love the Lord
 And that I hate all sin.
 O speak afresh some pardoning word
 And keep my conscience clean!

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

NOVEMBER, 1889.

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

THE PLAGUE OF THE HEART.

A SERMON PREACHED BY DR. GILL IN 1762.

“Which shall know every man the plague of his own heart.”—1 Kings viii. 39.

THE whole verse reads thus: “What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands towards this house; then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do. &c.” These words are part of the prayer which Solomon offered up to God at the dedication of the temple. After he had addressed the Divine Being by mentioning several of his attributes, and expressed his admiration that he should dwell upon the earth among men, he requests of God that not only the present prayers might be graciously answered, but that all the future supplications of the Israelites, whether as a body of people, or individuals, might be regarded. In a more particular manner he intreats of the Lord that when those who shall be sensible of the plague of their own hearts and distressed by it apply to him for relief, that he would hear and forgive. Thus the words I have read are introduced. Now, what I shall endeavour to do will be:

I. To show you what the plague of the heart is; what is meant by it, and what may be learnt from it.

II. The knowledge that some persons have of the plague of their own heart. I say *some* persons, because it seems clear from the very manner in which the words are expressed, that all do not know the plague of their own heart.

III. What those persons may do who are thus sensible of the plague of their own heart. They may spread out their hands to the Lord, and look toward his holy temple, in hope of having relief from thence, and even the forgiveness of their sins.

I. I shall inquire what is meant by the plague of the heart, and what we may learn from this expression, “Which shall know every man the plague of his own heart.”

In the first place this plainly suggests that the heart of man is not whole and sound. It is unhealthy; it is distempered; it is attended with a very grievous disease; for what more grievous than the plague? The disease of the heart of man is sin, and

particularly indwelling sin, the sin of our nature, which has its seat in the heart. Every sin is a disease, as is clear from what the Psalmist says, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases." Here diseases and iniquities are represented as the same; and the healing of these diseases is signified by the forgiveness of iniquity.

Now, as every sin is a disease, so more especially indwelling sin, or the sin of our nature. This is a natural and hereditary disease to the sons of men. There are some bodily diseases that come immediately from parents to children, and of this sort, in a moral sense, is the sin of our nature. We are by nature children of wrath, and the reason is we are by nature sinners, otherwise we could not have been by nature children of wrath. Sin is natural to us. It is as natural for one of Adam's fallen race to sin as it is to do any act whatever. It is natural to men; it is derived to them in a natural way. It is hereditary. We are conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity; born in sin, and so are called transgressors from the womb. As our first parent Adam was, and as our immediate ones are, so in course must their offspring be; for "who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." (Job xiv. 4.)

This disease is epidemical and universal; all are tainted and affected by it. There are diseases in a natural sense which are called epidemical, which, when they come into a village, a town, or a country, go through them; but then, be they as epidemical or universal as they may, there are always some that escape; but in this case there is not one, no, not one of Adam's race. For almost six thousand years there has not been one of Adam's posterity that has escaped this disease, except the Man Christ Jesus, who descended not from him by ordinary generation; otherwise all mankind have been infected with this plague, this pestilential disease, sin. "All," says the apostle, "are under sin." "We have before proved," says he, "that both Jews and Gentiles," which is a division of all mankind into its proper parts, and includes the whole; "We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." (Rom. iii. 9.) All are under the power of sin, involved in the guilt of sin, and liable to punishment for it. This is the case of all mankind; all have sinned in their first head, Adam. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Yea, Jehovah himself is represented as looking down from heaven, taking a survey of the children of men, of their qualities and actions; and the result of this survey is that "they are all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Now if there were any person free from this infectious disease, sin, undoubtedly the eye of God would observe it. It is most manifest, then, that there are none of all the individuals of human nature that have escaped it; but all are infected with it,—the body, and the members of it; the soul, and all the powers thereof. It may be said of men in general, as it is of the body of the people of Israel, that "the whole head

is sick, and the whole heart faint." It is an epidemical disease.

It is a very nauseous and loathsome disease; the Psalmist speaks of it as such, "My loins are filled with a loathsome disease." He had respect to sin, or the fruit and effect of it; for he had before observed that there was no soundness in his flesh, nor any rest in his bones because of his sin. This disease makes a person loathsome to Jehovah, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. This is a disease that mankind are very early infected with; therefore the apostate sons of Adam are represented by an infant cast out into the open field, to the loathing of its person in the day that it was born. Being infected with such a disease as this, it cannot but be loathsome in the eyes of God; and sin, that makes us loathsome in the sight of God, makes us loathsome in our own sight, too, when we are led to take a proper view of it. Hence those words of the apostle Paul who had a large experience of the nature, force, and power of indwelling sin, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" or from this dead body which I carry about with me. Do but represent unto yourselves how loathsome it must be for a living man to have a dead body fastened to him and be obliged to carry it along with him wherever he goes and to have it wherever he is. Just so it is with the people of God who have any knowledge of this pestilential disease, this body of death which they continually carry about with them.

This is a disease, also, that is mortal in itself, a deadly disease, as the plague is generally supposed to be. There are diseases which are not unto death. We read of one sin in particular which is unto death. It is emphatically so, namely, the unpardonable sin, because it is not forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come. But every sin is in its own nature deserving of death. The wages of every sin is death, eternal death. This disease is incurable, except by the grace of God and the blood of Christ. What Jeremiah said of the people of Israel, that their bruise was incurable and their wound grievous, because there was none to plead their cause that they might be bound up, and they had no healing medicines, may be said of all mankind with respect to this disease of sin. It is incurable by any methods they themselves are capable of making use of, or others for them: "When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to king Jareb; yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound." (Hos. v. 13.) So let a sinner that is diseased with sin use whatever means he can short of Christ and his blood, they will be all ineffectual. Christ is the only Physician that can cure the plague of the heart, and his blood is the sovereign balm. "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?" Yes, and that Physician is Christ, and the balm is his blood.

Now the disease I am speaking of is called the *plague*,—the *plague of the heart*. The plague is a distemper which you all know is very threatening, wasting, and destroying, and exceeding

shocking and distressing. It is called "the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noon-day." It destroys its thousands and ten thousands when God gives it a commission, as in the case of David's numbering the people. It was sent at his own choice, and no less than seventy thousand persons were immediately destroyed by it. Whenever we hear of the plague breaking out in any of the countries abroad to which our ships trade, we are always alarmed lest they should, with the goods brought from thence, bring that dreadful distemper along with them, and all proper caution is taken to prevent it. Whenever we hear of it nearer our borders, in a neighbouring country, what an alarm it gives us! About forty years ago, or it may be somewhat more, perhaps some of you now present may remember it broke forth in Marseilles, in France. What a consternation were the inhabitants of this city in! How many meetings for prayer were set up and held for some time! But there is a plague nearer than this, for it is in the heart of every man, and yet little or no notice is taken of it;—a plague of more fatal consequences than a temporal disease is. The latter only destroys the body, but this destroys the soul to all eternity unless it is cured by the grace of God and the blood of Christ. It is the plague of the heart, and we carry it about with us.

The word here made use of is sometimes spoken of as the plague of leprosy; as in Lev. xiii, and xiv. Persons infected with that plague (after it was a clear case that so it was with them) put a covering upon their upper lip, and cried, "Unclean! Unclean!" All sinners, likewise, who are made sensible of the leprosy of sin and that they are infected with it, humbly flee to Christ, the great Physician, and say, as the leper in the gospel, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." This leprosy of sin is not only like that which was outward in man, but like that got into a house which could not be removed until the house was pulled down. Of this kind is the plague of the heart, the leprosy of sin in us; for it is an inward, spreading one; there is no removing of it until this earthly house of our tabernacle is taken down. Hence says the apostle, "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened."

These hints may serve to give you some idea of the plague of a man's heart, indwelling sin, and corruption. But,

Secondly. I shall give you a fuller view of this plague of the heart by laying before you the state and condition of the heart of man according to the Scriptural account of it, which is this;—a man's heart is wicked, yea, wickedness itself. So it is said in Ps. v. 9, "Their inward part (that is, their heart) is very wickedness." It is not only wicked, but wickedness itself; not only wickedness, but extreme wickedness, that is, extremely wicked. The carnal mind is said to be enmity against God; not barely an enemy to God, but enmity itself; which expresses the great degree of enmity in the carnal mind of man to God and all that is good.

Sin is not only sinful, but it is exceeding sinful, and it is made so to appear to a truly enlightened mind, as it was to the apostle Paul, who tells us "that sin, by the commandment, became exceeding sinful." Such is the heart of man. It is wicked, wickedness itself; it is sinful, exceeding sinful; yea, it is the seat of all sin.

The corruption of nature, most properly the plague of our heart, is represented by the apostle as that which dwells in us; "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." By sin that dwelt in him he means not any particular sin distinct from others; but an assemblage of sins, corruptions, lusts, and iniquities; for he afterwards represents it not only as a person, but as a law having power and authority; and as a body consisting of divers members, divers lusts and pleasures. The heart of man is like Babylon,—a cage of every unclean and hateful bird, and the hold of every foul spirit. It is the seat and source of all sin. It is the forge where all is hammered; for the evil heart devises evil imaginations. There is the mint of sin; it comes from thence. "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; these are the things which defile a man." (Matt. xv. 19, 20.) Out of the abundance of the wickedness of the heart the mouth speaketh bad things. All the evil actions of life have their rise from hence; and you may judge hereby of the malignity of man's heart and what a plague is there. It is so bad that Jeremiah says it is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. It is *deceitful*. There is deceitfulness in every sin, particularly in indwelling sin, the corruption of our nature. The apostle cautions the Hebrews to exhort one another daily, lest any of them should be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. The old man is said to be corrupt according to the deceitful lusts of which he consists. So deceitful is man's heart and the lusts that dwell there, that even the best of men have been deceived thereby. Not only the apostle Paul was deceived by it before his conversion, agreeable to that saying, "Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me;" but even after conversion the best and wisest of men have been deceived by their own hearts and the deceitfulness thereof; for a man promises himself *that* in sinning which he never enjoys. He promises to himself a great deal of pleasure in sinning. Hence divers lusts and pleasures are joined together as if they were one and the same, or as if men in serving the one enjoyed the other. This is proposed, this is expected; but is it enjoyed? No; the pleasures expected from sin are all an illusion, all a dream; that fantastic pleasure which is enjoyed is a short-lived one. The pleasures of sin are but for a season, and issue at last in bitterness and death. Sin, though it is rolled in the mouth and kept under the tongue as a sweet morsel, proves in the end as the poison of asps.

Men promise themselves much profit in sinning which they never enjoy. This was the temptation of our first parents with

which they were imposed upon and deceived. Satan suggested they should be as gods, knowing good and evil. This was the bait,—more knowledge; whereas by dallying with the temptation instead of gaining more knowledge, they lost, in a good measure, what they had. A man's heart promises him much profit in sinning; that he shall gain much riches in the way of illicit trade and other unlawful practices; but how frequently is he disappointed; and were it otherwise, "What would it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Sometimes men propose to themselves and expect a great deal of honour among ungodly men by following their examples and complying with their customs; but how often are they disappointed! Besides, when the conscience comes to be awakened, and when the apostle's question is regarded, "What fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?" they will readily acknowledge they had none at all.

A man proposes to himself liberty in sinning; but does he enjoy it? No; he is brought into more and more bondage. "While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." (2 Pet. ii. 19.) Whoever commits sin is the servant of sin, the slave of it. "Is Ephraim a servant? Is he a home-born slave?" Verily he is; and so is every ungodly man.

They promise themselves peace,—that they shall have peace though they walk every man after the imagination of his own evil heart to add drunkenness to thirst; but do they enjoy it? No; for while they are crying, "Peace, peace," sudden destruction comes upon them. How deceitful is the heart of man! That is promised which is never enjoyed. There is nothing in a man's heart to be trusted to: "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool," even he that trusts in the goodness of his heart, in the supposed integrity of his heart and of his conversation, which he supposes springs from thence. Persons of this character "trust in themselves that they are righteous, and despise others." They trust in themselves that they are rich, and increased in goods, and stand in need of nothing; when at the same time they are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, and will find themselves most miserably deceived another day. The heart of man is deceitful; the plague is in it,—indwelling sin and corruption. There is nothing more deceitful than the heart of man. It is exceedingly wicked; wicked to the highest degree of wickedness, which seems to be the meaning of the expression.

All that is in the heart of man is wicked. The thoughts, and the imagination of the thoughts of the heart are so, according to Gen. vi. 5. So in Matt. xv. 19, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts." Men's thoughts are evil. The thought of foolishness is sin,—abominable in the sight of God. The apostle therefore exhorts Simon Magus to pray that the thoughts of his heart might be forgiven. The sensible sinner has reason to hope for

this; as we read: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isa. lv. 7), both evil thoughts and evil actions. Yea, the imagination of the thoughts is evil,—the first formation of evil thoughts, or those motions, as the apostle calls them, of sin, which are in our members are evil. You read of some that thought themselves wise men and good men; but became vain in their imaginations, and their evil hearts were darkened (Rom. i. 21); and of others, more openly profane, that resolved to walk according to the imagination of their evil hearts. (Jer. viii. 10–12.) Every thought and every imagination of the heart of man is evil. "God is not in all their thoughts," nor, indeed, in any of their thoughts. His thoughts are not like theirs. His are holy, theirs are unholy; his are thoughts of peace, theirs are thoughts of evil. No good thoughts arise from the wicked heart of man. No good things come out of this Nazareth; for there is no good thing in it. Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is evil, only so, and always so. The imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is said to be evil from his youth. Hence he is represented as like the troubled sea which cannot rest, continually casting up mire and dirt. The affections of the heart are inordinate, all out of course, and run in a wrong channel and to wrong objects. Men are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

Their hearts are set upon the world and the things of it; the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life. The mind of man is corrupted, depraved, and distempered. There is vanity in it; hence men are said to walk in the vanity of their minds. They are empty of all that is good; yea, they are averse thereunto; for "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." The mind is darkened by sin; has no light into divine and spiritual things; is darkness itself; calls evil good, and good evil; puts darkness for light, and light for darkness. The understanding being depraved it passes a wrong judgment on things. Conscience being darkened does not perform its office, being in many seared, as it were, with a red hot iron, and in everyone it is evil. Happy those who have their hearts sprinkled by the blood of Jesus from an evil conscience. Their will is stubborn and inflexible. It is not subject to God's law, nor to his gospel. It is like the adamant, and called a *stony heart*. Now, by all this and much more which the Scripture says on the subject, we may judge of the state of the heart of man, and in a good measure learn what is meant by the plague of it. It must be in a most sad condition while under the influence of this pestilential disease.

Further. The plague of the heart is very deep and secret; it is an evil which none are acquainted with but a man's own conscience and God. Secret sins, heart sins, these may be called

the plague of the heart. Says the Psalmist, "Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." (Ps. xc. 8.) *Secret* sins which are in their own hearts, or, if committed, none but God and their own hearts are privy to them. Yea, there are some sins that a man himself is not privy to; they pass through his heart, and he, not being always upon his guard, cannot take notice of every thing that is done. Even a good man cannot. Hence David says, "Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults." (Ps. xix. 12.)

Or, *the plague of the heart* may denote such sins as are in a particular manner predominant in a man's heart. There are some sins which may be termed a man's "own way" (Isa. liii. 6); constitutional sins, or sins which most easily beset. In some pride, in some the lust of impurity, in others ambition, and so on. These are common and prevailing sins in the hearts of men, and may be called *the plague of their hearts*, and which give great distress to those who have the grace of God. They find them to be a plague indeed; their daily experience proves it.

There is an expression in a parallel text where the same thing is intended, though in somewhat different language. Says Solomon, "What prayer or what supplication soever shall be made of any man, or of all thy people Israel, when everyone shall know his own sore and his own grief, and shall spread forth his hands in this house; then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, &c." (2 Chron. vi. 29, 30.) What is called in the book of Kings "the plague of his own heart," is here denominated "his own sore, and his own grief." This may a little enlarge our idea of the plague of the heart. A man's *own sore*, and his *own grief*. His *sore*;—that which gives him a great deal of pain and uneasiness, as a sore does. So the corruption of nature does to a sensible sinner, when he is pricked to the heart, wounded through a sense of sin, and feels how grievous and intolerable it is. "The spirit of a man may sustain his infirmity," the outward infirmity of his body; he may be able to bear it with some degree of patience; but a spirit wounded with a sense of sin, who can bear? This is a sore which is very painful indeed. "Every man his own sore, and his own grief." Sin causes grief, and nothing more than the inward corruption of nature. David we find expressing his grief on this account: "I go mourning all the day long; for my loins are filled with a loathsome disease; and there is no soundness in my flesh" (Ps. xxxviii. 6, 7); and so all good men do. They are like the doves of the valley, every one mourning for his own iniquity, especially the sin of his nature, which is his *own*. Hence Jabez's prayer to the Lord was, "Keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me,"—the corruption of nature and its breakings forth.

This is what Solomon calls a man's *sore* and *grief*, because it produces grief to the people of God. They are grieved, because it is contrary to the holy nature of God and his righteous law; and

it is against the Lord who is their Maker, their Benefactor, their God, and Father; against himself who has shown so much favour to them, and expressed so much love towards them. It cuts them to the heart that they should sin against this God, and that his name should be dishonoured in any measure by them, as it is by their sin. It causes the enemy to open his mouth, and the way of truth is evil spoken of. This grieves the people of God, and because hereby the Holy Spirit of God is grieved. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God" (Eph. iv. 30); and then the apostle goes on to mention various sins whereby the Spirit of God may be grieved. He who convices them of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; he who hath been their Comforter, and is the Spirit of faith in them, the Spirit of adoption to them, and the earnest of their heavenly inheritance,—that he should be grieved by them is grievous to themselves. So, likewise, because hereby they are deprived of communion with God. Iniquity, in this respect, separates between God and the soul. They are filled with confusion, distress, and contrition of mind, as Peter was through his fall. But this much may suffice for the opening up of the *plague of the heart*. From all this somewhat may be gathered and your own experience will furnish you with more upon this humiliating subject.

II. There is a knowledge of this. Some persons have a knowledge of it, and some have not. This is supposed in the text by "All thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart." That is, as many of them as shall know the plague of their own hearts, suggesting that all do not. Some do not know this. Carnal men do not. Only spiritual persons that are under the influence of the Spirit of God, who convices of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. As for others, they know nothing of the plague of their own heart. They may possibly know something of the nature of sin, the difference between moral good and evil by the light of nature, the laws of men, and the general notions obtained among men; but they know nothing of the *spring* of evil actions, of indwelling sin, the fountain of iniquity. To this they are strangers; and more especially such as are grown up to work all iniquity, whose consciences are cauterized, or seared with a hot iron. All those who are whole know not the plague of their own hearts. "The whole need not a physician, but those that are sick." The former need a physician as much as the latter, but they know not that they stand in need of one; the reason of which is, they do not know the plague of their own hearts, and therefore, in their own apprehensions, they need no physician. It is quite the reverse, however, with *those that are sick*, that is, who are sensible of their sickness; for otherwise all men are sick, but our Lord means those who are *sensible* of it, as Ephraim was: "When Ephraim saw his sickness." (Hos. v. 13.) Now those who are sensible of their sickness feel their need of a physician; but those who are insensible of sickness are like him whom the wise man describes as upon the top of a mast, who

says, "They have stricken me, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not." (Prov. xxiii. 35.) So it is with such insensible sinners as are whole in their own esteem. Those who think themselves increased in goods, and in need of nothing, do not know the plague of their own hearts. Those who imagine they need no repentance, do not know the plague of their own hearts.

The Pharisee knows not the plague of his own heart; for his language is, "I am not as other men are." The apostle Paul did not know the plague of his own heart at the time to which he refers when he says, "Touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." The perfectionist knows not the plague of his own heart; if he did, he would not say he is free from sin. Job says, "If I wash myself with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean; yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me." (Job ix. 30, 31.) "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." But good men know the plague of their own hearts, being enlightened by the Spirit of God convincing them of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Such as are made light in the Lord, and made acquainted with salvation by him, are made light so as to know themselves and the plague of their own hearts. Those in whose hearts God has commanded the light to shine, not only see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; but they see the vileness of their nature and the corruption of their hearts; and that they know this appears from the confession of sin which they make; not only of the outward actions of sin which they commit; but also of indwelling sin; for while they are confessing the one, they are naturally led to the other; as the Psalmist was when he said, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." This appears from the groanings of the saints; for they groan, being burdened, burdened with indwelling sin. So David says, when speaking of sin on which account he had no rest in his bones, "My groaning is not hid from thee."

Saints, under the New Testament, speak the same language; for the people of God, under different dispensations, have the same experience in this respect. Says the apostle, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It appears by the feeling they have of a law in their members warring against the law of their minds, fighting one against the other, so that they cannot do the things that they would. It appears from their non-dependance upon any religious duties performed by them; for however outwardly religious they may appear in the sight of others, they are sensible of imperfections in their services; they know there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not; that there is strange distraction of mind, wanderings of thoughts, and a mixture of sin, even in their most holy things. They cannot, therefore, depend upon anything done by them; but acknowledge when they have done all they can, that they are but unprofitable servants. It

appears also by their prayers against the plague of their own hearts. This leads us to consider,

III. What those persons may do who are sensible of the plague of their own hearts. They may spread out their hands to the Lord and make supplication to him under a sense of their great depravity. They may pray that the Lord would keep them from the plague of their own hearts, that it may not break forth to the grieving of their souls or the dishonour of the Divine Name, and that they be not destroyed thereby. Was David, when reflecting on the power of his enemy, induced to say, "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul?" So the saints, when they behold the force of corruption in them, fear they shall some day perish thereby; yet in the midst of all their discouragements, they can spread out their hands to God, and pray that he would mortify those corruptions of nature. Though the Lord hath said he will subdue their iniquities, it becomes them to pray that no iniquity may have dominion over them; that this house of Saul might grow weaker and weaker, while that of David grows stronger and stronger; that the inward man might be renewed day by day, and the old man put off according to the former conversation; that though it be not destroyed, it may be weakened; and also that the Lord would grant fresh manifestations of forgiving love for sins of heart, as well as of life and conversation.

Upon the whole, this may serve to humble us before the Lord, when we consider what we are, what we have about us, and what is in us, namely, *the plague of the heart*. It is enough to humble the proudest heart when sensible of it, and cause the words of Job to be adopted, "Behold I am vile!" "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job xlii. 5, 6.)

This also may lead us to wonder at the grace of God, that he should have any regard to such diseased and corrupted creatures as we are; and that God should dwell upon earth in the hearts of sinful men, as in verse the twenty-seventh. This is marvellous grace indeed. This may lead us, who know the plague of our own hearts, to be thankful to God that he has not left us to that blindness persons are under the influence of who talk of the goodness of their hearts, and see no need of the cleansing blood of Jesus, that healing balsam. Blessed be God, he hath not left us to this! Such neither know the disease, nor the Physician; neither know the plague of their own hearts, nor how they are to be cured of it. God, blessed be his name, hath opened our eyes to see our disease, and hath shown us who the Physician is. May it, then, be our great concern to show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.

A MAN may be poor as Job, as to the things of this world, and yet be as proud as Satan. A sense of need, a sense of unworthiness, a sense of God's unmerited favour towards oneself, is attended with true humility in the heart.—*Hobbs*.

THE GRACE OF GOD IN OLIVER CROMWELL.

No man ever did more for the interest and welfare of our country, both civil and religious, than Oliver Cromwell, and perhaps no man has been more maligned, and his motives and character more assailed and misrepresented; and yet to no one person, as an instrument in God's hands, are we so much indebted for our present liberties as we are to the celebrated Protector.

Throughout the whole of the civil war which lasted for many years he proved to be a man of great foresight and undaunted courage; and at times, when the Parliament and even the army were inclined to flag and give up, by his letters and messages from the battle-field he stimulated them to persevere, knowing that unless they conquered the king and the Romish party, the cause of religious freedom would be lost and the church of God brought to suffer bondage, persecution, and in many cases death.

It was at the conclusion of this long war that the great and noble-minded defender of our liberties and real contender for the faith of the saints made his first speech before what, in history, is termed "the little Parliament." Our nation is very much indebted to the late Thomas Carlyle, who bestowed many years of ardent labour in collecting the Letters and Speeches of Cromwell. From these Speeches we will give a few extracts by which any discerning person may read the true character and see the grace and faith that God had bestowed upon this illustrious saviour of our land. The following are a few pickings from his Speeches. In Speech I, alluding to the late war, he says,

"It pleased God about the middle of this war to winnow, if I may so speak, the forces of this nation, and to put them into the hands of men of other principles than those that did engage at the first. It would take more time than is allotted to me to tell you of all the strange windings and turnings of Providence in crossing and thwarting the purposes of men, that he might raise up a poor and contemptible company of men, neither versed in military affairs nor having much natural propensity to them, and bringing them into wonderful success, simply by their owning a principle of godliness and religion, which, so soon as it came to be owned and the state of affairs put upon the foot of that account, God blessed them, furthering all undertakings, yet using the most improbable and the most contemptible and despicable means; for that we shall ever own. What the several successes and issues have been I cannot mention at this-time, though I thought to have enlarged on that subject, forasmuch as considering the works of God and the operations of his hands is a principal part of our duty and a great encouragement to the strengthening of our hands and of our faith for that which is still to come. It is fit for us to ascribe our failings and miscarriages to ourselves, yet the gloriousness of the work may well be attributed to God himself, and may be called his strange work. Not

one of the events that have taken place but what has an evident print of Providence set upon it, so that he who runs may read it. We have such a history to look back upon, the hand of God being so eminently visible, that even our enemies have confessed that God himself was certainly engaged against them, else they would never have been disappointed in every engagement."

Having briefly dilated upon some of the events arising out of the war, he now addresses the Government which he had called together in the following manner:

"Truly God hath called you to this work by, I think, as wonderful providences as ever passed upon the sons of men in so short a time. It has come to you by the way of necessity,—by the way of the wise providence of God, through weak hands. And therefore I think coming through our hands, though such as we are, it may not be ill taken if we offer something as to the discharge of the trust which is now incumbent upon you. And although I speak of that which may appear like a charge, yet it is a very humble one; and if he that means to be a servant to you, who hath now called you to the exercise of the Supreme Authority discharge what he conceives to be a duty to you, we hope you will take it in good part. And truly I shall not hold you long to it, because I hope it is written in your hearts to approve yourselves to God. Only this Scripture I shall remember to you, which hath been much upon my spirit: 'Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints.' (Hos. xi. 12.) It is said before that 'Ephraim compassed God about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit.' How God hath been compassed about by fastings and thanksgivings, and other exercises and transactions I think we have all cause to lament. Truly you are called, as Judah was, to 'rule with him,' and for him; and you are called to be faithful with the saints who have been instrumental to your call. And again the Scripture saith, 'He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.' (2 Sam. xxi. 3.)

"I know it is better to pray for you than to counsel you, and I am confident many thousands of saints do this this day, and have done and will do, through the permission of God and his assistance; yet I think of another Scripture which is very useful, wherein every Christian man is counselled to ask wisdom from above, and we are told what that is;—it is 'pure, peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits; without partiality and without hypocrisy.' Purity, impartiality, and sincerity, these are the effects of wisdom, and these will help you to execute the judgment of truth. And then if God give you hearts to be 'easy to be entreated,' to be 'peaceably spirited,' to be 'full of good fruits,' bearing good fruits to the nation, to men as men, to the people of God, and to all in their several stations, this will teach you to execute the judgment of mercy and truth. The 'judgment of truth' will teach you to be as just towards an unbeliever as towards a believer; and it is our duty to do so. A second thing is to desire you would be

faithful with the saints. I hope, whatever others may think, it may be a matter to us all of rejoicing to have our hearts touched as was Christ (with reverence be it spoken) 'touched with our infirmities.'

"In my pilgrimage and some exercises I have had abroad, I often read the forty-first chapter of Isaiah, where God gave me and some of my fellows encouragement as to what he would do there and elsewhere, which he hath performed for us. He said 'he would plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, the myrtle, and the oil-tree; and that he would set in the desert the fir-tree, and the pine-tree, and the box-tree together.' For what end will the Lord do all this? 'That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this,'—that it is he who hath wrought all the deliverances we have received. For what end? For the good of the saints to the end of the world. Therefore I beseech you have a care for the whole flock. Love the sheep, love the lambs; cherish and countenance all in all things that are good. And if the poorest Christian shall desire to live peaceably and quietly under you, and to lead a life of godliness and honesty, let him be protected. I think I need not advise, much less press you to endeavour the promoting of the gospel, and to encourage such ministers as be faithful in the land,—men that have received the Spirit which Christians will be able to discover; men that have received gifts from Him who is ascended up on high, who hath led captivity captive, to give gifts to men, even for this same work of the ministry.

"The apostle in Rom. xii, when he had summed up all the mercies of God and the goodness of God and discoursed in the former chapters of the foundations of the gospel and of the things that are the subject of the first eleven chapters, he beseecheth them to 'present their bodies a living sacrifice,' and that they would not think highly of themselves, but be humble and sober-minded, and not stretch themselves beyond their line; and also that they would have a care for those who had received gifts to the uses there mentioned. I speak not with regard to a ministry derived from the Papacy and pretending to what is so much insisted on, 'Succession.' The true 'succession' is through the Spirit. The Spirit is given to make proper speakers-forth of God's eternal truth; and that is right *succession*. I confess I never looked to see such a day as this when Jesus Christ should be owned as he is this day in this work. God manifests this to be the day of the power of Christ, having through so much blood and so much trial as hath been upon these nations, made this to be one of the great issues thereof,—to have his people called to the Supreme Authority. Perhaps you are not known by face to one another; indeed I am confident you are strangers, coming from all parts of the Nation as you do; but we have not allowed the choice of one person in whom we had not this good hope that there was in him faith in Jesus Christ and love to all his people

and saints. Thus God hath owned you in the eyes of the world; and thus, by coming hither, you own him. That is a memorable passage in Isa. xliii. 21, 'This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise,' and may the Lord apply it to each of your hearts.

"Consider the circumstances by which you are called hither; through what strivings at Marston Moor, Naseby, Dunbar, and elsewhere, through what blood you are come hither, where neither you, nor I, nor any man living three months ago had any thought to have seen such a company being called to take upon them the Supreme Authority of this Nation. Would all were the Lord's people. It ought to be the longing of our hearts to see men brought to own the interest of Jesus Christ. If I know anything that is likely to win the people to the interest of Jesus Christ, to the love of godliness it is a humble and godly conversation; so that they may see that you love them, that you lay yourselves out for them. If I had to choose any servant, the meanest officer for the Army or the Commonwealth, I would choose a godly man that hath principles, especially where a trust is to be committed.

"Ps. lxxviii is a glorious prophecy, I am persuaded, of the gospel churches,—it may be of the Jews only. There it prophecies that God will bring his people again from the depths of the sea, as once he led Israel through the Red sea. And it may be, as some think, God will bring the Jews home to their station 'from the isles of the sea' and answer their expectations 'as from the depths of the sea;' but sure I am when the Lord shall set up the glory of the gospel church, it shall be a gathering of people as 'out of deep waters,' that is out of the multitudes of the nations and people of this world. All I have to say in my own name, and that of my fellow-officers who have joined with me in this work, is that we commend you to the grace of God and to the guidance of his Spirit; that having thus far served you, or rather our Lord Jesus Christ in regard to you, we shall be ready in our stations, according as the providence of God shall lead us, to be subservient to the farther work of God and to that authority which we shall reckon God hath set over us."

The Royalists and the Papists might go on for fifty years to come, as they have done for two centuries past, vilifying the character of this good man, branding him with the epithet of "Hypocrite," "Usurper," "Tyrant," and calling his religion hypocrisy and cant; but where is there a child of God, a partaker of his grace and Spirit who can read the foregoing and following statements without coming to the inevitable conclusion in his mind that Oliver Cromwell was a man humbled in spirit, rich in grace, strong in faith, bold in the cause of Christ, yet tender, kind, and compassionate to the meanest of the Lord's people, and indeed, we may say to all others who were worthy of it?

He proceeds now to speak of his office as Lord Protector, a title of which he was eminently worthy. The following is from Speech III:

“I see it will now be necessary for me a little to magnify my office. I have always been of this mind since I first entered upon my office. that if God will not bear it up, let it sink. I called not myself to this place. God is witness. If my calling be from God and my testimony from the people, God and the people shall take it from me, else I will not part with it. I should be false to the trust that God hath placed in me and to the interest of the people of these nations if I did. To make plain and clear what I have here asserted I must take liberty to look a little back.

“I was by birth a gentleman. I have been called to several employments in the Nation, to serve in Parliament, &c., and I endeavoured to discharge the duty of an honest man in those services to God and his people's interest and to the Commonwealth. Having seen a happy period put to our sharp wars and contests with the then common enemy, I hoped, in a private capacity, to have reaped the fruit and benefit, together with my brethren, of our hard labours and hazards; the enjoyment, to wit, of peace and liberty, and the privileges of a Christian and a man. I can say, in the simplicity of my soul, I love not to rake into sores. I hoped to have had leave to retire to a private life. I begged to be dismissed of my charge. God be Judge between me and all men if I lie in this matter.”

The Lord Protector was more far-seeing than his Parliament. Indeed, very few men in the land appeared to have the same discernment of what liberty of conscience is. He was determined to make no difference between sect and sect; but to allow every denomination to follow the convictions of their own minds. He was assured that no Act of Parliament could bring fallen, ungodly man to a saving knowledge of the true and living God, who had bestowed upon him so freely and bountifully his grace, humility, and love. Upon this matter he thus speaks:

“Is not liberty of conscience in religion a fundamental? So long as there is liberty of conscience for the supreme magistrate to exercise his conscience in erecting what form of church-government he is satisfied he should set up, why should he not give the same liberty to others? Liberty of conscience is a natural right; and he that would have it, ought to give it, having himself liberty to settle what he likes for the public. Indeed that hath been one of the vanities of our contest. Every sect saith, ‘O give me liberty!’ But give it him, and he will not yield it to anyone else. . . . I undertook this Government in the simplicity of my heart and as before God, and to do the part of an honest man; and I can say that no particular interest, either of myself, estate, honour, or family are or have been prevalent with me to this undertaking. God hath declared what government he delivered to the Jews, and that he placed it upon such persons as had been instrumental for the conduct and deliverance of his people; and considering that promise in Isaiah, that ‘God would give rulers as at the first, and judges as at the beginning,’

I did not know but that God might now begin, and though at present with a most unworthy person; yet, as to the future, it might be after this manner. I am speaking as to my judgment against making government hereditary, and to have men chosen for their love to God, and to truth and justice, and not to have it hereditary; for we read in Ecclesiastes, 'Who knoweth whether he may beget a fool or a wise man?' I have told you my thoughts, which truly I have declared to you in the fear of God, as knowing he will not be mocked; and in the strength of God, as knowing and rejoicing that I am supported in my speaking, especially when I do not frame things without the compass of integrity and honesty; so that my own conscience gives me not the lie to what I say. Supposing this cause or this business must be carried on, it is either of God or of man. If it be of man, I would not have touched it with a finger. If I had not a hope that it was of God I would many years ago have run from it. If it be of God he will bear me up. If it be of man it will tumble, as everything that hath been of man since the world began hath done. And what are all our histories of actions in former times, but God manifesting himself; so that he hath shaken and trampled upon everything that he had not planted? If the Lord take pleasure in England and if he will do us good, he is very able to bear us up. Let the difficulties be whatsoever they will, we shall, in his strength, be able to encounter them. I bless God I have been inured to difficulties, and I never found God to fail me when I was enabled to trust in him.

"I look at the people of these Nations as a people blessed by God. They have been so, and they will be so, by reason of that immortal seed which hath been and is among them,—those regenerated ones in the land who are the flock of Christ and the lambs of Christ, though perhaps they may be under many unruly passions and troubles of spirit, whereby they disquiet themselves and others; yet they are not so to God, since to them he is a God of patience, and will own the least of truth in the hearts of his people. God hath said, 'My glory will I not give to another;' therefore let men take heed and be twice advised how they call his revolutions, the things of God, and his working of things from one period to another, how, I say, they call them necessities of men's creation; for by so doing they do vilify and lessen the works of God, and rob him of his glory, which he hath said he will not give unto another. We know what God did to Herod when he was applauded and did not acknowledge God. And God knoweth what he will do with men, when they call his revolutions human designs, and so detract from his glory. These issues and events have not been forecast, but were sudden providences in things whereby carnal and worldly men are enraged, and under which many, and I fear some good men have murmured and repined because disappointed of their mistaken fancies. But still all these things have been the wise disposings of the Almighty, though the instruments have had their passions and frailties.

Let us take our sin in our actions to ourselves; it is much more safe than to judge things so contingent, as if there were not a God that ruled the earth.

“We know the Lord hath poured this Nation from vessel to vessel till he poured it into your lap when you came first together. If you would consider the hand of God in his great dispensations you would find that there is scarcely a man that fell off at any period of time when God had any work to do who can give God or his work at this day a good word. ‘It was,’ say some, ‘the cunning of the Lord Protector.’ O what blasphemy is this! Men that are without God in the world and walk not with him, know not what it is to pray or believe, and to receive returns from God and to be spoken unto by the Spirit of God, who speaks without the Written Word sometimes, yet according to it. God hath spoken heretofore in divers manners. Let him speak as he pleaseth. Hath he not given us liberty to go to the law and the testimony? And there we shall find there have been impressions in extraordinary cases, as well without the Written Word as with it; and therefore there is no difference in the thing thus asserted from truths generally received, except we exclude the Spirit, without whose concurrence all other teachings are ineffectual. God speaks to the hearts and consciences of men, and leadeth them to his law and testimony, and there also he speaks to them, and so gives them double teachings, according to that of Job, ‘God speaketh once, yea, twice,’ and to that of David, ‘God hath spoken once; yea, twice have I heard this.’ These men with their Masses and Service books, their dead and carnal worship,—no marvel if they be strangers to God and to the works of God, and to spiritual dispensations. And because they say and believe thus, must we do so too? We, in this land, have been otherwise instructed, even by the Word, and works, and Spirit of God. I wish that every sober heart, though he hath had temptations upon him of deserting this cause of God, yet may take heed how he provokes and falls into the hands of the living God by such blasphemies as these. In Heb. x we read, ‘If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin.’ That was spoken to the Jews, who, having professed Christ, apostatized from him. They that attribute to this or that person the results of those mighty things God hath wrought in the midst of us, and fancy they have not been the revolutions of Christ himself, upon whose shoulder the government is laid, they speak against God. The worldly-minded man knows nothing of this, but is a stranger to it, and thence his atheisms and murmurings at instruments, yea, repining at God himself. And no wonder, considering the Lord hath done such things amongst us as have not been known in the world these thousand years, and yet notwithstanding is not owned by us!”

(To be concluded in our next.)

To be blessed *indeed* is the soul's desire of one taught of God.

AN EXPOSITION OF I. KINGS XVII.

BY J. DENNETT, ON JAN. 20TH, 1886.

IN this chapter we have a rather obscure account of a servant of God, for when he was born or who his parents were the Holy Ghost has not been pleased to disclose to us; but he was raised up as a prophet of the Lord in a time of great trouble, and he prophesied against the house of Ahab and against his wicked and idolatrous ways. John the Baptist is said to have come in the spirit and power of Elias. Elijah is first spoken of under very extraordinary circumstances, and John the Baptist came into the world under circumstances quite as extraordinary or more so. When God promised Zacharias a son it was at a peculiar time of his life and of his wife's life, and when the promise was made unbelief at once began to work, and Zacharias asked for a sign, and it was given him; for the angel said, "Behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season" (Lu. i. 20); and dumb he was, not only until the child was born, but until he called for the table, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." Then his tongue was loosed, and he spake, and praised God, and the people said, "What manner of child shall this be?" This was the child that was to come in the spirit and power of Elias, and be the messenger and forerunner of the Lord Jesus Christ, "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

In the chapter before us we have an account of a man raised up by God, but nothing is recorded of his parentage, any more than that he belonged to the inhabitants of Gilead; but like John the Baptist he was evidently a man sent from God; for if God had not sent him his prophecy would have been without power and authority. But God opened his mouth, and he said, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand." So he had to do with the living God, and had the words of the living God in his heart and spake them with his lips. He knew that God's eye was upon him, and had an assurance that the heart of God was towards him. His first words were addressed to king Ahab, and his message was a judgment upon the king and the nation for their wickedness: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." By Elijah saying "my word" we are to understand God's word which he had put into the mouth of his servant; and he was to deliver this message to Ahab and his house.

After he had done so the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan;" for God knew that the message that his servant had delivered would stir up the wrath and enmity of Ahab, and that his design would be to take away the life of his servant Elijah, and he also knew the

dearth and misery that would come upon the land; therefore the Lord told him to go and hide himself by the brook Cherith. This shows clearly that he was to be hidden from his enemies; for God knew both men and the devil would devise to take away his life, as Herod devised to take away the life of Christ, and as Paul's enemies planned to take away his life. At the brook Cherith God had provided means to sustain Elijah, which shows his mercy and kindness towards his servant; therefore he said, "And it shall be that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there." It is an easy thing with God to supply the needs of his people, and he is never forgetful of them. He knows all their hard cases, and all the paths in which they have to tread, and has said for their comfort, as regards the things of this life as well as the life to come: "Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." (Isa. xxxiii. 16.) The apostle Paul, speaking to the Philippians who had shown him so much temporal kindness in administering to him the things of this life, said, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Phil. iv. 19.)

The prophet Elijah did as he was commanded; for we read in the next verse: "So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord; for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan." Here we see the obedience of faith. It would require faith in Elijah to believe that the ravens, which are ravenous birds and unclean under the law, should feed him night and morning, and bring him flesh when there was famine and dearth in the land. But in Elijah we see the obedience of faith, for he credited the word of the Lord, believed in his ability to provide for him, and acted according to it. Now notice what God did for him. These ravenous birds brought him "bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook." Most likely the prophet spent some of his happiest days there, and probably they were some of his most prosperous times spiritually when he was thus shut out from the world and had to watch the hand of the Lord for his daily bread; for he would watch for the Lord to send the ravens in the morning with bread and flesh and again in the evening. These ravens brought the bread and food to the prophet and then returned again, and some have thought that it was bread and meat out of the house of Ahab, the very enemy of Elijah. We may almost imagine how he would, while in this position, realize the kindness of God, and having been enabled by faith to obey God's command he realized his presence which would be to him a heaven on earth. The apostle Peter says, "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" (1 Pet. iii. 13.)

But Elijah was not always to remain by the brook Cherith. His happiness was to be disturbed. We read, "And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land." Elijah might say, "What is to become

of me? I am cut off from the city. God has commanded me to come here, and now how shall I be sustained, for the brook has dried up?" and so, like Samson of old, he might say, "And now shall I die for thirst?" God's word never fails, and God's resources for supplying his people never dry up.

The Lord now gives him further instructions; as we read: "And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there." He is not to go back and expose himself to Ahab's wrath, but to go to Zarephath. And what is to be done when he comes there? "Behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." God provides everything beforehand for his people. In his hands are all the hearts of the sons of men. He has provided means, and he knows the instruments he intends to use, and sometimes he uses the most unlikely of instruments. Here is a widow woman in the very midst of poverty and trial, but not entirely destitute; yet, in looking round on her circumstances, she finds there is only a little meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse; and when the prophet came to her she was gathering of sticks, that she might go in and dress it for her and her son, that they might eat it and die. Who would have thought of God sending his servant to be sustained by this poor widow woman who was in such extreme trial! Elijah might have said, "What a covetous wretch I should be to desire anything of this woman and her son;" but this was God's way; as he said: "Behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." So the poor woman's heart was made ready to do it.

"And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks." It was the same woman God had commanded to feed the prophet that must come to the gate: "And he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel." As there was a famine for water this would be a trial for faith, for, doubtless, she had no more than she needed. But Elijah was athirst. Poor man, the brook had dried up. Where was water to come from? There is nothing so trying as thirst. I believe it is worse than hunger. Perhaps the prophet had gone some time without water. How different to when he was lying by the brook drinking as often as he pleased. So spiritually. At times our supplies seem cut off, and the streams of mercy and life seem all suspended; but as the Lord kept the prophet alive, so will he keep our souls alive; for his eye is as much over us as it was over the prophet: "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." (Ps. xxxiii. 18, 19.)

But this widow woman had a little water, "And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand." He calls first for water, and secondly for bread. The woman did not object to go and fetch a little water. Perhaps she was better supplied with that

than with the meal in the barrel and the oil in the cruse; for we read she said, "As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse; and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die." So she received him as a man of God. Probably this poor widow baked just as much as they wanted at a time, and perhaps she ate her bread with cheerfulness and gratitude to God, thinking that the rain would soon come and there would be a fresh supply of meal in the barrel. But she had come to the last extremity, and perhaps she thought, "Why has God brought me into such difficulties and extremities? What shall I do? Here is death in prospect,—not from invasion or the sword, but from famine. Why has the Lord forsaken me? Why does he deal thus with me?"

Now Elijah speaks again to her, saying, "Fear not; go and do as thou hast said." Never would a "fear not" be spoken more sweetly into a sinner's soul than this was spoken into her soul, for evidently she was very much tried and stood greatly in need of a word of comfort, for she had her fears. "Fear not; go and do as thou hast said; but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son." Here was a further trial of faith for the woman. Nature would say, "I and my son must have the first bit, and then if there is any left, thou shalt have the rest." But no; she obeyed Elijah who said, "Make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth." Justly might the poor woman have said, "How hard is this request! Is this man of God come to deceive me? If I make the last morsel of meal into a cake, and give it to the prophet, how can it be that the barrel of meal shall not waste; and if I use the last drop of oil, how can it be that the cruse of oil shall not fail?" But she was raised above reason; for God gave her faith in a time of need, and strength to trust in him and rely upon the word of his servant; for we read: "And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah; and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days." So there was no lack. The Scripture says, "The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." (Ps. xxxiv. 10.) Here we see the prophet and the woman with the fear and faith of God in their hearts.

But as Elijah was disturbed at the brook and only remained there for a time; so here he was not to be without trial. The Word says we are to go "from strength to strength," and to be "emptied from vessel to vessel." In the case of some there may appear peace and prosperity, and little or no trial, as was probably the case with Martha and Mary and Lazarus; but death entered their house, stirred up their nest, and brought them into deep

trial. Lazarus was taken sick and his sickness terminated in death. So here: "It came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him." Although he did not die of the famine, he died of sickness. It is often the case that in the midst of luxuries people die, and in the midst of famine and poverty God's people are sustained. The dungeon did not kill Jeremiah. Job's affliction did not kill him, and the stocks did not kill Paul and Silas. In the case before us, while in the midst of apparent contentment, and love and union existing between the man of God and this poor widow woman, death came and marred their temporal comforts and something to try their spiritual union. The poor woman might say, "Surely this is worse than if my son had died of the famine. Now he is taken from me. What shall I do?"

"And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?" As though she thought it was through the man of God that this sickness and death was caused, and was ready to charge the blame upon him, or at least ask him the question; but notice, she does not in an unqualified way make this charge, but simply puts the question to him. This is just what the Word of God often does whilst it is being preached. It will call up your sins, your base backslidings, and your wanderings of heart; and conscience says, when your sins are called up through the preaching of the word, "Guilty! Guilty! Guilty!" a thousand times over in your souls. That is just what the preached word is for. It is not always to bring you into great joy, but to bring your sins to remembrance that you may tell God your transgressions, and that you may be humbled and tried, and brought off from all hope in self, and to press out more energetic and real prayers from your souls, which is invariably the case with the Lord's people when they are oppressed; as we read: "Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses." (Ps. cvii. 6.)

Then the prophet speaks again, saying, "Give me thy son. And he took him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed." The woman might say, "What is the man of God going to do, taking my dead son out of my bosom and carrying him up into the loft? His breath has left his body. How can he be again restored to life?" The prophet possessed the Spirit of God, the spirit of faith and the spirit of prayer, and these acting mightily together his soul went out in supplication to heaven: "And he cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee let this child's soul come into him again." Here he tells us who has slain the woman's son,—that it was the hand of God, and doubtless he felt it was for the trial of faith, and that the power of God might be made manifest and the Scripture fulfilled in this case, as it was in the case of Lazarus,

of whom the Lord said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God;" for as Lazarus was raised out of the grave; so this woman's son was restored to life. The woman looked at it as though Elijah had come to slay her son, but Elijah looked at it as the hand of God, and he cried unto the Lord.

Now look at the confidence in which he cried. "O Lord *my God*." He felt a nearness to the Lord in telling him about this affliction and trouble. The woman might say, "What use is it to pray when the soul has left the body and life is extinct, and there is nothing but the breathless frame left?" But the prophet had faith in Him who is the Resurrection and the Life, he had faith in the living God, he had faith in the Holy Ghost, for all Three are concerned in the resurrection of God's people, both soul and body. Then follows the prayer of faith to which the apostle James exhorts, saying, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." (Jas. v. 14.) "Is there anything too hard for the Lord?" "Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." (Jer. xxiii. 24.) "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." (Ps. l. 15.)

Are any of you in difficulties and in distress? Have losses and crosses overtaken any of you, or are you in the depths of poverty, or in some peculiar trial, under chastening, or persecution? If so, it may seem to you as though God would not undertake your case, and you may be tempted to call no more upon the name of the Lord; but remember, nothing is too hard for God.

"And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived." Here see the wonders God wrought in answer to the prayer of faith. The apostle Paul alludes to the case of Elijah and this poor widow woman in Heb. xi where he mentions the worthies who were reputed for their faith, and says, "Women received their dead raised to life again."

"And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother; and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth." When he carried the child up into the loft it was only a corpse,—only the earthy, dead part, for the soul was fled and gone; but now he restored to the poor woman her living child, body and soul united again. In this was displayed the triumph of faith, and here was a proof to Elijah and the widow woman that God was a prayer-hearing and answering God.

"And Elijah said, See, thy son liveth." It is not revealed that the woman knew how the restoration was accomplished nor how the body and soul were re-united. By this miracle the woman had a proof that Elijah was a man of God, and no doubt

they rejoiced together, for they had had their weeping time and now came their rejoicing time; and thus the Scripture was fulfilled: "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." This brought a sweet confidence into the woman's soul. Perhaps she had fears before, and suspicions and questionings arising in her mind about Elijah, and she may have said to herself, "Is he a man of God? Is he a prophet? Has God sent him here?" But now all fears and suspicions were dispelled from her mind, and she could say, "I have the conviction and assurance that *thou art a man of God,*" and no doubt many sweet thanksgivings would go up from her soul to God under a sense of his goodness; and the Scripture says, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." (Ps. li. 17.)

Now, out of a feeling heart, she says, "By this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." Thus she received God's word and God's messenger, and glorified the name of the Lord; and the Scripture says, speaking of God's servants, "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." (Matt. x. 40.)

THE EXPERIENCE OF J. A.

AS WRITTEN TO MR. BUNTINGTON.

HAVING met with much opposition in my mind against attempting to commit to writing my experience, I could not, for a time, comply with your request; but having been enabled to see that the opposition came not from God, I am determined, with the Lord's help, to acquaint you with some of the most remarkable occurrences, leaving out the whole train of deliverances I have experienced in a way of providence, which, if written, you would conclude that the Lord had been with me from my mother's womb.

I have often thought, of late with great satisfaction, and I believe it has made your ministry, in the hands of God, savoury to me, how plainly the Lord has revealed it to me that you are his servant; for I had sat nearly ten years under what was called the gospel, under R. H., and under J. W., and never knew truth from error, law from gospel; nay, I did not know Calvinism from Arminianism. But I had not been under your ministry many months before I discovered and said to several, that if what you said respecting Arminianism was true, I should be damned. But it was not what you nor all the world could have said, naturally speaking, without the Spirit's power, that would have delivered me from it; for though I saw that I could not be saved that way, yet I found afterwards that a work of the Spirit was as much beyond what I had come through as the heavens are above the earth; for what I had heard served only to convince my judgment that it requires an application by the Spirit of God to bring it home to the heart.

I began at times to be satisfied from what I had experienced, as I thought, and from the Lord hearing my prayers and delivering me; and not only in this, but in having my prayers remarkably answered at other times; so that I concluded I was certainly in a saved state. And I had, from this last trouble, not only left off going to the playhouse, to which till this time I was much addicted, as often as three or four times a week, but the very root or desire was cut for this and for everything else, seemingly, excepting godly company and godly conversation; and I could now so talk about the doctrines of the gospel, that many, as well as myself, were deceived, and thought I had a saving knowledge of God; nay, by some I was looked up to as a very remarkable person. But you will see in the sequel that when the Spirit of the Lord began to operate all my seeming comeliness was turned into corruption, and my soul stood naked and exposed to the wrath of the Almighty; and that you were the instrument in his hands of bringing me first *into* and afterwards *out* of my trouble.

I am now enabled to see how rightly the Lord has timed everything, how everything has come suitably to the state I was in, and how all things have worked together for my good; for just when my mind seemed ripe for the truth and I began to be dissatisfied, and to think there must be something more in religion than what I knew, I was brought under your ministry. And though I believe I had heard almost all who are called gospel ministers in London, I never so much as heard your name till within these three years; but as soon as I heard you I understood enough to make me miserable, and I never found any rest after I did hear you till I was delivered. I began to argue in favour of Arminianism and against the truth of the Lord, for I found my false hope was destroyed; and I was filled with a great deal of bitterness in my mind against you, though we then had never spoken to each other. However, the arrow stuck fast.

It happened about this time that I had several dreams and visions of the night indicating what was coming upon me, two of which I will relate. I dreamed that I was walking a considerable way in great perplexity through many waters, some places shallow and others very deep. As I had just passed a church, a relation of mine who had often come with me to hear you preach overtook me, and all on a sudden I saw a great light, like the sun in his meridian splendour; and I heard a voice, saying, "Put off your shoes; for the place whereon you walk is holy ground." I did so immediately, and went on my road joyfully; but I then lost sight of my relation and saw him no more; and what is remarkable, this very person came but once or twice to hear you after my trouble began, and has now given it up entirely, and, I believe, through fear of falling into the horrible pit wherein he saw me plunged. The other dream was this: I saw myself arraigned at a bar for a crime which I thought was not my own; however, when my trial began I was convinced

that I deserved to suffer; but after remaining a considerable time at the bar in great anxiety, Justice itself came and delivered me; and I understood that another had answered for me and made atonement; and I came away greatly pleased and happy in my deliverance. But in my way home I perceived a man slain and terribly mangled; which circumstance left a lasting impression on my mind.

On Monday, Aug. 31st, 1789, between nine and ten o'clock in the evening I was sitting reading a book of yours addressed to Caleb Evans, and while I was reading it an uncommon light darted forth, somewhat in the manner of a flash of lightning, which seemed to strike me across the forehead, and directly it sunk into my inward parts, and I felt it within me as plainly as ever I felt anything in my life. Surely it was the candle of the Lord searching all the inward parts of the belly; for my soul was like a bird shot, it sunk in a moment, and my countenance immediately fell. This supernatural light fastened a conviction within me which convinced me that all my past experience was nothing but a delusion, and that I was a hypocrite, and in spirit a Pharisee of the Pharisees in the sight of God, and had taken up a profession of the gospel only upon reason and through fear, without experiencing the power of it. But the light which I had now received shined so bright in reading the Word and examining my experience to try to support my spirit, that I wondered how I had read the Scriptures before, and how it was possible I could have been so much deceived. I betook myself to my room in the greatest horror imaginable, and this text came to me: "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" I thought this came from the adversary, and was meant to deceive me, as he had done before; therefore it afforded me no comfort; and immediately the following text came to me: "Thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron." (Dent. xxviii. 23.) I looked out at my window, and to me it so appeared. I dropped immediately on the floor, crying, "Lord, save, or I perish," and if ever words were spoken from the heart, these certainly were.

I kept reflecting on my past experience; but the light which was in me convinced me there was a wrong motive at the bottom of all my profession; and such sins were brought to my remembrance which I had not so much as thought of for years; the appearance of which convinced me that my soul was naked before God, and exposed to all the curses of his law; for the covering which I had clothed myself with was all burnt up.

I arose from the floor and hurried to bed to drown or forget my trouble, but continued saying, "Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner" till I fell asleep; and a sinner I did appear black enough, God knows. When I awoke the next morning my trouble and horror were so great I could not act in my business, though, before this trouble came on, it had been my greatest pleasure; and during my five months' distress my business or

property did not appear worth one moment's consideration; nay, it was of so little esteem that I would have given it to my brother, if he would have accepted it. And though, in one of my matters, I was apprehensive it would be put into the hand of the Lord Chancellor, yet nothing had any weight with me but the welfare of my soul. And such was my grief, that though I wished and tried to hide it from those around me, it was impossible, for I was obliged to confess, and that to many, that I was a wretch undone; for it appeared to me that I had sinned against light and knowledge, and that there was not such another sinner in the world.

To add to my distress, the next night I dreamed I was in a garden with two friends, for one of whom I had a very great regard. In the garden there was a tree whose top I could not discover. There descended a beautiful bird, which both my friends tried to destroy, but I was very much displeased and earnestly wished to have it. One in the company aimed a stroke at it with a sword, when it mounted immediately; and the moment it was out of sight I heard a noise by the side of me, and turning round saw the earth cleave asunder with a confused noise and swallow up one of my friends, together with myself; and I cannot help thinking that what I then felt when sinking bore a resemblance to what condemned spirits feel in hell. After having fallen a great way with this horrid sensation, I found myself in a large grave, where there were many dead bodies; and one I particularly noticed had a crown on its head, which I understood to be the body of king David. I saw my companions no more, but remained alone among the carcases; and after I had surveyed them a while and stumbled over some of them, there appeared a person unexpectedly, and conducted me out. The next day after, the sensation which I felt when I fell kept me in all the horrors imaginable. I believe I was shown David in the grave because I was to experience some of the horrors which he felt; and under the heaviest troubles I have had a gleam of hope from having some part of the Psalms brought to my mind, the following passages in particular: "Let not the pit shut her mouth upon me;" "The snares of death compassed me about, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me." I knew this was my case; and thought that if David went so far and had deliverance, it might be the same with me.

My last dream was verified, for I grew worse and worse, and continued sinking deeper and deeper into despondency; insomuch that my relations and some of my acquaintance amongst whom I have been brought up came to me, and said if one who had lived as I had done was lost, what must become of the world? Others said they knew I had a good heart; but this, instead of affording me comfort, as I believe they meant it to do, only grieved my spirit, for I knew my heart was deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; and though my life had been remarkably moral, the light which shone within me convinced me

that my mind and conscience were both defiled, and that in every thought, word, or act I had committed sin.

On Sunday, Sept. 6th, 1789, I came to hear you preach. Your sermon seemed exactly suited to my case, and particularly several texts you quoted and enlarged upon. One was, "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." Another to the effect that the Lord would rend, and afterwards return and heal. These, as well as the greatest part of your sermon, were so applicable to my case, that I thought I felt deliverance coming; but as I knew that if I were set at liberty from all my trouble in the chapel I should disturb the whole congregation, I therefore prayed that I might be delivered at home. But this very prayer Satan handled as an accusation and aggravation of my trouble through my whole distress, under this idea that I had thought lightly of that pardon which was worth more than the whole world, and of which I was then sensible; that I had now let slip the day of grace and should never find repentance. I seemed to be got almost beyond the reach of mercy, and had neither power nor spirits to keep myself decent; but was so harassed the moment I began to do one thing that I was driven to another, insomuch that one of my relations said I must privately have committed murder, otherwise I could not be so unhappy. My distress began to affect my body, and was like a fire burning within me night and day; and, as it reads in Deut. xxxiii. 2, "From his right hand went a fiery law," so I felt it raging in my conscience, and calling for righteousness and obedience which I had not.

One morning my thirst was so great that three quarts of liquid in an hour did not allay my thirst; and what added most to my grief was that I could not pray, though there was a groaning and seeking after God in the spirit beyond anything I had ever felt; for if I attempted to pray a power superior to my own drove me from it. Through fear and horror I went from place to place groaning under the continual apprehensions of eternal destruction, a terror to myself and to all around me. I was tempted to try to get rid of all thoughts of religion and a future state. I went so far that I could not bear religious conversation, but used to get away from it, and hide the Bible and other religious books. But this would not do. I got worse and worse, and was compelled to search the Scriptures, and that more than ever, for something to ease my troubled mind; and was compelled also to come and hear you, for there was no one else at this time from whom I received any ease. I often experienced relief while you were in prayer, and indeed it seemed as if the Lord put words in your mouth purposely to suit my case; but as soon as your prayer was over, you were led in your sermon to draw the line between a professor and a possessor, or a hypocrite and a real child of God, and you discovered my very thoughts, insomuch that I was clearly convinced I was nothing but a Pharisee, and not a child of God.

About this time a professor asked me my mind respecting you, and how I could ever go to hear you after I had been brought into so much trouble under you. I was enabled then to say, and that in confidence, that if any in London were right, you were; and I had light sufficient to see that he was in as bad a state as myself, only his eyes were holden that he could not see it. Several persons brought promises from the Word of God which were suitable to my case, but I told them I could not believe. I could see the safety of those who did believe in Jesus, but if they would give me the whole world, I could not believe.

The Lord for some time had prospered everything I put my hand to, and my getting something of a name among the people with whom I dealt lifted me up. But these very people whose esteem I so much prized were to see me in my desperate condition; for one day, in all my trouble, I went to the Exchange, and what I went for I know not; but from my appearance they concluded I was mad; and from this I became the talk and jest of them all. I was at last obliged to take to my bed, which I kept for eight days together, and it is amazing how manifestly the Lord supported me, for I would not take anything that was recommended, either as food or physic. Satan often came as a familiar spirit indeed, for I was not without his temptations and arguings the whole five months. That text in Isaiah, "Tophet is ordained of old," &c. lay much on my mind, and it was so impressed on my spirit that I have had my soul, as it were, carried down amongst the fiends, and thought I could see the very place and manner of their punishment. Satan had such possession of my heart and tongue that he made me do what I never did before, namely, curse and swear. When he began his temptations one morning I said, "Here I am, only created to live about twenty-two years, have always been harassed by Satan, have called continually to be delivered from sin in vain, and am now going to hell," for I thought it impossible to live the day out; "What a——being must God be!" I felt a trembling seize me the next moment, upon which I said, "Now all is over. I have now committed the unpardonable sin." In my desperate fit I thought of a sword which I used to keep by my bedside, and said, "That will soon make an alteration, for hell cannot be worse than what I feel." I got out of bed in a moment, and I believe, if the Lord had not moved my sister to displace it under some apprehensions of this kind, I should have killed myself; for when I found I was disappointed I smote my hands against the bedstead and beat off part of the flesh in my rage. But, what is amazing, under all my trouble, whenever there was a little cessation, which was never long, I feared that I was coming out the wrong way, and prayed earnestly to God if it was so to plunge me deeper, if necessary, so as not to let me come forth any other way than his own, and with a saving knowledge and experience of Jesus Christ. My spirit, at such times, was seemingly absent from the body (not in my sleep, but when lying in my bed awake),

and I thought I could see the world under me; and the language of my heart was, "O that I knew where I might find him! It might be that I might find mercy."

But after this a gloomy horror seized me, and there seemed at times a carelessness of what became of me. The adversary suggested, "Perhaps the doctrine of universal salvation may be true thus far, that after the reign of the saints one thousand years, the wicked might be delivered." I searched to find out whether the words "ever," and "everlasting" might not mean a term. I also inquired what the Hebrew words were, and procured the best of dictionaries. But the more I searched the more the light which was within convinced me it was not as I then wished. This, and many other particular errors the devil tried at different times to draw me into to make me stop or rest short of Christ; but blessed be the Lord, as fast as I caught hold of anything of the kind he cut it off, and drove me from my false refuges, sometimes by your preaching, and sometimes by texts of Scripture, and plunged me deeper and deeper. It was given out by some that religion had driven me mad; my relations and friends said the same, and one spoke very desperately against you. It pleased the Lord, however, at this time to strike one of the family, who is no friend to religion, with actual madness (such as I never was); which stopped the mouths of some.

After I had uttered the words before hinted at, I came to hear you, and your text was: "Curse not the king, no not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber." (Eccles. x. 20.) I was then most completely miserable, and said, "O that I was any other person in the chapel, or any other creature upon earth! Then there might be room for hope; but there is none for me. I have sinned the unpardonable sin." When I came out I asked a member of the chapel whether he thought that anyone had ever uttered such words, and yet was saved. He said he was assured that the Lord never permitted his people to go so far. I said no more, but went on, and begged of God, if he would not pardon me, to cut me down before I got home. But O the goodness, patience, and wonderful mercy of God; for though I had thus tempted him, he permitted me, though I trembled through fear when I drew near, to get safe home; and afterwards in my sleep I had the following vision: I saw a hand stretched forth with a book in it, and heard a voice, saying, "Your name is written in the Book of Life." I asked to see it. The Book opened, and I read my name with John Bunyan's on the same line; and I can now well remember the handwriting; it was as legible a hand as I ever saw. After I had read it I asked if there were none whose names were written in that Book who would be lost at last. The voice answered, "Look at the end of the line." I did so, and perceived the two capital letters, "E. L." I asked their meaning, and was answered, "Everlasting Life." Upon which I withdrew.

When I awoke in the morning I found a calm on my spirit to which I was not accustomed and which I attributed to the vision; but it was suggested to me that such whose names were written in the Book of Life were never acquainted therewith; and immediately that text of Paul's came to my mind wherein he makes mention of some whose names were in the Book of Life; but I found that visions would not satisfy a soul under strong convictions, any more than the letter of the word without the application of the Spirit.

Soon after this, in hearing you (and I came that night not knowing that I ever should get back again), I saw on a sudden a brilliant star over your head, and felt a sensation of joy; but something within said, "That is not for you; it is only a manifestation for him;" and I found this gleam of comfort gone. But from this and the vision before my soul seemed somewhat supported for a time, and when I went to bed I entreated the Lord that if he intended to pardon me, he would manifest it to me that night. And the very manifestation which I wished for appeared; for in my sleep I was in an open country, and the heavens seemed to be opened, and a bright light, beyond that of the sun, shined on me. Whereupon I was filled with joy, longed to leave this world, and threw myself down in hopes of leaving my body there, and that my spirit would ascend; but something told me that would not be the case yet. But when I awoke in the morning I found it fulfilled. And indeed, as I found my dreams and visions of troubles fulfilled, so also have I since found my dreams of comfort fulfilled.

The star which I saw over your head continued with me for some time, both in reading the Word and in prayer; and it appears to me that the Daydawn and the Daystar had begun to shine in my heart; for the wrath, desperation, and rebellion of my heart were soon gone; and what I felt in my spirit was pure, peaceable, and gentle; and the joy, satisfaction, and love to God which I received and felt under the word are beyond all description; for as I cannot find words to express my trouble, so neither can I find language sufficiently expressive of the joy I experienced at my deliverance.

After my happy deliverance I tried to bring those sins to remembrance which lay so heavy on me during my trouble; and I believe the devil tried to get me back into my old hole; but the door was shut, and my sins were gone. The Almighty, who pardons like a God, gave me such views of the covenant of grace and of my interest in it, and such a feeling sense of the forgiveness of my sins, attended with such a love to God, his people, and his ways, that, were it always to be with me as it then was, my business must be managed by others; for that, as well as everything else respecting time, and sense appeared not worth notice. However, I have since found my affections catching at these things, and have longed for a return of this sweet frame of spirit. But blessed be God, his Word is fulfilled, that though we

are not taken out of this world, he keeps us from the evil of it. The Lord has permitted my faith to be tried pretty much since my deliverance; but I found that by these things I got more established.

I remember when I was first delivered your mentioning that what we felt in our first love would not always last; but that there would come a day of adversity to balance the day of prosperity; but, had all the world said so then, they could not have made me believe it, my love, joy, and peace were so great. But though, at the dawn of day the darkness makes the first light in the east appear beautiful, yet when the sun arises and shines in its splendour there is a more glorious appearance; so it is with a Christian in his first love; there is great joy. But it appears to me that an established Christian who is enabled (by the Spirit) to quench the fiery darts of Satan and live more by faith than sense, shines like the sun in its splendour, and, if I may so speak, gives more glory to God, and has more satisfaction himself; for afterwards there is that confidence in God which nothing can shake. I speak from my own experience. It appeared now in reality, as Paul says, that old things had passed away, and all things were become new; and the change was so great that it seemed as if I had got into a new world; and, instead of death appearing awful and dreadful, I have envied those, in that respect, who have, according to the nature of things, seemed to be nearer the end of their race than myself.

Thus, Sir, have I given you a short account of the Lord's dealings with my soul. I find it impossible to give you the whole. But I entreat your prayers, that God would be pleased to keep me always humble.

THE body, the flesh, strictly speaking, is the lowest and meanest part in man. Its origin is mean; it is of the earth, but the soul is by far the noblest part; its origin is God, it is of God, and he is the God of the spirits of all flesh. (Numb. xvi. 22.) Now it was this lower part in man that was the chief in our parents' sin. The eyes of the body saw the forbidden fruit and the appetite craved it. It was the hand of the body that took it, and the mouth of the body that ate it, and the stomach and belly received it. And I have no doubt but the soul was awfully alarmed at all this; and even conscience, being then pure and furnished with the law of God, which they received by inspiration, did its office; for Eve knew the forbidden tree and God's command about it, and mentions it, which knowledge is peculiar to the soul; but the flesh gained the ascendancy and carried all before it, on which account the evil corruption in man is called the flesh. And ever since Adam fell it appears plain that whatsoever is the most strictly forbidden the flesh is the most apt to crave. Hence God complains, "All flesh hath corrupted his way." And as that nature which is generated from one to another is flesh, it is said that that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and as sin in the human body works in a lascivious way, so it is called the flesh that lusteth against the Spirit; and we are exhorted to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.—*Huntington.*

BROTHERLY LOVE.

My dear Friend and Brother,—I feel very grateful for the kindness you have shown towards a poor, guilty sinner in writing such precious things which softened my heart and brought tears to my eyes. I laid your letter by after reading it until this evening when I had another perusal, and felt how condescending and kind was God the Eternal Spirit to indite in your heart such good matter. It came at a time when “restless sin and raging hell had struck all my comforts dead;” but my little faith revived as I read the words of peace and consolation contained in yours.

What you say seems too good to be true, and it cannot be believed except faith is wrought in the heart by the Spirit of truth. O to think that the great Creator of man became a Man, with all the sympathies of the nature of man; and is not against the nature of man, but against the sin of that nature. He came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and was made flesh and dwelt among us; and his delights were with the sons of men, and what he delights in he has power to gratify himself with, though it cost him blood and groans and tears. I should like to be divested for a few hours of all family and business cares, and have a little talk with you upon the glories of Christ’s kingdom, and to speak of his power, because, as you say in yours, “one rivulet of his love flowing into the soul would make the tongue to speak, the eyes to see him, and the heart to melt in gratitude and love toward him.” The Blessed Spirit alone can reveal Christ, and I am sure when I feel the least softening, it must be his work; and yet after I have felt contrition of spirit, humility, and love, and the tears have flowed with love and grief, I have been so unbelieving as to doubt whether it was his work. Yet it is the sweet Spirit alone who kindles love to Jesus in the hearts of his saints, and teaches us that whatever knowledge we may have of God and Christ, a sinner can never learn to love. O that my love was equal to my knowledge!

I have often sweetly fed under your ministry, and can truly say you are seldom out of my thoughts; and when it is better with me than at other times I speak of you to the King, in supplicating a blessing upon you and your wife, and the ministry you have received of the Lord to make known the riches of his grace to the most guilty and depraved of Adam’s race to whom he has given a broken and a contrite heart, for it is such that Jesus came to save. But you will say, “How, then, is it that I do not hear from you?” Well, beloved brother, it is because of my dark, unbelieving heart that I write so seldom, and when I have posted a letter I have sometimes been so tempted by Satan and unbelief that I have wished I could withdraw it. Yet there is something within me that cannot cease to cry, groan, and sigh, but I can seldom sing, and am more of a groaner than a singer in the assembly of the saints. Still, I am daily and often hourly pleading

the blood that Christ has shed for the atonement of the sins of his people with sometimes a fainting and sometimes a lively hope that I am one of them. Earthly ties are being continually broken, and outward and visible associations are being dissolved; and it is sweet to feel that sacred union so firm and strong that binds the soul to God as his adopted child and a partaker of his grace. It is indeed an unspeakable Gift, the Gift of Christ, and when he is revealed to our hearts the Hope of glory, it is, it must be by the power of the Holy Ghost; as he never reveals him as such to those he is determined not to save. These things have made me know what it is by bitter experience to be exceedingly filled with the scorn of those that are at ease, and the contempt of the proud. Numbers can hear and admire the preaching of Christ in all he is except Christ in us the Hope of glory; but nothing short of this can afford me any comfort, kindle love, increase faith, or revive my hope. In his manifested favour is my life, and joy; and there is not a drop of real joy without his presence. I hope the Lord is blessing the word of life through your ministry to the building-up of his saints and the glorifying of his great name. May the Lord show you much of himself, as much as you are able to bear, supply your needs in the pulpit, and give you increasingly to feel that the only object really worth living for in this present evil world is for the glorifying of his great name. I remain,

Yours affectionately in the Gospel,
 London, Feb. 16th, 1884. D. P. GLADWIN.

NO GOOD THING IN THE FLESH.

My dear Brother in the Lord,—I generally feel cheered when I discover your handwriting in the direction of letters, and the one now received gives me encouragement, for I find you are walking in the same path as myself, and I can compare notes with you. I was telling my dear wife the other day that I felt as though I had not a spark of vital godliness in my soul, and I feared that after all my profession there was nothing in me but nature, and that at the last I should prove to have been deceived.

In reflecting on the past I can see nothing but sin and sinfulness, and remember the time when I was only seeking the pleasures and vanities of this ungodly world, and desiring to walk after the flesh and fulfil the lusts thereof. Bunyan's remark upon Atheist meeting Christian after he had passed the delectable mountains and trying to laugh him out of all his religion and persuade him that there was no God nor the place that he was seeking after, were a little comfort to me, for I could see how wonderfully the Lord hides pride from man, and makes him to experience daily that no good thing dwelleth in the flesh, and that the believer is dependent upon the blessed operations of the Spirit of God daily and hourly for his grace to keep him alive in the divine life.

This morning I have been reading about Peter denying his Lord and Master after the wonderful manifestations he had received, and after he had beheld his excellent glory on the holy mount; but after the word of the Lord respecting him had been verified, Christ again looked upon him, and he went out and wept bitterly. These things are left upon record to show us that only as we are held up by the Lord can we stand, and this made David cry, "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe." The Lord sees fit to suffer Satan to sift some of his children as wheat, to show them where their strength lieth, and that his grace is sufficient for them; for his strength is made perfect in weakness.

But in looking back upon our past experience can we not see the Lord's interposing goodness and mercy, and how the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, has appeared amid all our defects and shortcomings; for sometimes when walking abroad thinking about our worldly affairs, sometimes when cast-down by the difficulties of the way, when there has appeared none to help, and sometimes in the morning when the hour for family prayer has drawn near, we have felt our minds led to read some particular chapter, and our soul has gone out in longings after God, and we have cried, "When shall I come and appear before God, love him as I desire, and be led into the mysteries of his kingdom?" While thus in contemplation has not the Word at times been made sweeter to us than honey or the honeycomb, and could we not then say that we esteemed the words of his mouth more than our necessary food? When we have been thus favoured, and enabled to pour out our hearts before the Lord in love, praise, and gratitude, we could use the language of Scripture and say, "Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." Thus the Word of God is verified wherein it is written, "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." (Zech. xiii. 10.) When this is the case ardent desires flow from the contrite heart, and we can then sing aloud of Christ's righteousness and make mention of his only.

Then we conclude, after experiencing so much of the Lord's goodness, that our mountain stands strong, and that we shall never be moved; but soon again the enemy is permitted to come in like a flood, and begins his old work bringing in his vile accusations, and our poor carnal nature listens to his evil suggestions, which often cause us to stagger like a drunken man, and to be at our wits' end, so that we know not what to do nor where to fly, and often dwell in darkness as those that have been long dead; and this causes our spirits to be overwhelmed within us. When left to ourselves we are prone to listen to Satan's lying insinuations, although we know he was a liar from the beginning and is called the accuser of the brethren.

My mind is often led to seriously contemplate how it will be with me at the last. My time is short and my end nigh at hand. Am I safe in Jesus' hands? If so my soul cannot be lost. Have I the oil in my lamp, or have I only a name to live and still dead in sin? These things often impress my soul with much solemnity. I want to have the full assurance of faith, and to have my heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and my body washed with pure water. I am much as usual in bodily health, but I find my extreme deafness a great trial, and feel to be a trouble to myself and to all about me. I am fit for no company, and there are none but the godly I care for. Our children are in good health, and have a fair prospect as regards the things of this life; but there are at present no signs of them being prepared for the life to come, and we are well assured they will remain as they are unless God, in mercy, quickens their souls, and implants in them the incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth for ever.

My wife unites with me in Christian love to you, and to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

Your Companion in Tribulation,
 March 30th, 1869. BEN. GREGORY.

THE PRECIOUS CORN OF WHEAT.

My dear Sir,—May God give you of the dew of heaven, by which is intended the sweet, gentle, refreshing, softening, meekening, humbling, renewing influences and operations of his Spirit felt in the heart, and plenty of corn and wine. The corn represents Christ Jesus, that precious Corn of wheat which fell into the ground and died, but is now risen again, and is in the hearts of his saints as a handful of corn in the earth on the top of the mountains of Zion, and the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon, and they of the city of the great King shall flourish like grass of the earth; for though low in stature, yet are they green, tender, fresh, and verdant. By the *wine* is intended the everlasting, immutable, free and sovereign love of God to poor sinners, and when indulged to drink thereof it goeth down softly, making the lips of them who are asleep to sing of his unmerited goodness. This wine represents the precious, atoning blood which cleanses from all sin, and it is freely given to him that is ready to perish, and to those who are of heavy hearts; so that they drink and forget their poverty, and remember their misery no more. May this and every other blessing be given to my dear friend.

I have delayed writing to you until now; first, because I desired to watch the hand of God with respect to my unworthy self, and through his great goodness I have felt much better, though I experienced yesterday a slight return of my old complaint, but I now hope it is going off again; and further, I have been waiting for a communication from Chichester, and this I have just received. I go there to-morrow week, Oct. 8th, if the Lord permit. Does my dear friend think of coming to Brighton?

If so, would you like to accompany me? I would not press for anything that is not quite convenient to you, but I should be much gratified with your company. I have for the present declined all invitations to preach at Brighton, feeling that rest here is necessary for me, and I am unwilling to do anything that might prevent my going to Chichester at the time appointed. The Lord is leading me by a way that I know not, for I am not assured what may be his purposes as to the future, but I do know that it is well, yea, and that it shall be well; but this is attended with many dark seasons and deep exercises; but, notwithstanding all, the Saviour condescends to fulfil his promise: "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man taketh from you."

With our united love to yourself, and all friends,
I remain,

Yours affectionately in the Lord,

Brighton, 1859.

JOHN HOBBS.

TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS.

Dear Friend,—I have supplied at Zoar the two last Lord's days. It is a mercy if I have not spoken in vain. It is a great honour to be made an instrument of good to the souls of the Lord's people. He will bless by whom he will bless, and he will have all the glory in the salvation of his people. The treasure is to be in earthen vessels. The ministers know it to be so as well as the hearers, and they are constrained to preach salvation by grace. I wish I could love Christ more and could exalt his name more highly.

You are going to Cirencester. Could you come to Abingdon? The friends as well as myself would be glad to hear you. We have a station at A. now. If you come may the Lord come with you and bless his word to the souls of his people; so that both he that speaks and they that hear may be blest together.

I hope to return on Friday. Please direct to me at Abingdon. Give my Christian love to your wife, and any inquiring friends. Mr. M. and family desire to be remembered to you.

Yours in the Truth,

April 27th, 1859.

WILLIAM TIPTAFT.

ADAM is not the father of souls, or of spirits, but of bodies, or of the flesh: "God giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." But one soul is not generated of another. We read of fathers after the flesh, and of the Father of spirits in one verse: "Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" (Heb. xii. 9.) We should distinguish between the body, or the flesh as it is God's workmanship, and the corruption of the flesh which is the evil work of that arch apostate, the devil.—*Huntington*.

INQUIRY AND ANSWER.

Dear Mr. Editor,—As there is a doctrine being spread by some who call themselves ministers of Christ, to the effect that *the bodies of the saints are holy*, which seems contrary to the Word of God and the Spirit's teaching in the souls of his people, and is calculated to be a stumblingblock to many in Zion, may I ask if the bodies of the saints ever become holy in this life? By giving your thoughts upon this subject you will greatly oblige one who has to carry a corrupt body, which is full of infirmities and sins, even after having experienced the mercy and presence of God.

H. H.

ANSWER.

There ever have been, there are still, and will be to the end of time in the church of God men who preach some false doctrine or other. If they have not a sound experience of what they are by nature and of how original sin has corrupted them from head to foot, they never will from their hearts endorse the language of Scripture respecting the filthiness of the flesh and blood of the saints, even after their souls are born again of the Spirit, where it says, "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores" (Isa. i. 6); and that the flesh will retain its corrupted state until the resurrection morning, when the bodies of the saints will be changed from evil to good.

That the bodies of the saints are not holy is so clearly and fully decided by the Lord Jesus that we wonder how any man born of God can deny it; for Christ himself hath said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (Jno. iii. 6); which portion, if we take it in its most comprehensive meaning, includes all the sinful propensities of the mind and of the body, according to the corrupt state in which we come into the world, agreeable to what David by the Holy Ghost has said, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Ps. li. 5.) We believe every child of God who is taught of the Spirit and made acquainted with the vileness and wickedness which dwells in his flesh, and who has to realize that in him dwells an old man of sin, will never be able to separate the old man from flesh and blood, nor flesh and blood from the old man, for they are in league; and on account of this God declares in his Word that "we have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement." (Isa. xxviii. 15.)

But let us refer to some of the Old Testament saints who had a goodly measure of grace and precious faith in their souls, and were sweetly indued by the Spirit of God and much under his divine teaching in their souls, and do we find that their bodies were holy in this life? Look at Noah. As soon as he came forth from the ark after the Deluge he became drunken. Was this a

proof that he possessed a holy body? Could a man with a holy body have fallen into drunkenness? Again. Look at David, whom God calls the man after his own heart, whom Samuel anointed with the horn of oil, and on whom such a blessed measure of the Spirit was poured; yet, in the hour of temptation and through his sinful inclinations, he fell into the sins of adultery and murder. Did he possess a holy body which committed adultery? Did this man possess a holy body when he secretly planned the murder of Uriah? In Ps. xxxviii, speaking of the view he had of his body, or his flesh, he said, "There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin." Again: "My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness." And again: "My loins are filled with a loathsome disease." Surely his bones and his loins were part of his body; yet in the one he says there is no rest because of his sin, and in the other he says there is a loathsome disease, by which he means the sins that were in his mortal tabernacle, the flesh. Peter was a good and gracious man, and not only a private Christian, but called to be an apostle of Christ. He had been much in the company of his Lord and Master, realized much of his presence, and had such a view of his Godhead that he said, "Thou art the Son of God;" and yet after this with his mouth he uttered oaths and curses, and said respecting Christ, "I know not the man." If Peter's body had been holy, his tongue and lips would have been holy too; and then could his holy tongue and his holy lips have uttered oaths and curses, and denied all knowledge of his Lord and Master, the Holy One of Israel? After Peter's recovery he was more deeply led into the mystery of iniquity, and proved what the corruption that is in us by nature had done for flesh and blood; for he says, "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away." (1 Pet. i. 24.) He saw and felt what a poor, withering creature is man, and that even the bodies of the saints were withering away, and would soon return in a corrupt state to the dust of the earth. Was the body of that poor sinner in the Corinthian church holy when he committed incest, and took unto him his father's wife, a sin which the apostle says was not so much as named amongst the Gentiles? What! A holy body indulging in such an heinous, and extraordinary sin? Then again. A member in the Ephesian church in a time of temptation put forth his hand to steal. If his body had been holy must not his hand have been holy; and could that holy hand have been engaged in stealing or taking that which belonged to another? We think in the minds of any discerning persons who have in them the fear and grace of God there will be but one conclusion, and that is that all those saints whom we have named proved to their mortification and soul-trouble that their bodies were sinful, that they possessed an old man of sin, and had a law in their members warring against the law of their minds,

which brought them into captivity to the law of sin which was in their members.

We do not name these cases to give the least encouragement to sin. God forbid. If we fear God it will be our desire to honour him and serve him as far as we are able whilst in our imperfect state on earth; for if a man professes to fear God and yet lives in open sin, he gives the lie to his profession and is a disgrace to the congregation with whom he may meet; as Paul says: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." (Rom. vi. 16.) The prayer of a child of God is, "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe. Preserve me from falling. Keep me from evil that it grieve me not. Enable me to live to thy glory, to walk humbly before thee all the days of my life, and never let me disgrace my profession, or bring a reproach upon thy cause of truth. Grant me thy fear, that I may hate evil and depart from iniquity."

If the men who are attempting to spread this doctrine, whether ministers or private persons, are holy in their bodies, supposing that they have children which they have begotten since their bodies, as they say, have become holy, then, of necessity, must their offspring be holy also; for the law of nature is that like begets like. If the bodies of such men are holy and their souls are regenerated or born again of the Spirit, then it follows that they could not possibly beget unholy or unsanctified children. Should such men reply and say they possess a body of sin apart from the natural body which is made up of flesh, blood, and bones, and that though they are holy in body and their souls are born again of the Spirit, yet they have an old man of sin, and therefore on account of this their children which they beget are unholy;—if they should reason thus, then, are we to understand that the old man of sin begets their offspring in his image? The Scripture says, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." (Job xiv. 4.) On the other hand we may ask, "Who can bring an unclean thing out of a clean?"

Again. If those who teach this doctrine maintain that there are certain times when the child of God, being much favoured with the presence of the Holy Ghost, that at those times in particular his body becomes holy, but that when the Spirit withdraws his gracious influence, then the body again loses its holiness, what a muddle this would be, both of doctrine and experience. We might call them occasional or periodical changes of the body from sinfulness to holiness, and from holiness to sinfulness.

The apostle, though he possessed so much of the Spirit and grace, love and patience of God in his soul, and was so continually and sacredly devoted to the Lord and to the preaching of his gospel, yet he tells us his experience in the seventh of Romans where he declares, saying, "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." Every evil dwelt in his flesh, and he felt evil

propensities of every kind, and the law of sin in him was continually opposing the Spirit of his mind, and this produced in him a constant conflict; therefore he said, "With the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin," and surely when he says *the flesh*, he means flesh and blood, which in another place in speaking of it he declares, "Flesh and blood (that is in its present corrupted, depraved state) cannot inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Cor. xv. 50.) In Phil. iii the apostle tells us he has not attained to holiness of body, but that he is pressing after it and longing to attain to it, and assured that himself and the whole church of God would realize this exceeding great mercy; and that this is what he had not attained to is beyond all doubt; for he said, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection." It is clear from this that the ultimate end which he, by faith, had in view was the resurrection of his body at the last day, for he knew full well by painful experience that he carried with him a sinful, weak, depraved, unholy body, even though it was, as all the bodies of the saints are, the temple of the Holy Ghost; and he was looking forward to that which he certainly had not yet attained to; therefore he said, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." (Phil. iii. 21.) If his body had been holy, or if the bodies of the saints had been holy, whatever could have induced the apostle to call his body and the bodies of the saints *vile* bodies?

If the bodies of the saints are holy in this life, their souls being regenerated or born again from above, and having within them a new man which is created after God in righteousness and true holiness, even the incorruptible seed, the hidden man of the heart, what is become of the old man? Into what corner is he driven? Or have such persons cast out this old man, annihilated him, or have they placed him, as it were, between the upper and nether millstones, and ground him to powder? The whole tenor of Scripture and the experience of all such who are convinced by the Blessed Spirit of the evil, carnality, weakness, and wickedness of the flesh is at variance with the doctrine that the bodies of the saints in this life are holy. True; God took two good men to heaven, body and soul together, but he had changed their bodies first, and this was not done until they had finished their earthly course.

How clearly, and blessedly has the Holy Ghost told us what the bodies of the saints are through the fall, and that they retain their corruption until temporal death comes upon them, when they are laid in their graves to sleep until the resurrection morning in the following Scripture which says, "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." (1 Cor. xv. 43, 44.) And again: "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when

this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." But if the bodies of the saints are holy now, why should they not be holy in the day of death? And if holy at the day of death, how can they when committed to the earth, be sown in corruption? We may indeed say, "Certain strange things come to our ears. What new doctrine is this?"

We believe it is the desire of every child of God who has been favoured to realize the Lord's presence, power, love, and mercy to his soul, to walk humbly and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, for God has separated him from the world, having redeemed both body and soul unto himself, and both will at last be united to bear the full image of the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven; and the evidence of this is the indwelling power of the Holy Ghost; for the bodies of the saints are his temple. The children of God stand amazed at the condescension and grace of the Holy Ghost in taking up his abode and continuing in this temple which is yet corrupt, but which he will at the last day raise from the dead without spot, stain, or wrinkle upon it; and wherever the Holy Ghost comes to dwell, there is the earnest of all that is to be afterwards accomplished; as Paul says, "Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." (Eph. ii. 14.) The "purchased possession" is the whole church of Christ, body and soul, which body he will raise by his own power at the last day and take his church, as his bride, into his everlasting kingdom, and so, as Paul says, "shall we ever be with the Lord."

We think if men who profess to be ministers of Christ should preach this new doctrine of *holiness of body* the saints of God would listen to them with an experience which utterly contradicts it, knowing well the truth of the Scripture which says, "The body is dead because of sin." (Rom. viii. 10.)

THE art of the enemy is to mix some truth with many errors, and especially to work a *false spirit*, and thus, if possible, to draw aside the simple. May the Lord give you grace to take the warning, though some of you will stand to it that *it is all the same.*—*Bourne.*

As corrupt nature doth nothing but sin, so by grace it sustains no change, but is still evil, and present with every child of God when he would be good. And from this corrupt mass springs all evil, which, in thought, word, look, or deed discovers itself daily, and that in the best of men, and in every man; for "the thought of foolishness is sin," and if the thoughts be sin, what are looks, words, and actions? No call for a High Priest to bear the iniquities of our holy things, if this corrupt mass were removed. But an Advocate with the Father, a Mediator in the presence of God for us, and our command to ask the Father in his name, and the prayers of all saints being perfumed by the incense of his oblation, show plainly enough the indwelling of sin in every saint of God.—*Huntington.*

Obituary.

HETTY CROUCH.—On Aug. 24th, 1889, aged 73, Hetty Crouch, a member of Bethel Chapel, Southborough.

She was an earnest seeker of salvation for a number of years. The following is part of a letter written by her own hand to a sister after an illness some years ago:

“The Word of God tells us that Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, and I know I am a sinner vile indeed,—the vilest of all, and more deserving of hell than any. O what a mercy I am spared until now! If I had my deserts I should have been in hell before now. It is a mercy Christ says, ‘And yet there is room.’ I think sometimes the Lord never can make room for such a wretch as I feel myself to be. I know all things are possible with God and that he can save whom he will. O that I may be found amongst the number of those who shall be saved! I think sometimes I would not mind what trouble I had in this world, so that I could but feel to have a good hope in the Lord; though I am not altogether without a *little hope*. When Mr. Guest was reading in the chapel about waiting for the Lord, these words came:

“Wait for his seasonable aid,
And though he tarry, wait;
His presence may be long delayed,
But cannot come too late.”

This seemed to give me a hope that the Lord would come in his own time and visit me with his salvation, though I felt almost as wretched as ever. O that the Lord would give me a heart to look on him, and to feel that my transgressions are forgiven!”

Our dear friend was a daughter-in-law of the late William Crouch, minister at Pell Green, Wadhurst, but had been a widow for about twenty years. She suffered much for several years through weakness of body, but the Lord wonderfully supported and provided for her. She was greatly tried also about her soul. She was a constant reader of the Bible and good books, and marked many parts where she had been encouraged; but she never rose very high.

Her seat at chapel was never vacant if it was possible for her to get there, and I have often seen her weep when unable to go. She truly favoured God’s righteous cause. A few weeks before she died she told me the following words were blessed to her: “The Master is come, and calleth for thee,” and she remarked, “O how I should like to fly away and be at rest; and yet I do want to wait with patience, and to hear the Lord speak with power to my soul, and say, ‘The eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.’” She was confined to her bed about a fortnight. About an hour before she died, she said, “I must die, and leave all things here. O what shall I do? Dear Lord, help me to cast my soul into thy hands. Let me hear thy voice; for thy voice is sweet.” After this she quietly breathed her last.

J. KING.

REBECCA CLARK.—On Sept. 9th, 1889, at Castle Coombe, aged 81, Rebecca Clark.

She was convinced of sin when about fifteen or sixteen years of age under a Dissenting minister of the name of King. The family with whom she at that time lived were church people, and she had a great deal to go through on account of her religion; but she would not go to hear anything but the truth preached. She was not a great talker, but lived and walked consistently as a Christian. We were married in the year 1844. She attended the Baptist Chapel at Castle Coombe for more than forty years, and was never absent when able to get to the house of God. She seldom read any books but the Bible and the "G. S." We commenced taking it in the year 1840, and my wife was very fond of reading it, and often found its contents food to her soul.

I will now come to her last days on earth. She was ill about three weeks, but did not think her affliction was unto death until a week before she died, when she had to take to her bed. She seemed, as I thought, in rather a dead state of soul, and I felt a spirit of prayer come upon me for her, and was led to beg of the Lord to look upon her and grant her a fresh quickening, when these words were given me, I believe in answer to my prayer, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty," which melted my heart, as I believed it was from the Lord. About an hour after this, as I was in one room and she in another, I heard her praying to the Lord to look down upon her, and saying, "Come, dear Lord, and look upon a poor sinner," which broke my heart, and I felt a sweet union to her in the spirit which I believe will never be dissolved. The fear of death was entirely taken from her, and she longed for the Lord to come and take her unto himself; for she felt assured that Christ had died for her sins, and rose again for her justification. The last time I spoke to her I asked her if Jesus had come, upon which her countenance brightened up and she said, "Yes." After this she was unable to speak, but was sensible to the last, and passed away, without a sigh or a groan, to be for ever with the Lord.

I. CLARK.

WHEN the Saviour's goodness meets with and overcomes all the vileness of a poor, needy, sensible sinner, it really makes him nothing, that the Saviour may be All in all.—*Hobbs*.

I am more and more convinced what error there is in the professing church, and how we seem fallen on those evil days when perilous times were to come. I used, some years ago, in reading Mr. Huntington's writings, to wonder at two things: 1. The erroneous men he had to deal with. 2. His severe language against them. But I can now see that we have just the same men in our day, and just the same errors, and though I would not use Mr. Huntington's language because I have not his experience, his discernment, or his authority, yet I can see that such language was, in a measure, deserved, and that it was zeal for his Master and for the truth, that made him so denounce error and erroneous men.—*Philpot*.

A FEW LINES WRITTEN WHILE UNDER SEVERE
DISCIPLINE.

O LORD, thy hand is heavy, yet give me grace to bear,
Nor for my fretful crying thy righteous chastening spare;
O bring my haughty spirit down low at thy feet to bow,
And for my base rebellion give sweet submission now.
Thou who a heavy cross didst bear while on this sinful earth,
Thou who didst die for worms like me who feel of nothing
worth,

Yet not a word of anger once escaped thy holy lips;
When I can view thy sufferings how mine they do eclipse.

O mould me to thy image, though flesh does so rebel,
That by thee sweetly meekened I with thyself may dwell,
Where I shall see the needs be of every gloomy line,
And in my safe deliverance may see thy glory shine.

O how my soul would thank thee for daily strength and grace,
That thus far I'm upholden in earth's appointed race;
No thanks to me, my stubborn heart would run from every
cross,

But thou dost hold me to the rod or mine would be the loss.

In seasons past thou gav'st a willing mind
To bear all tribulation if I thy heaven might find,
And yet when thou dost test me, when left I can't submit.
Alas I'm but a coward; not for the battle fit.

O arm me with thy Spirit, give me a suffering mind,
That I in every trouble some sacred sweet may find;
More wean'd from earthly bubbles, my heart more fix'd above,
My soul anticipating the heavenly feast of love.

Yet, even while I'm writing my fearful flesh doth quake,
Lest under heavier burdens I yet might have to shake;
But with thy patient servant I would have grace to say,
"I still will trust in thy dear name, although thou should'st
me slay."

Thou know'st my native aptness to seek some earthly good,
To want earth's pois'nous dainties and loathe thy precious
food;

No wonder, then, a bitter cup is such a needful thing,
To cause a heavenly hunger and to repentance bring.

The hour of death is coming, released from sin and woe
The weary, wayworn pilgrims to endless rest shall go;
Lord, grant that I among them may find a victor's palm,
And sing eternal praises in heaven's oft long'd-for realm.

Till then, O give me patience to bear thy holy will,
And every trace of murmuring do thou be pleased to still;
In every future sorrow that yet may have to come
Give me sweet resignation to say, "Thy will be done."

M. C. D.

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—“Shoreham, Sussex, 7, New Road, January 4, 1889. Mrs. C. Hodges,—Please send two Boxes of Ointment by return of Post, as I have a friend requires one at once. I have just read two accounts where it has quite cured bad legs, and oblige, yours truly, Mrs. Richards.” Cure for Bad Legs, Ulcers, Carbuncles, Broken Breasts, Quinsy, Sore Throats, Sore Lips, Scalds, Boils, Burns, Bruises, Cuts, Abscesses, Whitlows, Piles, Poison Wounds, Skin Eruptions, Chapped Hands, Tender Feet, Corns, Bunions, Sprains, Cold on the Chest, Sore Eyes, Ringworm, Vaccination Eruptions, Tumours, &c. Cancers greatly relieved. Try one Box. To be obtained of all Patent Medicine Vendors, or from the maker direct, post free, 1s. 4d., 2s. 9d., 4s. 9d.—C. HODGES, 14, Belgrave Road, Tunbridge Wells.

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“23, Canning Street, Kemp Town, Brighton, April 5th, 1889.

“Dear Madam,—Please forward me some more powder to the above address. I am thankful to say my feet are very much better; in fact, walking now is a pleasure instead of a burden.”

“Yours truly, A. J. BURGESS.”

“High Street, Tottenham, February 23rd, 1889.

“Dear Mrs. Chivers,—Please send me your valuable remedy for Corns, &c. It does all you say. I recommend it far and near.”

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N. B.—THE APPENDIX

To Mr. GEO. THOS. CONGREVE'S WORK ON CONSUMPTION, contains

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CURE. Containing also LETTERS FROM A LARGE NUMBER
OF MINISTERS.**

*The following Cases are selected from the THIRTY-FIRST SERIES
now Publishing in the Weekly Journals:*

CONSUMPTION—"VERY LITTLE HOPE"—J. McNAB, of KELSO.

RECOMMENDED to me by Mr. E. LAST, of KELSO, N. B., who kindly interested him-
self on the patient's behalf—and sent me a statement of his case, dated July 5, 1888.

The patient is a stonemason (one of the worst of all trades for those who are liable
to chest affections). Illness commenced with a cold, which developed into inflammation
of the lungs. Cough followed, with great expectoration, occasionally mixed with
blood. Medical testimony—"Very little hope."

In three weeks there was manifest improvement, the patient felt stronger, and soon
after got out a little daily.

In a letter, Aug. 22, Mr. L. writes: "J. McNab appears to be making wonderful
strides towards permanent recovery. He has raised no blood lately, and eats and sleeps
well."

Sept. 29: "He has gained much strength, but expectoration continues—he takes
good walks every day."

J. McNab continued my treatment into the present year, receiving ten or twelve
letters from me. His progress and health became more rapid after the Winter months
had passed.

July 1: I received a letter from the minister who all along had so kindly interested
himself in this poor man, and corresponded on his behalf, and he says: "More than a
year ago I wrote you for J. McNab. He was then confined to his bed, and appeared be-
yond reach of medical aid—in fact he had been given up. After following your advice
for some months, he was able to get out again. He is now working again as a stonemason,
and looks the picture of health and strength."

"His friends look upon his recovery as almost miraculous."

BRONCHITIS—CASE of a LITTLE BOY in IRELAND.

"I have tried all other remedies for my little boy, and they have failed. Mr. Scott,
of this place, who has been cured by your treatment, recommends it strongly to me."
So writes the father on the 30th of November last.

The patient (5 years old) was troubled with a hard and rending cough, for which
little relief could be obtained, and which was rapidly prostrating him.

In a month after attending to my advice Mr. O'Kane writes me: "My boy is going
on well."

In the next letter he says: "Thank you a thousand times for the cure you have
made in my child's case. Your treatment ought to be known all over the world."

Writing me on 11th July last, to know if I would advise sea bathing, he reports:
"My boy continues quite well.—Yours truly, A. O'KANE, DUNGIVEN, CO. DERRY."

* * * **DAYS OF CONSULTATION at COOMBE LODGE—TUESDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY**
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THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

DECEMBER, 1889.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

THE FRUITFUL BOUGH AND THE STRONG BOW.

A SERMON PREACHED AT GOWER STREET CHAPEL, LONDON, BY THE
LATE MR. PHILPOT, ON LORD'S DAY EVENING, JULY 27, 1856.

"Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him; but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob."—GEN. xlix. 22—24.

IN reading the Old Testament records we are struck with this circumstance, that in the case of many of those who were raised up for signal purposes in the church of God, there was that in their birth or in their life, which was marked by some peculiar divine interposition. One feature of this nature is particularly remarkable in some of the most eminent saints and servants of God—that their mothers were naturally sterile. It was so, you know, with the mother of Isaac, the heir of promise; of Jacob; of Samson; of Samuel, in a very marked instance. It was so (to come to New Testament times) with the mother of John the Baptist. The mothers of all these eminent servants of God were naturally barren; and as a desire for offspring amounted, in Eastern wives, almost to a passion, God seems to have taken occasion thereby to manifest his prerogative and display the sovereignty of his power, even in the circumstances of their natural birth. You find this in the case of Joseph also. As he was to be a marked instrument in the hands of God, eminent as a saint, and eminent as a preserver of God's people in Egypt, he had to spring in the same way from a barren mother. You well know that Rachel was sterile, and that, in answer to prayer, God gave her a son, whom she named "Joseph," as a pledge (the name signifying "he shall add") of further offspring.

Now Jacob before he dies assembles his sons around him, and pronounces over them, what we cannot exactly call blessings, because to some no blessing was given,—but he bids them "gather themselves together that he may tell them that which shall befall them in the last days." Having spoken of one, and then another, he comes down at last to Joseph; and upon him he pronounces this special benediction, which we shall now endeavour to open up, as the Lord may enable. "Joseph," says he, "is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him; but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his

hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob."

I shall, with God's blessing, in endeavouring to unfold the mind and meaning of the Holy Spirit in these words, show,

I. First, Joseph's *fruitfulness*; for he is specially marked out here, by the finger of God, as being "a fruitful bough."

II. Secondly, the *source* of that fruitfulness; that it was not in himself; but that "he was a fruitful bough by a well; and his branches ran over the wall."

III. Thirdly, Joseph's *persecutions and bitter afflictions*, "for the archers sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him."

IV. Fourthly, Joseph's *victory*. "*But his bow abode in strength.*"

V. Fifthly, the *source of that strength*. "The arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob."

I. "*Joseph is a fruitful bough.*" You cannot but remember that striking parable which issued from the lips of Him that cannot lie (John xv), where the Lord uses those solemn words, "I am the Vine, ye are the branches. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." Thus in the vine, the visible church of Christ, there are *unfruitful*, as there are *fruitful* branches. I need not dwell at any length upon the circumstance that these unfruitful branches never had a living union with the stem. No man that knows truth for himself can believe for a single moment that the unfruitful branches which were cut off by the judgment of God, had the same union with the living stem that the fruitful branches had. It would be an insult to the doctrines of grace, and to that God who revealed them, to say that the branches that bore no fruit were in the vine in the same vital way as those that did bear fruit. But Joseph was eminently "a fruitful bough;" and when the husbandman or vine-dresser came and looked at the bough, under the verdant leaves his searching eye beheld the rich, ripe clusters.

But what is *fruit*? There may be much fruit that is worthless; nay, more, really poisonous. A few years ago a man took his station upon Blackfriars' bridge, and held in his hands a basket of fruit, very tempting to look at; many persons bought of it, and some went home and died. What had that man in his basket? Why, the fruit of the belladonna, or deadly night-shade, the berries of which have all the appearance of beautiful fruit; and yet to eat them is death. Thus it is not the appearance of fruit (for the eye, unless skilled, cannot discern the good from the bad) that stamps it as good and genuine. There may be much fruit (hedge fruit, for instance) called by that name, but not fit to be put upon the king's table. When, then, the Blessed Spirit speaks of fruit, and calls Joseph "a fruitful bough," he means fruit produced by the grace of God, fruit which weighed in the balance of the sanctuary and judged by the scrutiny of an unerring eye, claims and deserves the name. The only fruit, then, that is

worthy the name, is that which is produced by the Holy Ghost, and springs out of a vital union with the Son of God. And all fruit, called such, that does not spring out of this vital union, and is not brought forth by the operations and influences of the Holy Ghost upon the heart—men may call it what they will; God will never put it upon his table. But Joseph was “a fruitful bough,” inasmuch as the fruit that he bare was of God’s own producing.

Let us spend a few moments in looking at this fruit; for it is a very important matter to know whether we are fruitful boughs or not. But bear in mind, that the bough is not always or often conscious itself of the fruit it bears; nay, the more the bough is loaded with fruit, the more it droops and sinks; the heavier the fruit, the lower the bough. But, assuming that the saints of God cannot often nor always see in themselves that fruit which is visible to others, we may take a glance at what the Holy Ghost, in the Word of God, calls by that name.

1. *The fear of God* in a tender conscience is a special fruit that grows upon the gospel bough. This fruit is found in every living child of God, for God’s own promise is, “I will plant my fear in their heart, that they shall not depart from me.” “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Some of you may be mourning, as you will ever have reason to mourn, over your own barrenness and unfruitfulness in the things of God. But have you godly fear? Has the Lord planted that divine fruit in your soul? That is the first grace; all others will come as the Lord is pleased to bring them in, and to make them manifest.

2. *Faith in God*; faith in his word, truthfulness, greatness, power, glory, justice, and majesty, which ever is accompanied with a godly reverence of his great name; that living faith of which he is the Author, and which is exercised upon his divine perfections, is a fruit of the Spirit; for “faith is the gift of God.” No man can produce faith in his own soul; it is the special work of God to produce faith in himself; and when this faith—for it is the same faith that believes in God that believes in Jesus (as the Lord said, “Ye believe in God, believe also in me”)—when this faith believes in a revealed Jesus, in Christ made known by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, in blood sprinkled, in a righteousness brought near, in a love made known, in a Surety discovered and made manifest; when faith not only embraces God in his terrible majesty, but Christ in his Person and work, what a special fruit and gift this is of the Blessed Spirit.

3. When “a good hope through grace” is raised up in the soul, through some testimony, smile, promise, word, or inward evidence of interest in a precious Christ—when this “good hope” is opened up in a believer’s heart—and this door is often opened in the valley of Achor, amidst much confusion and trouble—this is also a fruit that hangs upon the gospel bough.

4. When *love*, too, is shed abroad in the believer’s heart, and he can say with Peter, “Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee,” because he has felt and found Christ very pre-

cious to his soul,—that love is a fruit which hangs as a rich cluster upon the gospel branch; for love is expressly mentioned by the apostle as one of the fruits of the Spirit.

5. Where there is *peace* also with God, through believing in Jesus Christ, and peace with the dear children of God; when the Prince of Peace sways the sceptre of his grace in the realm of peace, the believer's heart; that is a blessed gospel fruit.

6. When the blessed Lord is pleased to manifest his loving-kindness, and to swell the tide of *joy* in the soul, so that it is able to joy in God, and rejoice in Christ Jesus "with joy unspeakable, and full of glory;" that is a fruit that grows upon the gospel bough; for "love, joy, peace" are pre-eminent fruits in the spiritual catalogue, given by the apostle, Galatians v. 29.

7. Shall I not add, also, *resignation* and *submission* to the will of God, with tenderness of conscience, humility of mind, brokenness of heart, contrition of spirit, and love to the dear children of God? Are not all these gospel fruits? But time would fail me to enumerate and describe one by one the blessed fruits that hang upon the gospel bough, and by the possession of which a man becomes manifested as a fruitful branch.

But, as I said before, we are very imperfect judges of the fruit as regards ourselves. Many of the dear saints of God, in whom the eyes of others can see the rich ripe clusters, hidden, it may be, by the verdant leaves of profession, mourn and sigh daily over their leanness and barrenness. "My leanness, my leanness! Woe unto me!" is their continual cry, when they examine themselves as in the sight of God. As the gardener looks under the leaves to find the rich clusters, so they take up, so to speak, the leaves of their profession, one by one, and say, "Do I bring forth fruit? Do I live to his praise? Is my walk consistent? Is my conscience tender? Do I manifest any godly fear? Is the Blessed Spirit producing in me those fruits which are to the honour and praise of God?" And when we feel, as we do feel at times, so much in our carnal mind to sink us low, and so little in our spiritual mind to lift us high, we are ready to faint, and say, "Lord, is there *any* fruit produced in my heart, in my lips, or in my life?" Yet, with all the complaints that the dear saints of God make of their barrenness and want of fruitfulness, in the sight of a holy God, they are fruitful boughs, for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. The tears you shed, the sighs you heave, the desires you utter, the brokenness you experience, the contrition that is working in your heart when looking unto the Lord for some manifestation of his love to your soul—all these are so many precious fruits of the Holy Ghost hanging on your bough; and yet you see them not. You want to be different, to live a holy life, not to have a sinful thought, not to speak an idle word, not to do a foolish or sinful action. But you are hampered and hindered in running the race; and with all your desires to live to God's glory, what with your carnal mind, what

with the snares spread for your feet, what with the temptations of Satan, the cares of life, and the anxieties of business, your mind seems to droop as falling so short of being what you would be, and producing what you fain would produce.

II. But I pass on to our second point,—the *source* of Joseph's fruitfulness. There is one sentence from the mouth of God, written by the pen of the prophet Hosea, that shows us what is the source of all real fruitfulness; "From *me*, (not from *thee*,) is thy fruit found." And there is another sentence written by the same inspired pen, in which God, speaking of Ephraim, says, "Ephraim bringeth forth fruit unto himself." Self was the ruling source of all the apparent fruit that grew upon Ephraim's bough; and as he bore fruit only to himself, God despised it and rejected it.

i. But we have the secret *source* of gospel fruit here pointed out. "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough *by a well*." In Eastern climes, and in fact to some degree in our own more humid climate, trees, shrubs, or flowers cannot grow unless they are continually watered; in the East more particularly the vine requires a perennial spring in order to make it even live, much more blossom, and bring forth fruit. Thus Joseph's fruitfulness sprang from this source, that he was planted "by a well." And what was this well? What said the Lord to the Samaritan woman? "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a *well of water* springing up into everlasting life." You well know that the operations and influences of the Holy Ghost are compared again and again in Scripture to water. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth in me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly (or heart) shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit." Again. "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground? I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." I need not, therefore, occupy your time with showing that the well is a scriptural emblem of the Holy Ghost, who alone makes us fruitful in every good word and work. Yet there is something in the emblem that casts a sweet light upon the source of all fruitfulness. A well is hidden from view; it lies deep. Men may pass it by, and not know its existence; but it is there. The vine, then, dipped its roots in quest of the well. There is in trees and plants naturally and instinctively a search after food; and the food of the plant is the source of its fruit. Plant a tree upon a barren spot, and it will spread its roots till it finds a fruitful soil; a shrub upon a wall will drop its roots down till it reaches the ground; a sapling planted a little distance from a stream, will spread its roots till it reaches the water; as though there were an instinct in the very tree itself, to find out that which shall be a source of life and fruitfulness.

If, then, a tree, a vegetable, can from some instinct go in quest of that which shall sustain its natural life, shall not much more

a child of God go in quest of that which shall sustain his life and maintain his fruitfulness? As, then, the vine dips its roots into the well, and keeps drawing up continual supplies of moisture to make the leaf green and the fruit rich and ripe, so a child of God who feels his poverty and necessity, and yet knows something of the sweet operations of the Holy Ghost in his heart, spreads out the roots of his faith, hope, and love, in quest of this perennial supply. The thirstier the vine is, the more room there is in its tubes and veins to draw up the moisture in the well; so the more a Christian feels his dryness and barrenness, the more room there is for the supplies of living water to keep him alive and to bring forth every good word and work. The source of all fruitfulness is the well. If he be a minister, he never can bear fruit to be a blessing to the people, unless he dip his roots well therein. And if, my hearer, you be a gospel bough, you must dip the roots of your faith and love into the same living well. The Holy Ghost must be the supply of all divine life and the source of all divine fruitfulness. Now, every secret desire that springs up in your bosom, every longing petition for the operations of God's grace in your heart, every yearning longing after the bedewing of his mercy upon your soul, every mournful complaint, every trickling tear, every lamenting sigh that you are what you are; (as Hart says,) "'Tis winter all the year with me;" these lamentations, what are they? They are the going forth of the roots of your religion after the well; they are the instinctive movements of the life of God in your soul to get supplies out of the fulness of Christ; and every complaint, sigh, cry, and lamentation over your barrenness and want of fruitfulness, is really the putting forth of the life of God in your heart, which life of God is in quest of this ever-flowing supply. Not so with those not acquainted with the depths of the fall and the barrenness of man. They can do without the well; they want no Holy Ghost to begin, no Holy Ghost to maintain, no Holy Ghost to complete the work of faith with power; they want no faith of God's giving, hope of God's inspiring, love of God's shedding abroad; they want no God-given prayer, or God-given answer; nor do they wish for the Lord, and for the Lord alone, to work in them. They can manage their religion for themselves; they can manufacture, as I was saying last Lord's-day evening, some imitation of the holy anointing oil; they do not want the Spirit to drop it into their breast; they can get the pestle and mortar, and the drugs, and compound a counterfeit that will be good enough for them. Not so with the saint of God; he must have the holy anointing oil, he must have the well into which he may dip the roots of his faith, and from which he may draw living supplies; for without them he has nothing, and is nothing but barrenness and death.

ii. But there is another thing very noteworthy spoken of Joseph. "*His branches run over the wall.*" You see there was that fruitfulness put forth in him which developed itself not merely in leaves and fruit, but also in the length and strength

of the branch. Of all trees and shrubs, the vine is the weakest, as the prophet Ezekiel says, "Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon?" It is helpless and prostrate; and as such needs a trellis or wall on which to hang and expand itself to its utmost length. What is this wall? Need I answer? You have answered it already in your own bosom: *Jesus Christ, the Son of God!* He is the wall, as the Holy Ghost is the well; and as the branches of Joseph, the fruitful bough, ran over the wall and rested with all their weight upon it, so do faith, hope, love, and all the spreading tendrils and branches of divine religion, rest and hang upon the wall, Christ. Now, there is no limit to the extension of the vine but the length of the wall. I have seen a vine which has covered ten or twelve houses. It can spread itself as far as the wall extends; and the branches run over it as though they delighted in spreading themselves as far as they can go. So with the faith, hope, and love of a child of God. When he finds the solid foundation that the Person of the Son of God, God and Man in one complex Person, Immanuel, God with us, affords faith, he expands his whole soul upon him. What is the vine without a wall? Prostrate, lying on the ground. And what is the fruit without it? Crushed in the dust; trampled upon by the foot of every passer-by; trailing in the mud and dirt; but when supported by a wall, the fruit is not crushed, not trodden down, but stands forth in all its luxuriance and beauty. We bear no fruit to the honour of God, to the good of his people, and the profit of his church, except as we rest upon Christ. When we hang our all upon his glorious Person, as God-Man, on his atoning blood, justifying righteousness, dying love, and risen power, and feel what a solid foundation Jesus affords us to rest our weary souls upon, then we may spread; there is no let or hindrance then. If we spread upon the ground, we only spread in the dust; if we bear fruit upon the soil, it is only mingled with mire and mud. Let us be raised on the wall; then we may extend our length and breadth, and reach as far as the Holy Ghost may lengthen our branch and cause it to bear fruit. Bear this in mind as indispensable to all fruit: the *well* and the *wall*. If no well, no fruit; if no wall, what fruit there is will trail upon the ground and be tarnished with the dust. The two go together. Where there is no "well" there is no "wall;" and where there is no wall, there is also no well. Where the Holy Ghost is at work upon the heart, there alone is Christ; for he takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to the soul. His delight, his covenant office is to form Christ in the heart, the Hope of glory; so that wherever there is the well there is the wall. It is through these two things, or rather two Persons—the operations, influences, and teachings of God the Holy Ghost, the third Person of the glorious Trinity, and the finished work of the Son of God—that all the fruitfulness of the church is produced.

III. But I pass on to show Joseph's *afflictions*, and bitter ene-

mies with their *cruel persecutions*. Now, one would have thought that Joseph being so eminent a saint, and having conferred such benefits upon his brethren, would have escaped their malicious shafts. But no, it was not so; nay, it was his very fruitfulness that drew it forth. Be a barren bough, and you will not be worth shooting at; it is only wasting powder to shoot at you. Be a fruitful bough, be an honour to the church of God; manifest in your families, in your business, and in your movements generally, that the grace of God is operative and bringing forth fruit in you, you will have archers; and these archers, as in the case of Joseph, will hate you, and shoot at you, and sorely grieve you.

i. But who are these archers? They would not be spoken of in the plural number unless they were many and diverse. 1. The *profane world* carries a bow and arrows in the quiver, and often shoots against the saints of God. The profane world hates the church of God; the more it sees of the image of Christ in the church the more it hates it, for the "carnal mind is enmity against God;" and where the carnal mind reigns and rules, there will be bitter enmity against all who bear God's image. Such will ever shoot at you words of slander, calumny, malice, unkindness; there is no arrow in their quiver which they will not at times discharge against you. Yet, after all, they are but indifferent marksmen; they rarely know where to hit us; their arrows, for the most part, go wide, and very few hit the bull's-eye. 2. Not so with the next archers of whom I shall speak, the *professing world*. These are, many of them, the bitterest enemies that the church of God has to encounter, for they hate power, they hate the life of God in the soul. They like well enough the fruitfulness that springs from themselves; but not that which springs from the operations of the grace of God. They hate a religion which their very conscience tells them they do not possess; they abhor an experimental, vital work of God upon the soul, because it condemns them, and makes them feel that they are destitute of that which they see in the saints of God. Their enmity, therefore, being drawn forth by the power displayed in their hearts and the fruit manifested in their lives, they shoot at them arrows, even bitter words, and often sorely grieve them. Place two servants in the same house, one a child of God, and the other a professor; take two daughters in the same family, one a living soul, and the other dead in profession; and you will see how Peninnah can vex Hannah, how the professor can vex the possessor. What grievous words and unkind speeches will be continually uttered to harass and distress the mind.

3. But these are not the only archers. Sorry I am to say that some of the keenest archers that shoot at Joseph and sorely grieve him are the *saints of God* themselves. As Hart said, no doubt from painful experience:

"From sinner and from saint
He meets with many a blow."

The children of God are, for the most part, very tender in their

feelings; and many of the dear saints of God have many questionings and fears as to their own sincerity and uprightness before him. Many also are deeply exercised with powerful temptations, and are pained and grieved with the hidings of God's face and the workings of sin in the carnal mind. Now all these feelings give, so to speak, a butt and target for the arrows to be shot at. We do not fear *them*, but we fear lest what they say is true; we do not fear the archer, but we fear the arrow that he shoots, because (according to an ancient simile which has been well versified by a modern poet), it is often tipped with a feather from one's own wing:

“Keen were his pangs, but keener far to feel,
He owned the pinion which impelled the steel;
While the same plumage which had warmed his nest,
Drank the last life-drop of his bleeding breast.”

It is when the arrow is feathered from our own wing that it strikes most home. Now, have you not sometimes been guilty of an inconsistency, an infirmity, a slip, a foolish word, of something that has been taken to feather the arrow? And has any dart quivered in your wounded soul so sorely and deeply as the arrow the flight of which has been guided to the mark by the feather you yourself have afforded from your own breast?

4. Again. *Satan*, he is the very prince of archers, the Robin Hood of bowmen. He knows where to hit, and his target is the carnal mind. The rebellion, the blasphemy, the filth, the wickedness that he can stir up, what Scripture calls his “fiery darts,” how these stick when they are shot by this infernal archer!

5. And then there are the arrows discharged from our *own carnal mind*,—the infidel workings and base imaginations of our deeply fallen nature, and these discharged from our own bow. How keenly they stick in our conscience, in our new man of grace, and what work they often make!

ii. Now, one would have thought that Joseph being a fruitful bough could have looked with complacency, almost with holy scorn, upon these archers; but it was not so; “*they sorely grieved him.*” To be sold by his own brethren into Egypt; the dreams and visions God had given him to be derided; to be cast into prison as an ungodly man through the very person who was tempting him to ungodliness, and there to be neglected and forsaken; how these archers had shot their arrows against his bosom, and sorely grieved him! It was because he had the fear of God, because his feelings were tender, that the arrows found a place. Had he a bosom of steel, had he a heart of stone, the arrows would have fallen off blunted and pointless; but it was because he had tender feelings, a living conscience, warm affections, godly fear, and a work of grace upon his soul, that he presented a tender spot for these arrows to stick in; therefore the archers not only “hated him, but shot at him, and sorely grieved him.”

IV. But did they prove his destruction? Did any one drain

his life blood? Did he sink and die like a wounded hart? Did he fall upon the plain and gasp out his forlorn life? No; for "*his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.*"—He then had a bow; he could shoot too. And what was his bow? and how did he direct the arrow? He picked up the arrows that were shot at him, or rather he took them out of his own wounded bosom; and instead of aiming these shafts against those who had so sorely grieved him, he shot upward; he launched his arrows towards the throne of the Majesty on high; he turned their bitter shafts into prayers, supplications, and petitions. Thus the very arrows shot at him he turned into petitions wherewith to approach the throne of God. He drew his bow even up to the heaven of heavens; and that is what you should do. Never return evil for evil; never return railing for railing. When you are shot at by the archers, do not shoot at them again. Take your arrows and bring them before the throne; present your feelings wounded as they are, your groans and sighs, with your warm petitions, and spread them before God who hears and answers prayer; and you will find the benefit and blessing of it. They will beat you at shooting if you shoot at them. They can use language that you cannot. A man of birth and education, drawn into collision with a street ruffian, cannot bandy words with him; he must pass on; he would soon be beaten in the strife of words. So you must never shoot arrow against arrow with those archers who sorely grieve you. You have a tender conscience; you have the fear of God; you weigh your words; you know what will grieve your mind when it comes back upon you; and you are therefore sparing of your speech. Cease from that war; return not a single arrow; let them shoot away; take their arrows; direct your bow upward; turn them all into prayers and supplications; and in due time sweet answers of mercy and peace will come into your bosom. Thus Joseph's bow "abode in strength," and all their arrows neither struck his bow out of his hand, nor broke it asunder. He could shoot as well as they, but not in the same way nor at the same object.

Perhaps the words may apply to a minister whose "bow abides in strength." He has to shoot the arrows of God; as we read, "Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies." It is good when his bow abides in strength, and the arrows of truth which he shoots reach hearts. Oh, this evening, if God should have directed an arrow from my bow into any heart, what a mercy for that soul will it be. The arrows of truth may stick deep and wound for a time, and yet they are blessed arrows, because in due time healing, pardon, and peace come to repair the wounds which they make.

V. But we come to *the source of Joseph's strength*. We have seen the source of his *fruitfulness*, and now we see the source of his strength: "*The arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.*" It is a singular expression, "*the*

arms of his hands;" yet to my mind there is great beauty in it. Look at a man's arm and a man's hand; and ask yourself which is the stronger, a man with a strong arm and a weak hand, or a man with a strong hand and a weak arm? "Why, of course," you say, "the man with the strong arm, for there all the muscles are; there are the levers of motion." So "the arms of the hands" is to my mind a beautiful idea, because if the arm is strong, the hand is but the means the arm makes use of to do all it requires. So "the arms of Joseph's hands were made strong;" and then he could hold the bow, direct the arrow, and shoot to some good purpose.

I am here reminded of what I once read in Latimer's sermons. Our ancestors, you know, were celebrated bowmen. Victories were won at Cressy and Agincourt by the English yeomanry, who were skilled in the use of the bow. Latimer says, in a sermon preached before the king, that no man could be a good archer who did not learn from his boyhood; and the custom he tells us was for the father to put his hands upon the son's hands to teach him how to shoot, and throw the whole strength of his body into the bow. Looking at this as explaining the expression, it seems to me replete with sweetness and beauty. When the boy drew the bow, it was not the strength of his own arm that drew the string, nor was it the keenness of his eye that directed the arrow to the mark. The child appeared to draw the bow and to direct the arrow; but the hand of the father was upon the hand of the child, and the eye of the father was guiding the eye of the child; thus though the child seemed to draw the bow, it was the strength of the father that really pulled the string. So "the arms of Joseph's hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob." God put his hands upon the hands of Joseph, drew the bow for him, directed the arrow, and hit effectually the mark. Apply this to your experience. When you pray effectually, it is not you that pray; it is the Spirit of God that prays in you; for he helpeth our infirmities, and intercedeth for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. When you believe, it is the Spirit of God that works faith in you; when you hope, it is the Spirit of God that produces hope in you; when you love, it is the Spirit of God that sheds abroad love in you; it is the arms of his hands that are put upon your hands, and they are made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob. We seem to pray, though God prays in us. We seem to believe and hope and love; but it is the work of the Spirit upon our hearts. So the secret of Joseph's handling the bow to good purpose was that the hands of God were upon his hands and they were made strong by the mighty God of Jacob.

Now, no minister can ever be blessed to the saints of God unless he hold Joseph's bow, and unless his arms are made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob. We read of a man who shot a bow at a venture, and the arrow hit a king's breast. Who prompted the man to draw the bow? Who guided the arrow

that reached Ahab's guilty heart? Was it the man that drew the bow, or was it God that prompted him and aimed the shaft? Clearly it was God. So it is with every servant of God. If his arrow reach the conscience of any of the election of grace, it is God who sends the arrow into that sinner's heart. Unless God give him Joseph's bow, and makes the arms of his hands strong, he may shoot away—the shot will only be a random one; it will never hit the mark, never bring a sinner down, never lift a saint up, never profit the church of God. If ministers be fruitful boughs, the source of their fruitfulness is a well, and they rest upon a wall; and though the archers may shoot at them and sorely grieve them, yet their bow abides in strength, and they never let it go. The bow of prayer and supplication they never let fall out of their hands; the weapons of their warfare are not carnal, but spiritual; they shoot the arrows of truth, for the arms of their hands are ever made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.

We see, then, Joseph's fruitfulness; we see the source of it; we see the persecutions his soul was grieved by; and we see the final victory that he gained. God of his infinite mercy lead our souls into the same blessed track, apply his truth to our hearts, that our bow may abide in strength, and that the arms of our hands may be made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.

THE Lord will never send you amongst the congregation of the dead for spiritual food.—*Bourne*.

IN these days of gospel light men can form a modern language more refined than that of the Scriptures, to suit the taste of people in genteel life; but they are not aware that whoever attempts to alter the true language of Canaan, shall in the end, like the builders of Babel, be utterly confounded.—*Bourne*.

THERE is nothing so precious to a believing heart as the truth, when applied to the soul by the power of God. The Lord ever will bless his own truth; but how can we expect him to bless error, or that he will make a lie to be profitable? I believe that the end will show that there will be no reason to regret the controversy which has been so warmly carried on about the Sonship of Christ, especially in the Metropolis. The effect will be to draw a clearer and sharper line of distinction between the men who hold the truth and those who have drunk in the error. You probably have heard or seen some of the pamphlets which have been launched against me on the subject. I have just looked at them, but no more, as I soon saw enough of their spirit to throw them aside. When men manifest such carnality and such bitterness we want no other proof that they are not taught of God. They cannot see it themselves, nor can their admirers see it in them, but those who know the truth by divine teaching and by divine testimony see at a glance where such men are, and know that they are not under that holy anointing which teacheth all things and is truth and no lie. But as I have sent forth my little book on the subject I shall not take the trouble to answer the various pamphlets that erroneous men may write against me.—*Philpot*.

THE GRACE OF GOD IN OLIVER CROMWELL.

(Concluded from page 476.)

IN Speech V in commenting upon Ps. lxxxv this godly Lord Protector will, we think, commend himself to every lover of truth and admirer of the overruling providence of a wise and gracious God, as being a man very blessedly instructed in the way of righteousness and very graciously indued with the indwelling power of the Holy Ghost. Well were it for this Nation at the present day if we had a Sovereign on the throne, or a number of gracious men as manifestly on the side of God and Christ and seeking his glory, the good of his church, and the welfare of the Nation generally, as was this noble-minded Oliver Cromwell and others, who saw and acted with him. He says,

“I read a Psalm yesterday which truly may not unbecome me to tell you of and you to observe. It is the eighty-fifth Psalm, and it is very instructive and significant. I wish this Psalm might be better written in our hearts, that we might say as David did, ‘Thou hast done this,’ and ‘Thou hast done that;’ ‘Thou hast pardoned our sins;’ ‘Thou hast taken away our iniquities.’ Whither can we go to a better God? If we are but enabled to cry unto him, he will turn and take away our sins. May we listen to him, and consult and meet in Parliament to ask his counsel and hear what he saith, for ‘he will speak peace unto his people.’ There is a deal of grudging in the nation that we cannot have our horse-race, cock-fightings, and the like. Till God hath brought us to another spirit than this he will not bear with us. Say you, ‘But he bears with them in France, and they do so and so.’ But have they the gospel as we have? They have seen the sun (that is, the gospel) but a little; we have great lights. If God give you a spirit of reformation, you will preserve this nation from turning again to those fooleries; and what will the end be? Comfort and blessing. Then ‘mercy and truth shall meet together.’ There is a deal of truth among professors, but very little mercy. They are ready to cut the throats of one another. But when we are brought into the right way, we shall be merciful as well as orthodox; and we know who it is that saith if a man could speak with the tongues of men and angels, and yet want *charity*, he is but sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. If your hearts are set to it, then you will sing Luther’s Psalm (Ps. xli), and that is a rare Psalm for a Christian. If Pope and Spaniard and Devil and all set themselves against us, though they should ‘compass us like bees,’ yet in the name of the Lord we should destroy them.”

After making every allowance for the clandestine purposes of some and the hypocrisy of many who took up the cause of religion for mere worldly purposes and selfish ends, yet we must own that the land was at this time favoured with a great many able ministers who preached and a great many gracious saints who received, and knew the power of the gospel in all its saving benefits and blessings. Therefore those in power who were

lovers of the grace of God might truly use the language of the Psalmist and say, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." In Speech VI the Lord Protector thus addresses his Parliament respecting the gospel and the ministry:

"You have a gospel ministry among you, and I am persuaded that is one of the most growing blessings on the face of this Nation. You have a good God that hath watched over you and us,—a God that hath visited these nations with a stretched-out arm, and borne witness against the unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, against those who would have abused such mercies as I have reckoned up unto you. A God that hath not only withstood such to the face, but a God that hath abundantly blessed you with the evidence of his goodness and presence. He hath done wonderful things amongst us by terrible things in righteousness. As we are met to seek the good of so great an interest as I have mentioned and the glory of that God who is both yours and mine, how can we better do it than by thinking of such words as these: 'His salvation is nigh them that fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.' I hope I fear him, and may we be enabled more to fear him, seeing that such a blessing as his salvation is nigh them that fear him; and seeing that we are all of us representatives of the good of all these lands, may we endeavour with our whole strength that 'glory may dwell in our land.'"

Evidently the crown was not only within his reach, but had he been desirous of grasping it and wearing it, no strategy of his own need have been used. He could have had it had he been ambitious to wear it, for it was offered to him time after time. The following will show that this was not the honour he sought:

"This frame of Government which it hath pleased the Parliament through your hand to offer me, truly I should have a brazen forehead if it did not beget in me a great deal of consternation of spirit. I have lived the latter part of my age in the midst of troubles; but all the things that have befallen me since I was first engaged in the affairs of this Commonwealth, if they could be brought into a compass that I could take a view of them at once, truly I do not think they would so move my heart and spirit with that fear and reverence of God that becomes a Christian, as this thing that hath now been offered by you to me. My comfort in all my life hath been that the burdens which have lain heavy on me were laid upon me by the hand of God, and I have many times been at a loss to know which way to stand up under the weight of them, except by looking at the conduct and pleasure of God in it, which hitherto I have found to be a good pleasure to me. And should I come to any resolution in this matter suddenly without seeking to have an answer put into my heart and so into my mouth by Him that hath been my God and my Guide hitherto, it would give you very little cause of comfort in such a business as this, for it would savour more of the

flesh, and proceed from lust, and arise from arguments of self; and if my decision arise from such motives as these, it may prove even a curse to you and to these three Nations, who I verily believe have intended well in this business, and have had honest and sincere aims towards the glory of God, the good of the people, and the rights of the Nation. In the affairs of the world things may be intended well, as they always are by those who love and fear God; but if your choice fall upon a person whom God takes no pleasure in, and who to please any of those considerations which are of this world shall run upon such a rock as this without due consideration, without integrity, approving the heart to God, seeking an answer from him, and putting things to him as if for life and death, that such an answer may be received from him as may be a blessing to the person who is to be used for these ends, why then it would be like a match where a good man makes a mistake in the person he loves to, and, as often turns out, it proves a curse to the man and to the family through mistake. If this should be so to you and to these nations, it had been better that I had never been born. Seeing you have completed the work on your part, I would ask that I may have some short time to ask counsel of God and of my own heart."

After duly considering the matter he thus addressed the Parliament:

"I have taken into consideration the things contained in the paper which was presented to me, and sought of God that I might return such an answer as might become me and be worthy of the Parliament. I must bear this testimony to them, that they have been zealous of the two greatest concernments that God hath in the world. The *one* is that of religion and of the just preservation of the professors of it; to give them all due and just liberty, and to assert the truth of God. As to the liberty of men professing godliness, you have done that which was never done before, and I pray it may not fall upon the people of God as a fault in them if they do not put such a value upon this as never was put on anything since Christ's time, for such a catholic interest of the people of God. The other thing cared for is the civil liberty and interest of the Nation, which though it is and ought to be subordinate to the more peculiar interest of God, yet it is the next best that God hath given men in this world. If any think the interest of Christians and the interest of the Nation inconsistent, I wish my soul may never enter into their secrets. Upon these two interests, if God shall account me worthy, I shall live and die. If I had to give an account before a greater tribunal than any earthly one, if I were asked why I engaged in the late war I could give no answer that were not a wicked one if it did not comprehend these two ends."

In Speech XI, when addressing the second Parliament, he speaks of how he was first induced to take part in the war, and how he was gradually led on to the position of Lord Protector of the realm, and how he chose men who had the fear of God in

their hearts, and who were termed "Cromwell's Ironsides," which truly was a proper title; for under his guidance they never lost a battle, but always came off victorious; and they were never known to engage with the enemy without having previously called upon the name of the Lord for help and deliverance. He says,

"I know my calling from the first to this day. I was a person who was suddenly preferred and lifted up from lesser trusts to greater, even from my first being a captain of a troop of horse, and laboured as well as I could to discharge my trust, and God blessed me therein as it pleased him. The troops were old decayed serving men, and I raised such men in their place as had the fear of God before them and made some conscience of what they did; and from that day forward they were never beaten. Truly this is matter of praise to God, and it hath some instruction in it,—To own men who are religious and godly, and peaceably and honestly disposed to live within rules of Government and be subject to those gospel rules of obeying magistrates and living under authority. I reckon no godliness without this circle.

"I hope I shall ever have the Word of God for the rule of my conscience, and for my information and direction. If men have been led into dark paths through the providence and dispensations of God, surely it is not to be objected to a man, for who can love to walk in the dark? But Providence doth often so dispose. I have had a great experience of Providence, and though such experience is no rule without or against the Word, yet it is a very good expositor of the Word in many cases."

In Speech XVI he again refers to Ps. lxxxv and comments upon it as a man well versed in the Scriptures, well acquainted with the grace of God, and as one who closely watched the providence of God who had been so manifestly with him and his followers ever since the war first commenced, and who had given them such deliverance and signal victories. He says,

"I remember I touched a little upon Ps. lxxxv when I spake to you in the beginning of this Parliament, which expresseth well what *we* may say as truly as it was said of old by the penman of that Psalm. The first verse is an acknowledgment to God that he had been favourable unto his land and brought back the captivity of his people, and then how he had pardoned all their iniquities and covered all their sin, and taken away all his wrath; also of his unspeakable mercies, blessings, and deliverances out of captivity, pardoning of national sins and national iniquities. The greatest demonstration of his favour and love appear to us in this,—that he hath given us *peace* and the blessings of peace, to wit, the enjoyment of our liberties, civil and spiritual. The church, in this eighty-fifth Psalm falls into prayer and into praises, great expectations of future mercies, and much thankfulness for the enjoyment of present mercies; and breaks into this expression, 'Surely salvation is nigh them that fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.' Truly I hope this is

his land. We are a redeemed people from the time when God was first pleased to look favourably upon us and to redeem us out of the hands of Popery in that never-to-be-forgotten Reformation,—that most significant and greatest mercy the nation hath felt or tasted. Then in what sense is it 'our land?' Through the grace and favour of God that he hath vouchsafed unto us and bestowed upon us, with the gospel, peace, and rest after ten years war. Who would have thought when we were plunged in the midst of our troubles, that ever the people of God would have had liberty to worship God without fear of enemies, which is the very fulfilment of the promise of Christ that he would deliver his people from the fear of enemies, 'that they might worship him in holiness and in righteousness all the days of their life?' This is the portion that God hath given us, and I trust we shall for ever heartily acknowledge it.

"The church goes on to make her boast yet farther and say, 'His salvation is nigh them that fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.' *God's* glory; not carnal, nor anything related thereto; but the glory of a free possession of the gospel; this is that which we may glory in. And the Psalm closes with this: 'Righteousness shall go before him, and shall set us in the way of his steps;'—that righteousness, mercy, love, and kindness which we have seen and been made partakers of from the Lord, it shall be our guide, to teach us to know the right and the good way, which is to tread in the steps of mercy, righteousness, and goodness that our God hath walked before us in. We, too, have peace this day; for I believe in my very heart you all think the things that I speak to you this day, and I am sure you have cause to do so. And yet we are not without the murmurings of many people, who turn all this grace and goodness into wormwood, and who indeed are disappointed by the works of God. You have now a godly Ministry, such a one as, without vanity be it spoken, the world has not,—men knowing the things of God, and able to search into them. The spirit of a beast knows not the things of a man, nor doth the spirit of man know the things of God. The things of God are known by the Spirit. Truly I will remember but one thing of those misguided persons now cast out from us, and that is their greatest persecution hath been of the people of God,—men really of the Spirit of God. What is the reason that men slip in this age wherein we live? As I told you before, they understand not the works of God, and consider not the operation of his hands. They consider not that God resisted and broke in pieces the Powers that were, that men might fear him, and have liberty to do and enjoy all that we have been speaking of. For that very cause said David, 'He shall break them down, and not build them up.' If therefore you would know upon what foundation you stand, own your foundation to be from God. He hath placed you in the enjoyment of your civil and spiritual liberties. God hath given you strength to do what you have done, and if God bless you in this work, you shall

be called the blessed of the Lord. The generations to come will bless us. You shall be called 'the repairers of breaches, and the restorers of paths to dwell in;' and if there be any higher work which mortals can attain unto in this world beyond this, I acknowledge my ignorance of it."

In Speech XVII he again refers to the same Psalm, namely the lxxxv, and says,

"The last time of our meeting I discoursed upon a Psalm, and I am not ashamed of it at any time. There you have one verse which I forgot: 'I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace unto his people and to his saints; but let them not turn again to folly,' that is to dissension, division, and destruction in a nation under a civil war. If God unite your hearts and bless you, and give you the blessing of union and love one to another, and tread down everything that riseth up in your hearts and tendeth to deceive your own souls with pretences of this or that, and not prefer the keeping of peace, that we may see the fruit of righteousness in them that love peace, it will be said of this Nation, 'It is all over with England!' I shall be ready to stand and fall with you in this seemingly promising union which God hath wrought among you, which I hope neither the pride nor envy of men shall be able to make void. I have taken my oath to govern according to the laws that are now made, and I trust I shall fully answer it. I sought not this place. I speak it before God, angels, and men, *I did not*. You sought me for it, and you brought me to it. I can say in the presence of God, in comparison with whom we are but like poor creeping ants upon the earth, I would have been glad to have lived under my woodside, to have kept a flock of sheep, rather than undertaken such a Government as this."

The above was Cromwell's last Speech to the Parliament. The toils and hardships of the battle-field, the oppositions of his enemies, with the burden of the Nation, as a heavy yoke upon his shoulders had already told upon his strong constitution, and he was frequently poorly, and began to feel that the time of his departure was drawing near. He became tired of the world and weary of his life; but he had lived long enough to see his desires and prayers fulfilled for the good of the Nation; and now his soul desired to depart and enter that world where the Canaanite is not found, and where his sun would no more go down and the days of his mourning would be for ever ended. In his last moments he had nothing to glory in but the sovereign grace of a covenant God, as may be seen by the following prayer which he uttered on his death-bed:

"Lord, though I am a miserable and wretched creature, I am in covenant with thee through grace; and I may, I will come to thee for thy people. Thou hast made me, though very unworthy, a mean instrument to do them some good and thee service; and many of them have set too high a value upon me, though others wish and would be glad of my death. Lord, however thou do

dispose of me, continue and go on to do good for them. Give them consistency of judgment, one heart, and mutual love; and go on to deliver them, and with the work of reformation; and make the name of Christ glorious in the world. Teach those who look too much on thy instruments to depend more upon thyself. Pardon such as desire to trample upon the dust of a poor worm, for they are thy people too. And pardon the folly of this short prayer, even for Jesus Christ's sake; and give us a good night, if it be thy pleasure. Amen."

The following is a short account of his last moments:

"Sept. 3rd was always kept as a Thanksgiving day since the victories of Dunbar and Worcester. The wearied one, that very night before the Lord took him to his everlasting rest, was heard thus, with oppressed voice, speaking, 'Truly God is good; indeed he is. He will not':—then his speech failed him, but I thought he said, 'He will not leave me.' This saying, 'God is good,' he frequently used all along, and would speak it with much cheerfulness and fervour of spirit, in the midst of his pains. Again he said, 'I would be willing to live to be farther serviceable to God and his people; but my work is done. Yet God will be with his people.' He was very restless most part of the night, speaking often to himself. Something to drink was offered him, and he was desired to take the same, and endeavour to sleep, unto which he answered, 'It is not my design to drink or sleep; but my design is to make what haste I can to be gone.' Towards morning he used divers holy expressions implying much inward consolation and peace. Among the rest he spake some exceeding self-debasing words; and truly it was observed that a *public* spirit to God's cause did breathe in him,—as in his lifetime, so now to his very last. When the morrow's sun rose, Oliver was speechless, and between three and four in the afternoon of Sept. 3rd, 1658, he lay dead."

The work of the enemies of this great and good man has long been to brand him as a hypocrite, a deceiver, and one who feigned religion for some selfish ends; so that his real character has been very much under a cloud. We are glad to find that light has begun to dawn upon the English Nation as to his real worth, and we hope the time is not far distant when by all Protestants, whether Nonconformists or otherwise, it will be acknowledged that to Oliver Cromwell, as an instrument in the hands of God, we are, as a people, indebted for the great blessings of civil and religious liberty which we now enjoy and which, through the mercy of God, we hope will ever be continued to us.

WE know that our adorable Redeemer is the Saviour of the body as well as the soul; but we know also that these vile bodies of ours are not regenerated as the souls of his redeemed are. In this tabernacle, therefore, we groan, being burdened. "I know," saith Paul, "that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing;" and I too often know, to my sorrow, the same.—*Hawker*.

A PASTOR'S ADDRESS TO HIS FLOCK.
CHRISTMAS, 1884.

SINCE we met on the first of January of this year, what a short time it seems to look back upon! How very quickly the year has fled, and our days are so many the fewer. Time keeps hurrying us along the road of life, and amidst the many things which we may have to try and trouble us, there is an assurance of one thing; namely, that each and all of us are fast hastening to a never-ending eternity. That is a solemn fact which we cannot dismiss from our thoughts; and only as the Lord is pleased to raise our minds above the world and everybody in the world to look to the Lord Jesus, and as we have a view of him in his glory and power exalted at God's right hand, and exalted there as the glorious Head for poor, guilty, struggling, crying, praying sinners; only as we thus get a view of Christ, can we meet death and eternity with anything like pleasure. But as the Spirit is pleased now and again to enable us to look up to the Lord Jesus Christ and by the eye of faith to see him seated on his glorious throne, having overcome sin and Satan, death, hell, and the grave, our souls are encouraged and strengthened to hope in him, and believe that it will be well with us.

Of one thing we are well assured, and that is, that we shall want much grace to endure, much grace to hold on our way, much grace to take us to heaven; but not more grace than God has promised and not more than he can give, and may I not add without presumption, not more than he *will* give? If God has given us a little grace in our souls, and I trust he has, that is eternal life; and that little grace in the soul has brought a sacred sweetness which no man dead in his sins knows anything about; and since that sacred sweetness was first felt, many, many times has it been renewed. Many times has the Lord given us another touch. These are the renewings of life,—the renewings of the Lord's mercies and kindness to us. We can find no real pleasure in anything only as the Lord sends his Spirit or comes with his presence into our souls.

Such seasons as these,—Christmas with all its feasting and festivities, and all the things we may come into contact with, leave our souls barren, unfruitful, and unsatisfied; but when we have some little return of the Lord's gracious presence, then we can say, "Thy loving-kindness is better than life." While the world may be deriving pleasure from and taking a liberty in gratifying the flesh in numberless ways at this season of the year, what is Christmas to us except we find Christ in us the Hope of glory,—Christ in us the life of his people? Without Christ in us with his life-giving power, Christmas to us is a blank; but when we feel this all is well, and whether it be at mid-summer or at mid-winter, whether at the longest day or the shortest day, it is then a happy time with us. But without him what a blank, what an absence of comfort, what an aching void,

what an empty heart, what an uncomfortable soul! What a mercy to feel it, and to know the difference when he comes thus and we feel his quickening breath, and to know the change when he departs. When he is gone, O what a loss it is! When he sends a stream of salvation what moisture is felt, and when he withdraws, O what drought! We are not strangers to these exercises and changes.

But with us it is not Christ born into the world only that we want to know, but Christ gone into glory, having triumphed over the world; and you and I can never overcome the world but in his strength. He himself has said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (Jno. xiv. 27.) We have to do with the Lord Jesus who is now gone into glory, and who said to his disciples before he left them, "But now I go my way to him that sent me." Then he told them what they should do after he was gone: "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive. that your joy may be full." (Jno. xvi. 24.) And what the Lord said to his disciples, he says to all of us: "Ask, and ye shall receive." What then are we to ask for?

First. That the Lord would give us more spiritual life, more of that life which we hope he has implanted in our souls, even spiritual, immortal life. That is one of the pleas of a child of God, and Christ says, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (Jno. x. 10.) What has been so sweet to your souls while you have enjoyed it as spiritual life?

Second. We ask that we may have more peace,—the peace of God. Sure I am there is a false peace which is not produced by God's Spirit. It is the peace of this world which carries away the minds of many; a peace which the world patches up. But there is the "peace of God which passeth all understanding," and this is the peace our souls want to enjoy, even "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,"—the peace made by the blood of his cross. O to have the enjoyment of that peace in the principality of our consciences!

Third. Are we not led to ask that we may know more of God's love? We have known but little yet of his love. True; our souls may have been filled and emptied again and again, many, many times over; yet, after all, we have had but a little of it. It is as Mr. Hart says,

"The little, too, that's known,
Which children-like, we boast,
Will fade, like glowworms in the sun,
Or drops in ocean lost."

I think I may safely express the feelings and desires of every one of you that have passed from death unto life and been brought to receive Christ in your hearts,—your feeling is this: "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; for thy love is better than

wine." What a different love is Christ's love to all others! Those who have ever tasted his love know there is something about it, I was going to say *angelic*, but it is far above the love of angels or of mortals. Jonathan's love to David was very great; as David said, "Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." What is God's love? Something uncreated, something that is of the same nature as himself; nay, it is God's nature, for *God is love*. Therefore it must be holy and sacred to the soul that has ever felt it. It is love that draws a chosen sinner, love that begets love; for we have no love but that which God's love begets.

Fourth. In our requests at the close of another year may we not venture to ask that in the succeeding year we may know what it is to be made and kept more spiritually-minded? Most of you have proved to your dismay, consternation, and grief how easily you have slipped into a state of unfruitfulness and carnality, and how many things have caught your minds, ruffled your tempers, and stirred up the lusts of your flesh; so that instead of spirituality having the predominance, much evil and sin have ruled! What is it all permitted for? That we may fall down like that godly man Daniel and say, "O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face." (Dan. ix. 8.) We dare not promise to be any better; but the Lord will not condemn us if we are enabled by his own grace to look up and say, "Lord, make and keep us more spiritually-minded. Let our affections be more raised to things above. Let us bear more of thy image, and let us live more above the dying things of time and sense." In short, the desire of our souls is to experience the fulfilment of this text: "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." This only can keep us from gliding back into that state of spiritual death in which we have so often been ensnared and kept for a time.

Fifth. We may ask the Lord to keep us from evil. We have but an indistinct view of what we are surrounded with, and have but little idea of how we are surrounded by infernal spirits. The devil is the Prince of the power of the air, and he has thousands of companions. He keeps the wicked satisfied with their so-called pleasures, and if the natural conscience is stirred without grace, without the new birth, there is something whereby Satan will lull and overcome that man or woman; and so these convictions wear off. So long as the soul is destitute of the new birth Satan cares not. You and I hope we fear God, and that the Lord has written his fear in our hearts; but we know not how many devils surround us, for we cannot see them. In this respect they are like God invisible; for they are not seen with our naked eye any more than we can see God.

Look at Peter. He could not see that devils were hatching a plan whereby to overthrow him; but God saw them, and as a kind friend he said, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed

for thee, that thy faith fail not." (Lu. xxii. 31, 32.) Peter did not know that the devils were so near him, but only a short time elapsed before his feet were tripped up, and that was not all, for his mouth was opened, his tongue was used, and it was used even to swear. If he had cursed and sworn against one of his fellow-disciples or one of his enemies it would have been bad enough, yet we might have thought it excusable; but to say "he knew not the man" who had preached such sweet sermons into his soul, who convicted him, and at whose feet he fell down and said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord," this was indeed a great sin. Little did he think a short time before that Satan would gain such access to his mind as to throw him into such a state as this.

What need we have to be continually praying that we may be kept from evil. That godly prayer of Jabez in the book of Chronicles is a little break in those dry chapters which we have scarcely patience to read at times; but this prayer, this significant prayer is placed in the midst of it: "And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, O that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me." (1 Chron. iv. 10.) There is a real prayer! How sensible the dear man was of his need of God, and how it agrees in substance with the prayer of David: "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not;" and again: "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe." Have we not much need to be crying and begging of God to be kept from evil? Paul says, "I pray God that ye do no evil."

Another thing we need is much of God's presence. What is such a guard, such a safeguard as to have the presence of God? This is the wall that God places round about his people. This was the hedge that was round about Job, and the devil knew it, therefore he prevailed with God to withdraw his presence, or that hedge that was about him. He said, "Hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?" (Job i. 10.) When the wall was withdrawn Satan gained access to Job, but not before. How much need we have of the presence of God, and can we not say with Moses, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence?" (Exod. xxxiii. 15.) Moses had what he requested. It was not a vain prayer, for it was for something God was pleased to give and for something which Moses was pleased to receive. Moses was not more pleased to have what he requested than God was pleased to give it; for I believe the Lord Jesus himself entered into the spirituality of that text which Paul quotes: "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts xx. 35.) If it is blessed for us as creatures to receive God's blessings, his presence, and his grace, what pleasure must there be in the heart of God when he gives that blessing that maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow with it? The things I

have named constitute some of the desires of our souls; and why are these things to be asked for? That "our joy may be full." It is not full without these things, for it is but half joy without them. We feel just a little moving in our souls, and then we seem to lose it again; but as Christ said, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

There is another thing that I think most of us at least can heartily agree in asking of God, and that is, that the Lord would bless his church to which we belong. The Lord makes his own people concerned that his church generally should grow. We know not how large God's church is. You may know the size of the church here and how many members there are, but you know not the extent of the church of God at large. Wherever a soul is quickened into life, there is a member of Christ's church. It may be an isolated case, but that soul is a member of Christ's body. But where God's people meet together they should be more concerned about the spiritual prosperity of that cause in particular than about other places. If people are meeting together in London and other places, we may hope and desire that they may have God's presence; but we are not so much concerned about them as we are about having God's presence here. We may be glad to hear of a church in London prospering and having additions, but that would not satisfy us as individuals. I may say for a great many of you that you have these gracious desires that God may prosper and increase us as a church, and bring others like ourselves to testify of what he has done for their souls.

You may be very dissatisfied about your own cases, and may fear that you have not felt the guilt of sin enough, nor felt the burden of it heavy enough, nor known a law-work deep enough, that your joys have not been high enough, nor well-grounded, that you have never known Christ in that singular way of preciousness as God's people know him, yet how glad would you be, how cheered would your hearts be, to hear twenty or thirty sinners speak of their hungerings and thirstings, their prayers, desires, cleavings to God, love to his Word, and love to the minister who preaches the Word? On hearing these things your souls would probably be filled with thanksgiving and praise, and bring forth the old because of the new. Perhaps the Lord may lay these things a little more upon our hearts, and before another year has passed away, we may see the answer to our prayers.

But whether or not we live through the year upon which we shall, if spared, so soon enter, I hope the Lord will fulfil that Scripture to us: "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." (Numb. vi. 24-26.) That was the blessing wherewith Aaron was to bless the children of Israel. If the Lord grant us this we shall have all our hearts can desire. May he be with us living or dying, for his name sake. Amen.

NOTHING can be very ill with us when all is well within.

PROOFS OF EFFECTUAL CALLING AND ELECTION.

It has been on my mind at intervals for some time to write a short outline of what I hope the Lord has done for my soul, as the very fact of being requested, when in company, to give an account of God's dealings with me shuts my mouth and binds me with bands too strong for me to break; so that, with such feelings, I hate the sound of my own voice.

When people ask me what was the beginning of my religion, they merely ask me the very question which I often ask myself and one which I cannot with any clearness answer. I wish I could, for, as one of our divines says, "A real beginning is a beginning felt," and the nearer we can come to that, the clearer does our calling and election appear to us.

I cannot remember any period in my life when the thoughts of eternity did not trouble me at times, even in my childhood, and the thought of the punishment due to sin marred everything to me, and made me to "sit alone." These convictions were attended with legal strivings, which set me down farther off than ever. Sometimes they would die out for a while, and then revive again with greater force. I felt the weight of sin sink me, so that I dreaded to close my eyes in sleep, lest I should awake in that place where hope can never come. I used to attend a place of truth, but had no understanding of the things I heard. I was convinced of the truth of election by grace, but the doctrine only served to stir up my enmity; for while the weight of actual transgression laid heavy on me I had no knowledge of the fall and the sin of my nature. I thought if it were not for this dreadful doctrine of election I might be saved, as I would pray so much, and be so devout that salvation must follow, if election had not closed the door. What miserable ignorance! I thought this hill might surely be scrambled up by human hands and feet; but the more I tried to scramble up it the further down I slipped.

If anyone should ask why I believe there is no salvation anywhere but in Jesus, and why I believe it is not of works, but of grace, I answer, It is because I have tried every other way and found them fail, and have worked hard, and found my works worse than nothing. I think I have entered deeply into the poet's experience where he says,

"No help in self I find,
And yet have sought it well;
The native treasure of my mind,
Is sin, and death, and hell."

I particularly remember two lessons which effectually brought me to this place. One was this;—I was reading the Word of God, and found *love* spoken of as being the one thing needful, and I thought, "Love God! Is that all? Well; I can do that." But alas! O what I felt rise up in my mind instead of love, even most deadly hatred; so that I found it impossible to love God,

for my mind was enmity itself; and this seemed to cut off all hope. Within a few days of this I was again reading, when I came to these words: "Only believe." I said within myself, "What! Only believe! Why, I do believe, and I will believe, if that is all;" but as I uttered the words to myself I felt such convictions of unbelief take hold of me and found such utter inability to believe that it made me tremble. In looking back to that time I have thought I was there brought to the place of stopping of mouths, and "I fell down, and there was none to help." I found no flesh could stand in the presence of a holy God. There seemed no way of escape,—no way whereby such a sinner as I could be saved. I believed the elect would be saved, but that only seemed to shut me out. I wondered what people went to chapel for. If some were elected to salvation and the rest left to be lost, what could be the benefit of preaching I could not conceive, for as yet my eyes were not opened to see the Lord's method of salvation nor my ear circumcised to understand the truth I heard preached. I continued in this dark, benighted, and despairing condition for some time, and was afraid to pray, yet obliged to cry for mercy, because I felt I could not do without it. The dreadful weight of sin was pressing me down, yet under it all a feeling would come that if I perished it must be seeking for mercy. And even now I sometimes fear I have never had a living cry in my soul, which is the first evidence of the life of God; though conscience witnesses to my being many times brought to drop my hold of everything and cry only unto God. This state of mind lasted, with little variation, until the spring of 1856 when I was led, in the providence of God, to hear the late Mr. Russell, of Rotherfield, from these words: "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." (Matt. xi. 4, 5.) Under this sermon the scales fell from my eyes, and I began to see, though only like men as trees walking. Election, as Mr. R. spoke of it, looked so different; and so far from its shutting me out, I clearly perceived that were it not for the electing love of God no sinner could be saved. There was no other foundation firm enough to set my foot on, and now the question began, "Am I elected?" I no longer wondered why people went to chapel, for this ray of light discovered the secret, and I began to listen for the same reason, though I scarcely knew it then. My inquiry was, "Am I one of these favoured people? Do I bear any marks of being an elect vessel of mercy?" What beauty, blessedness, and suitability I found in this very doctrine which I had so hated; and as Mr. R. went on describing the characters whom the Lord would save and his method of doing it, the whole plan of salvation opened to my astonished view and my soul was enamoured with the way, and such love sprang up, and longing desires after these blessed realities, and hope,—yes, *hope*, though I could not

have said so then,—hope dawned upon my soul. I hoped in God's mercy, for methought there were some traces of the teaching of God already upon my spirit, and a "may be" rose in my mind that I should one day know the Lord for myself. I came out of the chapel that day a new creature, though I wist not what had happened to me. From that time I was conscious of a new principle at work within me, and became the subject of new hopes, new desires, new fears, and new pleasures,—feelings which I could no way understand, but I loved the change.

The Sunday following the one already mentioned it was my delightful privilege again to hear Mr. Russell from the following words: "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (Jno. x. 29.) This was again a never-to-be forgotten time. The final perseverance of the saints was so sweetly opened to me that I became more and more in love with this wonderful way of salvation. It was so astonishing to me that I should have remained so long under concern without understanding anything of the truth; but how clearly have I since seen it to prove that none but God can open the eyes of the blind.

During the week intervening between these two Sundays my mind had been much tried upon this point, namely, that if the Lord pardoned my sins and did not take me at once to heaven, I should sin again and there would be no more forgiveness, neither in this world nor in the world to come. This I now believe to have been a temptation of Satan, as it operated in my mind to frighten me from seeking after the thing I felt so much to need,—the pardon of my sin. I had then no idea of the Lord's way of multiplying pardons, and how "he passes by (not without correction) the transgression of the remnant of his heritage, because he delighteth in mercy;" so that this second sermon of Mr. R.'s was as helpful to me as the first; for it showed me the Lord's covenant to be so perfect, and no flaw or loop-hole for self, sin, or Satan to destroy one of these sheep, though plenty of room to fear them all. But the great thing still remained, "Am I in this covenant?" This newness of life and freshness of hope did not long continue, but gradually faded and left me more miserable than ever.

The next five years comprised a season of intense darkness and miserable temptations. I could not forget the past, and the feeling of my heart was, "There is no deliverance wrought. The harvest is over and past, and I am not saved." The following words often sorely tried me: "An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed." (Prov. xx. 21.) This seemed to express my sad case, but the hand of God was still too strong upon me to suffer me to go back into the world. I was held by a mighty hand, and I felt it. I sometimes felt so desperate as to say within myself, "O that this dreadful God (I use the words with reverence) would let me alone, and let me be like other people;" for I could not feel this

was for my good, but rather for my destruction. I knew I was set up as a mark by the world, and I felt shut out from God and his people. O this was a dreadful page in my life! Still, I was not without some softening touches. One I remember was in reading the hymn commencing,

“Not all the blood of beasts.”

It was very salutary to my parched-up soul, and when I came to the verse which reads,

“My soul looks back to see
The burdens thou didst bear
When hanging on the accursed tree,
And hopes her guilt was there”

my heart was broken with contrition, and a sweetness of desire and intensity of longing to which I had long been a stranger again sprang up. I was in such a starving condition that I eagerly grasped at this as a token for good; but the sweetness soon subsided and left me where it found me.

With the exception of a very few such touches my case continued one scene of darkness and despondency until the middle of the year 1860, when the Lord was pleased to lay upon me a heavy affliction, and at the same time, I hope, to carry on and deepen the work he had commenced, showing me further of my sinnership, and pouring upon me, in some measure, a spirit of prayer and supplication during the hours of my solitude and darkness. As Mr. Hart says,

“I prayed to be new born,
But knew not what it meant,” &c.

But I believe now that I cried unto the Lord then because I *was* born again. I often prayed to the Lord to show me myself and show me himself in the same way he did to his people, but when he answered I was frightened at the sight.

One thing I now particularly remember, I heard the people of God bemoan the pride of their hearts, and I had myself a sort of knowledge that I was proud, but when I prayed, “Lord, if I have not rightly seen the pride of my heart, do, in mercy, show it me” I was on my knees in a dark room, and this dreadful pride was so discovered to me that it drove me off my knees, for the sight was so terrifying,—to think that pride should rise up in such a sinful heart as mine. This made me fly from myself, and flee the harder for refuge to Him who is able to save from sin. My nights and days now became one long chain of crying for mercy. I felt I must have it, yet feared I never should. I was afraid my trouble would wear off again without deliverance, and this drove me to pray, “Lord, increase it rather than it should die out.” Sometimes I felt some sweet dawns of hope, at other times floods of despair. I longed to lay hold, but feared to presume, feeling distinctly within the struggling of the new nature to break forth into liberty, and a striving to clasp Jesus in my arms as the Antidote of death.

On one occasion I felt the Lord draw near to me and speak the following words with much sweetness, "Seek ye my face." My soul, melting under his presence, replied, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek." His enabling grace was so great and so precious, and I knew he would not bid me seek in vain. I should have said that previous to this time I had been much tried with these words: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." (Lu. xiii. 24.) This was to me a hard saying, and led me continually to beg of the Lord that he would open it to me, which he graciously did once while on my knees asking him about it, for it was as though he said to me, "Because they strive not lawfully." This was plain to me, because I was no stranger to the two strivings, and it served to strengthen my faith and hope in the Lord, which was further confirmed a few days after by the words, "Seek ye my face," as before mentioned.

The word preached was made very useful to me at this time; for I generally picked up something to instruct and encourage me. There were no barren Sabbaths then like I have now. It was so nice to have my case spoken to and read some traces of the Lord's work in my heart, so that I never tired of hearing, reading, or praying. On one occasion in hearing the late Mr. Mortimer my hope was so far confirmed as to enable me to say, "I have a hope in the mercy of God, and that I shall never die until I have seen the Lord's Christ." He spoke from the words: "The meek shall eat and be satisfied; they shall praise the Lord that seek him; your heart shall live for ever." (Ps. xxii. 26.) My soul was so helped forward that I could not help praising the Lord, for I did eat to my satisfaction, though not so as to be fully satisfied; and I felt a divine persuasion, I hope, that my heart should live for ever. But, alas! I did not think then how many deaths it would have to live through. A very comfortable week succeeded this, and my hope had never been so strong before. I believed in the Lord to the saving of my soul, and this was attended with great jealousy over myself lest I should step aside anywhere or stop in the race before I had attained that which my soul was on fire to obtain.

This hoping, waiting, loving, longing, fearing, desiring, wide-awake state continued some months until, in the providence of God, I went to hear the late Mr. Tatham of Eastbourne. (I went many times, but this once was a special time.) He read Isa. xlix, and my soul being on the stretch for God, as he read this verse, "That ye may say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves," the words moved in my heart, and I felt that rolled up in them was the very thing I wanted, if I could but get it. I could not go on listening, but only ask that this might be the text, which literally came to pass, and I was not disappointed of my hope. The remaining bands by which I was bound began to snap, and my soul gradually came forth into the light. I felt the Lord was mine with all his

saving benefits, and peace flowed into my soul, covering the whole face of it. It was not that ecstatic joy of which some speak, but solid peace, such as I had never felt before, and it kept steadily increasing for some days. I particularly remember once during that week feeling so full and wondering at the greatness of my enjoyment, so that I stood still in going down a passage, and looking up, with my hands clasped, I said in my simplicity, "Lord, I did not know heaven was so good as this," much less had I thought mortals on earth could be so blessed. In looking back to that spot I have remarked how impossible it is for the carnal mind truly to realize a true, God-wrought, spiritual blessing, and equally impossible for the unrenewed heart to bring forth those unutterable, indescribable groans with which the Blessed Spirit helps our infirmities previous to a deliverance. The time of which I am now speaking I consider my best days, though they were, perhaps, not tempered with understanding; but I have never since found the same uninterrupted peace for so long together.

"In prayer my soul drew near the Lord,
I saw his glories shine,
And when I read the sacred Word,
I called each promise mine."

His praises were continually in my mouth. Night by night I laid me down in peace and slept, for the Lord only made me to dwell in safety. Morning by morning I awoke with the Psalmist's language in my heart and on my lips, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name; for he hath redeemed my soul from destruction, and crowned me with loving-kindness and tender mercy." My daily duties were carried on in the fear of the Lord, and his presence shed a new light upon everything, and all things were sanctified to me by the word of God and prayer. He led me by the still waters, and caused me to lie down in green pastures. He led me in paths of righteousness, for his name's sake. But all this time how very little in reality did I know of myself, and how little experience I had of real, spiritual impotency! I was far from realizing that the exercise of faith was not in my own power, and had little idea of finding the throne of grace covered with a cloud. But as soon as the Lord withdrew his comforting presence I soon wandered, and was surprised to find I had no power to return, and was terrified to find again I could not pray.

While writing this I have been thinking of David's words, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul," and again of Jehu's saying, "Come, see my zeal for the Lord." What different motives prompted the two;—the one was actuated by a gospel humility, and the other by a spirit of pride and self-aggrandizement. To apply the case;—If the foregoing is written in the spirit of the former, it is well; but if in the spirit of the latter, it is ill.

A SHORT COMMENTARY ON ROM. XII. 1-5.

BY DR. HAWKER.

IN order to form a right apprehension of the apostle's meaning we must carefully keep in remembrance all that went before. Paul begins at this chapter to shew what gracious consequences must follow in the life of a child of God brought into the blessed enjoyment of being justified fully before God in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. He had in the foregoing chapters very fully displayed the electing love of God the Father, the redeeming grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the regenerating work of God the Spirit upon the souls of God's people.

Having therefore shewn both the ground-work and superstructure of the church's mercies, and traced them up to their Fountain-Head in the covenant love and faithfulness of Jehovah in his Trinity of Persons, he now calls upon the church with all the earnestness and affection of a brother to live by faith in the daily, hourly enjoyment of those glorious privileges. "I beseech you therefore, brethren," (saith he) by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." It becomes a point of infinite importance to the peace and comfort of every child of God to have a right apprehension of what is here meant. My views, I confess, differ from all that I have heard or read upon the subject. I therefore very affectionately intreat the reader to look up to the Almighty Author of his Holy Word, who guided his servant the apostle's pen, that the Lord the Spirit may be his Teacher in the perusal of it. And my soul is looking also to the same matchless Instructor, that both writer and reader of this Commentary may together be taught of God.

I will first beg to observe what appears to me *cannot* be the sense and meaning of the passage according to true Scriptural grounds of faith before I venture to offer what appears to me *to be* the real meaning of it. And when I have presented both before the reader, I shall very humbly leave him to form, under the Lord, his own conclusion.

And here I begin with observing that the living sacrifice which the apostle calls upon justified believers in Christ to present unto God cannot possibly mean anything of their own; for Christ is the one only Sacrifice before God, and "by that one offering of himself once offered, he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Heb. x. 10-14.) Neither can the holiness the apostle speaks of, in which they are to present their bodies, mean any holiness of their own; for "there is none holy but the Lord;" and the church hath no holiness but in Christ and from Christ. And Paul could not be supposed to mean the holiness of the creature; for he had told the church just before in this epistle that his body was a body of sin and death. (Chap. vii. 14-24.) He could not therefore mean that the church was to present their bodies a living sacrifice, and holy unto the Lord. And equally

foreign to the apostle's meaning must it have been to suppose that the church was to look for acceptance in themselves before God in any righteousness of their own; for Paul himself taught, under the Holy Ghost, that it is "to the praise of the glory of God's grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." (Eph. i. 6.) So that upon none of those grounds could Paul be supposed to recommend the church to present their bodies before God.

Having shown, and I hope upon true Scriptural authority, what cannot be supposed to be the sense of the apostle's words, I will now venture, and upon the same authority, to bring before the reader what appears to me to be his meaning.

Let it again be remembered that the apostle had before fully established the doctrine of the church being elected, called, justified, and sanctified by God in Christ. He begins an exhortation from these premises. And that little word, "therefore," as an illative particle, he useth, as deducing all he had to say, and all he intreated from them in consequence thereof. "I beseech you therefore, brethren." Brethren in Christ as he elsewhere calls them. "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," partakers of Christ, interested from a union with Christ in all Christ's communicable holiness, grace, and glory. (See Heb. iii. 1; John xvii. 22.)

Next, I pray the reader to observe the apostle's expression when he saith, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God." What mercies did the apostle mean? All are mercies that we have from God. But I humbly conceive Paul alluded to what the prophet taught the church and which Paul himself afterwards explained,—the "sure mercies of David." Now, then, we arrive at the main subject of inquiry concerning this presentation of their bodies, which is to be "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, and (saith Paul) your reasonable service."

Holy Scripture reveals no sacrifice but one. And this indeed is a living Sacrifice; for Jesus ever liveth to make it effectual as a life-giving principle to his people. Having opened a new and living way by his blood, he ever liveth to keep it open by his intercession. And God the Holy Ghost, by putting forth the efficacy of it into the persons of the redeemed makes it truly living in their hearts and consciences. . . . It is impossible to conceive that Paul should direct the church to do what he himself could never perform,—to present his body a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God when he groaned daily under a body of sin and death. Yea, he had before said to the church, "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." (Chap. viii. 10.) And how shall a body *dead* because of sin, present itself a *living* sacrifice? Reader, the Lord give you a right understanding in all things. And if under divine teaching your views and mine correspond, we shall both see and, through grace, be enabled to follow what the apostle so affectionately recommends when just-

fied in the Person and work of Christ by those mercies of God, to present our bodies indeed as well as our souls, daily and hourly upon the altar of that living sacrifice, which is holy, acceptable unto God, and our reasonable service. For Christ is our New Testament Altar (neither is there any other), our Sacrifice and the Sacrificer. And as the whole person of every child of God, both soul and body, is united to Christ, both are included in this presentation. "He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit." And the Lord Jesus himself saith, speaking of the persons of his people, "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." (John xvii. 21.) And while "we know that he abideth in us by the Spirit which he hath given us," we know also that "our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in us." (1 John iii. 24; 1 Cor. xi. 19.)

And as it is by consequence of this union in our souls with Christ, by regeneration we are made "partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world through lust," and at the separation by death of soul and body the soul joins the society of the "spirits of just men made perfect" until the morning of the resurrection; so from the same union with Christ the body at death sleeps in Jesus until the last day, and, equally one with Christ in body as well as soul, the body will be raised by virtue of it to live with Christ, both body and soul, for ever. The Holy Ghost bears sweet testimony to this most blessed truth in his Word: "For if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. viii. 11; 2 Pet. i. 4.)

I do not think it necessary, after having so largely stated what appears to me to be the apostle's meaning of the daily presentation of the child of God, to offer anything more on what follows in relation to the effects which arise out of it. No one who is a child of God and who daily lives in acts of faith and grace upon the Person of Christ and his living Sacrifice, will be conformed to this world. A conformity to this world and its vanities and customs, is wholly the reverse of a life of grace.

AFFLICTIONS, desertions, and temptations are as needful as consolations. Jonah's whale will teach a good lesson, as well as Pisgah's top; and a man may sometimes learn as much from being a night and a day in the deep, as from being forty days in the mount. —*Berridge*.

I AM now removed out of the book of Proverbs, which I have long studied, into the book of Canticles; but am got no further than the first chapter, verse the second: "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth." I seem to want nothing now but a closer union with the dear Redeemer. The world at times strives to divert my attention from the chief Object of my affections; but my soul is ever panting after him, yea, my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." —*Berridge*.

HOPING FOR BETTER DAYS.

My dear Brother in the Hope of the Gospel,—I now, according to promise, attempt to write a few lines to you. O that the Holy Spirit may direct my mind and influence my heart to say something that may, in some small measure, prove profitable to your soul; but I feel so very poor that I scarcely know what to write about.

I can say with Job, "Behold, I am vile!" O that I could sensibly feel to plunge into that sacred fountain that is open for sin and uncleanness. How empty and vain do all things here below appear to me; yet still I cannot rid myself of this clay idol,—the world. The things of time and sense drag me down from heavenly-mindedness, and this body of sin and death mars my peace and comfort, and Satan, unbelief, and fear often make me question the reality of my religion. Yet still I feel a groaning, panting, longing, desiring mind to be free from captivity and imprisonment; for I want to feel like Naphtali,—“a hind let loose.” But too often I feel shut up and cannot come forth, yet sometimes there is a little glimmering of light and hope that better days will come, and a sense and remembrance of the Lord's past mercies forbids me sinking into despair. Could he love me when a foe, and leave me when a child? No, blessed be his dear name. His covenant is an everlasting covenant, and his compassions fail not: “He will rest in his love;” “His mercy endureth for ever;” “He despiseth not his prisoners.” He heareth their groanings, and bottles all their tears, and has said in his Word, “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.”

Cheer up, dear brother; the harvest-time hastens on apace: “Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.” Pray for faith and patience that “after ye have done the will of God (in suffering for a season) ye might receive the promise.” (Heb. x. :6.) Cast not away your confidence. Christ is the Nail in a sure place; namely, in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure. Sin, hell, and unbelief oppose us, and, as dear Rutherford says, “There is no holding Christ at ease, unless the devil were dead.” We are called upon to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and may the Lord help us to keep the prize in view, considering him who “endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” When we are hard put to it before our enemies may we, like one of old, be enabled to look and pray toward his holy temple. Time wafts us along apace towards the eternal shore. Another year has fled and told its tale before the throne, and all our joys and sorrows intermingled in the past year have gone for ever. What awaits us in the present year is known alone to Him who orders all things after the counsel of his own will and who tells us that not a sparrow can fall to the ground without his notice, and that the very hairs of our head are all numbered. Surely, then, whether sorrow, joy, or death itself awaits us in the present year, we may be as-

sured of this, that the Lord does nothing wrong. We are poor, short-sighted creatures in judging of his ways and dealings with us. The saints of old were the same. Jacob said, "All these things are against me." Isaiah said, "I am undone." The Psalmist said, "Is his mercy clean gone for ever?" Jeremiah said that his hope and strength were perished, and that the Lord was turned against him, and become his enemy. Job said, "Mine eye shall no more see good." Jonah said, "I am cast out of his sight." Paul had his weaknesses and temptations, and Peter his fiery trials. Yea, he said, "If need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations." If faith, which is compared to fine gold, is to be tried, it must go into the crucible of affliction, for "the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." The pure gold will lose nothing but the dross.

But the flesh dislikes the way; and so I find it at the present time being in the furnace, confined to my bed, something having taken me in my thigh; and I see no likelihood of getting about just yet. My prayer is that it may prove a profitable trial. I wish to be as clay in the great Potter's hands. I began to fear of late because my path appeared smoother for a few months than formerly. I sincerely desire to feel a thankful heart for mercies unnumbered; but now on the threshold of this new year, the clouds of adversity begin to lower, and although he hides his purpose, still he rides upon the storm. I want to be thankful for bitters as well as for sweets. May the Lord grant that our wills may fully accord with his, for he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, or else he would have cut us off long ago for our wretched sin and unbelief.

Give my kind love to Mr. and Mrs. D., and all inquiring friends; likewise to Mr. Dangerfield who I see by the "Standard" is with you, and may the Lord bless his labours among you. Excuse more at present, as I am tired, sitting up in bed to write.

Yours in Hope of Eternal Life,

Sutton Benger, Jan. 5th, 1860.

JAMES HUGGINS.

SELF-DENIAL.

My very dear Friend,—I suppose you have thought that the poor old sinner had forgotten you, as he has not answered your kind letter before. I have had many things to encounter, and when I have had a little time I have had no will, and when I have had the will I have not had the time. I find that self-denial is not such an easy thing to practise as it is to talk about, and I find dead sloth and unbelief to be two such great enemies and they are often very near to my soul, so that I seldom feel to have left them behind; but blessed be the name of the Lord he does sometimes lift up my soul above all these things, and then I can and do triumph in rich grace and free mercy.

I have heard that you, my dear friend, have hurt your hand, so that you cannot go on with your business, and perhaps the

devil and unbelief have set in upon you and are telling you that it is all over with you and your family, and that your place will be in the Workhouse, for you will get so much in debt that you will never be able to get out again; and perhaps he comes in on the other hand and tells you that this is a mark that God is against you, for unbelief and the devil will say, "If you were a child of God this would not have happened, for the Lord preserveth the simple." My dear friend, the Lord's people are a poor and an afflicted people, for the Lord trieth the righteous, and he does not let us know with what he will try us until the trial comes, and when it is brought upon us, then we know what it is that tries us. No doubt your present trial is for your soul's good and for God's own glory, and that you will see to be the case one day and be enabled to bless the Lord for it; for although no affliction for the present is joyous, but grievous, yet afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby. If your poor mind is exercised with it, under it, and about it, you will find the fruits of it by-and-bye, and that will be peace, love, meekness, submission, tenderness, and gentleness, which you will feel to be so sweet that you will be enabled to kiss the rod and him that hath appointed it.

I hope the Lord will abundantly bless your soul, as I believe he hath done many times in the past, for you have got into my heart. May the Lord lead you unto the wounded side of your Saviour, and apply his precious blood to your soul, and may the Lord the Spirit bring your religion bit by bit and show it to you and let you see that he has put something within your soul, even eternal life. What a difference there is between true and false religion! My dear wife joins with me in love to you and to all the friends.

Ever thine for the Truth's Sake,
 Pewsey, July 5th, 1842. THOMAS GODWIN.

A FAITHFUL GOD.

Dear Mother,—This morning I received your kind letter, and was truly glad to hear from you. From your manner of writing I can see that the weakness and infirmities of old age are creeping upon you very fast, and you have arrived at the time when the strong men bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, when the grasshopper is a burden, and desire fails. My prayer for you is that God may be the strength of your old age, your light in darkness and your life in death; and that the gracious Spirit, the sweet Testifier of Jesus, may constantly take of the things of Christ and show them unto you; so that, feeling your own weakness and ignorance, you may be enabled to depend upon his wisdom to guide you through all the mazes and intricacies of this mortal state, and be helped to glorify the Lord Jesus by looking unto him to carry you down to the latest moment of your life, to be with you and administer

all needful strength and consolation in the last conflict, and to bring you off more than Conqueror through him that hath loved you.

I have many times wished I might have an opportunity of making you some amends for the sorrows and painful feelings that my conduct must have caused you in the early period of my life by trying in some degree to soothe the sorrows of your old age; but of this I see no prospect, yet I trust, through grace, I shall not cease to besiege the throne of God on your behalf. Outward circumstances with me look gloomy, but what a mercy it is our God is the same. After having felt much confusion what a blessing it is to enjoy peace in our souls, even the peace of God flowing through the bloodshedding of Immanuel. When this is enjoyed, though a host of carnal professors, with all the powers of earth and hell, should rise up in arms against the soul, still it may and will rejoice in the Lord and joy in the God of its salvation. May you enjoy much of this precious blessing. At such times we not only feel that the foundation of God standeth sure, but that we ourselves are upon it. The apostle Paul says, "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. iii. 10, 11.) And what is the result of preaching Christ crucified? We shall find the Saviour's answer most conclusive: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." This believing is not the work of the creature, for saith the Holy Ghost, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." (Eph. ii. 8.) May the Lord help you to see the stability of this foundation and your own standing upon it; for this will stand when the wood, hay, and stubble of creature-doings will be burnt up, for God's Word declares that the day cometh when "all that watch for iniquity shall be cut off; that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought." (Isa. xxix. 20, 21.)

I wish I could write something which, under the blessed teaching of the Spirit of God, might lead your mind up to Him who, as one says, "Sees us when we see not him, and always hears our cry." O what a mercy it is that he does, for were he to prove unfaithful as often as we prove faithless to him, into what depths should we sink, even to the borders of despair, and at last into the pit where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth; but blessed be his name, our safety depends not on our faith, but on the unchangeable nature of his covenant love, mercy, and grace given to us in Christ Jesus before the world began, and therefore he gives us his Spirit to quicken us to feel our need of Jesus in all the fulness of his salvation and suit-

ability of his work, and he works faith in our hearts to embrace Christ as our salvation, who has promised that he will never leave us nor forsake us, and that when we pass through the waters he will be with us.

May the Lord give you some precious faith's view of his faithfulness and keep your soul staid on himself amidst all the weakness and infirmities of your old age. I should like very much to see you, but fear there is no prospect of my doing so, as I never so felt the difficulty of procuring the necessaries of life as I have done the last two or three years; but have much to be thankful for in that we have not wanted bread, though many times I have wanted faith. We shall feel a pleasure in hearing from you, as we are anxious to know how you are.

Your affectionate Son,

April 6th, 1844.

JOHN GARDNER.

BACKSLIDINGS OF HEART.

My dear Friend in the Truth,—I once more make an attempt to address a few lines to you, trusting they may find you and yours in the enjoyment of good health. Good health naturally is a great blessing; but greater far spiritually, and of this I think you are in possession, judging from your writings from time to time; but I feel sure you need no praise from any fellow-creature, as you are looking forward to your reward which is treasured up in Christ Jesus.

Time passes very swiftly. It is twelve months since I wrote to you. A year in our history should mean something, but I must, with shame, confess that in my case the year now past appears almost like a blank in my life of threescore years and ten. What may be in the future I cannot tell, but I hope something brighter than what I have felt in the past twelve months. I have experienced such backslidings of heart, uprisings of unbelief, hankerings of my old nature after the things of this world, and a host of other besetments, that the very recollection of them would be sufficient to drown all hope of mercy in a just and holy God were it not recorded that "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." I often fear lest the conflict in my own case will not end in accordance with the promise that though a troop overcome Gad, he shall overcome at the last.

There is in me such a longing to look into the future, especially when I am approaching imaginary trouble; but the Lord has only promised grace sufficient for the day. We find in reading the Scriptures that doubts and fears prevailed at times with the saints of old, who we are apt to look upon with some degree of envy, seeing they had such signal manifestations of the favour of God; but it is a great mercy for us that their doubts and fears are recorded as well as their blessings and triumphs over their fears, inasmuch as we find in their experience a similarity to our own. Not that we can be content with the bare knowledge that the

saints of old experienced the things they did, but that we may feel the living witness in our own souls, which we should know but very little about if it were not for the trials we have to endure; for it is in times of trial that we find the truth of what the poet says, "Trials make the promise sweet;" and in looking back upon past trials and the deliverances we have had from them it encourages us onward. Sometimes when I look back I am surprised to see how in trials that I imagined would have utterly destroyed me, the Lord has so favoured me that they have had little of the nature of trial about them; for like the Israelites when they looked back upon the mighty Egyptian host, they were constrained to sing, "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea."

There is much error and dead profession at the present time, and it is a great mercy to be brought feelingly into spiritual warfare. There are many false teachers who would try to persuade us that what we call spiritual trials are all whim and fancy, and that if we would but give ourselves to God and trust in him, we need not have any such trials, which is a proof that they are entire strangers to such exercises. They tell us that if they commit sin during the day they can make it all right with God before they go to sleep. May the Lord, if it be his blessed will, open their eyes to see their sad condition. Truthful preachers are very scarce in this neighbourhood; but still I would be thankful for a few crumbs which at times fall from the Master's table; for, like the Israelites in gathering the manna, those that gathered little had no lack, and in like manner we have no real lack. The Word says, "The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet." (Prov. xxvii. 7.) The Lord is pleased to remind us sometimes that we must not look too much to the creature for spiritual meat, and sends us a morsel by quite an unexpected hand; so that like Elijah we are constrained to thank him for it.

I must now close. May the presence of Him that dwelt in the bush richly dwell with you in time, and take you to dwell with him and all the rest of his blood-bought family through eternity.

Yours in Best Bonds,

Nov. 8th, 1888.

BENJAMIN RAYNER.

SANCTIFIED afflictions are a thousand times rather to be chosen than unsanctified prosperity. These may consist with, yea, are often the effects of God's special love. He sees we want them, and he knows that they will work for our good.—*Berridge*.

BETTER, infinitely better to smart for sin here, than to cry out of the smart of sin in hell. Conviction of sin by the Spirit is a preparation for cleansing from sin by the blood of Christ. Better to roar from the disquietness of one's soul on earth, than to sleep secure in sin till we drop into perdition, and roar for sin in the bottomless pit.—*Mason*.

Obituary.

JOHN ALDERMAN.—On Sept. 22nd, 1889, John Alderman, of Great Brickhill, Bucks.

Our departed friend was for many years a member of the church at Woburn. Being a man of few words, and having been called by grace many years ago, the particulars of his call cannot now be given; but when a young man he was a singer and also used to ring the bells of the church in his native place. Some time after Mr. Tiptaft had left the Church of England, he went to preach at Woburn, and our departed friend, with others, out of curiosity went a distance of four miles to hear him, and the Lord was pleased to bless the word to his soul; so that from that time his face was set Zionward, and he continued to walk four miles every Sabbath to hear the gospel until the Lord called him home. When under the law his burden of sin was felt to be very heavy. One day, when thrashing in the barn, he dropped his flail, and fell on his knees and said, "Lord, if my sin cannot be forgiven, I can work no more." The Lord answered him by applying the following Scripture to his soul, "He brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a Rock, and established my goings." (Ps. xl. 2) So sweet was this message of peace to him that he scarcely knew where he was.

He was baptized by Mr. Godwin about thirty years ago. His place in the house of God was never empty, and when the cause of truth was removed to Woburn Sands he was chosen deacon. The friends of late have often remarked that our departed friend seemed to be ripening for glory. At the prayer-meetings tears of love and joy often trickled down his face, and he seemed reluctant to leave the house of God, and would say, "Friends, let us sing another hymn before we part." The theme he delighted to dwell on was, "Grace, 'tis a charming sound."

A few days before he died I spent a short time sitting by his bedside. I asked him how matters stood with him, and whether the grace that he had so often spoken about was as sweet as ever to him. He replied, "It is all gone. I seem to have no feeling of prayer or praise." I told him that some years ago I myself was seriously ill, and felt just as he did, and feared my religion was all gone just when I most needed it. He said, "O how glad I am to hear you say so; for I thought no one was like me." The same evening he lifted up both hands and said, "Praise God! Praise God!" Two days after this he said, "The journey is long, but very bright." The next day he sweetly fell asleep in Jesus. His loss is a bitter stroke to our little cause. May our last end be like his.

JAMES WRIGHT.

THE remembrance of the gall and wormwood of afflictions will tend to sweeten the taste of heavenly enjoyments.—*Berridge*.

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