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THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JANUARY, 1879.

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

ADDRESS TO OUR SPIRITUAL READERS.

Dear Friends,—We desire, with the Lord's help and blessing, to write something that may be profitable to you. In so doing we would offend no man unnecessarily. Our aim is truth and peace. We would love all that love our Lord Jesus in sincerity, and pray earnestly for the peace of Jerusalem. O that we all could more cast aside our own selves, and seek not our own things, but those of Christ! We are but sojourners upon earth for a brief season, and pilgrims to a heavenly city; that sweet abode of love and peace. How blessed it would be if our hearts could always remember the psalmist's words: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Heaven will know no strife. As citizens of heaven, may the Lord enable us as much as possible to cease from strife upon earth.

We take up our pen, then, with a simple design of doing our readers good. We would lay aside all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, and walk and write in love. Now, dear friends, we are sure you will agree with us in thinking that there is no little danger in the present day of our losing sight of the real nature of Christianity. There is such a mixture of the true and the false, of possessors of grace and those who only profess, in our churches, congregations, and associations generally, that the distinctive characteristics of true godliness are in danger of being hidden or obscured. Men's minds are bewildered, and sometimes, alas! almost anything will pass muster as Christianity. We should beware of a spurious charity which will sanction almost any line of conduct, however inconsistent with the Word of God, and attempt to reconcile it with a profession of godliness. These things ought not so to be. Such a charity as this is not in harmony with the Word of God, and degrades the doctrine of Christ, which is according to godliness.

We are right to contend most earnestly in love for purity of doctrine. The ministry of God's Word should indeed be sound. O! we would not deviate knowingly a hair's breadth from the words of God. Every word of God, we know, is pure. We would reverence and be conformed to the Scriptures. But, then,

correctness of sentiment is not the only thing; nor does an orthodox creed constitute a man a Christian. Paul says, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Let us remember that he not only says, "Reject a heretic after the first and second admonition;" but, "If any man be covetous, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one no not to eat." Let us beware, then, of a party spirit, which may make us improperly tolerate in those who see with us upon certain doctrinal points, or share our sentiments as to the ordinances, what is inconsistent with a profession of Christianity. Perhaps nothing indicates more the low estate of our churches than this toleration of evil and neglect of discipline. May the Lord give us more grace, and make us beware of allowing charity to degenerate into laxity. May we earnestly maintain the sweet and precious doctrines of free grace; but may we ever maintain, in word and action also, that they are doctrines according to godliness.

These considerations have led us to adopt, as the motto of our Address this year, the words of Paul: "For ye see your calling, brethren;" and our endeavour will be to bring before the minds of our readers, in plain and simple language, the true nature of the Christian calling. We shall aim at correctly exhibiting it in its unworldly and self-denying character, in its essentially separating, sanctifying, and heavenly nature. May the Lord graciously help us, and bless our efforts to his glory and his people's real profit.

We will first very briefly consider whence this calling has its origin; merely dwelling upon this point, as well as other matters, with our principal end in view, which is to remind God's children that their calling is not to earthly honours, riches, and pleasures, to a mere worldly prosperity; but to a heavenly kingdom, to pleasures at God's right hand; and, on their road to these things, to a life of separation from the world, to a sojourning in this world, not as a home, but as a wilderness. The language of this calling is:

"This life's a dream, an empty show;
But, the bright world to which we go
Has joys substantial and sincere.
When shall I wake and find me there?"

Now the calling, then, is entirely from heaven. It is heavenly in its origin, and heavenly in its nature. It is from Him who has blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. The rise and spring of this calling is, as Paul informs us, the good pleasure of God's will. His people are "the called according to his purpose." The apostle enlarges upon this, and says, "For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also *called*." Thus effectual calling is in accordance with his determinate decree of electing grace, and is entirely ruled thereby.

We see, then, at once, what a holy, high, and heavenly cha-

rafter this calling must bear. How can it be otherwise when it proceeds from electing grace, and is to the enjoyment of eternal love? to the full participation in the manifestation of the greatest glory of God? O! this calling is not such as the conduct of professors generally would indicate. It is not such an earthly sensual thing as too often from that conduct we might suppose. It is *holy*; for it has its origin in the great act of eternal separation made between God's people and others in the decree of electing grace. It is *high*; for it is to a kingdom out of sight; not of this world, but to endure through eternal ages.

“A kingdom of immense delight,
Where health, and peace, and joy unite;
Where undecaying pleasures rise,
And every wish has full supplies.
A kingdom which can ne'er decay,
When time sweeps earthly thrones away.”

“He hath made us kings and priests to our God.” “And the saints shall take the kingdom, and possess it for ever.” It is *heavenly*; for the kingdom and the glory and the blessedness are heavenly things. The Head, through whom all the blessings flow, and in union to whom they are all possessed, is in heaven. The saints say, “Our Father, which art in heaven.” The blessed Spirit comes from heaven to lead us there; for the saint's home is where his Father dwells, in heaven. He is not called, then, to earthly things, but heavenly. He seeks through this calling a better country, that is, a heavenly; a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God.

But we pass on, and turn our attention next for a few moments to the persons who are called. Paul is very express upon this point: “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,” &c. Again, it is written: “Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength.” Thus, with the weak things of the world God stills the enemy and avenger, and overthrows the things that are. So Christ says, when he thanks his Father: “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” Can anything more plainly discover the mind of God in this matter, and bring to light the unworldly, flesh-humbling character of the Christian's calling? Had God designed his church to shine with an earthly light and splendour, he would doubtless have called the wise, the mighty, and the noble. But it is not so. He passes by palaces, and calls the dwellers in cottages and hovels. He passes by the rich, and calls, for the most part, the poor. He passes by the learned, and calls, again for the most part, the ignorant. Thus he stains the pride of all human glory, and pours contempt upon all the wisdom, learning, nobility, strength, and excellency of the flesh. He passed by many a man-esteemed member of the Sanhedrim, and called

a dying thief. He made by his free grace that dying thief a broken-hearted, God-justifying penitent; and whilst Pharisees scorned,

“That dying thief rejoiced to see
The fountain in his day.”

Yes, so it is. In order to show the nature of this calling, that it is not to earth and earthly things, but to heaven and heavenly ones; not to fleshly glory, but to self-abasement and the very dust of death; a dying thief is manifested as a child of God, an elect vessel of mercy, and called by Almighty, free, and efficacious grace. Thus, saved by love, and pardoned through a Redeemer's blood, he is taken from a cross of pain and ignominy upon earth to a crown of glory with Jesus in the heavens.

Need we say more? Is it not plain from this sovereign dispensation of God in calling principally the foolish, the weak, the base, the despised things of this world, yea, as Paul says, “the things that are not,” that this calling is not to worldly advancement, honour, gain, and prosperity? These are not the things the saints are to look for in accordance with their calling; but rather to the loss of these things, as Christ says: “If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me.” And again: “He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world for my sake shall keep it unto life eternal.”

Ah, how different is this to the pomp, the vain glory, the self-seeking, self-exalting, worldliness, covetousness, luxury, carnal-security of innumerable professors!

We now turn our attention to the means and instruments God is pleased to make use of in the work of calling his saints unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ. Paul tells us that it pleases God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. By this means he called the Corinthians; in the same way he called the Thessalonians: “Whereunto he called you by our gospel.” The same blessed preaching of the cross which was to some foolishness and a stumbling-block, was to the children of God the power of God unto their salvation. In this matter God was all. There is nothing, when it is properly understood, in the gospel that natural men can admire. It is foolishness unto them. Like the Lord Jesus, of whom it speaks, it is as a root out of a dry ground, and has no form or comeliness to natural men and natural principles in men. But God accompanies the word of his grace with the light and power of his Holy Spirit to the hearts of the elect; and then it is to them the wisdom of God, and the power of God. Thus God's word came to the Corinthians in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. So it came to the Thessalonians, “not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.” Thus it was to them “not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God.” Christ was a revealed Christ to them, and was formed in them the Hope of glory. The power was en-

tirely of God, and they were made to know and feel that it was so. If the gospel of God had adapted itself to man's natural wisdom, the wise Greeks would have hailed it with pleasure, not esteemed it foolishness. If it could have applauded man's righteousness and inherent goodness, it would have delighted, and not proved a stumbling-block to the self-righteous Jews. But as it pronounced man's wisdom to be folly, his righteousness filthy rags, his goodness badness, and his strength a thing of naught, natural men, Jews and Gentiles alike, condemned it. It poured contempt upon fallen human nature; cried, "All flesh is grass;" and man in return naturally pronounced it foolishness. But in this very way it did God's work. It called out, by a divine Almighty power, the elect of God. In them it pronounced a sentence of death upon the flesh, and brought them by divine grace forth from the world that now is, and lieth in the wicked one, into a place of separation. Thus it accomplished the divine will.

But now a word as to the preachers. Paul tells us they must be sent. No man properly takes any office in the church of God unless God has called him to it. The apostles were called to be apostles. Even Christ took not the great High-priesthood upon himself; but the same who said unto him, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee," the same said unto him, "Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec."

Now, God is pleased to call into the work of this ministry, and send forth to preach his gospel, just such persons as he wills. He sends forth some rich, some poor; some learned, some unlearned; just as it seems good unto himself. But this we may safely say,—he will make all the men he sends forth self-denying, and will show them how utterly insufficient of themselves are human learning and ability; and how all-important divine teaching.

In the Christian calling, then, we see that, so far as means and instruments go, God is pleased to use that which of itself is entirely insufficient, and would by itself prove utterly useless. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." An earthen vessel, like Gideon's pitchers, can only hold and, at the same time, conceal the light. Such are God's ministers, in and of themselves,—knowledge-holders and knowledge-hiders. But, then, God's design is that the light shall shine forth; therefore the pitchers are broken with a variety of adversities (2 Cor. iv.); and God, by even such naturally insufficient creatures, maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge, and gives forth to the elect, and to the overthrow of Satan's kingdom in them, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus."

In this calling, then, we at once see from these things also that there is nothing of the world, nothing of the flesh, nothing of the mere creature. All things are of God; and all is designed by God for the bringing forth of the people of God into the experimental fellowship of Christ, in both death and resurrection.

But these things will even shine forth in a clearer light as we go on to consider what Christians are called unto. As we see what they are called to be, we shall see the true nature of the calling.

I. Those who partake of the Christian calling are *called to be saints*. Not the monstrous saints of popery and false religion; but the saints of God. As Luther has well said, a poor milkmaid who goes about her daily work in the fear of God may be a saint; whilst some monk, with his shaven crown and will-worship, may be looked upon by God with abhorrence and as an abomination. God's people in Christ are his holy ones in the highest sense. They are separated from the rest of his creation, and separated unto God. They are holiness to the Lord. This separation unto God is personal, inward, and outward. Let us glance at these three things.

1. *Personal*. In this respect they are saints indeed. We mean, herein their separation is really perfect. They are seen as in Christ. Though in themselves full of imperfections, and ready to cry out, "Unclean, unclean;" "woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips," as seen in Christ they are, as Scripture says, "all fair." There is no spot in them. They are before God as Christ is. This is their standing. "Without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing;" children in whom is no blemish. Thus they can stand before the great King.

"Those holy ones shall all appear
And worship at his feet."

In eternity, when they are actually made as Christ is, transformed completely into his likeness, they will not, in this respect, be one whit holier than they are now. They are *holiness*; this admits of neither increase nor diminution.

2. But, then, those who are called to be saints are also saints *inwardly*. There is a work of divine grace of a separating nature upon their hearts.

"Immortal principles forbid
The sons of God to sin."

There is a new nature implanted in them by the Holy Ghost, who himself takes up his abode in their hearts. He is there as the source of a new life, a fountain of living waters, springing up in them into eternal life. By means of this work they are distinctly separated from the rest of the world. They have a new heart given them, and a new spirit put within them. "We have not received," says the apostle, "the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God." Well, then, of necessity these saints possess an inward separation from those round about them. They have new thoughts, a different judgment, different feelings, and are affected in different ways to the rest of the world. And, mind, by the world we do not only mean the profane, but also the naturally religious world. Born again of the Spirit, sanctified inwardly to God by the work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, they come forth not only out of Egypt, but from Babylon.

8. Now, from this inward separation there will result one of the conversation likewise. It must be so. Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good. The tree is known by its fruits. If there is a deadening to the world within, it will appear in an *outward* moderation as to the pursuit of worldly gain and worldly honours. If there is a deadening to the life of sense, there will not be an indulgence in worldly lusts and pleasures. He that striveth for the masteries is temperate in all things. Never did the grace of God make men into cunning hunters and men of the field, like Esau; but into plain men, content to dwell in tents with Jacob. In other words, it will not make those persons in whom it is over eager after the things of the world, or over indulgent as to its luxuries. They will be brought thereby into conformity with Paul's words: "Let your moderation be known unto all men."

So, again, if there is a separation from the false religion of the world, this will manifest itself. Grace will make the child of God act as Moses did. He will choose rather to suffer affliction with the despised people of God than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Deadened to doctrines of free-will and creature ability, he cannot but throw in his lot amongst those who, like himself, are obliged to flee from the midst of that Babylon, lest they be partakers of its plagues.

This is but a brief sketch; it is only suggestive; but may help our friends to see with more distinctness the holy nature of their profession as "called to be saints."

II. Those who partake of this calling are *called to be strangers and pilgrims upon earth*. These two words go well together in describing the character of a true Christian. First, let us look at them as *strangers*. Briefly, the following things suggest themselves to the mind as essential to strangership.

1. Strangers or foreigners in a land may be known by their *dress*. These strangers may certainly be thus distinguished. Let us look at the Christian's dress as before God, man, and his own conscience.

Before God, he is clothed in the robe of a Redeemer's righteousness. There he can trust to nothing else. Like Joshua, he has stood before the throne of God in filthy garments, and felt himself exposed thereby to the wrath of God. But, then, he has had his filthy garments taken from him, and the robe of Christ's righteousness given him instead; and now his language is, "I will make mention of thy righteousness" for acceptance, most blessed Jesus, "and thine only." In this is all his boast.

Before men, as a poor lost sinner saved by grace, his clothing is humility and love. He is humble, because he is lost, yet found by freest mercy. He loves because he has had so much forgiven. The grace of God has so overflowed his heart with its sweetness that it has made him in his inmost spirit forgiving, meek, and lowly in heart. It has conformed him, in some good degree, to the image of his Master.

But, then, before his own conscience, how is this man dressed, —this man who thus before God has the righteousness of Christ, before men is enabled to clothe himself with humility, and to walk in some degree in love as a dear child of God? Let Isaiah speak for him: "But we are all as an unclean thing; and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Or take the poet's words:

"My best is all defiled with sin;
My all is nothing worth."

Yes, this is the saint. He would do good, but evil is present with him. He cannot do the things which he would. Indwelling sin pollutes and spoils all. Thus, when he looks at himself, and considers his daily life, he covers his eyes "with shame-blushing face," and is ready to say of himself, "Chiefest of all sinners; and of saints the least." Thus the saint may be known from the rest of the world by his garments.

2. Strangers may be known by their *language*. Nothing, perhaps, is more distinctive. So it is here. The language of the saints is that of Canaan and the heavenly Jerusalem. Listen to them. They speak of the utterly lost and ruined state of human nature, and ascribe the glory of salvation all to God. Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness. Man makes a deity of man. Man's wisdom, man's skill, man's virtue, man's wonderful works; this is the language of man. But the saints cry out against all the glory of man. They say that "all flesh is grass;" and they ascribe all glory only to the Lord. Thus, in Ps. xxix., it is said, "And in his temple doth every one speak of his glory." O the sweet language of saints! How hateful to their ears is the language of creature-goodness!

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

And as they hate the language of creature glorification, so they have also a repugnance to a mixed sort of speech. God has turned to them a pure language, and they love to hear, in this far-off country where they sojourn, the pure language of their heavenly home, the land of the everlasting rest.

3. Strangers may be known by their *actions and customs*. There are generally some peculiarities about them. So it is here. God's people are a peculiar people, zealous of good works. They love the worship of God's house. "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house." "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!" Hence they do not forsake the assembling of themselves together. They prefer to meet with the saints of God to associating with others in places of amusement, or even in social intercourse. "I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness."

They are upright in their dealings with their fellow-men. They would sooner suffer loss than do what is wrong, could they gain the whole world by it. Their exercise is not to get rich, but to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man.

4. Strangers in a country *have different interests to the natives.* Their hearts are in their own land. So the hearts of God's people are in heaven. There their real treasure is. Consequently, though they cannot be altogether indifferent to what takes place round about them, though they will feel some interest in, and be affected in measure, by the events of the world, still they will not be influenced by them as other men. They have a better world in expectation. This earth is but a sojourning place to them; and consequently they are in the world, but not of it. All goes well, in the midst of earth's commotions, with their native land, the heavenly city; their best interests can never be affected; they receive a kingdom which cannot be moved; and "there is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High."

Now, what makes this the more true is that they are not only strangers, but *pilgrims* upon earth. They are not, that is to say, like some foreigners who become naturalized in the countries they dwell in. No; God's people cannot be naturalized upon earth. There is nothing congenial to the new man in the air, the customs, or the characters of the inhabitants of this world. Besides, they are pilgrims. They are to themselves as persons journeying forward through this world and life to a better. Here they have no continuing city. Here they pass through innumerable changes; but they seek a city. To that city their steps are tending. That city they have in view. They would not always dwell here. With the saints of old, they confess that they are strangers and pilgrims upon earth. "Now," saith the apostle, "they who say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." So it is with saints. They

"Leave the world's deceitful shore,
And leave it to return no more."

"And, truly, if they were mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have," like those of old, "opportunity to return; but now," taught by God, and born of the Spirit, "they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he has prepared for them a city."

Well, then, "you see your calling, brethren." It is to be strangers and pilgrims upon earth. And O! how many things, which our space forbids us to mention, will probably arise to your minds as in this point of view you consider that calling.

III. Those who partake of the Christian calling are *called to be sons and servants to God and his dear Son Jesus Christ.* Sons and servants at the same time, as Malachi writes: "his own son that serveth him." To serve God and Jesus is their delight. They can entertain feelingly and heartily the words of one who said, "to serve God is to reign." They are like the freed man in Israel, who, having served for his seven years by obligation, was at length made perfectly free, and said, "O! I love my master; I love his house; I will not be made free. Bore my ear

to the door-posts of his house; I will still serve him whom I love." So with the saint. "O!" says the freed man of Jesus, "I don't want to serve another. I don't want, thou sweetest, dearest, loveliest Lord Jesus, to be freed from serving thee. My pain, my grief is that I cannot serve thee better. Ah! Lord, I long for the time when I shall see thee up in glory; when my Father's Name shall be on my forehead; when I shall be bathed in bliss; and then—then to its fulness shall the promise be fulfilled: 'His servants shall serve him.' Ah! Lord, the hope of this cheers me down below. I love to serve thee here, and hope to serve thee for ever. My God, my King, let others serve their lusts, themselves, the world; my desire is to be able more fully to say, 'Other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but now by thee only will I make mention of thy Name.'"

Thus, then, the saints are called to be Christ's servants.

"Not with the terrors of a slave
Do they perform his will;
But with the noblest powers they have
His sweet commands fulfil."

David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, blessedly describes how Christ makes a man a servant, and what are the feelings of God's called ones. He cries, "Now, Lord, I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid." But what made the man so willing, so eager to serve Christ? O! he says, it is love, nothing but love, grace, mercy, have wrought this wonder. "Thou hast loosed my bonds." Yes, this is it. When Christ looses the bonds of guilt, and law, and terrors from the heart, then he binds that heart to him in adamant chains of love; but we must not suppose that Christ's service upon earth has nothing but ease and comfort about it. O no! Those who serve Christ must serve him in rough and smooth things, in evil report and good report. They will meet with innumerable oppositions, both from within and without; and, therefore, in serving a crucified Saviour, they will only bring forth fruits with patience. As he says, "In your patience possess ye your souls." This, then, leads us to another view of this calling.

IV. God's people are *called to be soldiers* as well as servants. O to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ! Such a battle! such a cause! such a Captain! and such a prize, so sure and so glorious, may make even a coward bold. But still, let us remember, Christ's soldiers have to fight and have to overcome. O! how sweetly these words have dropped into our own heart, and cheered us as heavenly wine:

"There, in his book, I bear
A more than conqueror's name;
A soldier, son, and fellow-leir,
Who fought and overcame."

But though the crown is sure, the victory certain, the battle has to be fought, the victory won. "He that striveth for the masteries is not crowned," says Paul, "unless he strive law-

fully." And, again, he writes: "Now they that run in a race run all; but one receiveth the prize. So run that ye may obtain." Dear saints of God, do not let men beguile you into sloth and carelessness by any words of vanity. Go to God's Word; keep close to his Scriptures. When men advance things, under even the pretext of grace and liberty, which are not scriptural, cast their words from you. Remember what Mr. Hart says of preachers:

"Some overdrive, some frighten back,
And others *lull to sleep.*"

You are called to a race, to a battle. You are called to be soldiers; and the prize is not gained by sleeping or playing; but by godly fighting, and through divine grace winning the victory.

But look at the enemies, and then say if it is a time to be careless, settled on your lees, carnally-secure; a time to be as contrary to the precepts and counsels of Christ in his Word as it is possible to be? He says, "See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools." He says, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." He says, "Take" and "put on the whole armour of God;" and "Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth." He holds forth the prize to the overcomers, and cheers them in the fight by a view of the prize and a promise of the victory; "for stronger is he that is in you than he that is in the world."

Now see your enemies; enemies who all aim at the very life of your souls; enemies who would be the death of you could they really overcome; enemies, therefore, to be fought and conquered, not trifled with; enemies not to be scorned when we consider their power; enemies not to be feared when we consider the Captain of our salvation. In the first place, there are principalities and powers of darkness; the rulers of the darkness of this world. These, Paul tells us, have to be wrestled with; these have to be conquered.

Then, again, look at the world, with all its seducing and terrifying powers; with all its innumerable allurements, adapting themselves to the lusts of the eye, the lusts of the flesh, and the pride of the heart which is in us. Well might one pray,

"Save me from this bewitching world,
Which has to death ten thousand hurled."

O! it is indeed hard to fight against the world, to go against the stream of human opinion, to brave men's censures, to despise men's praises, to fear not what man can do against us; and in everything only know the will of the Lord Jesus. This, too, becomes a thousand-fold more difficult because of indwelling sin. Ah! here indeed is the stress of the battle. Our own hearts are the most treacherous, powerful, and deadly of our foes. We have a murderous enemy within us. A fire is burning in our own houses. There are traitors of all sorts and kinds lurking about in every corner of the city of Mansoul, ready to

throw open the gates at any moment, and give the city over to the world and Satan.

Now, we write not this to discourage the called of Christ, but, God willing, to arouse them. As Joshua and Caleb said, so say we, not to sleepy, foolish, talkative professors, but to the saints of God, the soldiers of Jesus Christ, "they shall but be bread for us." "If God be for us, who can be against us?" The Lord, then, arouse and animate our souls to the fight; as one of our poets well expresses it (271, Gadsby's Selection):

"My Captain sounds the alarm of war;
Awake! the powers of hell are near.
'To arms, to arms!' I hear him cry;
'TIS YOURS TO CONQUER OR TO DIE."

"Roused by the animating sound,
I cast my eager eyes around;
Make haste to gird my armour on,
And bid each trembling fear begone.

"In Christ I hope; in Christ I trust;
His bleeding cross is all my boast;
Through troops of foes he'll lead me on
To victory and a victor's crown."

V. Now, to conclude. All these things show us that the Christian calling is *one of self-denial*. He that loses sight of this does not see his calling in the true nature of it. A Christian man is not called to live after the flesh; "for if ye live after the flesh ye shall die;" but by the Spirit to mortify the deeds of the body, that he may live. He is called to put off, as concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and to put on the new, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. He is called to a crucifying of the flesh, with its affections and lusts. But, mind, this crucifying of the flesh is not what some persons suppose it to be. It is not to subject ourselves to unnecessary and uncommanded austerities. It is not to torment the poor body by fasts, and wearing hair shirts, and nobody knows what. Nay, it is not merely to deny the grosser corruptions of nature. The old man does not consist of only grosser appetites and sensual affections. The very acts of self-denial which some practice may rather cherish the old man than mortify him. He may thrive as to his legality, self-righteousness, and pride whilst he is being mortified as to grosser inclinations. He cannot be crucified properly apart from Christ. We cannot take a crucified self to Christ. No; the old man is only to be crucified at the cross of Christ. He that is Christ's has crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts. Paul well describes this in his epistles. He says, "I am crucified with Christ." There, at his cross, I get the real crucifixion; there I die to self in all its various shapes and forms. There I die to my own wisdom, strength, righteousness, and goodness, as well as am there crucified to the world, and the world to me. One of our poets says well and feelingly,

“When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Prince of glory died,
My highest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

His dying crimson, like a robe,
Hangs o'er his body on the tree;
Now I am dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.”

Yes, it is by the faith of the Son of God that the proper crucifixion of the old man is effected; and by the faith of the Son of God alone can a Christian man walk forward in the path of universal self-denial, or putting off himself, from day to day, in all respects.

Thus, then, we see the connection between the Christian's calling and a path of self-denial. He is called to believe in the Son of God, and called, in thus believing, to overcome the world and put off himself from day to day, as to worldliness, sin, and self-righteousness.

But we must bring our address to an end. Dear friends, we commence our labours upon this periodical another year with a somewhat oppressive sense of the responsibility of our post as editor, coupled with a feeling of our great insufficiency and deep poverty. But we would depend upon the Lord. Hitherto he has helped. We trust that he will still be our all-sufficiency. Brethren, pray for us, and our kind friend and able helper, Mr. Hemington. We are no lords over God's heritage; we claim no superiority over our readers. Our aim, we trust, is to use such gifts as the Lord has bestowed upon us for the benefit of his dear people. We are as brethren amongst brethren, as those who serve you for the Lord's sake. We know ourselves to be poor, infirm creatures; liable to err in judgment; to act, or speak, or write unadvisedly. We feel that it is sadly easy to get away from the blessed Spirit of God and his leadings, into our own spirits. How much, then, we need upholding grace! How much we need our dear friends' prayers, that we may be useful to them. Do help us all you can; may the Lord especially grant you a spirit of prayer for us. Pray that we may keep the pages of this magazine pure in the truth, sound in experience, sound in practical things. Pray that your editor, as he is ultimately responsible for all that appears in this magazine, may never swerve a hair's breadth from what is right, through respect to man; that he may never seek unnecessarily to wound any one, but never sacrifice a goodness of conscience towards God in deference to human opinion; that he may hold on his way, calmly, lovingly, yet determinedly, in paths of integrity and truth. O that this magazine may during the year come forth month by month laden with the sweet truth and Name of Jesus; that he may be glorified; that it may visit the hearts of the poor, the needy, the self-helpless, the weary, the heavy-laden, and may speak in those hearts of divine love, and Jesus' blood and glorious righteous-

ness; of rich, and free, and sovereign grace; of the blessed and Holy Spirit's almighty gracious power; and thus may be as the jubilee trumpet in many souls, proclaiming truth, and peace, and heavenly joy, and a holy spiritual divine liberty! May grace be with you all in Jesus.

Yours in love,
THE EDITOR.

A FRAGMENT OF THE PAST YEAR'S EXPERIENCE.

WRITING a little anticipatory, and as if speaking to our readers at the same time that our remarks will be read, we may say of the past year, that, with all its painful vicissitudes, it is gone for ever. But, O! what a never-to-be-forgotten year of heart-breaking sorrow and affliction has it been to us, far exceeding all previous years of trial, during our pilgrimage on earth. With the beginning of the year began, for the most part, our great family trouble, and which, month by month, as the year rolled on, was permitted to rage like a dreadful storm in the sky, and to break with such intensity of fury over our head, that our very heart was melted like lead in a furnace. And although He who rides upon the wings of the wind, and controls the angry elements of every storm by the word of his power, was pleased towards the close of the past year to make the storm of our bitter domestic affliction to reach its climax, and in a certain way to spend itself of its strength, yet in crossing the threshold of this "New Year" of grace, 1879, there are such painfully visible marks of wreckage of the past storm around us in our family circle, and such bleeding rents as the effects of it, in the feelings of our soul, that the new year finds us pretty much where the old one left us; viz., as being often drenched with grief, and overwhelmed with sorrow.

Both with ourselves, and our poor sorrow-stricken partner in life, we have to witness such an altered aspect of affairs as seems, at times, beyond what our frail sensitive nature could bear. The desolation, in part, which the blast of affliction has inflicted upon our home, makes things within its walls look different to what they did. Even things which have undergone no change seem changed to us; and the tranquillity of former days is too much shattered to admit of our gazing upon the altered scene without emotions most piercing and cutting.

Reminiscences of the days gone by, when the dear blessed child we so fondly and tenderly loved was with us, and was like an olive plant round about our table, roll in upon our mind, and make the death of our beloved one to be the more intensely felt as a present reality. Such flashes of thought in reference to her childhood and youth; such vivid remembrances of her fond and loving ways; and such solemn reflections upon the deeply mysterious dispensation of God by which she has been taken away, take place in our mind, that there is hardly a thing we do at

home, or an old track we take abroad, but what visions of the past hang about our eyes; and the very fact that they are only visions, and no longer pleasing realities, tends beyond expression to throw a sombre shade around every object and thing of an earthly nature.

But, then, whilst we enter upon the present year with so poignant a remembrance of the past year's trials, and particularly of the greater and more cutting affliction, as brought about by the hand of death, we also enter upon the present year with a consoling remembrance of the wonderful goodness of God, as manifested towards our most beloved child, in the salvation of her precious soul; and of God's loving-kindness and compassion, as manifested on different occasions to ourselves when our trial was at its height.

That our dearest beloved daughter is now with the Lord we have the most comforting persuasion. Her testimonies, as left behind, her state of mind in the conscious prospect of death, her last moments, and her peaceful and truly remarkable end, forbid our believing otherwise.

Again; that our own poor cast-down soul was, on one occasion in particular, and at other times, but with lesser joy, greatly blessed of God, this neither dare we deny. That our confidence in reference to the Lord's manifested mercy, both to our darling girl and ourselves, has been tried and tested to the utmost we confess has been the case; for the enemy has thrust at it with fearful vengeance, and taunted us about it with awful malice; but no sooner are we brought in spirit near to our God, and can find his voice sounding in our heart, than we find our confidence blessedly confirmed and established by what God speaks to us about it.

So that, putting day against day, and experience against experience, in respect of the year gone by, we have to look back upon it as having been a year of unusually great adversity and bitter tribulation; but one in which, when walking in the midst of trouble, we were sometimes wonderfully revived, and blessed in an unusual way with the comforts of God, and with joy in the Holy Ghost.

If, one day, as in truth was too often the case, we were as dark in mind and as miserable in soul-feeling as ever sin and our circumstances could make us; and if, whilst in such an experience, we were fretful, peevish, prayerless, full of rebellion, and ready to dispute God's right to his face to suffer his dealings with us to be marked with such severity; yet, another day, when blessed with the manifestations of his favour, we should be as meek in spirit as a little child, and could, with tears in our eyes, cry *for* submission, even if we could not feel it. And sometimes, when submission enough has been wrought in our soul to enable us to now to the dispensation without feeling an inward disposition to complain, we have found God to come, as in a moment, and so melt our heart with his mercy, and comfort our mind with hope

of better things to come, that we have been constrained to cry out, "My blessed God."

Our worst times throughout our affliction were when we could not shed a tear, when we could neither weep over our dear child, nor over our sias, nor after Christ; but when our affliction seemed to be a sort of hard iron-like affliction, and our own feelings as stubborn and as hard as the trial itself. We have felt sometimes, under such hardness, as if a more unfeeling wretch never could exist. We have felt that if the recovery of the sick one, or the salvation of either her soul or our own, depended on our crying with a feeling heart to God, that the sick one must die, and that she and we must both be lost together, for aught that we could do in raising a feeling cry in our soul to prevent it. We have never in our life before so much proved the value of tears. Let affliction be as bruising as it may, and sorrow as overwhelming, yet, if we can only weep, O what a relief it is! How a soft heart really sweetens trial; or, at least, makes it far more bearable. At such times in our affliction, when we could walk about our house bathed in tears, and could drop upon our knees, and pour out our complaints into the bosom of our God, and could feel that it was into his blessed bosom that we were helped to pour them, it seemed then as if there was something in the trial that was worth having, and something to make amends for all; but when we were left to be shut up in prayer, bound in spirit, feeling our heart as hard as a stone, and our eyes as dry as the dust of summer, those were the times when we used to feel literally crushed in spirit, and used to be tempted to say unto God, "Show me wherefore thou contendest thus with me."

We have passed through whole nights in this experience, nights, we mean, not upon our bed, but when we have sat up to watch over, and administer to the wants of, our precious child; and during which never-to-be-forgotten nights, our anxiety for our darling has been intense beyond expression, and our sorrow of soul as deep as the sea; and yet our feeling of anxiety and of sorrow would seem to be a feeling without a feeling in it. All would seem dark and dismal, within and without. Our trial would seem to be wrapped about with the most impenetrable mystery; and our mortal life on earth, and God's dealings with us, would appear such a ravelled skein that we used to sit dumb and confounded; and yet, whilst, like Job in the day of his calamity, our lips spake not a word, our spirit would utter things against the Almighty which we durst not pen for other eyes to read.

But O! that one night in particular, when our soul was so much blessed, and when the joy of the Lord came down hour after hour, dripping like dew from Jehovah's throne into our poor aching heart; when every verse in that precious hymn of Hart's,

"Faith in the bleeding Lamb," &c.,

seemed to drop with the very unction of the Spirit, like so many

bits of solid heavenly comfort, into the very centre of our soul. Never, we think, shall we forget that night of prayer, and praise, and comfort, and joy; so blessedly did the dear Saviour of sinners reveal himself to our faith. We had shed floods of tears for our dear suffering child; but that night we could sit and think of Christ, and shed tears for him. It was in truth a precious season in our experience, and time of unequalled domestic sorrow.

Having wished, with the kind consent of the editor, to fill a page or two, in the first number of the magazine for this year, we have felt our mind more led to supply those pages with this fragmentary reference to our late affliction, than with other matter. And if the fragment of reference we have penned should in any way prove a word in season to any who may, at the very beginning of, or during, this "New Year," be called to walk in a similar pathway of tribulation, our chief desire in writing the same will be accomplished.

C. H.

"THE DAYS OF THY MOURNING SHALL BE ENDED."

ISA. LX. 20.

O! WHEN shall my pilgrimage end? Yea, when shall this warfare be o'er?

Ah, when shall my spirit ascend to regions where tears are no more? Must conflict for ever be mine? Must tempests unceasingly blow? Sins (hydra-head serpent) combine, to poison each comfort below?

Shall those whom I love turn aside? the straight path of Scripture forsake?

Earth's fondly clasp'd rivets divide? or cords of affinity break?

Dear Lord, let me look far above those clouds which so darken my sky,

To yon bright horizon of love, where sin's poison'd arrows ne'er fly.

I loathe such existence as this,—a world with so little to cheer.

O when shall the kingdoms be his,—Christ's government only appear?

Yes! then shall the sighs which oppress give place to transcendent delight,

The manifold darts of distress remain in earth's shadow of night.

Salvation! How precious the word! salvation from self and from sin!

The presence of Jesus the Lord; O when shall this Sabbath begin?

O when, in the lone silent tomb, shall this fragile body be laid,

When the Master shall bid me come home, the member to be with its Head?

I long for that moment of joy; yes, I long for that hour so blest;

Though worms shall this body destroy, the soul shall eternally rest.

Come quickly, Lord Jesus, yes, come; I long to be ever with thee;

I pine, like the exile, for home; I pine, like the slave, to be free.

LET your heart plod much on the free covenant of grace in Christ by prayer and meditation; and let your sins come into the same room with you, while you are on the inquiry.—*Dorney.*

STRONG CONSOLATION.

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”—HEB. vii. 25.

Our High Priest bears and takes away all the sinfulness and failings that are in, or do accompany, the holy worship of his saints. The world is apt to despise the worship of the saints as mean and contemptible, unmeet for the Majesty of God. This puts them on the inventing of what they suppose more glorious and beautiful, though God abhors it. But the saints themselves know that of their defects, wants, and failings in their worship that the world know not of, and how unfit it is and unsuited to the Holy Majesty of God, with whom they have to do. They know how the bitter root of unbelief in their hearts springs up and defiles them and their duties; how effectually vanity works in their minds, and a secret loathing in their wills, in their best duties, and most solemn acts of worship; besides innumerable other sinful distempers, that often get ground and place in their hearts. These they know are the things that in and of themselves are enough to defile, pollute, and render abominable all their worship; yea, and if God should mark what is amiss, the guilt of their holy worship is enough to make both it and them that perform it to be for ever rejected.

But now, here is their relief. Here beauty, glory, and order is recovered to their worship. Christ, as their High Priest, takes away all the evil, filth, and iniquity of their holy things, that they may be presented pure and holy and glorious before God. So did Aaron typically of old. (Ex. xxviii. 38.) Thus doth Christ, our High Priest, really answer for all that is amiss, all failings, all miscarriages in his saints. Them he takes on his own score; and what is from his Spirit, that enters into the presence of the holy God. He presents it to himself, and by him it is presented unto God.

By this means doth the Lord Christ preserve the glory and beauty of gospel worship, notwithstanding all the defects, and failings, and defilements that from the weakness and sins of his saints do seem to cleave unto it.

Here lies encouragement to the people of God upon a spiritual account, as to the state of things between God and their own souls. They have discoveries made unto them of the glory, majesty, and holiness of God. They know that he is “a consuming fire;” they have discoveries of his excellences which the world is not acquainted with. They are also sensible of their own poverty, wretchedness, sin, and weakness; how unfit, how unable to approach unto him, or to have to do with him in holy worship. They are ashamed of their own prayers and supplications, and could, oftentimes, when they are gone through, wish them undone again, considering how unanswerable they are to the greatness and holiness of God. In this condition, there is a plentiful relief tendered to faith from the consideration of this High Priest.—*Dr. Owen.*

“IS THINE HEART RIGHT, AS MY HEART IS
WITH THY HEART?”

Dear Friend,—It is written (Dan. vii. 18): “The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.” This precious part of God’s Word has comforted me more or less for upwards of 20 years.

How art thou getting on in this sin-desolated world? Is thy soul in health and prosperous? As the outward man is daily perishing, is thy inward man renewed day by day? “The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.” Has the kingdom of heaven been taken by thee lately by force of prayer, in solemn secret blessed communion with thy sweet Lord Jesus? Or has thy love abated? If thou livest near to thy heavenly Father in thy duties, thou shalt learn many blessed secrets that will amazingly help thee on thy journey, while thy soul remaineth in this kingdom of grace. “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him.”

The Lord hath seen fit to put thee into a hot furnace of bodily affliction. Now, thy mercies do not rise to thee out of the dust; but they flow to thee through that blessed channel,—sanctified afflictions. Let the cloud be ever so dark, thou shalt surely see a rainbow of mercy shining in the midst of it. If thou wert without the trial, then thou wouldest be without the deliverance. So then, welcome thy bitter cross, and say, Happy pains, sweet bitters, healthful complaints, profitable bereavements! Well; is not this the language of thy heart, at times, even now, whilst thou art under bodily affliction? Be assured that, as thy days of darkness, so shall thy strength be.

“The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.” Now, there are many steps to take, and many to ascend, in this kingdom of grace. There is the step of convictions for sin. There is also another step, far higher; and I trust thou hast ascended that step,—the full assurance of faith. If thou hast attained to this secret spot, happy art thou; but there is another blessed step thou shalt shortly take. Now, don’t let thy heart be troubled at the thought. Thou shalt step from this kingdom of grace into the kingdom of glory. Thy faith shall be turned into everlasting sight, and hope into glorious fruition. So shalt thou ever be with the Lord. O amazing love, and that from everlasting, to put thee into the kingdom of grace! Not many noble or great of the earth are heirs of this kingdom. Then are you and I, two poor ignorant worms of the earth, called by matchless grace? Now, beloved, if the thought that thou shortly shalt take possession of this kingdom of glory is not enough to break thy hard heart, and make thee to rejoice, I don’t know what will.

My affliction, at times, will not allow me to walk across the road, as I am so short of breath. I often look down into the grave, but can see no terror. The cause is solely this:—Our most glorious Christ has been there before me, and made it a

lovely bed of roses for thee and me and all the blood-bought and Spirit-taught saints. Instead of our Judge condemning us, he stepped from his kingdom of glory and died for us. O what amazing love! Surely thy heart ought to rejoice, and make thee sing the praises of God with joyful lips in his sanctuary. But here instead thou art often fretting, pining, grieving at the dispensations of God toward thee. Canst thou not bear one pain? one bereavement? Our light afflictions are but for a moment. Consider what was endured for thee, what agony and bloody sweat; and this will silence thy heart.

But the grave could not hold this glorious Warrior, who fought the battle with death, hell, and sin, in garments rolled in blood divine. He ascended in triumph the heavenly heights, a glorious Victor over every enemy: and is now interceding for thee and me. As the grave could not hold this glorious Warrior, it cannot hold thee. This honour have all the saints.

May the Lord ravish thy heart with this amazing love. Besiege well a throne of grace. Let not thy heart be slack in secret prayer,—blessed communion from day to day. I know thou art, like me, a poor earthen pitcher, and cannot contain much of such amazing love. I recollect a spot where the Lord so burst in upon me with this amazing love that I cried out, "Hold, Lord! It is enough. My cup runneth over. I cannot contain much; mine is but a small vessel."

Again. It is not thy Lord's will that thou shouldest always remain in this kingdom of grace. His will is to transplant thee to his kingdom of glory; but until that time arrives, I exhort thee to hold up thy pastor's hands daily in thy secret closet visits. If thou art seldom in thy closet, engaged in this blessed employ, thy soul will get sickly, and thy enemies will prevail. As was the case with Moses, so it will be with thee. Thy soul's Amalekites will surely prevail against thee.

Again. It is thy pastor's duty, and desire also, never to get slack in this sweet employ in secret, but keep begging, hoping, panting, striving, longing, craving for the people, that they may thrive, and that their hands may be held up in prayer for him.

I now close this epistle, with this solemn warning to you all, as a church and people. If the Lord was to remove a spirit of prayer from you, as a people, for the work of the ministry, thy sanctuary would become a den of thieves. I can prove this from God's Word and my own experience. I saw a Baptist chapel the other day in a state of wreck and ruin, and a habitation for owls; the windows all smashed in. In this deplorable state it had been for years. Baptist ministers have long tried to make a stand there, but could not. The Lord's presence was removed in this solemn manner.

May the Lord still continue to bless you, as a people, with his presence.

I remain yours in Christ,

THOS. LITTLETON.

13, Ashford Road, Eastbourne, Jan. 24th, 1878.

“THE PATH OF THE JUST.”

My Dear Friend,—From the tone of yours, which came to hand in due course, I perceive you are no stranger to that path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen. To the fowl we may compare the high-flying professor; to the vulture a keen, sharp, shrewd professor, with great light in his judgment, great knowledge of the letter, and great gifts, without charity, or the love of God. Now Paul puts such down as nothing in the church of Christ; nothing at the throne of grace; nothing in the sight of God and Christ. And all that they are unto their carnal brethren is a tinkling cymbal,—a mere empty sound. (1 Cor. xiii.) These are unacquainted with the way in which God has been leading you,—that of tribulation. Not that any man is without trouble; for sin has entailed this upon all (Job v. 6, 7), professor or profane. But the afflictions of the Lord's family, as Peter tells us, are for the trial of their faith. (1 Peter i. 7.)

Now, what is it saints believe? They believe in that blessed covenant, ordered in all things and sure (2 Sam. xxiii. 5); they believe that God will perform that good work which he begins in the heart (Pbil. i. 6); they believe in the suitableness of gospel promises (Prov. xv. 23); they believe that God in Christ is able to save, comfort, and deliver in all troubles. (2 Cor. i. 10.) All this they believe, not as a mere creed, for their faith does not stand in the letter, but in the spirit.

Let us just glance at the above faith, and see how God honours it. He has given it, and he will acknowledge it, not in our way, but in his own way, time, and manner. Abel, by faith in that covenant of grace which insured that the seed of the woman should come in time to be the substitutional Lamb of God, offered a lamb. And the Lord had respect unto Abel; that is, to the act done under the influence of faith. And by it, sacrificially, he obtained witness of God, but truly by the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world. Now, what floods of guilt, of temptation, and corruption we may suppose he waded through to get at this ever-blessed testimony God honoured him with. Faith went right on, without turning to the right or to the left. God had promised, so faith said, He will perform; therefore, trust in him. This has been our case again and again. The bow of promise is seen in the dark cloud; therefore, fear not; press on; and all will be well.

But, again. They believe in the suitableness of God's promises. O what a sweetness and suitableness there was in that word which God spake unto David in great extremity, as recorded in 1 Samuel xxx! Ziklag was burnt, the women taken captives; and his own men, filled with rage, talked of stoning him. Then David was greatly distressed; but God first encouraged him, and then he encouraged himself in God, to inquire of the Lord about this gloomy affair. And God told him he should overtake the

enemy, and most certainly should recover all. This word girded up the feeble loins of his mind. Then he girds his sword upon him, and so did his men, and recovered all. He left death upon the battle-field, and returned unto the poor feeble ones who were foot-sore, heart-sore, faint, and altogether unable to go over the brook, triumphant. He gave also an equal share of the spoil to all. Thus did David. And so a precious Christ has done with us. When the spiritual Amalekites, Satan and his host, with the fire of our raging lusts, set on fire the whole course of nature, all our profession appears hay, wood, and stubble. Such a wretched state we then see ourselves in, that we wonder what will be the end. We first inquire of one, and then of another; run here and run there; seeking help from everyone except the only One who can help effectually. At length, there is seen to be no other remedy. God must be sought with tears, sighs, and supplication. Then God, bless his Majesty, speaks a word in season. O how good it is,—sweeter than honey, milk, or wine.

Again (but this should have come in the second place), they believe God is faithful to complete that good work he is the Author of in the hearts of his redeemed. This brings them in storms to commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator. Paul knew, in his rough voyage unto Rome, all would be well. My friend, without trials you and I can have no right knowledge of divine grace. (Deut. xxxii. 10.)

Again, and this properly comes fourth, they believe that God in Christ is able to save, comfort, and deliver in all troubles. This is the Rock unto which they lift up the eyes of their minds for salvation; and he is the Rock of salvation. Isaiah felt him precious in trouble, and gave a sweet testimony respecting him (ch. xxxii. 2): "And a man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind." When the blustering winds of adversity are blowing hard, taking that child, removing that friend, cutting down a tender loving wife, and hurling confusion into all our paths; no hiding-place in such perilous troubles but the Man Christ Jesus the Lord, God over all. Isaiah goes on: "And a covert from the tempest." You and I have had some rough sailing this last 20 years. We have been, at times, tempest-tossed, and not comforted. No sun, no moon, no stars appeared for many days. Had we not been well secured in the hold of eternal redemption, by the three-fold cord of eternal electing love, I am positive of one thing,—that we should have been like some other fleshly ones who, trusting to the cobweb of their own faith, have been washed overboard. But thanks be to God, we have thus far weathered the storm. Therefore, we will venture once more to wave our flag. Especially may we do this every time we enter the Cape of Good Hope. And on this flag it is written: "Hitherto God has helped us."

The prophet goes on: "As rivers of water in a dry place." What a dry place I experience prayer to be without this river! How dry are ordinances without this river! Yea, even the letter

of truth is dry without the flowing river. But thus far it has followed us, and will not forsake us. "As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Yes, when the sun of temptation beats, as the sun naturally on the head of Jonah, it will teach us to lie close under, and cleave to the sides of this rock.

Yet, notwithstanding all that God has said, all that he has done in us and for us, both in his kind providence and in the triumphs of his grace, when left to reason on the works of God, what wretched infidels we are! Zion said, "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me;" when, at the same time, he was behind the cloud, ordering her affairs in infinite wisdom. He leads in a sure way, but not always a pleasant one. He leads by a right way, but not always a comfortable one. He leads in a profitable way, but not always a smooth one. He leads in an eternal way, but not always a joyful one. The righteous man, thus led, shall hold on his way, through all trials, troubles, sorrows, and afflictions; and in the end will prove victorious over all.

"And then O how pleasant the conqueror's song!"

Yours in Love,

Southill, Feb. 15th, 1876.

J. WARBURTON.

THE RENT VAIL.

"And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom."—MATT. XXVII. 51.

ASCEND, my soul, in sacred fire;
 'Tis Jesus' blood which doth inspire
 Thy glorious melody.
 The veil is rent, through Jesus' blood;
 Now to my soul descends the flood
 Of love divinely free.
 The veil is rent; God's love is mine;
 Into my heart its beams can shine,
 To make my cup o'erflow.
 Through precious blood my soul's secure
 Of heavenly joys, bliss sweet and pure,
 All love can e'er bestow.
 Awake, then, O my soul; awake,
 Psaltery and harp; together make
 Your notes ascend on high.
 O! Who can sing like those who feel
 How through the rent, yet beauteous veil,
 Love flows eternally?

I AM blind, but, bless God, content. All that he doth is wise and just. All that comes in his will is welcome. His choice is better than mine. Eyes might have blinded; but blindness shall enlighten me. God hath not cast me off, but called me aside into the invisible world. There Jesus Christ is the only Sun.—*Polhill*.

“NONE TEACHETH LIKE GOD.”

A Brief Account of the Lord's Goodness and Mercy Manifested to my Dear Mother, Harriet Ashdown, of Cross-in-Hand, who died in peace, April 23rd, 1878, aged 82 years.

My mother was born on Aug. 19th, 1795, at Loughton, and brought up in the Church of England, where her father and mother were regular attendants until their death. Her father was a tradesman, a very moral, honest Churchman, and brought up all his family to the Church, where all, except those departed, remain to this day. Some members of the family took part in the singing. My mother being a good singer, and very fond of it, was among them. Her eldest brother was chosen to take the clerkship. Such were my mother's connections. But

“The appointed time rolls on apace,
Not to *propose*, but *call* by grace;
To change the heart, renew the will,
And turn the feet to Zion's hill.”

When she was between 25 and 27 years of age, she was nursing her brother's wife in a painful illness, and I have heard her say that she died in her arms. Her pangs and groans so wrought on my mother, or, rather, the Lord did by them, that she for the first time went into a closet to pray to the Lord for mercy. The suddenness of her death left a lasting impression on my mother's mind. Being convinced of her own state as a sinner before God, she sank into a low state of body, and great distress of soul. How long her distress lasted I am not able to say; but not very long. I have heard her say that while in her worst state, she did not close her eyes in sleep for three days and nights together, for fear of awaking in eternal torments. One day, while in this trouble, her mother was baking bread; and in heating the oven, she brought in a furze faggot, when this thought came into her mind: If I had no more years to be in hell than there are thorns in that faggot;—but O! it's for *eternity*, eternity, eternity! Then she tried to number the thorns, until she was overwhelmed with grief and despair.

But deliverance was now drawing near. She had an impression on her mind to send for *old* Mr. Funnell, who at that time preached occasionally at the Dicker and East Hoathly. She had heard him spoken of with great contempt. Her father objected to her sending for him, as he was a Methodist, and would, he said, drive her quite mad. But her case was an urgent one, and her mother agreed that her brother should go and tell him that there was a poor lost sinner sinking into hell, and she wanted him to pray for her. Mr. Funnell, when he heard the message, received her into his heart, and put up a prayer for her that same evening. She also had a sort of dream, about the same time as he was praying on her behalf. She seemed to be in a large open forest, by the side of a river. From the opposite side she saw a bright shining form coming towards her, with a golden sceptre

in his hand, which he held out for her to touch. This she did, after making great efforts. Then peace flowed into her soul that passeth all understanding. She felt her guilt and burden were gone. She broke out into singing with these words :

“ I mount, I fly;
O grave, where is thy victory?
O death, where is thy sting? ”

They were all watching, thinking she was dying; but *no*: sovereign grace was raising her up as a monument of mercy.

The next day, Mr. Funnell came to see her, feeling sure the Lord *had* delivered or *would* deliver her. I have many times heard her speak of the peace and joy that flowed into her soul at that time, whilst dear Mr. Funnell was reading a psalm, and in prayer.

After this, there was a sweet union between them; they were close friends until Mr. Funnell's death. Under this sweet deliverance, she said to her mother, “ *I know now what the minister means when he says, ‘ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.’ ”*

But now another trial awaited her. She could no longer sing in the church, and frequently absented herself to hear Mr. Funnell and other ministers. This brought great opposition from her father and mother, as well as from the Church minister and all her friends. I have heard her say that she was obliged to carry the matter to the Lord in bitterness of soul.

But soon she became acquainted with my father, who always strove to sit under sound truth, and sometimes talked a little about it. He always seemed fond of godly ministers; and they used to go sometimes to Lewes to hear old Mr. Jno. Vinall, whose ministry was much blessed to my mother at that time, as well as in after years. She also profited by the conversation of the friends. When they came out of chapel, she used to walk behind them to hear them talk; and while they were telling each other of their sins, sorrows, and fears, and the blessedness and freeness of the Lord's mercy and grace, her soul was much comforted, notwithstanding the trials and opposition she met with at home and among the Church friends.

She was soon married to my father; and trials of another kind quickly fell to her lot. My father had no work, or very little, and she was soon obliged to sell some of her clothes to get food. For some years they were much tried in providence; indeed, at times, this was the case until near the end of their days. In these seasons she used to go into the fields to work, with little food in the morning, and no more until she returned at night. She was wont to tie her apron strings tight to support her body; but the Lord sustained her. About this time the ministry of the late Mr. W. Burch, of Staplehurst, was much blessed to her. He came to Mayfield once a month.

Another painful affliction came upon her, when I was a little

boy. About the time of harvest, she had sore boils all over her body, from head to feet; so that with pain and difficulty she went into the harvest fields with my father. Some days, when the wind blew, it caught her dress; and I have seen her stand and weep until I also have wept for a long time with her. When I have been in the fields with the sheep, I have wept whole days, and sometimes gone under a hedge to kneel down to pray to the Lord to help my mother, and deliver her. In those days the book of Job was much blessed to her, also Lamentations. She has often said how precious those parts of the Word were to her in these afflictions, which lasted some time. She had at last three large carbuncles on her backbone, and was confined to her bed. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."

I shall now pass over many years of sorrow and distress, mingled with the Lord's mercy and helps to her. As circumstances changed, and many of her old friends died, and others moved away, and the cares of a family too much engrossed her, she fell for some years into a cold backsliding state of soul. But in the year 1851, my youngest sister, who was living with a farmer, and taking care of the children, as they moved from one farm to another, slept in a damp bed, and took cold. She was soon brought home ill, and sank fast in consumption. At this time, my father had no work, and we were very badly off. When this occurred, my mother said, "This is for my sins;" and she sank in deep distress; and her sorrows and distress cast a gloom, at times, over the whole family. It was not only her own soul now, but the soul of my poor sister, which was laid with much weight upon her. "Lord, in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them." Such was her case at this time, in bitterness of soul. Ah! this was a sorrowful time with us, as a family. My sister sank fast; and my poor mother was then almost in despair, until she was tempted hastily to say, "The Bible cannot be true, or the Lord would hear and have mercy."

Under this exercise, and Satan's temptations, she was brought very low; but a few days before my sister died, the Lord was pleased to pardon her sins, and deliver her soul, giving her sweet peace, whilst reading this hymn of Mr. Hart's:

"Bless the Lord, my soul, and raise
 A glad and grateful song
 To my dear Redeemer's praise,
 For I to him belong.
 He, my Goodness, Strength, and God,
 In whom I live, and move, and am,
 Paid my ransom with his blood;
 My portion is the Lamb.
 Though temptations seldom cease,
 Though frequent griefs I feel,
 Yet his Spirit whispers peace,
 And he is with me still.

Weak of body, sick in soul,
 Depress'd at heart and faint with fears,
 His dear presence makes me whole,
 And with sweet comfort cheers.

O my Jesus, thou art mine,
 With all thy grace and power.
 I am now, and shall be thine,
 When time shall be no more.
 Thou revivest me by thy death;
 Thy blood from guilt has set me free;
 My fresh springs of hope, and faith,
 And love, are all in thee."

She said, "This hymn is all mine, mother." This deliverance and mercy of the Lord to my poor sister's soul was in the morning, as we were about to sit down to breakfast; and O the joy and gladness of my poor mother's heart! I well remember we all wept for joy around the breakfast table. But my mother was too full to eat; she walked about the house, first up stairs, and then down, walking, and blessing and praising God, saying, "Let every thing that hath breath praise him. I called upon him in distress, and he heard me. Bless his holy Name! He will bring back the captivity of Jacob; he will deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also. O what mercy to me, a base backslider! O what wonderful love! O give thanks unto the Lord, for his mercy endureth for ever."

This sweetness remained with my dear mother for some time; and dear sister died in peace, Nov. 2nd, 1851. Many times have I heard my dear mother relate this trial, and the Lord's mercy in it, to friends with tears of gratitude and self-abasement, saying, "Ah! it was all for my sins. I forsook him, and went after idols. I have been a base backslider; but O, his unspeakable mercy!

"Was ever grace, Lord, rich as thine?
 Can aught be with it named?"

Hart's hymn,

"Backsliding souls, return to God,"

was very sweet to her.

From this time she was kept very tender in the fear of God, and for the most part lively in soul. She was very fond of Huntington's works; and as she had been in the habit of hearing Mr. Funnell and other non-Baptist ministers, she was opposed to baptism, and was, as well as my father and the rest of the family, what are called Huntingtionians.

About the year 1852 or 1853, Mr. W. Cowper, of the Dicker, came occasionally on a Lord's day evening to preach in Mr. Chapman's room at Cross-in-Hand. Sometimes he came on a week evening; also Mr. Tiptaft and others. Now Mr. Cowper and Mr. Tiptaft soon began to preach baptism, but though she loved the Baptist ministers, yet she did not see baptism to be a necessary part of gospel obedience, until she read a sermon by Mr. Kershaw. Under this she was truly convinced it was an

ordinance of the gospel, and was confirmed in it through the ministry of Mr. Cowper and Mr. Tiptaft.

Now another trial awaited her. She had never joined any church; but now baptism and the Lord's supper were laid with weight upon her mind. She often got a ride to the Dicker with Mr. Chapman to hear Mr. Cowper there, as well as at Cross-in-Hand. Her soul got fed and comforted; and she was soon made willing to cast in her lot with that people, though with much trembling. After she had consented to come before the church, she was much cast down on account of past backslidings, and her "unworthiness," as she would say, "to commemorate his dying love and blood. Such a poor old base sinner as I go to his table!"

My father knew nothing of her intentions, nor yet of her going before the church, until afterwards. Why she did not tell him I don't know; but the day she was going she was greatly exercised, and said to the Lord, in pleading with him, "*If they receive me, let it be a token THOU hast received me.*" So, with much trembling, she went to the chapel and before the church; and when she withdrew for the church to consult about her, she has said that she felt sure they would not receive her, and sank very low. But she was called in and told she was received; and then such peace and comfort flowed into her soul that her heart was broken with the Lord's goodness. She said within herself, "Thou hast received me; thanks to thy holy Name."

(*To be continued.*)

HOMeward LONGINGS.

THIRDLY. I have a desire to be with Christ. There the spirits of the just are perfected; there the spirits of the righteous are as full as they can hold. A sight of Jesus in the Word, some know how it will change them from glory to glory; but how then shall we be changed and filled when we shall see him as he is! "When he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

Moses and Elias appeared to Peter, and James, and John, at the transfiguration of Christ in glory. How so? Why, they had been in the heavens, and came thence with some of the glories of heaven upon them. Gild a bit of wood, yea, gild it seven times over, and it must not compare in difference to wood not gilt; so the soul that but a little while has been dipped in glory. Glory is a strange thing to men that are on this side of the heavens. It is that which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive;" only the Christian has a Word and a Spirit that, at times, doth give a little of the glimmering thereof unto him. But O! when he is in the Spirit, and sees in the Spirit, do you think his tongue can tell? But, I say, if the sight of heaven at so vast a distance is so excellent a prospect, what will it look like when one is in it? No marvel, then, if the desires of the righteous are to be with Christ.

Objection: But if this be the character of a righteous man, to desire to depart and be with Christ, I am none of them; for I never had such a desire in my heart; no, my fears of perishing will not suffer me either to desire to die to be with Christ, nor that Christ should come to judge the world.

Answer: Though thine is a case that must be excepted, for that thy desires may not as yet be grown so high; yet if thou art a righteous man, thy heart has in it the very seeds thereof. There are therefore desires, and desires to desire; as one child can reach so high, and the other can but desire to do so. Thou, if thou art a righteous man, hast desires, and these desires are ready to put forth into act when they are grown a little stronger, or when their impediment is removed. Many times it is with our desires as it is with saffron; it will bloom and blossom, and be ripe, and all in a night.

Tell me, dost thou not desire to desire? Yea, dost thou not vehemently desire to desire to depart and to be with Christ? I know, if thou art a righteous man, thou dost. When a man sows his field with wheat, it is soon covered with great clods. Now that which is under the clods grows as well as the rest, though it runs not upright as yet; it grows, though it is kept down. So do thy desires; and when the clod is removed, the blade will soon point upwards. I know thy mind; that which keeps thee that thou canst not yet arrive at a desire to depart and to be with Christ, is because some strong doubt or clod of unbelief, as to thy eternal welfare, lies hard upon thy desiring spirit. Now, let Jesus Christ but remove this clod, and thy desires will quickly start up to be gone. I say, let Jesus Christ but give thee one kiss, and, with his lips, as he kisses thee, whisper to thee the forgiveness of thy sins, and thou wilt quickly break out and say, "Nay, then, Lord, let me die in peace, since my soul is persuaded of thy salvation."

There is a man upon the bed of languishing; but O! he dares not die, for all is not as he would have it betwixt God and his poor soul; and many a night he lies thus in great horror of mind. But do you think that he doth not desire to desire to depart? Yes, yes; he also waits and cries to God to set his desires at liberty. At last the visitor comes and sets his soul at ease, by persuading of him that he belongs to God; and what then? O! now let me die; welcome death! Now he is like the man in Essex, who, when his neighbour at his bedside prayed for him that God would restore him to health, started up in bed, and pulled him by the arm, and cried out, "No, no; pray that God will take me away; for to me it is best to go to Christ."

The desires of some good Christians are pinioned, and cannot stir, especially this sort of desires; but Christ can and will cut the cord some time or other; and then thou that wouldst shalt be able to say, "I have a desire to depart, and to be with Jesus Christ." Meantime, be thou earnest to desire to know thy inte-

rest in the grace of God; for there is nothing short of the knowledge of that can make thee desire to depart, that thou mayest be with Christ.

This is that that Paul laid as the ground of his desires to be gone. "We know," says he, "that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." And know, that if thy desires be right they will grow, as other graces do, from strength to strength; only in this they can grow no faster than faith grows as to justification, and than hope grows as to glory. But we will leave this, and come to the second thing.

2. As the righteous men desire to be present with Jesus Christ, so they desire to be with him in that country where he is. "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city." "But now they desire a *better* country." Here is a comparison. There was another country, to wit, their native country, the country from whence they came out, that in which they left their friends and their pleasures for the sake of another world; which indeed is a better country, as is manifest from its character. It is an heavenly; as high as heaven is above the earth, so much better is that country which is an heavenly than is this in which now we are. A heavenly country; where there is a heavenly Father, a heavenly host, heavenly things, heavenly visions, heavenly places, a heavenly kingdom, and the heavenly Jerusalem, for them that are the partakers of the heavenly calling, and that are the heavenly things themselves. This is a country to be desired; and therefore no marvel if the righteous desire to have a habitation there. There is the Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and an innumerable company of angels. There is the general assembly and church of the first-born, and God the Judge of all, and Jesus, and the spirits of just men made perfect. Who would not be there? This is the country that the righteous desire for a habitation. "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city." Mark, they desire a country; and God prepareth for them a city; he goes beyond their desires, beyond their apprehensions, beyond what their hearts could conceive to ask for.

There are none that are weary of this world from a gracious disposition that they have to a heavenly, but God will take notice of them, will own them, and not be ashamed to own them; yea, such shall not lose their longing. They desire a handful; God gives them a seaful; they desire a country; God prepares for them a city, a city that is heavenly, a city that hath foundations, a city whose Builder and Maker is God. And all this is that the promise to them might be fulfilled: "The desire of the righteous

shall be granted."—*Extract from Bunyan's "The Desire of the Righteous shall be Granted."*

[To a spiritual mind, there is often such a blaze of glory around the writings of honest John Bunyan and others that, dazzled thereby, it is impossible to see certain incidental blemishes. So, when we look at the sun, we cannot perceive the spots upon its surface unless we first mitigate the glory of its brightness by interposing between our eyes and that luminary smoked or coloured glasses.]

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

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

My dear friend's very affectionate letter came duly to hand, and I most sincerely thank him for it. Your daughter is still with us. She talks about leaving us this day week, but I say not till this day fortnight, and I believe my word will stand in this case. I have been much comforted by her coming amongst us, and it is my earnest wish that she may be able to speak a similar language when she gives her dear parents a full account of her visit on her return to Lewes. I have the pleasure to inform you that she is favoured with the blessing of health, and appears comfortable in her mind; though often writing bitter things against herself, concluding that she has neither part nor lot in the Redeemer's greatest work. But this, you know, is common to all the royal family. This is one of the secrets of the Lord, known only to David and Jonathan, and such as fear his Name. Among these is your dear daughter; and this she dare not deny. However much she may be tempted to doubt her interest in the finished work of Jesus, she is safe in the ark; and though she may now and then take her flight from it, as the Lord lives, she shall find no rest for the soles of the feet of her faith until she returns. She is destined for a better world than this. Few have tried harder to make their nest in something here; but all her efforts have been and ever shall be in vain. She cannot feed on husks, as many do. Neither can she kiss the Lord's children, and go back to her own kindred (in the flesh), and to the gods formerly her own. On the contrary, I perceive in her a cleaving, like as in the case of Ruth, to the poor and needy, and a desire to glean in the fields appointed for her by Him who loved her before dust was fashioned into a man. What a blessing to her parents! What a cause for gratitude in her own soul! How astonishing are these works of grace and a divine power to hypocrites, formalists, and devils! The thankfulness I feel on the occasion I shall never be able fully to describe.

I have of late been much on the wing, which is very unusual with me. I expect to be under a different frame shortly; but the Lord has a right to take us through life as he pleases, and we ought to be thankful for the least token of good. I am a poor hobbling thing, unable of myself to do anything but sin against the Almighty, and stray from his fold. I am sure to be

at something of this sort every day and hour of my life. I never was a greater fool than at the present time; yet, blessed be the Lord, I never had a clearer view of my folly. This is cause of thankfulness, whether I feel it so or not. What a mercy, my brother, to know our own vileness, and sensibly to feel that we are the chiefest of sinners. But what a sweet blessing to have a well-grounded hope that all our sins were placed to the account of Jesus, and that his righteousness is made over unto us. What a wonderful transfer! But few believe in it, and fewer still enjoy the benefits of it. Yet there are those who do both; and truly blessed are they; yea, and shall be so for ever and ever.

Miss M. has been with me; and it is now finally concluded for her to leave us on the 20th inst. If I see her uncomfortable, which I hope will not be the case, she shall leave sooner. I may tell you she has Mrs. Bensley's full consent to be absent from that family till a few days after Sept. 1st. I dread the moment of her departure. Her conduct has been so affable ever since she came here that she is just as if she had become one of the family; and I cannot help treating her as such, not merely as a friend on a visit. She has given us a pressing invitation to accompany her into Sussex, and I assure you few things in this world would afford me so much pleasure. Nevertheless, I think some future period would be better, as she has to call at Leicester, and spend a few days with her friends there. Should we live a little longer, I hope my young folks will pay you a visit, if the old ones cannot. They are anxious to take time by its forelock; but I say, not yet.

It appears Mrs. Verral has quite forgotten Manchester. I fully expected to have heard from her ere now. Give my kind love to her, also to Mrs. Morris and all the young folks; and believe me, my very dear brother,

Ever yours,

Manchester, Aug. 6th, 1814.

W. HUDSON.

To the Editor of the "Gospel Standard."

"Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."

Dear Sir,—When our dear Lord had fed the five thousand with five barley loaves and two small fishes, he said unto his disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost;" and they filled twelve baskets with the fragments. I have therefore viewed the late beloved William Gadsby, Mr. McKenzie, and Mr. Philpot, yourself, and other kindred contributors to and Editors of the "Gospel Standard," as so many gatherers together of the precious fragments of spiritual matter and spiritual experience of present and bygone days.

The bread of life, given in the first instance by the Lord himself, has blessed, pardoned, separated unto himself, and saved the happy recipients, who are now for the most part with himself in glory; and the fragments or records of those blessings of life have, through the pages of the "Gospel Standard," been both

helpful, nourishing, and blessed to many who have been blessed with a spiritual appetite, and who, though faint, are still pursuing. What multitudes of elect sinners were fed in the days of, and through the instrumentality of, Mr. Toplady, Mr. Huntington, Mr. Romaine, Mr. Warburton, Mr. Gadsby, and Mr. Philpot!

These records, through the pages of the "Gospel Standard," will be handed down to the generation to come of those who fear the Lord, and who trust in and call upon his Name. Truly the Lord's own sent servants go forth "weeping, bearing precious seed;" but there is a promise given them by the Lord himself that they "shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them."

"Once they were mourning here below,
And wet their couch with tears;
They wrestled hard, as we do now,
With sins, and doubts, and fears."

But O, the mercy, the great and unspeakable mercy, to be now in the very footsteps of all those dear departed elected and redeemed sinners; to be blessed in our souls with the like precious faith, to support us in and bring us through the same tribulative path; and to be loved with the same eternal and unchanging love which embraced them, and finally landed them in glory!

May the blessed Spirit open up in a sweet, spiritual, and experimental manner; may he seal and apply to every regenerate reader of the "Standard" the precious truth which my poor soul was favoured in a small measure to see last night in these words: "I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." And may his anointing and enlarging presence be abundantly upon and with you as the editor.

I am, &c.,

Nov. 9th, 1878.

A READER OF THE "G. S."

Dear Friend,—I received yours (in a fit time) on the 9th of August, with your kind inquiry after my bodily health, mingled with an affectionate reproof, for which I thank you. It seemed somewhat like that "excellent oil" spoken of in Ps. cxli. 5; and the other parts savoured of honest simplicity and godly fear. That is the best fruit which is brought forth by the beams or rays of truth and grace shining into our hearts by the blessed Spirit's power. He is the Glorifier of Jesus. Under his blessed teaching and influence there is a solid, solemn feeling, and we loathe ourselves and the garments spotted with the flesh; and we are enabled again to look unto Jesus. And, blessed be his Name, he sends a little help again in the time of need.

Thus it is that I am kept hobbling on. It is, as Paul says, "by grace, through faith; and that not of yourselves;" no; "it is the gift of God." I think there is a feeling in me, at times, that does breathe forth in language like the following:

"Lord, make the union closer yet,"—

I mean, felt union;

“And let the marriage be complete.”

Truly the old wine is better. It is good for such as are of a heavy heart.

It is an infinite mercy indeed that the Lord is of one mind, and changeth not. Were he not so, Jacob must be consumed; but there is not the least shadow of turning with him. No; and he says to Jacob, “*I will keep thee in all places,*” &c. (Gen. xxviii.) This must in the spirit include tribulation also. “It became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” This is Zion’s merciful and faithful High Priest, who is “able to succour them that are tempted.”

What a mercy it is that he neither slumbers nor sleeps, but watches over his Israel, night and day! And not only so, but he waters this his vineyard also; and gives “power to the faint.” It seems, at times, to my view, that he has got a secret way of communicating strength to his tried, cast-down, and afflicted family; when they sigh and cry unto him, and feel, at times, almost overwhelmed. Blessed be his Name, he can command both winds and waves, and can say, “Be still;” yea, does say, “Hitherto.” He is truly that blessed Potentate, against whom there is no rising up. No; when he is graciously pleased to arise and shine with the beams of his mercy and loving-kindness into the soul, and a little of the healing power of his truth and grace is felt, then our fears are scattered, and every accuser is silent, and there is a sweet calm felt within. Hope seems to bud with expectation, and love in some measure is felt. The hand of faith is strengthened again, and it takes a reverential hold of the word of the Lord, and eats it. This produces penitential confession, mingled with heartfelt thanksgiving and prayer, to be enabled to trust solely in him and on him; and to be kept from evil, and to be enabled to live to his glory. A consciousness of our weakness in these blessed seasons is sometimes keenly felt; and we are enabled to beg of the Lord to keep us secretly in his pavilion. Sometimes, it may be, we are indulged for a little time so to be kept; then all seems well; and his truth is fitted to our experience. Being brought home in time of need, his truth is seen and felt to be truth indeed. Truly he is wonderful in working. We are ready to say, “Bless the Lord, O my soul; and forget not all his benefits.” And as the light shines, we perceive something of his way of working, and feel in some sweet measure that his word is true, for we cannot but think that the blessed Spirit hath, *even in us*, made intercession with groanings that could not be uttered. We see that it is in consequence of his power put forth that we have been enabled to look again once more to the Lord when our way has appeared quite hedged in, and Satan has thrust hard at us to stop our cries; for he hates sighs, groans, and broken petitions,

breathed forth unto the Lord from a feelingly burdened heart. He would fain stop this work if he could; but the Lord graciously overrules his malicious wiles; and under the influence of the blessed Spirit, the soul is something like the man by the way-side,—it cries so much the more, till the Lord is pleased in mercy to speak some word of support and peace unto it. Then it can read that sweet saying of David: "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him."

Surely, through mercy alone, these things have been feelingly known in some measure in my soul. I am in prison, but sometimes am allowed to walk in the court thereof, when the north and south winds blow, and am indulged, at times, with a little bread and water. My strength is then renewed; the word is sweet; and I am ready to set up another stone, and write, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped me." I inwardly grieve for my unbelief, fretfulness, and wretchedness; and wonder at the long-suffering, goodness, and tender mercy of the Lord towards guilty, guilty me; and beg of him in love and mercy to condescend to carry me as he did Israel of old. I feel the best when my own strength is gone, and he enables me to fall on him as the Rock of eternal salvation. O! precious resting place! But though I trust this is really the case with my soul, at times, yet, alas! how soon I return to my own place, and painfully find that indwelling sin is not dead, and Satan is never weary! O may the Lord enable me, thee, and his quickened family, in faith, in feeling, and in effectual fervent prayer, to plead with him as David did when he said, "Hold up my goings in thy paths;" and as Jabez, when he said, "O that thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldst keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me." "My help," saith the poet, "must come from the Lord;" and so says my soul. I believe my friend knows these things; but repeated trials from within and without, as they are over-ruled by the grace and mercy of the Lord for our good, deepen our acquaintance with the following truth: *that religion without divine power is like a nut without a kernel.* When a little child cracks one of this sort, it casts it away, it is of no good. We should do so also. The fishermen in olden times, it seems, did the same with the bad fish.

But to return, and write a few lines more. It is an undoubted fact with me, that the tabernacles or bodies of the saints are a part of the purchased possession of the Lord of hosts. He has no doubt built them, to show forth in the resurrection the infinite depths of his wisdom, and the exceeding riches of his grace, in and through Christ Jesus the Lord. And that the dearly-loved and purchased inheritance of Jehovah might know a little about the blessedness in reserve for them, even whilst on this side the river, they are said to be "sought out," to hear and learn of the Father; and are declared to be blessed, being instructed out of his law. Here they tremble indeed. But they are of that

number that come unto Jesus, being led by the teaching and power of the blessed Spirit; yes, they come to the blood of sprinkling; and its blessed effects and power are in some measure felt in their hearts. These things, through the blessed Spirit's teaching and power put forth in their souls, keep them from hastening after another god. Surely the Lord will cause such souls to hear a voice behind them, when they turn to the right hand or to the left, saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it." "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift;"—all things in one. But we are told that when the Lord led Israel from Egypt to Canaan, he led them not by the way of the Philistines, though that was near, but by the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And we are told they went up harnessed. O that the word of our God dwelt richly in my heart, through the unctuous teachings and testimony of the Holy Ghost, who says to the living, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added;" as though he had said, I have treasured all in Christ. That is a precious declaration in Zech. xiii. 9. It is far more valuable than rubies, when we can read it in the light of life. When I am enabled so to read, I feel all must end well; yes, even tribulation, which my flesh shrinks at, and frets so about. Nevertheless, I dare not say I have not, at times, a little felt peace. Then, especially then, I want him to hold me fast, and keep me near him. I tell him of my vileness, fears, weakness, and helplessness; I tell him indwelling sin, the world, and Satan are too strong for me; that Satan is subtle, and my flesh is weak, so that I cannot walk alone; and that it must be altogether of his special free favour, if I am in any measure enabled to live to his glory, and get to heaven at last. And I trust I do, at times, really feel that hope is not dead yet. Then shall I be satisfied, if I am but indulged to awake in his likeness. But I do need him all through the wilderness, to keep down and under the man of sin; to draw me near to him, and keep me there; to give me eyes to see and a heart to lean on and trust in him. O to be enabled to wait on him in his fear, with that admonition living in one's breast, by the renewings of the blessed Spirit: "Trust in him at all times." I must say, with the poet,

"I would, but cannot; Lord, relieve;
My help must come from thee."

Mercy and peace be with you, and the two or three.

Oakham, 1847.

WM. LEE.

My dear and very kind Friends,—I am feeling my weakness much this morning, but I feel unwilling that the post should go out without sending a few lines to yourself and your dear sister. Now, my beloved and valued friends, what return can I make you both for your continued kindness to my unworthy self? All I can do is to thank you affectionately. Ah! my dear

Mrs. Peake, you have indeed acted a kind and generous part towards me, ever since the Lord in his gracious providence directed your steps to my dwelling in London. There is no chance work with our blessed and gracious Redeemer. It was all arranged in his infinite wisdom that we were to know each other in the flesh in this time-state, and that we should experience the love of the brethren in our hearts; and this we know, by Holy Writ and the glorious Spirit's teaching, that it is a blessed mark we have passed from death unto life. And you, my dear friends, have not only loved in word, but over and over again (I know not how many times; but the Lord knows) have you proved your Christian affection in deeds of kindness.

Ah! my dear friends, I shall never be able, while in this house of clay, to tell out or write out the merciful and bountiful way the gracious and watchful Lord has dealt with me, a sinner, yes, a very sinful woman, ever since he gave me a being, in a way of providence. Yes, it is he who covered me in my mother's womb, and brought me forth into this sin-ruined world. And after sporting with sin and death for years, he did not render to me my just reward, which would have been everlasting ruin; but graciously convinced me of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and when I looked for hell, he brought me heaven, by revealing his dear Son in me, and by proving in my guilty sinned conscience that the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth from all sin.

“Many days have pass'd since then;
Many changes I have seen;”

but, notwithstanding all my backslidings, all my shortcomings, and my base ingratitude, he still goes on to bear with and deal graciously with me, a sinful, fallen creature, and continues faithful to his gracious promise: “I will never leave thee; I will never forsake thee.”

I remember, when living in London, when in the hot furnace of affliction, heated not only with soul trials, but also difficulties of things in providence which were added, I was walking to chapel one Sunday morning, with my heart full of sorrow, when these words came from the Lord; and up to this very moment I am proving the fulfilment of them: “No good thing will he withhold from her that walks uprightly.” The words no sooner were spoken than my soul within me was humbled in the dust, and my spirit replied and said, “What! *me*, Lord, an upright walker,—one so base, sinning in everything I do?” Then came the answer, and the opening up of the scripture as follows: An upright walker is one who has ceased from self, so reduced in strength as not to be able to take one step in the path that leads to life eternal, but obliged through grace to lean entirely and throw his whole weight upon the Lord Jesus Christ. This is an upright walker, who walks in the strength of the Lord.

Since then, dear friends, I have thought of the inquiry in the

Scriptures: "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?"

"Poor Zion, afflicted with wave upon wave,
Whom no man can comfort, whom no man can save."

It is Zion's mercy that, after she has wickedly departed from her gracious Lord, and gone after other lovers, grace is given her to return to him who loves at all times. Yes; he rests in his love, and knows not the shadow of a turning.

Now, I know these things will not really and truly suit the fat, the strong, and the active, who are able at all times to spring upon their feet, and walk without help; but the unerring Word declares that "the Lord delighteth not in the legs of a man;" but graciously tells us that "the lame shall take the prey." The longer I live the more I am convinced, and that, too, from my own personal experience, that the glorious gospel of the blessed God cannot be welcome news, nor received into the heart in the love of it, before the Lord brings down the heart with hard labour. There is no room for Jesus Christ until the Holy Ghost makes room. Truly has the poet said,

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

How many of your valued Christian friends have been removed since I was last at Oakham! This is a loss to your little cause; but they are taken from the evil to come. And I fear, from different reports, that the enemies of truth are gaining ground. But the Lord reigneth.

Now, my dear kind friends, I must say Adieu, for I feel it is time to put down my pen. Thanking you both again for your kindness, I am

Affectionately Yours,

Camel Cottage, Wantage, March, 1877.

T. VAUGHAN.

My dear Friend,—I believe you are anxious to know how I go on. I am better than when I left home, indeed, much better; but do not expect to have what is called health in this world. I must look for it in that land where the inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick; for their sins are forgiven them.

In Christ we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins. I need an application of this daily, because I am a daily offender; and we are encouraged to draw near to a throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy. Having found him ready to forgive, I find him so still; and he doth not deal with me after my sins, nor reward me according to my iniquities. I have at this present time nothing to say against him, nor am I disposed to open my mouth against others. A consciousness of my deserts and the Lord's tender mercies silences me completely; and I am waiting to see what he will do with me, and with others. By strange dealings I have been taught to see and loathe myself. Nothing less than what I have

passed through would have been sufficient to bring down my self-righteous and proud spirit. And how mighty must that be which requires such means! And how great that love which supplies an adequate remedy! My desire and prayer is, that you may follow after and find him who hath redeemed us by his blood. A knowledge of him will bring what at present is inconceivable, and will show you more thoroughly than anything else the nothingness of that religion which is passed off for the glorious work of God. It is hard to detect the imposition, and to believe all that really is hidden under that imposition. But Christ Jesus known and felt in your circumstances will make all things plain. The Lord grant that you may not be long without the revelation of him to your soul's full satisfaction. This I know,—you have need enough of him. He only can master for you one great disturber of your peace, a disturber which you have not liked to hear mentioned. I do not mean the grosser corruptions of nature, but a worldly spirit, which insensibly hardens and deadens the heart, and closes it against the Lord. You know he is exalted far above all heavens, and for this end,—to spare the poor and needy, and to save the souls of the needy. He has promised to redeem their souls from deceit and violence. Pray to him, as being able to save to the uttermost. He has the fulness of grace in himself. He has promised that his Spirit shall guide you, and that whatsoever you shall ask, he will give it you, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. He knows what we are, for he has proved it by bitter experience; having borne our sins upon the tree.

There is nothing stands in the way so much as unbelief; and faith is not our own; it is the gift of God. This faith has been given you, even to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Saviour of poor sinners; so that you possess faith in the principle of it. The enemy labours hard to hinder it, as to its actings and effects. You are fearful of applying to the Saviour, lest you should presume. But to him you must sooner or later come; and when labouring and heavy laden, that is the time in which he is ready to receive us. The Father gave us to Christ; and it is his work to draw us to him. And Christ never will cast out any that the Father brings to him. I have proved his willingness and ability. I know the value of his death and resurrection, of his blood and righteousness. And I am no stranger to his power. He has humbled and softened even *my* heart, and turned my affections to himself; and than me there never was one worse. O! M., the day in which he shall smile upon you and say, "Go in peace; thy sins are forgiven thee;" and this by that faith which is according to God's grace,—that day will be sweet to me. You know why. I have long been looking for it, and have begged it, and do beg it still. You see and feel the emptiness of that religion which is on every side, even where these things are much talked about, and the Saviour is in many mouths. But the Spirit of Christ is the sweet thing desirable; and if any man have not

the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. You have so much of him as to feel what it is that is wanting in the highest profession. The point before you is, the receiving the promise of that Spirit by faith. The Lord Jesus grant it, my poor little friend, according to his Word.

The friends here are kind to me. We had a comfortable day together on Sunday. There are but few who attend here, but some there are who love our Lord Jesus Christ; and he was not unwilling to let us know that he cared for us, by granting us his presence, which meekened, and humbled, and comforted our souls, so that we became willing that Christ should be All and in all, to the glory of God the Father.

Yours affectionately,

May, 1811.

W. J. BROOK.

May an increase of faith in the love of God be enjoyed by my very dear friend, whom, with a cheerful affection, I love in the Lord Jesus. Amen.

I received your truly savoury letter, giving an account of the exercise of your mind, and the leadings of providence in coming here. I have no doubt some good end will be answered, even though you should find no benefit to your bodily health. "The Lord doth *all* things well," especially for his people. His tender care is over them. "He careth for you;" and, from the account you give, it is evident his leading providence is in this affair of your coming here. He brought you to lie passive in his hand, submissive to his will, resigned to his providence. You are brought to watch his hand; and sure I am, those who are brought to watch and observe his providence, in the end shall not want his providence to admire. "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord." This, I believe you will have to observe. I know you fear him with filial reverence; and surely "I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, who fear before him." I know you love him; and "we know that *all things* work together for good to them that love God."

I am glad the Lord prevents any anxiety on your part to see me. He hath blessed our acquaintance. "Unknown, yet well known." Had the good Lord intended an interview for your profit, he, no doubt, would have moved thereto; otherwise, he will prevent. Should you recover your health, probably we shall see each other. If not, and this is continually on my thoughts, it will be but a small moment, and we shall rejoice together in the fruition of the presence of him we love. I beg you to observe, although I am not inclined for an interview, it is purely from love to your best welfare, and that our correspondence be not broken in upon. I further wish you to observe, my declining goes in concert with your not having anxiety for it. I should be sorry to take one step to hurt your mind, or leave anxiety there. Wherefore, I bless the Almighty that you

are so inclined, and pray, if it be his will, you may continue so, while things remain in their present state. I can truly say, "you are in my heart to live and die with you;" and I do find you often in the arms of faith and love, at the throne of grace, and that you partake with me of the love and goodness of the Lord. Here I can, through grace, feel your affliction, bear your burdens, travail in birth for you; speak (plead) for your edification, comfort, and enlargement; and your letters evince it is not in vain. God heareth prayer, and makes my heart glad by the evident answers.

You desire to glorify God, to have a deep sense of unworthiness of his favours, and long to rejoice more in his everlasting love and great salvation. You can say that, like as the hart panteth after the water-brooks, having an insatiable void which only the water can fill, so panteth your soul after more nearness of access to God, more enjoyment of his presence; to sit under his shadow with delight, feed on the fruits of redemption, and have the heart more enlarged in his worship. You have his word to encourage: "He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."

I am glad your sister Elizabeth is inclined to come and see me. I like her appearance much, which is as becometh the gospel; and do somewhat feel my heart engaged for her best welfare. O that she may reap real profit by the gospel while here; then there would be one good end answered in your coming. I shall be heartily glad to see her whenever she is inclined to call on me. The Lord having inclined her will for spiritual things, he will, I trust, give her the desires of her heart. She wishes to attain what you have attained,—certain saving belief in Christ to comfort; and she would leave the world for the cause of Christ, and the contents of the gospel. I shall be glad to be an instrument of the furtherance of the good work. The Lord increase her hope, and enrich her with the unsearchable riches of Christ; then will she find, as I have no doubt you do, Christ increasingly precious. You wish not to give him up. You will never be tired of him; and would be glad that he fill the best room (affection of the mind) with his presence. I am persuaded you would rather have anything of Christ than the best things of the world. Not only are you content to have the love, comforts, and gracious heart-enlarging presence of Christ, but you are willing to have the cross of Christ, the afflictions of Christ, the reproach of Christ, though it be foolishness to the world. If, for Christ's sake, for his glory, you are content with (yea, I am persuaded, nor will you say my persuasion is false, you would rather abide in) your present state, touching bodily affliction, knowing it to be for your soul's prosperity, than be restored to health, were worldly-mindedness, deadness, and barrenness of soul to attend the latter, then for Christ to live in you, and you to live to Christ, is the main thing with you. Then are you one of the people he hath formed for himself; and you shall show

forth his praise. Long for that you hope for, and let patience have her perfect work. Wait with the patience of hope. Lie passive in the hand of the Lord, and watch it towards you. Lean not to feeble sense; but take God at his word, put him to his word, plead the accomplishment of his word, wait the fulfilment of his word. I believe you are so inclined. All is well.

Yours affectionately,

Aug. 13th, 1822.

D. FENNER.

LINES ADDRESSED TO MR. F. COVELL,
ON COMPLETING HIS SEVENTIETH YEAR, DECEMBER 8TH, 1878.

As children, link'd in love and union sweet,
A tender father's natal morning greet,
And little offerings bring, with eager hands,
Whose worth a parent only understands;
So would we keep in memory the day
That marks thy seventieth year now pass'd away;
And join in some attempt, though short it fall,
To express the love that animates us all.

Threescore and ten years gone! O mournful sound
To those whose wishes earth's low pleasures bound!
But unto thee, whose soul hath waited long
With ardent hope, and expectation strong,
That face unveil'd in glory's light to see
That once was marr'd, and put to shame for thee;—
The thought ne'er brings a transient pang of grief
That life's gay spring hath fled, and summer brief;
Nor on the future rests one cloud of gloom,
As faith, exulting, triumphs o'er the tomb.

Yet must the thought to us be full of pain
That soon we may not hear thy voice again;
And just as once the Ephesian church wept sore
To think they should behold Paul's face no more,
So would we crave, if such thy Master's will,
To have thy teachings, prayers, and converse still;
And since as yet we see but little sign
That life's full vigour ceases to be thine,
Since Time his hand hath lightly on thee laid,
Thy locks unchang'd, elastic still thy tread;
Our warm desires must this expression take:
"Lord, spare thy servant for thy church's sake!"

W. H. S.

The above lines accompanied a splendid token of affection from friend Covell's church and congregation. We do not call it a testimonial; for too often testimonials are very unmeaning things, got up more to feed a love of prominence in the presenters than from any real esteem to the individuals they are presented to. Not so in this case. We believe our friend's people love and esteem him justly, as well as highly, for his work's sake, and for the affectionate, friendly, even

fatherly, interest he takes in them and their affairs. He is as a father amongst his children. A minister's great reward, as friend Covell well knows, is his dear Master's approbation; but after this will be the esteem and love of his people, founded upon his pastoral care of and spiritual usefulness to them.

We must add a word or two more. Our dear fellow-labourers generally must not be disheartened, and suppose that their people do not value their labours, because they do not receive quite such splendid tokens of affection. They are not all seventy years of age yet; besides, Christ says of Mary: "She hath done what she could." We should desire that the ministers of Jesus might serve him with a single eye to his glory, and take the oversight of the flock of slaughter, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; but we should also be glad if the churches of Christ showed a loving appreciation of their labours, and a spirit of warm liberality. Ministers have much to endure, far more than they imagine, for the people's sakes (2 Cor. iv. 12). It is well that they should be encouraged by some tokens of regard and affection. We could wish that the example of the friends at Croydon might stir the hearts of others to a degree of emulation. These are only general remarks. We refer not to particular churches, much less to our own dear and sympathizing people. The poet writes:

"With oil we fill the bowl,
To keep the lamp alive."

Perhaps, seeing ministers are after all but poor frail men, their earnestness in their work might be increased if their poor hearts were cheered from time to time by such kindly expressions of regard and appreciation from their people.

Obituary.

HENRY NIGHTINGALE.—On Sept. 21, 1877, aged 77, Mr. Henry Nightingale, minister of Providence chapel, Southwick, near Trowbridge.

My late dear husband was called by grace when on a bed of affliction at about the age of 23 or 24. Up to that time he had lived in worldly society, and had indulged in the pleasures of this world to no little extent. But, in the affliction alluded to, the Lord laid eternal matters with such weight upon his mind that he was obliged to forsake all his worldly pleasures and companions in sin.

At this time, he had been married to his former wife two or three years, and was in a comparatively affluent position as regards this life; but he had to pass through many great trials and changes, in which he was entirely stripped of all he possessed.

He first made a profession of religion among the Independents, and preached for them for some years. After a time, baptism was laid upon his mind, and he was baptized by the late Mr. Cowper, of the Dicker. As he was made more decided for the truth of the gospel, he was called to suffer much persecution, and had to endure many sharp trials of various kinds.

In the year 1855, the Lord in his providence brought him to the Old Baptist chapel, Southwick, where he remained a few years. At this time, he became acquainted with the late Mr. Warburton, and was of great assistance to him during the last two years of his life, frequently taking the Sabbath morning or week night services for him when he was unable himself to preach.

In the year 1861, he left the Old Baptist chapel, and came out and built another, that he might be free to proclaim the truth as it had been taught him. He lived to see the chapel built, also a schoolroom, and paid for. And here the Lord made him instrumental in gathering together a church and people, with whom he lived in peace and union until his death, and by whom he was much beloved and respected.

He was taken seriously ill in October, 1876, and the impression was firmly rooted in my mind that he would never get better. At this time he told me he was greatly encouraged and sweetly supported by the powerful application of the word to his soul in Isa. xxvi. 3; and I believe to his last day the savour of that promise never wholly left him. It was a love-token from his beloved Lord; and he was faithful who gave it; for my dear husband realized conspicuously and preciously the fulfilment of it all through his illness. Many friends called to see and converse with him; and to their numerous inquiries as to what he thought the result of his illness would be, his almost invariable reply was, "I have no will or wish concerning it, whether for life or death. If my labour is done, I am willing to go; if not, willing to stay. The Lord's will is my will." Most truly he was submissively and resignedly waiting the Lord's pleasure.

Notwithstanding his health and strength, though not his vigour of mind, were visibly giving way, he continued his labours in the ministry and the school until the first Sabbath in July, 1877. On the Friday evening before that day, he lost a quantity of blood from the rupture of a small vessel in the head; and we had to send for medical aid at twelve o'clock at night. At length the hæmorrhage was stopped, and he seemed to have nearly recovered the loss of blood. We asked his doctor if there would be danger of a relapse if he preached as usual on the coming Lord's day. He said, "No; but he must have short services." So he did preach twice, and administered the ordinance of the Lord's supper in the evening. At the close of this service, while giving out the hymn,

"Alas! and did my Saviour bleed?" &c.,

the hæmorrhage came on again. We got him home as quickly as possible, and a fearful time followed. We greatly feared he would then have sunk. However, not so; but he never went to his chapel again. His loved work was done.

He was favoured with diligence, zeal, fervour, and self-sacrifice above many. His greatest joy and delight was in the Lord's service. During the last year of his life it was his custom, I may say almost every Sabbath, while preaching to bring before his hearers the solemnity of death, saying, "I daily wish and try to walk arm in arm with death, so that when it comes, it may take me by no surprise." He was a great lover of the late Mr. John Warburton, and, like that dear departed saint, used to say, "Although I do not feel the joys of salvation as I desire, yet I know it to be a sure salvation."

On his last morning but one he awoke me very early. He seemed swallowed up with a sense of the Lord's goodness to him. His soul was full of praise, gratitude, and love to the Lord his God. "O!" said he, "what a mercy it is I can sleep! What a mercy it is I am in no pain! What a mercy it is I have all I need! What a mercy it is I have some one to attend to and care for me!" It was indeed good and profitable to be with him. After he had recounted mercy upon mercy, he said, with great feeling, "But I have not been without sore temptations, awful suggestions, dreadful infidel workings, unbelief and rebellion; *but not now.*"

On that day, he arose at his usual hour; was cheerful and happy through the day; retired to rest between nine and ten, and slept the

greater part of the night comfortably. He took refreshment two or three times. I left him talking energetically, and making various inquiries of one of his members concerning their last prayer-meetings; and he was to all appearance as well as he had been for weeks. On my return to his room he said, "I want to get up." I said, "Yes; I will help you directly." He sat up quickly in the bed for the purpose; when in an instant he was seized with a fearful pain, and laying both hands upon his heart, he fell back on his pillow, breathed rather heavily two or three times, and his spirit had fled. He was not two minutes passing the "dark valley." He had exchanged worlds, and his translated soul was with that precious Christ whom he had through rich grace so long and ardently loved and served.

The shock of his sudden departure was very great, but we felt that in mercy we were spared the anguish of seeing him lingering in protracted suffering; and though overwhelmed at the deep, deep loss, we could and did say, "The Lord is good." Valvular disease of the heart and chronic bronchitis were his fatal complaints.

His remains were interred on the following Thursday in his chapel yard. Mr. I. Spencer, of Bradford-on-Avon, performed the last sad office, and preached his funeral sermon on the next Lord's day evening, from Rev. xiv. 13. The members of his church, the teachers of the Sabbath school, and many friends followed him to the grave.

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

Southwick, Trowbridge.

ELIZABETH NIGHTINGALE.

JAMES KEYLOCK.—On Sept. 15th, 1878, aged 34, died at Latton, Wiltshire, James Keylock.

It pleased the Lord to afflict him in body when only 13 years of age, so that he was bedridden for upwards of 20 years. He was baptized in the river Thames just three years, to the day, before he died. Now, no doubt you will think it strange that he should have been bedridden so many years, and yet baptized as I have stated. After he had been confined to his bedroom several years, it pleased the Lord to put it into the minds of his rich neighbours to contrive a three-wheeled bed, and it was made for him about eight years ago. In this sort of carriage-bed he was conveyed, from time to time, to the place of worship; and also on that bed he was baptized. This was in other respects a great comfort to him, as by means of his movable bed he could obtain fresh air; for he could remain upon it all day with some degree of ease, though so afflicted with wounds and sores on his back. He used to be pushed about, chiefly by a sister in the faith, a poor woman named Maria Strong. She was a member with him at Cricklade, until she was put out of the church for, as was supposed, telling James Keylock what was said in the church-meetings. Of late, too, some persons have got her pay stopped by the Board of Guardians because she pushed J. K. to chapel. She is a poor, honest woman, subject to fits, but never had one when pushing James Keylock in his wheeled-bed.

I dare say you would like to know a little more about the spiritual history of the departed; but I feel very unequal to the task of touching upon this good man's career. I have felt much soul-union to him in prayer at the chapel, and to go with him in his earnest cries that the Lord would guide him through life, preserve him from self and the great enemy, and grant him close communion with the Lord. These requests the Lord was pleased to grant. I once asked him how he was. "Well," he replied, "in body, but—" "A *but*?" I said; "what is there wrong?" You are able to be drawn to God's house; you have no business to trouble you; and all the rest must be mercy." "Yes," he said, "it is; but there

is the battle within. This it is which grieves me; and the enemy tells me all is wrong, and will be wrong at last." Such was his daily experience of the conflict, except when the Lord was pleased to show his smiling face.

Our departed friend had also a great trial to pass through in church matters. He was obliged to resign his membership last year because men were admitted into the pulpit who gave an uncertain sound, as in Ezek. xiii. 3-7. The Lord gave our friend a clear understanding in the truth, and by that truth he abode, though he was a poor, afflicted, and dependent man. His poverty and his dependence could not prevent him contending earnestly for the faith, as the Lord had instructed him in it. His end was sudden. In all probability, the sight of Mr. Aikman, who called upon him in the afternoon on which he died, was too much for him, and gave him a sudden shock. He considered Mr. Aikman as exceedingly erroneous, and as a troubler of Zion; but what Mr. Aikman's reason for calling upon him that afternoon was, I know not. It is a sorrowful day at Cricklade now; and no better, though one was baptized on Sept. 8th. Some taken in, some turned out; but the Lord knows all hearts.

Of J. Keylock we can say, what a mercy that he has gone to enjoy, praise, and bless the Lord in a better world! There he is freed from all his bodily afflictions, and the troubles of his soul, which, especially those arising from church matters, brought him with sorrow to his grave.

D. PALMER.

The foregoing account was sent in a letter to friend Prewett, who, in a few lines written to us, confirms the account of J. Keylock's sudden death, and its connection with the visit of Mr. Aikman. Now, we do not wish in writing this to charge Mr. Aikman with the good man's death. We believe Mr. A., according to his views, did what he thought was his duty. We know not, indeed, with what motive he visited the deceased. It is very probable that the sight of Mr. Aikman and conversation with him may have been too much for so weakly a man as J. Keylock, and thus produced a catastrophe, which doubtless would be a source of grief and trouble to Mr. Aikman, as well as others. No persons can more thoroughly disapprove of the opinions of Mr. Aikman, as set forth in some of his writings, than we do. We consider them entirely subversive of the truth of God; but we have no personal ill-will towards him, and would earnestly desire to pray, both for him and the friends at Cricklade, that they might see what is erroneous and renounce it. Whilst we would set our faces like a flint against a man's errors, we would never appear to show a bitterness against his person.

THOMAS BURBIDGE.—On May 27th, 1878, aged 68, Thomas Burbidge.

Since the time that our beloved brother, Thomas Burbidge, wrote to the editor of the "Gospel Standard" respecting the death of Mrs. Mary Chandler, it has pleased God to call him to his eternal rest.

He was born at Barton, in Bedfordshire, of parents who, it is to be feared, knew not God. They were farmers, and, as respects their sentiments, Church people, and fully intended to make a Churchman of their son, who was for a time a thorough Churchgoer, and studied a book given him by the clergyman, entitled "The Whole Duty of Man." He was looked upon by some as likely to become a pillar to their church; so they said after he had left. It pleased God in mercy to his soul to cause him to enter a house where a few poor people met for prayer and praise on Strict Baptist principles; and the Holy Spirit fastened his affections to these people and their God. As soon as this was known by his parents,

they began to persuade him with all their powers against such a people, telling him he would be of no use in business or the world. They even persecuted him.

But God had begun the work, and it could not be overthrown. The people where he met, being encouraged and strengthened by his attendance, were enabled in time to raise a little chapel, in which, upon the confession of his faith, he was baptized, and thus became a member with them. He was not so powerfully wrought upon under the law as some are; but our God is a Sovereign, and brought him with weeping and supplication to his dear feet. He could heartily say with the poet,

“No more, my God, I boast no more

Of all the duties I have done,” &c.

His regular attendance and punctuality to time were excellent. At length, he was chosen to the office of a deacon, and, after the decease of his parents, when he had the farm, he always entertained the ministers, who found his order good at home as well as before the church.

But, dear man, he knew he was flesh as well as spirit; and the same God who chose to lead Israel of old into captivity for their good, chose, especially on one occasion, to withdraw the sensible manifestations of his love and grace from our brother; and truly his soul went down into deep waters for some months. He became now quite a companion with Job, and would often say, “O that it was with me as in months that are past!” &c. It was soon known by us what an ordeal he was passing through from his petitions, which became so weighty, and from the hymns he chose. The first hymn he gave out in this state is the 953rd (Gadsby’s selection):

“Alas! the Lord my life is gone;

My Saviour hides his face.”

But he who retaineth not his anger for ever, turned his captivity; and he would refer to that beautiful verse found in hymn 292:

“How signal are the blessings

My Saviour has bestowed!

He taught me wisdom’s lessons

When I had lost the road.”

He was well acquainted with the Word of God and the hymn-book, and had a good choice of hymns for divine worship.

Most of us well remember, the last Sabbath he was with us, with what emotion he gave out hymn 1065. An old member who sat near him noticed with what a solemn weight he gave out the last verse:

“The hour is near, consign’d to death,” &c.

I visited him at times during his short confinement to bed, and the first part of the time it was nice to converse with him. I said on one occasion, when he wanted his pillow moving, “Ah! the poor body often wants shifting now; but I trust the mind is settled.” He said, “Yes, I trust it is.

“On the Rock of ages founded,

What shall shake my sure repose?”

At another time, Mr. Pavey, the minister supplying for us, came into his room. They greeted each other in the Lord. Then he went on, “I cannot go up with you to-day. I have been meditating on what David said: ‘I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thy honour dwelleth.’” He spoke of God the Father’s honour dwelling in Christ, &c.

He suffered much the latter part of his illness from sickness, which quite spent him, so that he could not converse; but was believed to be often in prayer to his God. He was one of the seeking seed of Jacob, and knew the privilege of prayer; and very rarely did he conclude his

petition without bringing in a favourite verse of his, which is all-important to us as well as him :

“ Prepare me, gracious God,
To stand before thy face,” &c.

Free grace was his theme here, and as Mr. Cook, who buried him, said, this is the song of the redeemed, which they learn to sing in time, and go home to sing through all eternity. The good man appeared to bury him with a solemn pleasure, as he said it was comfortable for a minister to put those to bed in the earthly cavern who sleep in Jesus. Many were present who do not attend with us, for he was greatly respected. But he is gone to receive the reward of a good steward, having by God's grace fulfilled the office of deacon upwards of 40 years. “ Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.”

Barton, Ampthill.

WILLIAM ROBINSON.

ELIZABETH TAYLOR.—On Oct. 24th, 1878, Elizabeth Taylor, of Muggershanger, aged 72. She has gone to dwell with him at home whom she loved to serve when on earth.

The dear Lord inclined her heart to cast her lot in with those who loved the truth. She had felt the power of truth in her own soul, and she maintained it to the last. The words that arrested her first were: “ Flee from the wrath to come.” About the time when this took place, our friends met for divine worship in the old barn at Blunham, where the dear Lord blessed their souls under the ministry of old Mr. Thompson. Our dear departed friend was inclined to follow her dear Master through the ordinance of believer's baptism. As there is no baptistery at Blunham, she went to Potton, with three or four others, and was baptized by Mr. Tite, of Potton. I have heard our dear friend speak of the refreshing seasons enjoyed at that time. O that the dear Lord would send us a shower again, to refresh our poor souls, that we might sing in the heights of Zion!

Our dear friend always had a distance of about a mile and a half to walk in order to get to chapel. The last two or three years her strength much failed her; but still, if able, there she would be in her place.

The Thursday before her death she was picking up a few potatoes in the garden. In so doing she supposed that she caught cold. She was too poorly to get down to chapel on Lord's day. Her dear husband tells me that she got up on Sabbath day in the afternoon, and got a chill. She told her dear companion that her impression was she should not get better, and that the words of Isaiah to Hezekiah were on her mind: “ Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.” On Tuesday morning, she became worse, but was very happy in her mind, though not able to speak much. When asked by her friends how she felt in her mind, she said, “ Happy, happy. Heaven, heaven.” Those about her, seeing that her time would be short, wished the friends at Blunham to know. I felt very anxious to see her, and hear her last words; but, alas! she was not able to speak; nor do I think she knew any one, or took notice of anything. She remained in this state until Thursday, when her spirit took its flight to God who gave it.

G. LITTLE.

RIDLEY and HOOPER could never agree about black and white in King Edward's days; but, as one of them expresses it, they could afterwards agree in red. When God puts them together into sufferings, tears, and blood, they could love and live and die together as brethren.—*J. Hill.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

FEBRUARY, 1879.

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

RICHES FOR THE POOR.

A SERMON BY MR. SMART, PREACHED AT ZOAR CHAPEL, GREAT ALIE STREET, WHITECHAPEL, ON THURSDAY EVENING, FEB. 9TH, 1848.

“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.”—EPH. III. 8.

I have reason to thank the Lord that ever the apostle left this upon record: “I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.” There is nothing that so encourages and emboldens the soul to go forth in the service of God with a willing mind as his felt love and mercy; but O to have to stand up in his great Name, “in fear and in much trembling!” Not fearing dying worms; God has mercifully preserved and delivered my soul from the fear of man; and I have only to say that which he himself has taught me, “whether men will hear or whether they will forbear.” But a minister fears that he shall be left alone. He feels he is an empty fool, and is fearful God will leave him in that state. He feels such a trembling coward, such a poor, frail, weak worm of the earth, that unless the Lord appears, it seems he must of necessity give it up. And though he has encouraged his servants again and again, yet left to themselves they are by feeling weak as other men.

But, though hard to bear, yet I am satisfied in my soul it is very needful. Who can tell how our vain minds might be puffed up with conceit and pride, if God did not now and then put his finger upon us? In what a light, careless frame of spirit a man might come into the pulpit, if God did not now and then afflict the soul with “weakness, and fear, and much trembling!” And when he empties and he fills, how evident it is that “the preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, are from the Lord!” I ought never to forget these words; they have been encouraging to my soul: “I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.”

“And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but”—there my poor soul seems to falter in following him—“but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” It is a poor sign, when God lets sinners go

on in their own headstrong way, full of pride, conceit, vain-glory, and hypocrisy. Is it not a proof that we are his children, when he humbles us, when he chastens us, when he empties, when he strips, when he brings us to be paupers upon his bounty, and when he opens his hand and pours us out a blessing? In our right minds we can say, "Good is the word," the way, the will, the wisdom, and the purpose of the Lord our God.

How evident it is, that the Lord of heaven and earth can work his will "in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth!" When he wants a servant, he can easily snatch the prey from the terrible one. He has no occasion to consult the will of devils, nor the will of mortals. He quickeneth, teacheth, and thrusteth into the ministry whom he will. Who would have thought it of this valiant slave of the devil, this poor persecuting wretch, that declared he was "exceeding mad against" Christ and his people, and "verily thought that he ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth"? How visible was the prediction of Christ in this poor sinner: "The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service!" Poor Saul of Tarsus! He even went eagerly and besought letters of the high priest, that he might go to Damascus, and hale men and women, and commit them to prison. But O! astonishing mercy! astonishing love! If God had dealt with him as man might deal with man, what could have been expected, but that he should be struck dead in the way, and his soul sent to the pit of God's wrath? But even in this very errand of persecution, thirsting for the blood of saints,—“Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” The Lord of life was in heaven; but his members, his hated persecuted members, were here below; and “he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.” “Who art thou, Lord?” “I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.” And here is the agent for the devil, the slave to sin, the blood-thirsty blasphemer and injurious, stopped in his hell-hound, mad career of folly, by the irresistible grace of the eternal God, struck to the ground with an arrow from the quiver of the Most High, and brought truly to repent, truly to venture and believe on Jesus Christ for life and salvation, truly to feel that the Gospel is “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth,” and commissioned by God himself to proclaim the gospel of his grace to poor despised Gentiles.

“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints.” This is easily said; but has it ever been felt by us? It is a very great lesson to learn; yea, we are all our lives learning that we are “less than the least of all saints,” and very “chiefest of sinners.” How many say it with the lip, that know nothing of its substance, nothing of feeling it in reality! It is the very essence of the Holy Ghost's teaching in the souls of the redeemed to bring them sensibly to feel that they are the very chiefest of sinners. Perhaps many of you have said it with your mouths before the living God; have you ever felt it? Have you ever been humbled on account

of it? It is a great and deep step for the soul to take to get beneath the vilest of the vile. I believe no soul will come feelingly here, unless God brings him to it. And recollect, talking professor, if you say before God that you are "less than the least of all saints," and the very "chief of sinners," and never have a feeling sense of it, in God's account you are a liar; and he has said, "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone;" and "He that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight." O that professors would lay this more to heart! They talk before God, as if he were as much pleased with their empty chat as they are themselves. I am no enemy to prayer, or the supplication that flows from a living soul; I am an advocate for prayer-meetings, when they are properly conducted by spiritual men; but what a horrible thing for people to meet together to tell lies before the Holy One of Israel! More or less, ever since God quickened my dead soul, it has seemed in my feelings as if conscience stood on one side of my mouth and the devil on the other; and at the least word that seemed anything like a falsehood, I have felt checks and blows and stripes in a moment. And how it ever is that mortals can stand before God and say they are the chiefest of sinners without a feeling sense of it, God only knows. How dare you say with your lips that you are "less than the least of all saints," when at the same time you are striving to be the very greatest; when all your frail breath is spent in trying to appear something before dying worms, and using "swelling words of vanity" to seem great in the view of mortals?

"Nothing but truth before thy throne
With honour can appear;
The painted hypocrites are known
Through the disguise they wear."

It is bad enough to tell lies to sinners; but it is ten times worse, if possible, to tell lies at a throne of grace,—to tell lies at the footstool of the eternal God, who hateth lies and liars, and declares that none shall ever enter the new Jerusalem "that loveth or maketh a lie." Saints are "children that will not lie; so he was their Saviour; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them and carried them all the days of old."

"Unto me who am less than the least of all saints." It is not always that *God's people* feel this; and if they were to try, and if they would give all they possessed for a feeling sense of it, they could not feel it till God causes them. But this is safe ground, sinner. There is very little danger of falling here. There is not much pride bloating up the mind here. There is not much vain glory, self-conceit, hardened hypocrisy and presumption here.

"Unto me who am less than the least of all saints." What! the great apostle of the Gentiles come in his feelings beneath the least seeking soul? Why, poor sinner, it is a mercy of mercies to have the least portion of evidence that we are of the royal family at all. Instead of wanting to be uppermost and greatest, it is a mercy unspeakable to have the least testimony from God

in the heart that we are "bound in the bundle of life with the Lord our God." "They shall be mine," says the dear Redeemer, "in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." But it requires a deal of pruning, a deal of emptying, a deal of stripping work; and not only so, but a ray of love, mercy, and compassion, let into the soul, to bring us feelingly where God the eternal Spirit brought the apostle of the Gentiles: "less than the least of all saints."

I believe there is nothing so glistening, in the eyes of God's people, and in the eyes of God himself, as humbling grace. Why, if a man is truly humbled by the grace of God, it seems as though we were constrained to receive him, and constrained to love him; as though we dare not rebuke him. And is there a sweeter place on this side eternal glory, than "becoming as a little child," clothed in meekness, humility, and love, at the foot of the cross? Except thus "ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." If we could but keep "little children" when God makes little children of us, what a much smoother path we should have through this world! We should be so short, as not to have near the knocks and bruises that we now have; and we should be so lowly, that if we had nothing but bread and water we should be contented with it; and we should be so little in our own eyes, that we should say with the apostle, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me." And when thus little children at the foot of the cross, we should obey Peter when he says, "Wherefore, laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby." Why, sinner, if we could keep "little children," when God by his mercy makes little children of us, we should escape much of that tribulation which he hath promised us in this vale of woe. But he knows, as soon as we are left to ourselves, as soon as he withholds the influences of his grace and Spirit, we shall return to our own sad place, there to fall a prey to sin, and presumption, and pride, and vain glory, and self conceit, and every evil work, to swell again with self, to be puffed up again by the father of lies, to be filled again by the spawny breath of hell. And what a mercy of mercies it is, that ever God our Father should "turn again and have compassion on us," melt us at his footstool, and cause us, like Mary, to wash the dear Redeemer's feet! Sinner, do you know anything of the sweetness of being made "a little child"?

What sweet wrestlings there are at the throne of grace, when we can come "as little children!" If ever we say "Father!" feelingly, it is when we are children. If ever we say, "Lord, keep us," feelingly, it is when we are children. If ever we sing a song "to the praise and glory of God," it is when we are children. If ever we "come up out of the wilderness, leaning"

with our whole weight upon the arm of "our Beloved," it is when we are children. If ever we are in safeguard within, if ever we are set in safety from him that puffeth at us, if ever we are brought to exalt a dear Redeemer, if ever we are brought to have a teachable spirit and a contrite heart, it is through the humbling grace of God, when by his manifested mercy he brings us to his feet as "little children." Would to God we could come there and keep there! But never shall we, while self and the devil are uppermost.

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given." If ever we feel that all beside eternal misery is a gift, it is when we are "less than the least." You see, the grace of God, the riches of his grace, sparkled in the eyes of the apostle at the foot of the cross. And O! how his work upon the soul, bringing the poor sinner to "be converted, and become as a little child," sparkles with lustre in the sight of the living God! But, on the contrary, how hateful, how abominable, must be the pride, the self-will, the headstrong measures of his people to exalt self and the devil!

"Is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." How different God's way of preparing a man for the ministry is from man's way! When I hear mortals get into a pulpit and talk as if they got all merely by reading books, O! I think it is a black concern. Why, some poor things, if they had never read what this man writes, and never heard what that man says, would not know anything of God. They would not know in reality that there was a God. Bless his dear and precious Name, the little my soul knows of God and of his love and mercy, has been by his blessed testimony in my heart; and I believe it would not cost me much trouble and sorrow of mind, if there were only two books in the world,—the Bible and Hart's hymns.* Not that I want to despise the labours of good men, who have been of service, no doubt, to the church of the living God; but may the Lord set my face against those books that steal my heart from God. A man may get his head stored, he may cut a figure before dying worms; and if God is against him, the whole world cannot hold him out of hell. But what a mercy it is, if God has really prepared one's soul, in

* Our readers will fully agree with the preacher, that those ministers who derive the matter of their sermons only from hearing others or reading books and hard study, without being taught of God and having a real work of experience in their own souls, are miserably deficient as to the essentials of a gospel ministry. They will perhaps hardly agree with him in his expressed indifference to books. We hope some will be glad to read this month's "Gospel Standard," if it is only for the pleasure and profit which we trust they will derive from Mr. Smart's sermon. The meaning of the preacher is quite plain. It is one thing to get our religion by the use of natural abilities, from hearing ministers and reading books; another for God to bless such hearing or reading to us. Both preaching and writing have their uses and abuses. To hear and read and study may be desirable; but to put them in the place of divine teaching and power is to depart from God and to exalt in his place the creature.—(Dan. ix. 2.)

any measure, to speak of salvation by and through Christ crucified to poor sensible sinners!

Only look at the way he took with Peter. Peter was a warm-hearted man, and seemed to be one of the most zealous followers that ever Jesus had; but he was not always right. You know, Jesus had to say to him once, "Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou savourest not the things that be of God." If Peter could have had his fleshly way, the dear Redeemer had never died for your soul and mine; for he said, "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee." And how that poor man promised (and I believe he meant to perform it with all his heart and soul), "I will go with thee to prison and to death!" I believe he was ready and willing in his own feeling. And suppose, poor dear sinner, he had kept his word, and kept his ground; he would have been a fine fellow to preach to God's people! Why, he would have been full of "I" and "me," instead of being "less than the least of all saints." It would have been, "Ah! there is not one of you fit to be called a disciple but me; you all ran off but me; I remained, and cut off the man's ear, and was ready to have his head." Why, is *this* the way to "strengthen the brethren"? But O! what a lesson was that, when Peter got into Satan's sieve! There was a great deal of chaff, a great deal of self, to be shaken out; but not a grain of wheat was to fall to the ground; and this was to be the end: "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." And so the poor creature, who talked so valiantly about a prison and death, accosted by a silly girl: "Thou also art one of them," flatly denied it, told a most barefaced lie, and when lies would not answer his purpose fully and acquit him, began to curse and to swear. How wondrous are the ways of God! What would Peter have known of being "kept by the power of God" if he had never known anything of sadly falling? But the man that thought he could stand his ground, that thought he could defend his Master, is the very first to tell a lie, and support it with oaths and curses. And O! amazing grace and mercy! God will not only teach his servant what it was to have "a thorn in the flesh," lest he be "exalted above measure;" but he looked with a compassionate, heartbreaking look upon poor cursing Peter; "and he went out, and wept bitterly."

This is God's way of fitting a man for the pulpit. It is not merely by reading books; a man may read books for forty years and die a fool, and be damned; but the Lord is determined to bring his children to feel that they are "less than the least of all saints;" and though they forget it, he will make them learn it over and over again as long as they are in the wilderness. Although, perhaps, the servant of the Most High God may never go to outward acts of enormity in sin, either in his ignorance or after God calls him by his grace, yet God in his wisdom will send some internal thorn, some inward lust, some imp of hell in his very nature, to rage and roar in his soul like a ravaging wolf;

and this shall bring him to know, to his dying day, that there is not a baser wretch on the face of the earth, nor in the bowels of perdition, than he is; and yet nobody knows what it is. It is in the man's mind; there is some secret thorn, rankling, perhaps, daily and hourly, asleep and awake, and teaching him that he is "less than the least of all saints," and the very "chief of sinners." Lest he should forget it to-morrow, this thorn shall prick him to-morrow; and lest he should get puffed up, this thorn shall prick the bladder and let out the air; and he shall come again and again to God with, "Lord, be merciful;" "God be merciful to me a sinner." Ah! this is how God has dealt with me. He never let me run into gross, open sin; bless his dear Name, he never let me bring outward reproach upon his cause; but I have a vile heart; and if I am spared for 50 years, I never can be persuaded but I am the chief of sinners. From no outward act; entirely and solely from a secret grieving thorn, that hath "vexed my righteous soul," more or less, for 17 years. And I can assure you, that this thorn is enough any day, and almost any hour, to stamp death and damnation upon all notional religion. It is not worth a straw to me. I believe, if I had the clearest creed possible, the clearest notion of the covenant of grace and the way of salvation, this thorn would teach me in a moment that, unless Christ Jesus was formed in my heart, "the Hope of glory," unless his precious blood was shed for me and applied to my conscience, I am the most wretched, the most undone, the most ruined of all the human race. Take the most pious, good-tempered person in the world, and let even a fellow-creature (to say nothing about the devil) buffet him for five minutes, and see if he will retain his good temper; and let the thorn continue, and wherever he runs to screen his face let there be this buffeting, and I say good temper cannot bear it. Let this "messenger of Satan" buffet a man till he knows and feels that, if not saved by grace, he is damned as an act of justice, and I say it will stamp vanity and death upon notional religion, natural religion, and rounds of duty, which men so much esteem. People may out-talk him; but they cannot bring him to believe that he has any ground to stand upon, but the grace of God, by and through the blood of the Lamb.

"That I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Is there a poor poverty-struck wretch here to-night, really dreading the prison-house of hell? O! what a great thing it is, for a poor man, near a prison, to have a surety to stand forth for his relief and deliverance! And yet, though we might procure a surety, our creditor might please himself whether he would receive our surety's bond or not. But O! poor perishing sinner, this precious Christ, God's Anointed, is a Surety of God's own providing; so there is no danger of his refusing him. And what a mercy of mercies it is, that however poor, however wretched, however deeply sunk as a bankrupt wretch, the riches of his love and compassion cancel, pardon, and blot out sin; and

that if thy soul is panting after and seeking personal interest in this great Surety of the poor, he shall "stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul!" But none can ever feel spiritual poverty till God gives spiritual life, and puts his finger upon creature holiness and creature goodness.

What a solemn thing it is to be poor!—not in danger of a literal prison, but of that pit where body and soul, once entering, never can have release! But O! sinner, "though he was rich, for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich." Astonishing mercy! What could my poor guilty soul do but for Christ, God's anointed Surety for the poor? And what peace, what satisfaction, can my soul ever feel, but as I know in some measure by the witness of God, that this Surety Christ is *my* Surety, and that he hath obtained by his blood-shedding eternal redemption for my guilty soul?

"The unsearchable riches of Christ." Here is a bottomless abyss, that thou and I, poor child of God, shall never fully fathom to all eternity. In this "waste howling wilderness," with our poor narrow and contracted souls, only a glimpse of his glorious Person as our Redeemer, only a ray of his mercy as a covenant God dawning upon our souls, only a drop of his love and compassion distilling into our hearts, fills us with joy in a moment. "Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." But

"If such the sweetness of the streams,
What must the fountain be,
Where saints and angels draw their bliss
Immediately from thee?"

"The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

"The unsearchable riches of Christ." Is there a desperate case here to-night? How my soul feels for desperate cases! You know, a physician gets a name, and gets applauded, when he can cure some desperate disease; and O! it does my soul good to read in the Word of a Manasseh, of a Magdalene, of a dying thief, of a persecuting Saul; though really when one gets a sight and sense of the "thorn in the flesh," one gets lower than them all, and is ready to say, "His grace, his mercy, his love, his compassion, seem more to spangle in *my* salvation than in any one of them." "The heart knoweth its own bitterness." But is there a desperate case here to-night? Sinner, can we fathom "the unsearchable riches" of the blood of Christ? The devil tells us a deal about these thorns, and about our unworthiness, and about God's greatness and our littleness; does he ever tell us of the peace-speaking blood of the Lamb? that blood that poor dear Peter, who could tell lies and curse and swear, speaks of: "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb

without blemish and without spot." Poor desperate wretch! Poor, hell-deserving, monstrous wretch! "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Thanks be to God for that,—the exceeding riches of the precious, peace-speaking, cleansing, pardoning, atoning blood of the Lamb. My soul has felt that there is more efficacy in his precious blood to cleanse, pardon, and eternally forgive, than there is in this infernal "thorn," rankling daily in my mind for 17 years, to damn me.

Our precious Christ seems to invite desperate cases to him. And to tell you the truth, I have hardly common patience with little sinners. If any body tries my patience, to condescend to them or to have much to do with them, it is little sinners. But a poor thing deep in woe and sorrow, near the brink of hell, and yet that cannot help crying for pardon and peace through the blood of Immanuel,—this is the sinner that draws my heart. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord;" but he does not say, little sinner; he does not say, you that merely talk about sin, and make a great noise about it. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet." Poor sinner, are there the internal "thorns" rankling in thy mind, to the distress of thy living soul? Is there the plague of leprosy in sight deeper than the skin, yellow and red and spreading? Is there murder in the heart, cruelty in the heart, lust in the heart, malice in the heart, devilism in the heart? "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."

Poor sinner, God invites thee to reason the matter over with him. And suppose now, it took thee seven hours to tell out, as well as thou couldst put it in words, the heinous, crimson stains of internal sin and base desire in thy fallen mind, and suppose thou couldst tell him all that ever could be put into sentences, and then sigh and groan before him for an hour, and tell him there is a vast deal that has never been discovered to thee, but he knows all about it. Why, when the poor sinner has told his long tale, his crimson tale, his scarlet tale, his murderous tale, his enemies will say, You must go to hell, to be sure. O sinner! if Jesus Christ had never reasoned this point in my soul, personally and sensibly, I should be the most miserable wretch upon earth. Why, says the devil, what canst thou expect but hell? Why, says reason, thou must go into the pit. Why, says unbelief, thy sins are too crimson and powerful for mercy. And there is not an enemy thou hast but sticks to it through thick and thin, thou must go to hell; and I have believed many a time that if other people knew as much of me as I do, they would conclude I must go to hell inevitably. But, says he that is on our side, and while he is on our side he will baffle every enemy and silence every accuser: "Poor sinner, thou hast told thy heart as far as it is revealed; thine is a desperate case, indeed; thou art a hell-deserving wretch beyond a doubt; it is true enough; but though thy sins be as scarlet, poor sinner, here is my precious blood."

Even that hypocritical, that murderous, that adulterous David was led, in his penitential Psalm (the fifty-first) to say, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." And when the poor sinner has told his tale, the Lord opens his mouth, and with one sentence silences all. "Though it is true enough, plain enough, evident enough, that thy heart and life sins are as crimson, here is the fountain of My blood, opened for sin and for uncleanness; and such are the riches of my atoning blood, that when plunged in it, thou shalt be whiter than snow."

You see, the very first time that he takes up the matter, and answers our queries, and reasons the point with the poor hell-deserving wretch, he beats him. For if the God of heaven says, "Plunged in the fountain of my atoning blood, thou shalt be whiter than snow," what has the sinner to say why he should not go to heaven? Let him study seven years, and see what reason he can give why he should not go to heaven. The Lord admits every word of his plea against himself, gives testimony to the truth of it; but answers his objections by pleading the merits of his blood, and says, "Though thy sins be as scarlet, here is my rich blood, and thou shalt be as white as snow." The poor wretch is beaten out of all arguments, and all accusations, and all pretences, at once. What has the devil to say why he should not be saved? What have all the liars, that are enemies to his soul, to say why he should not go to heaven? He that reasons the point is the Son of God, who died for monsters; and he says, "True it is; thou hast a vile heart, a crimson heart; but plunged in this fountain thou shalt be as white as snow; and let justice, let law examine thee, and find a spot if they can." He has not a word to say why he should not go to heaven; the Lord has reasoned the point, and confounded him. "It is all true, sinner; but the riches of my blood shall make a crimson sinner as white as snow." Only get the whitest, purest linen, and compare with the new fallen snow, and there is a tinge upon it. But thou shalt be "as white as snow." Let justice examine thee, let the law of God come and deal with thee, let the pure eyes of the Majesty of heaven come and look upon thee; and if thou art "white as snow," thou are clean in the sight of the living God.

Sinner, this is the way to know something of the blood of Christ; to see how the Lord reasons the point with the soul. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." You see, he takes the deepest colours,—the crimson and the scarlet; as though he knew that the poor sensible sinner would rake up all the devilism of his heart to consign himself to perdition, and bring all that he could to testify against himself as the basest of the human race. But the Lord of heaven and earth will reason too. Though thou talkest of crimson and scarlet, he will talk of *blood*. Though thou talkest of a murderous heart, he will take thy murderous deeds to himself, and give thee his precious

blood and righteousness. And then what hast thou to say why thou shouldest not join the holy angels in heaven?

“If sinless innocence be theirs,
Redemption all is ours.”

Bless his dear and precious Name, “many daughters have done virtuously,” but a saved sinner, a blood-bought sinner, a sinner washed in the blood and righteousness of God, outshines them all.

Poor sinner, it is a mercy to know something of the riches of his blood, is it not? God forbid I should ever have any peace, but what that sprinkled blood upon my conscience gives. I would rather be miserable than have a false peace. And there is nothing that will so beat false peace out of thee as the buffetings of Satan. O! it is a mercy to be born of God, a mercy to be convinced of sin, a mercy to be led to reason the point with the dear Redeemer, a mercy to have peace and pardon by blood applied, a mercy to stand complete and for ever justified in the blood and righteousness of God.

These things are not learned merely by books; and a man that learns them only in the letter out of books, and gets into a pulpit, will be only a prating fool. All that preach anything but what they have seen with their eyes, what they have looked upon, and their hands have handled, are only frothy bubbles at best.

O what a robe is that,—the active and passive obedience of the Son of God! O the riches of the robe of righteousness, that clothes and justifies the ungodly! Is God stripping thee naked and bare to receive this robe? Only look at the passive death and suffering, the active life and righteousness of Jesus. He did not need this righteousness for himself; but, poor sinner, though thy life is one heap of guilt, let God put his righteousness upon thee, and then let law examine thee, let justice come, let even the pure eye of God look upon thee, and where is the spot, where is the wrinkle, where is the blemish? Thou art cleansed in the fountain, and covered with the robe King Jesus wove when on earth. And not only hast thou imputed to thee his active life of obedience, but his passive death and suffering. If we had only his active life imputed to us, we should have but half a covering, and death might stalk forth against the soul and smite it with a deadly wound; but bless his dear and precious Name, here is his passive death, suffering and dying in the stead of his people.

“And lest the shadow of a spot
Should on my soul be found,
He took the robe the Saviour wrought,
And cast it all around.”

O the riches of the mercy of God through a precious Christ! Is there a poor wretch here, that knows anything about the term *mercy*? We must go to heaven to understand what mercy fully means; but is there one here, that knows something of it? Ah! sinner, it is one thing to learn mercy out of a book; it is another

thing to have thy soul trembling upon the brink of deserved ruin, and the God of heaven snatching thee from it, and taking thee to the bosom of his love. O how "rich in mercy" is that God who loved us with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness hath drawn us!

Is there a poor wretch in the presence of God, too vile for mercy? too ruined for mercy? too nigh the pit of wrath for mercy? too unworthy to receive an act of mercy? too leprous for the mercy of God through atoning blood to cleanse and pardon? O! sinner, "according to his mercy," his unconditional and free mercy, "he saved us."

What a word that word *mercy* is! My soul knows something of its sweetness, something of its saving preciousness; but I must go to heaven to understand it to the full. Poor leprous wretch, it is suited to thee. "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." Poor sinner, *mercy!* Why, we cannot find one professor in ever so many that really has been half bad enough to need free mercy, unmerited mercy, boundless mercy; to feel that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," by and through the smitten Rock, the dear Redeemer Christ.

"Rich in mercy." O! sinner, how suited to thy case, if thou art poor and needy, by the teaching of the God of heaven! And if thou art, it is because he has got mercy in reserve for thee. "He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy;" "forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." His mercy is so rich, so effectual, so boundless, so free, to the purchase of the Redeemer's blood, that it is able to save entirely, fully, and eternally, "to the uttermost." "Rich in mercy."

And O! how rich is the dear Redeemer in love! How rich is he in his favour! Bless his precious Name, we are poverty itself; but what can we say of the dear Redeemer, as he stands in connection with the church, his spouse, but that he is rich, unsearchable, boundless, and that we must go to glory to know "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

WE oftener pray with our tongues than with our minds, and from our memories than our consciences, and from our consciences than our affections, and from our affections, as presently stirred, than from our hearts, renewed, bended, and inclined towards God.—*Manton.*

GRACE is not an inert thing. There is nothing in the whole universe of a more active nature. It is fire and life itself, even a divine flame and a spiritual life. It cannot rest. It must be active, according to its degree and strength. Difficulties and discouragements vanish before it. True godliness hath life and power in it, and what our Saviour calls *violence*, which takes the kingdom of heaven by force. The devil flies before it. The world and the flesh are vanquished by it. It lays hold on God himself; and wrestles for the blessings of pardon, grace, and peace, till in the end it prevails. It is a most noble spirit, the admiration of angels, and the delight of heaven.—*T. Charles.*

“THE RIGHT WAY TO A CITY OF
HABITATION.”

Dear Sir,—As you were so kind as to ask me to write to you, I will endeavour, if the Lord is pleased to enable me, to give you some account of his precious dealings with a most worthless sinner. May he and his grace have all the glory, and I take (what is my due) all shame and confusion of face to myself. I feel sometimes lost in wonder and astonishment at God's amazing grace in visiting, pardoning, and saving one who feels himself unworthy of the least of all his mercies, and am constrained to say, “Who am I, and what is my father's house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?” And also,

“Why was I made to hear thy voice,
And enter whilst there's room,
While thousands make a wretched choice,
And rather starve than come?
“’Twas the same love that spread the feast
That sweetly forced me in;
Else I had still refused to taste,
And perished in my sin.”

Although it was my mercy to be born of God-fearing parents, and to have many privileges others have not, besides sitting for about five years under the preaching of the pure gospel, before the Lord opened my blind eyes, yet until then I remained as ignorant of the doctrines of grace and of God's plan of salvation as a heathen. From a child I was exercised about my eternal state, and used to be troubled about my sin; and many times have I been scared with dreams, and terrified through visions. I remember, when about six years old, I used vainly to imagine that, because my parents were good people, I should be saved; but shortly after it pleased the Lord to break that snare in the following manner: I dreamed that the day of judgment was come; and when my father and mother were judged, I saw it was with difficulty they themselves were saved, and that I was shut out; and, as you will suppose, when I awoke I was much troubled; for “if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”

I was not suffered, as some of the children of God have been, to go to great lengths of outward iniquity, such as making a practice of lying, cursing, and swearing; but God knows I was and still am a grievous sinner. But there is this difference between my past and present state,—*then* I loved sin, and rolled it under my tongue as a sweet morsel. And so passionately fond was I of reading novels and romances (which I believe to be as fatal to the mind as poison is to the body), as well as of other abominable iniquity, that nothing short of divine power could stop me in my mad career; and I seemed bent upon my own destruction. But he waiteth to be gracious. His eye was upon me for good, or I should have perished in my unrenewed state, as my life was several times in great danger. Now, blessed be the Lord, sin is my

plague, sore, grief, and cross; and that which I do I allow not; and, through sanctifying grace, it serves to drive me to the feet of Christ, and makes the Word more precious. O the value of this promise: "He that confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall have mercy!" And: "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins." The sense of my sin endears Christ to me; for "they that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick;" and makes precious his everlasting justifying righteousness and atoning blood, and all the glorious doctrines of the everlasting gospel. I have, through it, the sentence of death in myself, that I should not trust in myself, but in the Lord Jesus, who (blessed be his Name) loved me, and gave himself for me. And the following lines are precious to me:

"Determined to save, he watched o'er my path
While, Satan's blind slave, I sported with death.
And can he have taught me to trust in his Name,
And thus far have brought me to put me to shame?"

But I must return, as, if I was to enter into particulars, the account would far exceed the limits of a letter; and I am afraid what I have written will not be entertaining to you. Shortly before it pleased God to cause deep conviction to enter my conscience, I became very dissatisfied with my state before him, and began to reflect upon my past life, which appeared dreadful to me, and filled me with the sorrow of the world, which worketh death. Being ignorant of the Lord's way of reconciling sinners to himself, I vainly tried by reforming my life to make my peace with him, and I began to read the Bible, &c. But, alas! when I took it up to read, which was generally after the business of the day was over, I used to feel such a dreadfully sleepy frame come over me, that it appeared a mockery to be so sleepy and slothful in reading God's own Book. Now I began to feel worse and worse. Let me do what I would, I could not obtain rest in my mind. I wanted something I had not got. At this time I was about 18 years of age. This scripture was much upon my mind: "Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God;" and I was troubled about election; but I did not know how to come to the knowledge of my own election of God; which made me still more uneasy.

The Lord now made me experience the fulfilment of this scripture: "I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish them that are settled on their lees;" for the word, both preached and read, was attended with power, life, light, reproof, rebuke, and conviction. It appeared as though it was directed to myself alone, and as if the minister knew all my feelings, thoughts, and conduct through my past life. My sins were set before the Lord; my secret sins in the light of his countenance. I saw that I had done nothing but sin against God all my life long. I felt that I was like the deaf adder, that stoppeth her ear, that will not

hearken to the voice of the charmer, charming never so wisely; and these words used to make me tremble: "Because I have called, and ye refused, I will also laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh," &c. And to the best of my recollection, this used to follow me continually: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." The law entered my conscience, that the offence might abound. It worked wrath there, and stirred up the carnal enmity of my mind against God to such a degree that I was a terror to myself, and thought that I was as bad as the devil himself; in fact, I believed, at times, that I was possessed with the devil; and it wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. Thus, though I was alive without the law once, when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. All my false hopes and refuges were swept away, and I saw that I was wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, destitute and lost, without God and without hope in the world; and I seemed given over to a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which should devour the adversaries. I felt that I was as bad as Judas, and expected my end would be like his. I could not believe there ever was such a sinner as myself in existence. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow.

But I must not enlarge. The Lord was pleased, at times, to favour me with a gleam of hope and ray of light. Once, as I was dwelling upon my great folly in trifling, as I had done, with the salvation of my immortal soul, and felt that I was more brutish than any man, and had not the common understanding of a man, these words came to me with sweetness, and encouraged me for a time to hope that some time or other I should see better days: "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." And the following of Hart's:

"His fairest pretensions must wholly be waived,
And his best resolutions be crossed;
Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved,
Till he finds himself utterly lost."

At another time, when sinking in despair, came this word attended with power: "Have faith in God." I could enjoy no company; but went about moping like one melancholy, crying and sighing all day long. If I went into worldly company, I felt condemned, and expected some judgment to overtake me. Death I greatly feared, and it was indeed the king of terrors to me; but, though it may appear strange to some, so sure did I feel that I was lost that I felt a wish that I might no longer be kept in suspense, but wanted to know the worst of it. When in the company of the saints, I trembled, fearing I was a hypocrite, and thought they could see through me, and knew what a sinner I was. Seeing their state to be so blessed, and that they were so happy in God, did but increase my misery; and my life became a burden

to me, and, like Job, I chose death, and strangling rather than life. I was chastened with pain upon my bed, and the multitude of my bones with strong pain, &c. In the morning, I wished for night, and at night, wished for morning. The following lines have been very precious to me, as descriptive of my experience :

“But thus the eternal counsel ran,—
Almighty love, arrest that man!
I felt the arrows of distress,
And found I had no hiding-place.

“Indignant Justice stood in view;
To Sinai’s fiery mount I flew;
But Justice cried, with frowning face,
This mountain is no hiding-place.”

Like Noah’s dove, which could not rest out of the ark, I found that there is no rest for poor sensible sinners out of Christ, the true Ark; but I knew nothing savingly of him then. At that time, I had not mentioned anything of the state of my mind to any one; but once I happened to say I feared I was lost; when a person observed that there was no cause to fear that, for, said he, “Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners,” or similar words; at which I felt an indescribable sweetness communicated to my spirit. But I wanted an appropriating faith; so it soon vanished.

(To be concluded.)

LETTER OF THE LATE MR. TOPLADY

TO A FRIEND WHO HAD LATELY MET WITH AN UNFORTUNATE ACCIDENT.

My very dear Friend,—1, Do not imagine that I forget you. On the contrary, I remember you continually, both on my knees and off them.

2. Do not imagine that I slight you. My reason for not having visited you so long is because I have been, for a great while past, almost as much an invalid as yourself.

3. Do not suppose that God is less your Friend than he was, because it was his pleasure that you should break your leg. Every hair of your head was numbered from everlasting. He is still your Father, your Lover, your Keeper, and your God in Christ Jesus. He will make you to hear joy and gladness; and the bone which he hath broken shall rejoice.

4. Do not think that his angels were off their watch, or slept upon their posts, because they did not so bear you in their hands as to prevent the calamity under which you labour. They were all attention at the very time; and your fall, together with its effects, was an event which their God and yours gave them express commission not to hinder.

5. Do not surmise that I am not deeply affected by what has befallen you, because I argue in the above manner. The Lord knows that I sympathize with you most tenderly; and, were it possible, should have rejoiced to lessen your pains by bearing half of them myself. My grand comfort is that you have a great

and faithful, a compassionate and unchangeable High Priest, who is touched with a feeling of your infirmities; who has graven you on the palms of his hands, and who carries your name upon his breast. To his never-failing grace and all-powerful intercession I commend you. In his care I leave you. And, if his holy and wise providence permit, I will embrace the first opportunity of coming to see you. In the meantime, and at all times, may the shinings of his countenance upon your soul "fill you with all joy and peace in believing; and make you to abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost." All is well while we enjoy his presence, and while our eye is unto him, and while our wills are melted down into his. The happiest seasons for a child of God are when he and his heavenly Father have but one will between them.

For the present, dear Sir, adieu. Grace be with you, and love with faith, from God our Father, and from our blessed Lord Jesus; in whom I remain,

Your very affectionate and sympathizing Brother,
Knightsbridge, Feb. 2nd, 1778.

AUG. TOPLADY.

A WONDER-WORKING GOD.

To the Editor of the "Gospel Standard."

Dear Sir,—As I read dear Clough's account of that marvellous answer to prayer, in the present No. (Nov.) of the "Gospel Standard," I was reminded of a most striking incident, equally wonderful, in the history of my own sister by nature, and grace too. My dear sister, who has long since entered into her eternal rest, was often, like many more of the Lord's dear children, deeply tried in providential matters. On one occasion, she was brought into circumstances of unusual distress; when she received a note from a kind friend at a distance to say that a hamper (containing very substantial relief, as she afterwards found) would come for her, by the carrier, on a certain day, to a certain inn in Chesterfield, the town where she resided. She went for the hamper at the stated time, but found, to her dismay, that she had not sufficient money to pay the carriage. She turned away with a very sorrowful heart; and walked slowly down the back yard of the inn. I remember it well. It was paved with rough pebbles, standing edgeways up. Half way down the yard she stopped, raised her eyes to heaven, and the prayer was wrung from her overcharged heart: "Lord, help me! Lord, help me!"

She hung down her head, and her tears fell fast upon something which began to glitter in a chink of the pavement at her feet. She mechanically stooped to see what it was, and it proved to be a half-sovereign, *standing edgeways*, between two of the rough paving-stones. How long it had been there God only knows; but two things seem very clear;—that no eye but hers could detect it; and that the tears of felt necessity were needed to bring the hidden mercy to light.

What a wonder-working God is ours! "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Such is his own faithful word, which is for ever settled in heaven,
 "And never was forfeited yet."

O for grace to love him more!

Yours truly in the Bonds of Christ,
 High Field, Scarborough, Nov., 1878. W. S. ROBINSON.

THE GOD OF JESHURUN.

"There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help."—DEUT. XXXIII. 26.

BLESSED truth! Let it echo as wide and as far,
 Through the range of the earth, as the scattered ones are;
 For they know,—they have proved it in many a way;
 And the record of many a sorrowful day
 Tells a tale of afflictions, temptations, and woes,
 When the soul was press'd down by its fears and its foes;
 And though neither helper nor succour seemed nigh,
 The God of Jeshurun was riding on high.

Blessed truth! Let it echo; the sick one will hear,
 And her heart and her eye give a throb and a tear;
 For well she remembers, and ever would tell
 Of the mercy that helped and supported so well,
 When her flesh and her heart seemed to fail; even then
 It was mercy that sweetly revived her again;
 And she knew, when relief came in timely supply,
 The God of Jeshurun was riding on high.

Blessed truth! Let it echo; the tempted one longs
 To look up, and exchange his complaining for songs;
 Then tell him, when Satan the fight would maintain,
 The God of Jeshurun is holding his chain.
 He may baffle his hope, and his comfort annoy;
 His arrows may pierce, but they cannot destroy;
 Though the battle-worn spirit in sadness may sigh,
 The God of Jeshurun is riding on high.

Blessed truth! Let it echo; the pilgrims should know,
 That whatever their lot, and wherever they go,
 In the darkest of seasons, they need not despair;
 The God of Jeshurun will make them his care.
 And when death lays his cold chilling hand on their heart,
 And they feel that from all things around they must part,
 They may smile at the tyrant, his sceptre defy;—
 The God of Jeshurun is riding on high.

Jireh Lodge, Knutsford.

E. M. L. H.

WHERE there is a shaking in our faith, there will be a wavering and unsteadiness in our hope, love, zeal, and all other Christian graces. Therefore, says the apostle, "That your love abound yet more and more in knowledge."—*J. Hill.*

FOLLOWERS OF THE LAMB.

“These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.”—
REV. XIV. 3.

THOSE who are called to be saints are called to follow the Lord Jesus in a path of tribulation. There can be no possible resemblance between a Head crowned with thorns and members completely unbroken;

“Between a Head like melting wax,
And hearts as hard as stone.”

Therefore the Lord's people are always represented as an afflicted people, and the way to heaven as one beset with dangers, difficulties, and tribulations:

“The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.”

So sings the poet; and to this agrees the Word of God: “I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people.” “A remnant shall be saved;” and this an afflicted one for “the afflicted people wilt thou save, and wilt bring down high looks.”

Now, the afflictions of God's people are of various kinds, and may arise from various sources.

1. There are tribulations and afflictions to be distinctly regarded as chastisements. They are God's rods for the punishment of sin, as is written in the Lamentations: “Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?” Isaiah writes: “Lord, in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.” And the Lord says in Isaiah: “For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him.” Now, Paul particularly refers to afflictions of this nature when he writes, as from the Lord: “My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.” In these chastenings of God, which come upon us for sin, and with an express reference to sin, there is a twofold danger which Paul cautions us against: first, *despising*, that is, making light of, and being stout-hearted under; whereas not to despise is to humble ourselves beneath the mighty hand of God, accepting his chastisement with submission and even gratitude, and earnestly seeking and praying to profit by it; and, secondly, *fainting*, that is, sinking into despondency, and a heartless, prayerless state under the trial, as seeing nothing in it but the anger and even vengeance of God. Both these are spiritually unfruitful states; and Paul stirs up the pure minds of the afflicted saints in opposition to them.

2. There are tribulations and afflictions which may come upon God's children without any distinct reference to a state of mind or actions of a particularly blameable character. So it was with Job; and here his friends made a grievous mistake in attempting to deduce from his great afflictions that he must have been, at least secretly, a very great sinner. They drew from his sorrows most unjustly an inference of his hypocrisy. Joseph

was a very afflicted man for a time; so was David when he fled from Saul in the wilderness; but in vain should we seek to trace their griefs to some particular sins of spirit or of action. Joseph was one of the most blameless of Scripture characters; and at the time we name, David, by God's grace, kept himself from his iniquity. Well, then, to what must we trace some afflictions of the saints? Why, to the general purpose of God concerning their conformity to Christ. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son;" and when, in accordance with this purpose of his will, he calls them by his grace, it is to make them thus answerable to the great first Pattern, that he might be in this sense the First-born among many brethren. Here, then, we have two sources of tribulation; but what is the third?

3. There are tribulations and afflictions which may come upon God's children for righteousness sake. Thus Isa. lix. 15: "And he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey." So Paul writes to Timothy: "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." And Peter says, "But if ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye."

The Christian man is called, then, not only to suffer afflictions in a way of chastisement, but in a way of obedience. He is called to take up the cross daily, and follow Christ. He is to expect to suffer many things in the path of duty. In following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, he is to expect to suffer for him. This is one of the features of the Christian's calling which we fear is greatly lost sight of. Even the godly appear to be too much aiming at a resting-place here below, and forgetting that their calling is a high and heavenly one. Saints of old "loved not their lives unto the death." These were the heroes who overcame the accuser of the brethren. Luther calls some professors "tender martyrs." Like By-ends and his companions, in the "Pilgrim's Progress," they are for religion with her silver slippers on. They are for imitating the busy bee, which is wise enough to keep at home when the rain doth come down, and only go forth when the sun shineth. Christians of the true stamp were figured by the three hundred followers of Gideon, who lapped the water,—men of moderation as to this life, intent, even though faint, in pursuing that which is to come. The saints before Christ were not tender martyrs when they wandered in sheepskins and goatskins, in dens and caves of the earth. The saints in the apostolic and early church times were not tender martyrs when they lost life and everything for Jesus. The saints in the days of the Reformers and our own Puritans were not tender martyrs when they proved whose they were by suffering in all sorts of ways for their blessed Master. We are persuaded that the martyr spirit is not extinguished; it is only buried beneath the worldliness, slothfulness, false opinion, and carnal security that have come in, we know not how, upon our churches, and almost covered up all that is peculiar in the Christian

calling. What a mercy if we were enabled to arise, cast off sloth, self-seeking, worldliness, and other works of darkness, and become truly followers of those who amidst persecution held on their way, and now inherit the promises.

"NONE TEACHETH LIKE GOD."

A Brief Account of the Lord's Goodness and Mercy Manifested to my Dear Mother, Harriet Ashdown, of Cross-in-Hand, who died in peace, April 23rd, 1878, aged 82 years.

(Continued from page 32.)

Now another trial awaited her. On the Saturday, as she was to be baptized the next day, she named it to my father, and told him that she was going to be baptized on the Sabbath. He said, "No; you shall not; I will stop that." She was in delicate health, and it was winter,—Nov. 19th, 1854. She found my father was very determined in the matter. She cried to the Lord for help, with fears, trembling, and sorrow. Bed-time came, and my father manifested the same determination against it. He arose about three o'clock in the morning, and said nothing, but went down stairs. My mother feared it was to get something to hurt her with, or to kill her or himself. Her soul was in distress. She prayed to the Lord for help with tears, and sorrow, and groans that could not be uttered. At six o'clock she arose, and went down stairs; but saw nothing of my father; he was gone, she knew not whither. So when the time came, she started for Zoar Chapel, Dicker, with Mr. Chapman, who kindly took her in his cart. She feared my father would meet them on the road, and stop her; but she saw nothing of him until she got into the chapel. Then she saw him sitting close to the pool. Her heart sank again, fearing he would prevent her being baptized, or make a disturbance in the chapel. But the service began, and dear Mr. Cowper baptized her "in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The spirit of love and grace entered into her soul, casting out all fear, which hath torment, and filled her heart with peace and gladness; so she went on her way once again rejoicing in his great and holy Name who had helped her. This verse was sweet to her:

"Amazing grace (how sweet the sound!)

That saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost, but now am found;

Was blind, but now I see."

Service being ended, my father left the chapel without saying a word to her. She did not see him after the service, or outside the chapel; but she had got the witnessing of the Spirit of God within, so that she was not greatly moved. Mr. C. again took her home in his cart. When she reached home, father was not there, and he did not come home until late. When he did, he was in great anger, and scolded her very much; also after they were in bed; but now she had peace in her soul, and felt she could bear all things. Soon after midnight he got up, and went down

stairs, and was gone about an hour; during which time she felt she could commit all into the Lord's hands; herself and husband too. After this he came up again, and fell on her neck and kissed her, and wept, and begged her to forgive him; and they wept together. "The Lord stayed his rough wind in the day of his east wind." He delivers "from the noise of archers in the place of drawing water." I do not name this circumstance by way of disparaging my father; for he was a most kind, tender, and indulgent husband and father; but what are the best of men if left in Satan's power?

In her later years, through infirmity and great deafness, my mother was often at home all the Sabbath. Many times I have heard father, when he got home from chapel, tell her the text and the heads of the sermon, also the hymns which were sung; and I never knew him oppose her in any branch of religion either before or after this time; but they often had ministers and godly friends in their house, and my father would cheerfully do his part in entertaining them. Now, before the ordinance of the Lord's supper, my mother was much tried again; fearing, as she said, that it would be presumption for an old sinner like herself to approach to the table of the Lord. On the Saturday previous, she was much cast down, until in the evening these words came with power to her soul: "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." She answered, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." She then had sweet peace, and looked forward, greatly desiring to commemorate his dying love in the ordinance of his house. Thus she went to the table with self-loathing, but with love and peace in her soul. Dear Mr. Cowper used to be very solemn, as well as very encouraging, on those occasions. She now much enjoyed the communion of saints; and the ministry was much blessed to her; so that she would often return home from chapel speaking of the goodness and mercy of the Lord, and the faithfulness of his servant.

After this, her eldest son was taken ill with a bad fever. As he lived near, and had a delicate wife, my mother did a good part of the nursing; and she also took the fever, and was very ill for weeks. During this illness she was much blessed in her soul. When I called to see her she took my hand, and said, "The Lord is good. The dew lies all night upon my branch; I wash my steps in butter; and the rock pours me out rivers of oil. I am not afraid to die now. Bless his precious Name, 'tis all treasured up in a dear Redeemer. Yes, 'tis all in him; he is All in all; bless his great Name."

Now I shall pass over some years, through which her soul was kept blessedly alive to the Lord and his people, and give a few extracts from some letters which she wrote to a daughter who suffered with ill health for many years. She afterwards lost her husband, and, having recovered, came to live with mother the last three or four years of her life, and also nursed her in her old age and last illness.

“I think I ought to beg pardon for not writing to you before, but I have no good news to send you from a far country, and I feel it hard work to talk or to write, except I am in the enjoyment of it.

“Oh, when will that blest time arrive,
When thou wilt kindly deign
With me to sit, to lodge, to live,
And never part again?”

“My dear children, I hope you are pursuing the narrow path that leads to eternal life. Remember it is through much tribulation we enter the kingdom, if at all; but we have got many foes to fight with; and we are so weak in ourselves, we need to put on the whole armour of God, and take hold of his strength, who is mighty to save.”

“Dec. 20th, 1868.—My dear Son and Daughter,—This comes with our united love. And O that it would please the Lord to raise you up again! Not one quarter of an hour have you been out of my mind since the day I heard you were so ill. I did not think you were brought so low before E. told me. My dear girl, I feel much for you. This ought to be a time for much prayer with us all, in a twofold sense; that the Lord may bless this affliction for the good of our souls; and raise you up again for the praise and glory of his grace and mercy towards us. Often do I picture to myself your dear husband sitting by your bedside, reading the Word of life; and O that the Lord would give you an understanding! He is wisdom. He is everything a poor sinner stands in need of. All is treasured up in Jesus.

“Venture on him, venture wholly;
Let no other trust intrude.”

But

“Whilst we can call one mite our own,
We have no full discharge.

Beg for the blessed Spirit's teaching, and to be stripped of everything of *self*, and so to come empty, naked, and bare to a full Christ. May we yet have to say, 'The Lord is above all things.' * * * From your affectionate Mother.”

“June 3rd, 1869.—My dear Daughter and Son,—I hope this will find you well. We received your kind letter yesterday morning, and were very glad you have had no relapse. This is a great mercy; and I hope that I return thanks; for there is nothing too hard for the Lord. I am much better, though I still remain very weak. I begin to work a little, though very trembling; 'tis all undeserved mercy. Your father is much better, and goes to work. I am glad to hear my dear children at Lewes are well. When you see them, give our kind love to them. “You seem to wish you could see your father and mother to converse with us on spiritual things. I do assure you, mine has been an in-and-out path. I am much oftener down than up. Hart says,

“'Tis perfect poverty alone
That sets the soul at large;
While we can call one mite our own
We have no full discharge.’

And I very often think that I have got too much self about me. We want to come empty, naked, bare, to a full Christ. He will not despise the prayer of a needy sinner. O, 'tis a blessed sight to see by faith a dying Saviour stand before the throne, pleading for poor helpless sinners. I never had the sight to the same extent but once; and that was years ago. I think I am as Hart's says:—

“‘Their pardon some receive at first;
And then, compell'd to fight,
They feel their latter stages worst,
And travel much by night.’

“I am afraid you do not sit under a sound ministry; and that is a great object to a poor seeking sinner. We want the stumbling-blocks taken out of the way; but if the minister has never been in the path himself, he cannot tell poor sinners the way. We want a minister that has tasted, handled, and felt all these things for himself; then poor sinners may judge whether they are in the footsteps of the flock. May the Lord open the eyes of your understanding, and show you who your teachers are. Never mind being scoffed at by the world. It is through much tribulation we enter the kingdom. I must now conclude, with kindest love to you both.—Your affectionate Mother.”

“March 10th, 1870.—My dear Children,—This comes with our united love. We were glad to hear this morning that you are something better. O may the Lord grant you may continue so. May these afflictions wean you from this vain world, and lead you to trust in the Lord.

“‘To trust him endeavour; the work is his own;

He makes the believer, and gives him his crown.’

I feel very dead and barren at this time. I am a changeable creature; but he has said, ‘I am God; I change not; therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed.’ O, my dear girl, what a mercy it is to be enabled to lay hold of the promises when the Lord is pleased to communicate faith to the soul! For all the promises are Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus, and sure to all the seed. The Lord grant you this faith, my dear children, for his great name’s sake; and he shall have all the praise.

“Your father went to work on Monday and Tuesday, and came home better than I expected. Yesterday he was at home very poorly. I have my old complaint about me; but it is all mercy that I am able to get about and to do a little. I do hope it may please the Lord for the weather to get warmer soon. This has been a long cutting winter to us.—Your affectionate Mother.”

In May, 1870, she was very ill with bronchitis. We did not think she would live; but she was much blessed in her soul. She said, “O how precious is a dying Saviour to my soul! He gives me songs in the night.”

“‘When Jesus, with his mighty love,
Visits my troubled breast,
My doubts subside, my fears remove,
And I’m completely blest.’

When she got a little better, she said, “I stood with my staff in my hand, ready to pass over the river Jordan; but I am put back. I must wait a little longer. Bless his great Name.” After which she writes as follows to her daughter:

“June 3rd, 1870.—My dear Children,—This comes with our united love to you. I did not think you unkind, my dear girl, in not writing before, for I am become very troublesome to you all. The Lord is sparing my life for some wise end; but I hope not to be a burden and cross to my dear children. I desire to adore his mercy to me, a poor unworthy sinner, and that it would please him to enable me, a poor old helpless sinner, to live to the praise and glory of himself, my few remaining days. I feel very much distressed about my dear children

at Lewes. I greatly fear my dear P. will never have her health again. May the Lord in mercy support my dear child under all his trials. I was glad to find the Lord had inclined your hearts to go to see them. It seems more than I could bear to see dear P. or the children; but the Lord is able to strengthen me. Still, I am extremely weak, and can only bear a little; but it is a mercy I am as I am.—Your affectionate Mother."

In the winter and spring of 1877, my dear mother was much favoured in soul, and would often speak to her daughter, Mrs. S., in the morning, of her songs in the night, and of his dew that lay all night on her soul. Hart's hymns were much blessed to her at this time; those especially beginning,

"And why, dear Saviour, tell me why
Thou thus wouldst suffer, bleed, and die?"

"When Jesus, with his mighty love,
Visits my troubled breast, &c."

I have heard her say before this that she has repeated these hymns and others in the night watches for an hour together, when under temptations and blasphemous thoughts, trying thus to rid herself of them; but now her Lord was come, and Satan, darkness, and sorrow fled away, and she enjoyed the sweetness of them. "Ah," she would say, "it is a full Christ for an empty sinner. Bless his great Name."

After Mr. Cowper's death she seldom went to the Dicker, as it was nine miles from her house, and her infirmities increased. Her deafness also became much worse, so that she could only now and then hear a word all through the sermon, even with her horn. She heard Mr. Mortimer once from these words: "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love;" and her soul was filled with peace and joy.

(To be concluded.)

SHORT PAPERS.

GRIEVING THE SPIRIT.

"And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God."—Eph. iv. 30.

THESE words seem to refer more especially to what is written just before, and to that which immediately follows. The 29th verse cautions against error; the 31st against that which is contrary to love. The blessed Spirit is the Spirit of truth and the Spirit of love; therefore says the apostle, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth;" and, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you," &c.

But we must not limit the application to what is in more immediate connection with this verse. The Spirit of God is the Holy Spirit; and, therefore, this admonition concerning not grieving him will also have reference to all the exhortations of the apostle.

In making some remarks upon these words, we do not in a

short paper like this intend to go deeply into such a subject; but only to throw out a few hints which may stir up the pure minds of our readers in a way of remembrance and reflection, and be profitable to them. We hope these words of the apostle have been both sweet and admonishing ones to us. We have felt the need of them, and hope the blessed Spirit has himself applied them with a divine power and solemnity. Thus he has made them effectual to stirring up desires and prayers in accordance with them in our heart, causing us to intreat the Lord to keep us by his divine grace from grieving the Holy Spirit of God.

In these words God addresses his people as his dear children. As a Father he represents himself as most tenderly concerned about their best interests, their spiritual welfare. What injures them, what wounds their souls, grieves him. As tender fathers are affected by the sufferings and sad states of their children, so God the most tender Father represents himself as affected by the injuries inflicted through sin, the flesh and Satan upon the souls of the godly. When, too, he applies such words as these of the apostle, he stirs up in them the graces of the Spirit, and calls into exercise a filial heart, and thus produces great and vehement desires that we may be enabled to walk as becometh the gospel of Christ, and may not grieve the Holy Spirit by what is discordant with his holy mind and will.

Further, we observe that the exhortation is enforced by the consideration that the Holy Spirit has sealed us to the day of redemption. The apostle would point out to us that the blessed Spirit has come into our hearts to assure us of our interest in Christ, to mark us to be the children of God, to fill our souls with peace and joy in believing; and, consequently, what a sad and evil thing it must be if, through the prevalency of the flesh, we grieve the Holy Spirit, and thus bring grief and trouble, darkness and uncertainty, and even bondage upon our souls, and dishonour him.

But let us now reflect for a few minutes upon the following things in connection with our text:

- I. *What the blessed Spirit is to his people.*
- II. *What consequences arise from grieving the Holy Spirit.*
- III. *How the Holy Spirit is grieved.*

I. *What the blessed Spirit is to the people of God.* Briefly, we may say *everything* in respect to godly gracious experience.

1. He is the *Spirit of life*. "You hath he quickened," says Paul; and this quickening is by the Holy Spirit. Thus, in the vision of the dry bones seen by Ezekiel, when the blessed Spirit breathed upon those bones they lived, and became an army to the living God. The blessed Spirit, as the Spirit of life from God, enters the dead bodies of the witnesses (Rev. xi.); and then they live again, and ascend to heaven. Indeed, the blessed Spirit is called "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." So, then, possession of divine life at first, and all the sustainment of that life afterwards, with all its actings, workings, and effects, are

from the Holy Spirit of God. We are nothing, can be nothing, and can do nothing properly, only as the Holy Spirit of God is in and with us. Thus he is in God's people as a well or fountain of living water, springing up into everlasting life. Paul could sweetly rejoice, and say, "O! blessed be God, I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." The entire life of the child of God, so far as he really lives in Christ, is by the living communications of the Holy Spirit of God.

2. He is the *Spirit of truth*. He, and he only, guides the saints into all truth. They have an unction from the Holy One, whereby they know all things. Whatever we learn properly is taught us by the Spirit of God. He abideth also in the saints to lead them farther and farther into the mysteries of God, and likewise to keep them in the truths which he already has taught them. All God's people are taught of the Lord, and this teaching is entirely in the hands of the Spirit. Christ sends forth his Spirit into the hearts of his people, and thus they learn his truth, and learn it properly. We know nothing in a right and saving manner which is not taught us by the Spirit of God.

3. He is the *Spirit of supplications*. We know not what to pray for as we ought, except as the Spirit of God enables us. He shows us our sin and misery, and makes us sensible of our wants. By him we have some right views of God and of his holy law, and our utterly lost condition. He reveals to our needy souls the rich provision of God's love in his dear Son Jesus. He gives us faith to believe, and hope to lay hold of God's mercy, as thus revealed, and thereby stirs up in our hearts earnest cries and supplications, with groanings which cannot be uttered. O the difference between prayers *with* and *without* the Spirit of God! How, when the Spirit is much with us, the whole soul goes out in longings after God! "As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after God, the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?" Then we pray, and then only, when the Holy Spirit himself is in us and with us as the Spirit of supplications.

4. He is the *Spirit of grace*. All the revelation of the grace of God is by him; all the communications of grace are through him. Faith, and hope, and love, and all other graces, have the blessed Spirit for their Author. Thus he is the Spirit of faith, the God of hope; and "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us."

5. He is the *Comforter*. It is his work to comfort those who are cast down, and his only. Natural men may kindle a fire, and compass themselves about with sparks. This shall not finally be the case with God's people. No! they shall be made to feel their dependence upon the Holy Spirit of God, the appointed Comforter. This is his blessed work in the new covenant; and this glory he will not give unto another. So it is said of Zion, when the blessed Spirit is not with her to comfort her soul, "O thou afflicted. . . and not comforted."

But we must not enlarge, our object merely being to give hints. Briefly, then, the blessed Spirit is the Glorifier of Jesus; the Revealer of the deep things of God; the Seal to the saints' religion, confirming it as of the Lord; the Witness, the earnest, the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, "Abba, Father." In fact, as we began by saying, the entire gracious experience of the child of God depends upon the blessed Spirit of God, who in this matter is All in all as the Spirit of Christ unto him.

II. Now these things will lead us very clearly to see what must ordinarily be the consequence of grieving the Holy Spirit of God. Of course, we well know that that blessed Spirit will never really forsake the work of his own hands. When he once comes into the heart of an elect vessel of mercy, he will never depart again. But, then, in the saint's present experience, many sad results will assuredly follow when he grieves the Holy Spirit of God.

1. *Guilt* will sadly prevail, with *disquietness* in the conscience. As the poet writes :

"If thou, celestial Dove,
Thine influence withdraw,
What easy victims soon we fall
To conscience, wrath, and law!"

Who does not know something of this? Long after Christian, in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," had had his burden removed at the cross of Christ, he and his companion Hopeful got into Doubting Castle and the hands of Giant Despair. If the blessed Spirit of God withhold his light and power, notions of truth cannot support the hearts of God's people. Christ and his sweet consolations are out of sight; the blood is no longer precious sprinkled by faith upon the conscience, and guilt, with guilty fears and even terrors, will surely make sad inroads upon us.

And here, in reference to this very point, we must again call attention to Paul's words, "Whereby ye are sealed." Plainly the implication is that if the Holy Spirit of God is grieved, the child of God will lose, to a great extent, the joy of salvation, and will probably sink into a guilty, restless, uncomfortable, miserable state of soul.

2. *Bewilderment and darkness* will greatly prevail over the mind. It is in God's light only we see light. We are never at any moment sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves. Our thoughts necessarily sink into confusion unless the blessed Spirit of God is with us and sustains them. O the seasons of darkness and bewilderment, the utter incapacity to think upon divine things, which have resulted, in our own experience, from grieving the Spirit! And again, at other seasons, it has been with us as with the psalmist David: "I thought upon God, and was troubled." If the blessed Spirit of God is grieved, instead of clear sweet comfortable thoughts of God, as in Christ a loving Father, we may think of him as a just, and angry, and terrible Judge, and be filled with most gloomy and terrifying apprehensions. All blessed soul-satisfying and comforting views of God

and Christ, and the blessed words of Scripture and free grace, depend upon the Spirit; and when he is grieved, all things are filled with darkness and discomfort to us.

8. *Corruption* makes sad inroads. "Iniquities," says the psalmist, "prevail against me." The Spirit of God alone can enable us to fight the good fight of faith. He alone can subdue those enemies, our inbred corruptions, under us. What head can we make then against these evils of our hearts when the Holy Spirit, being grieved, withdraws his gracious enabling power from us?

4. *Satan*, the accuser of the brethren, rejoices over us. We can only resist him successfully as enabled so to do by the Holy Spirit. Those who overcame the accuser of the brethren (Rev. xii.) did so by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony. But the blessed Spirit alone can testify of that blood, and furnish the heart with the word of God's grace as a weapon against the enemy. Paul writes: "The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

5. *The world*, in its seducing or terrifying forms, overpowers us. "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" But no man can so believe with a divine power, or truthfully say "that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." See, too, Peter boasting, yet falling through the fear of man; and then say what power can enable us at any time really to overcome the world, but that of the Holy Spirit? And say also what success shall we have, even if we fight at all, against this mighty adversary, the world which now is, if the Holy Spirit, being grieved, withholds his influences?

6. *Our hands will hang down in prayer*. No one but the Holy Spirit of God, as we have seen, can make us truly praying persons. What, then, will our prayers be, without that blessed Spirit is with us as the Spirit of supplications? An empty sound, a chattering noise! We cannot confess sin with the publican from a broken heart; we cannot cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner" in sincerity; we cannot praise God for his mercies; unless the Holy Spirit enables us. Necessarily, then, the hands hang down in prayer when the Holy Spirit is grieved.

Need we say more? The whole experimental life of God declines, all true peace departs, all joy of a godly nature vanishes, the worship of God becomes a weariness, his service a task:

"Ordinances tease or tire;"

life becomes a burden to the child of God, and yet death appears dreadful; there is no sweetness, no consolation in home, in friends, in anything, when the Holy Spirit, being grieved, that Comforter who should sustain our souls, is no longer with us, supporting, encouraging, and refreshing us with gospel consolations. But to proceed.

III. *How is the Holy Spirit grieved?* A few words about this. In the first place, to guard against mistakes, we must say he

is not grieved when by his own grace he is enabling a dear child of God to go forward, even in much felt darkness, trouble, and conflict. It is not the struggling soul, but the carnally-secure one; it is not the mourning soul, but the unexercised and easy one; it is not the tempted, harassed, distressed soul, but the light and trifling one, which grieves the Holy Spirit of God. A man may walk in darkness and have no comfortable light, yet obey the voice of God's servant, trust in God, and not grieve the Spirit. A man may be assaulted fiercely by sin and Satan, by lusts and corruptions, and not grieve the Spirit. God forbid that we should write a word to trouble, or grieve unnecessarily, the generation of God's tried ones.

What, then, is it to grieve the Holy Spirit? We think the context gives the answer. It is through the flesh to *allow* ourselves in those things which are in opposition to his work in our own souls; to walk in a way injurious to the new creature which he himself has created in our hearts; or, in other words, to walk after the flesh instead of after the Spirit. Thus Peter says, "Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." And Paul in this chapter says, "Put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." So, then, we grieve the Holy Spirit when we indulge the flesh, when we obey its ungodly motions; when we sow, as Paul says elsewhere, to the flesh; then of the flesh, the Spirit being grieved, we reap corruption. We will just instance in a few particulars, drawn from what is said of the Holy Spirit in this verse and the context.

1. As the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, and no lie is of the truth, we grieve the Holy Spirit of God by tampering with or entertaining error. Surely this thought should make us cautious. So as we contend in love, and at the same time strive valiantly for the experience, power, and practice of the truth, we cannot be too earnest and exact in the maintenance of it, even as it respects a sound form of words. Every word of God is pure. Truth is the throne of God, so to speak, and the chariot in which he rides triumphantly into the souls of his people. Error is the kingdom, and throne, and chariot of the devil. Must not this grieve the Holy Spirit of God, when his dear people admit Satan into their hearts in the form of error, and thus give place to the devil, who seeks to cast down in their minds the throne of God? O! error is to be dreaded! Truth is to be highly prized and loved! Therefore Paul, immediately after saying, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth," says, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit." The connection shows his meaning, and how he cautions the saints of God against all error.

2. But the Spirit of truth is also the Holy Spirit; therefore, when we are allowing ourselves in any ways or things of an unholy nature, we are grieving the Holy Spirit. Paul admonishes in the former verses against many such things. He enumerates there, as elsewhere, many of the works of the flesh, which are all

unholy. We need only refer our readers to the previous verses, and to Galatians v. and other places. Then they will clearly see what are the works of the flesh, and how, by allowing themselves secretly or openly in such things, they must necessarily grieve the Holy Spirit.

3. But the Holy Spirit of truth is the Spirit of love. Well, then; unquestionably we grieve the Holy Spirit in an especial manner by allowing ourselves in things directly opposed to love. Therefore it is that the apostle, immediately after saying, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God," says, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice," &c. And in the next chapter he shows us what kind of walk is not grieving to, but from and acceptable to God: "Walk in love, as dear children." We suppose nothing can well grieve the Holy Spirit more than the proud unloving spirit, and the unhumiliated unloving walk proceeding from it, which too often prevail among even the people of God. We wonder sometimes, and not over-wisely ask, why were the former days better than these? Is not the answer ready enough to our hands, when we see the unloving spirit manifested in the unloving lives of God's people?

4. The Holy Spirit is the Comforter, as we have seen, of God's children. This, then, grieves the Spirit, when the dear people of God seek their consolations elsewhere; when they fly to creatures, instead of seeking their comforts at his hand, who is the Almighty gracious Comforter of his children.

5. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of wisdom and understanding; and we know it is written in Prov. viii., "I wisdom dwell with prudence." Well, then, the Holy Spirit of God is grieved, not only by the grosser forms of sin in God's people, but by a foolish, careless, uncircumspect conduct. Therefore Paul says, "See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise." God delighteth not in fools. The Holy Spirit is grieved by the follies of the saints. A light, trifling, worldly, careless, inconsistent conversation, perhaps, is as grieving to the Holy Spirit of God as anything else can be.

6. The Holy Spirit of God is the Spirit of liberty. So the saints may grieve him, as the Galatians did, by inclining to the works of the law, and the indulgence of a legal spirit. This spirit, too, manifests itself in many grieving things, such as harsh judgments and censoriousness. For the fruit of such a tree must, of course, be bitter.

7. But we must conclude; therefore, lastly, observe that the blessed Spirit of God being, as we have said, the sole Source and Carrier-on of the life of God in the soul; the Spirit of light, of conviction, of prayer, of consolation, the only Author and Upholder of grace in the heart, of faith, of hope, of love, of humility, of patience; and that blessed God who makes the Word of God sweet to us, the means of grace a blessing, the ordinances a glory; we may clearly grieve the Holy Spirit of

God by looking unto and depending upon man, or creatures, or ourselves, in any of these things, instead of Him.

We give our dear readers merely a few hints; and only, in conclusion, express the desire that the words of the apostle may impress their minds with the same gracious power that, as we hope, they did our own before we sat down to pen these lines. The Lord, dear friends, give you and us to hear and obey the sweet yet solemn admonition: "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God."

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

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

Dear Friend,—It has been on my mind for a few days to write to you, although I do so with much diffidence, knowing my inability and incompetency to express my feelings on such a momentous subject as the following. In the night of the 25th October last, I was awoke by a dream, and was wide awake, when I felt the presence of the blessed Lord to be with me. I felt in a calm and serene state of mind, and said to him, "Lord, O that I may be found in thee, and thou in me, as the branch is found in the vine! What poor deluded creatures are those who bring to thee their good works for acceptance, hoping to gain heaven thereby; when I, a poor impotent creature, have not one good work to offer to thee, but am wholly dependent on thee, as my All in all, for my salvation." Then suddenly my mind was drawn aside for a few seconds, but soon returned again; when I said, "Lord, thou seest how soon my poor mind is drawn away from thee. It is cumbered about many things. O that I could choose that good part, to sit at thy feet, and receive of thy gracious words." When fearing he was about to depart, I said, "Lord, do not leave me; stay a little longer. What a blessed thing to feel a sweet assurance that thou art mine, and I am thine." I felt his blessed presence in my soul.

O what a sweet and blessed feeling it is to have a little communion with the Lord! It does indeed "charm the soul, and bring true peace and joy." I cannot describe my feelings, nor remember half what I said during my communion with him my soul desires to love.

This brings to my mind what occurred some few years back. Having a fen farm, I usually went once a week to attend to it, and often found many things to annoy me. But one day in particular, I was much cast down with the trial I met with. I went into my little room, and knelt down by the side of the table, and begged of the Lord to support me under the trial I had then met with; when these words were applied to my mind: "Ye now, therefore, have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man taketh from you." I felt sure they were from the Lord by the blessed power which attended them. I went home, waiting for the fulfilment of the promise.

This was on the Friday. On the Sunday following, as usual, I read a sermon, or some good author, until it was time to go to chapel; when the blessed Lord did see me again. I felt his presence in my soul, which brought me to weep at his feet, and in my feelings wash them with my tears, and wipe them with the hairs of my head; and I could with the eye of faith see the smile of his blessed countenance, as though he was well pleased.

My friend, it does astonish me why the Lord should take notice of me, one who feels himself to be the most unworthy of the least of all his mercies. It does indeed humble me in the dust before him; and it is my daily prayer to him to keep me from bringing any disgrace on his holy Name and cause. Now unto him who is able to keep us from falling be all honour and praise, both now and for ever. Amen.

Your truly,

Eastfield, Nov. 11th, 1878.

W. PAULETT.

My dear Friend,—Grace and peace be with you. How good it is to have a daily religion, a daily need of Christ! And O how sweet to be able to speak of some fresh manifestations of his love! I think I can say, with the apostle Paul, in a spiritual sense, "In deaths oft." A daily sense of deaths, weakness, and destitution is my experience. But, then, how blessed it is, in the midst of these things, to learn the all-sufficiency and the resurrection-power of Christ. We who love the Lord pray, O how earnestly at times! that we may know him, and the power of his resurrection. We are persuaded that there are breadths, and lengths, and depths, and heights, and a love of Christ which passeth knowledge; this with all saints we desire to comprehend. But these things are not to be attained in the path of ease and carnal-security. No! these blessed things are entered into through much tribulation; and the kingdom of heaven suffereth a holy violence; and the men who are in earnest take it by the force of sincere desires and fervent prayer.

I hope my friend is not amongst the number of those settled upon their lees, amongst those that are at ease in Zion. Carnal-security, a name to live whilst dead, a Laodicean spirit of vain-glorious confidence and self-admiration, whilst living at a distance from Christ, are things greatly to be dreaded. Painful as it may be to the flesh, it is a good thing to be kept exercised in divine things, and made alive unto God. This morning I felt these lines drop with, I trust, a divine sweetness upon my spirit:

"Angels here may gaze, and wonder
What the God of love could mean,
When he tore the heart asunder
Never once defiled with sin."

O! for a few moments what a beauty, sweetness, glory, I saw in the Lord Jesus! If it had been my own heart which had been torn asunder, a sinner's heart, and such a heart, angels would not have wondered at that; but here they wondered that a God of love should tear asunder the heart of Christ; the object of his infinite love; a heart, too,

“Never once defiled with sin.”

But when for a moment my thoughts are set free to rise up into the glories of God and Christ, O how shortlived are these visits! How soon I begin to sink! So it was with me this morning. The evil heart of unbelief fights so mightily against the very visits of God's love. But another verse of another hymn dropped into my heart with sweetness and relief, as reading off my feelings:

“Astonished and distress'd,
I turn my eyes within;
My heart with loads of guilt oppressed,
The seat of every sin.”

Yes, this is a sight I am sadly familiar with. O the dreadful deadly enmity of our old nature against God and Christ and all that is of God! Alas! this man of sin is within us.

“What crowds of evil thoughts!
What vile affections there!
Distrust, presumption, artful guile,
Pride, envy, slavish fear.”

This is a true picture of my heart. It is this heart which frightens me. How I can sympathize with the feelings of the poet when he writes:

“But much I fear lest in some hour
Of sore temptation I may fall;
And, yielding to the tempter's power,
Faithless may prove, and give up all.”

Oh! What can save such an one but grace? What can such a dry bone do if there is not an Almighty power daily put forth to raise it up and make it live? How those words of Hezekiah have struck my mind, and afforded comfort: “So wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.” And the psalmist says, “Which holdeth our soul in life.” The man who has a daily experience of this dying cannot trust in or advocate creature-power; the man who sees his past life in God's light, and feels the dreadful plague of his own heart, cannot be a pharisee if he would. Creature-power, wisdom, glory, excellency, all die away in reality amidst such experiences as these.

Then, again, how these things make us prize the religion of the heart and the closet. These things make us feel that, if it were not for the sake of others, we would altogether shun publicity and prominence. These things show us that religion flourishes the best in quiet, and make us love a private religion, and a secret intercourse with God. Then how offensive and repugnant to our spirits such experiences make the miserable strifes which too much prevail amongst God's people. If we were more in secret with God, more thirsting for daily communion with Christ, more needy, truly destitute, and, therefore, more men of prayer; if we had more of the life and reality of religion, more exercise of soul, and more true love to the Lord Jesus and his people, we should be far more tender in our spirits, and far more anxious for peace. We should know by experience how unseemly strifes and bitter contentions grieve the Spirit and hurt the soul.

We should know how they interrupt a blessed communion with God; how utterly injurious they are to real religion and the life of God in the soul. We should, indeed, contend, when requisite, earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, but we should contend in love. Like Augustine, in his contention with Pelagius, we should anxiously avoid controversy until conscience towards God forced us into it. Now, alas! pride, self-seeking, harsh hasty judgments, and a rash censoriousness govern us too much in our contentions. O that we were wise! O that we were made and kept more spiritually-minded! Alas! how much we seek our own things, under various pretexts, not in truth the things of the Lord Jesus. The gratification of ill feelings and a proud self-willedness, not Zion's real prosperity, are the things which we too often are aiming after. Pride and self leaven even our apparent contentions for truth; and we forget that the wrath of man, and corruptions of the flesh, never yet could work the righteousness of God. The wisdom we greatly need is not only that of sound doctrinal opinions, but that which James describes as from above, and which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated; full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." Alas! it would almost appear as if this wisdom had left the world and taken its flight back to heaven. May we have grace to pray earnestly for it.

Yours in Gospel Bonds,

OMICRON.

My dear Sister in the Lord,—I received your very valuable letter, for which I thank you. I rejoice to find that the dear Lord is so leading you on, as you say, from strength to strength. And O the blessed prospect there is at the end! You will, ere long, in Zion above, appear before God, there to see his face eternally with joy.

How faithful he is to his word! You have again proved it. You have by this dispensation been advanced in the knowledge of God our Saviour. I believe I have been and am still able to both bless and glorify the dear Lord on your behalf. Truly, my sister, it is, as you say, well worth waiting for; for when he comes, he comes so full of grace; as one sings:

"Divine compassion in his eyes,
And pardon in his hands."

We have generally a large store of sins heaped up by the time he comes; but we do not see the extreme blackness of them until we see them in his light of love, mercy, and grace; and then the black cloud appears doubly black; and then

"O how I hate these sins of mine,
That made my Saviour bleed!"

I was out yesterday with my dear brother Vaughan nearly all day. The Lord gave him early in the morning a sweet visit, which kept him very cheerful all through the day; and some sweet words and thoughts fell to our share in our journey into

the country; for we seemed to be going to Emmaus; and Jesus drew near. As the dear feeble old saint hung upon my arm, I felt that to love him was to love Jesus, and to love Jesus was to love him. But the dear Lord reserved for me the sweet heart-breaking till our return in the evening. Then the Lord sweetly put in his hand by the lock; and sweet was the perfume imparted. My soul perceived his coming, and rose up to welcome him in, and our hands met upon the handle. O the sweet-smelling myrrh, dropping from the hand of a dear, loving, bleeding, unchanging God, Christ! I wanted to hold him for ever in my soul's embrace.

Ah! my sister in and through covenant mercy, what sweets flow to us through a precious Lord! Your dear letter made me ready to burst forth as bottles full of new wine, as I read of your love and his love, of your sweet humblings, whilst he led you so kindly forth with love and grace. These are sweets that the world knoweth nothing of; and I am sorry to find so few, even of the professing family also, so little acquainted with them. But I have long felt a peculiar union to you in the Lord.

But I designed to tell you a little more of my dear Lord's visit, and its effect on my soul, and my dear brother's also. Well, so it was, about a quarter past eight, we were walking and speaking by turns of the way we had been brought, and of the changes we had passed through, when those lines dropped into my mind, as applicable to what we were saying:

“Our journey is a thorny maze,
But we march upward still;
Forget the troubles of the way,
And come to Zion's hill.”

I had no sooner spoken than my way from the beginning opened up at one view. My heart burst forth in love and praise, humility and godly sorrow. Yea, “sorrow and love flowed mingled down.” I saw his love to me, his grace in me, the choosings of him, the love I had felt to him, and all the precious cleaving of heart I had felt. Then all the wanderings, sins, hardness; in a word, all his goodness, and my badness; how he had led and how he does still lead me, came in view; and I cast a glance to Canaan's goodly land. My heart broke down. I took a turn in the midst of it to Calvary and Gethsemane. My brother kept repeating the hymn all down, and every verse helped on the sweet vision of peace and love. I longed to be for ever free from sins, and wanderings, hardness, coldness, and all the fleshly tribe. Then, as I went on, Christ gave me such a view of himself as exalted above sin, Satan, and men; of my safety, his church's safety and well-being; so fully secured everything seemed, that all indeed was well. I felt, and now feel, that he will enable me to come forth before his people with the savour of these things on the morrow.

My brother Vaughan is come, and I must hasten to a conclusion. I have his injunction to give his kindest love to you,

wishing you every blessing. Mr. Dennett also sends his love. And now may the dear Lord himself kindly smile upon you, and bless you with the continued light of his countenance. This is the prayer of

Yours affectionately in the Truth,

THOS. DANGERFIELD.

60, New Town Road, Birmingham, May 24th, 1862.

A PARAPHRASE ON PSALM XLII.

Written in a Season of Affliction.

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.”

As pants the hart for cooling streams,
Pierc'd by the archers' hand,
So pants my soul for thee, O God,
Chased by a cruel band.

With ardent thirst my fainting heart
For thy salvation longs.
When shall I tread thy courts again,
And join in Zion's songs?

Once with the multitude I joined
In solemn praise and prayer;
I sought thy house, nor sought in vain,
But found thy presence there.

Now a poor outcast from thy face,
Grief is my constant food;
While all my taunting foes exclaim,
“Ah! where is now thy God?”

Thine awful storms my shattered bark
With ceaseless waves assail;
Trembling I hear the billows roar,
Whilst guilty fears prevail.

With bleeding heart and streaming eyes,
Fain would I look to thee;
But darkness overspreads thy throne;
No cheering smile I see.

Were I indeed a child of thine,
Couldst thou forgetful prove?
And I go mourning all the day
Without one ray of love?

But, hark! 'Tis God thy Saviour's voice;
He bids thee cease to fear;
Hope thou in him, whose tender hand
Shall wipe each rising tear.

His gracious Spirit gives a song
To cheer the mourner's night,
Whilst with the shield of faith and prayer
He arms thee for the fight.

Call to remembrance Jesus' power
 Displayed in Jordan's land;
 At Hermon, too, and Mizar's hill,
 Where he revealed his hand.
 Sweet is the balm his grace can give,
 To heal thy wounded heart;
 His saving look shall flush thy cheek
 With health, and peace impart.
 His sovereign word shall clouds dispel
 Which intercept thy sight;
 The storm at his command be still,
 And darkness yield to light.
 Wait, then, my soul, with humble hope,
 Till thy deliverance rise;
 Till God's appointed hour arrive
 To help thee from the skies.

J. A. K.

REVIEW.

The Autobiography and Letters of the late Thomas Godwin, for Forty-Two Years Minister of the Gospel; with some Account of his Last Days.—London: J. Gadsby, 18, Bouverie Street. Brighton: Mrs. Godwin, 44, Buckingham Road.

THERE could hardly be a more observable disparity between two persons, in respect of natural character, position in life, education, and refinement, than what existed between our late esteemed friends, Mr. Philpot and Mr. Thomas Godwin; and yet the closest friendship and bond of union, on the ground of their agreement in the truth of God, and their seeing pretty much eye to eye in matters of Christian experience, existed between them. Their mutual friendship covered a period of many years; and though their mutual intercourse and correspondence on earth ceased when the first of them was removed by death, yet in their death "they were not divided." Death, in the first instance, merely separated them in personal presence for a season, but by the death of Mr. Godwin they were brought together again, and are now for ever and ever where parting can be no more known. They have joined "the spirits of just men made perfect." They are before the throne of God, awaiting with rapturous joy, "to wit, the redemption of their bodies;" when their mortal dust, which now lies in the grave, shall rise at the trump of God, and their bliss and blessedness shall be consummated to all eternity.

How vastly different, then, is the friendship and union which grace forms between the heirs of God, and the friendship and union which bind natural men together during their mortal life! Death not only separates chief friends, but it dissolves all fleshly relationships, severs all natural unions, and obliterates for ever every vestige of connection in which graceless characters are

affianced together in this present evil world. Even the good Jehoshaphat's affinity with Ahab, and David's with Ahithophel, are no affinities now. But the union which linked together our esteemed departed friends when on earth is as real and true now that they are in heaven as ever it was before. As it was a spiritual union in the Lord that bound them together in their mortal life, that union remains unchanged in nature and principle; the only difference being that, both being in heaven, they are better able to conceive of its reality, and to realise it in its unmingled felicity.

It is, then, a pleasant task to either write or speak of such good men now that they are gone. Not that we feel either worthy or competent to review either their character or their published works, which they have left behind as legacies to the church of God; but, being occasionally called upon to bring under the notice of our readers a new volume, we are somewhat obliged, in the way of duty, to employ our pen in expressing our honest opinion of the volume we notice; and incompetent as we might sometimes feel to be for the work we take in hand, yet a sincere and deep respect to the memory of the departed friend, whose book we write about, might make our task in every way a pleasant and an agreeable one to ourselves.

We cannot speak of the late Mr. Godwin from any particular personal acquaintance with him, never having conversed with him, to our remembrance, but twice in our life, and never but once having heard him preach. But it may be that, in the absence of such personal acquaintance, we may be the less in danger, in making some remarks upon his "Life and Letters," of yielding to a preponderating feeling of either prejudice or partiality, and, as a consequence, of reviewing his book in a one-sided way. We quite agree with the remarks expressed in last month's "Gospel Standard" about reviewing writings and works of any kind; viz., that a review should not be "a mere puffing advertisement; but a sincere, sober, and kindly expression of opinion upon a writing;" and we should be sorry, in noticing any book in the pages of this periodical, to purposely allow any other motive than what such words imply to guide our pen.

In dependence, then, upon the Lord's help, to enable us to write with Christian sobriety, we will turn at once to the volume before us. It contains, in the first part of it, Mr. Godwin's Experience; and in the second part, a goodly compilation of his letters, written to various personal friends, and collected for publication by his respected widow, since his decease. His experience being autobiographical, it will, we have no doubt, be read with much more interest by his many surviving friends than if any particulars of the same had been drawn up by any other hand than his own.

The "Autobiography" embodies a brief account of the author's life; and although the whole account is but a sketch, yet enough is written to admit of some reference being made to his birth-

place, his parentage, his boyhood, his days of vanity, his early convictions, his "hope in God's mercy," his "deliverance from the law," his "providential trials and deliverances," his "spiritual darkness and temptations," his "learning the truth," his "baptism and call to the ministry"; with other interesting reminiscences of his life, extending down to some considerable time after his settlement at Godmanchester, where he ended his mortal days upon earth, after a pilgrimage of seventy-four years.

His parents being in indigent circumstances, and having a family of eight children, our author had to meet the hard fare which falls to the lot of many in their childhood, whose parents are of the same calling in the world. Being nothing but a poor shoemaker's child, his opportunities of improving his temporal position were so small that he thought it no mean advancement, when ten years of age, to find himself man enough in pocket to be able "to cut his own loaf." He speaks of himself as being at this period "a steady and a hard-working boy." But, only a few years after this, he becomes more and more unsteady; his habits of life become more vicious and evil, and his course one of open sin and wickedness. He was married at the age of 23; and in speaking of this time, he says,

"Although my wife and I worked very hard for the bread that perisheth, and tried hard to pay our way, yet we were never satisfied unless we were card-playing or visiting. And we were both as proud as the devil and the pride of our hearts could make us."

The Lord, however, according to the purpose of his grace, was pleased, whilst he was quite a young man, to pierce his conscience with a portion of Scripture, and to begin to show him what he was as a poor, blind, ignorant sinner by nature and practice. His providential troubles and afflictions increasing upon him, he began to feel "very unhappy and very miserable;" and one day, when he was returning to his own house, he says,

"These words dropped in my heart and soul with such power: 'Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.' And now the Lord put a damper upon my wicked practices, and spoiled all my sport in this world. At that time, I was very fond of singing, but the arrow was shot into my conscience, and stuck fast there. I tried with all my might and power to get it out, and shake it off; but all was in vain."

Such was his extreme natural ignorance, when this arrow of the Almighty entered his soul, that he was unable to read a verse in the Bible; could not even read his alphabet; and yet we see how wonderfully the Lord could bring the very words of the Scripture into his mind, and make him read and understand them in a spiritual way, and feel the wrath of a broken law "let out into his conscience like a burning fire." What a striking proof, too, we have in this very first operation of God on his conscience, and the way in which it was brought about, that none but God ever can "open the eyes of the blind;" that none but he can "convince of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."

Our author being now inwardly and spiritually convicted of his state and condition as a perishing sinner; the Lord having begun to lay righteousness to the line, and judgment to the plummet, the work goes on, deepening more and more, until it assumes, in respect of law terrors and distress of soul, a magnitude far beyond what is ever manifested in the case of many. Our author being "as ignorant of salvation as a beast," and yet being made to believe that he was no beast, but a rational creature, with a soul that must live for ever; and being at the same time tempted to believe "that there was no ground whatever for him to hope for mercy, and that he was a reprobate, and must be cast for ever into hell," he became so "tortured and tormented" with the stings of a guilty conscience that he "envied the horse, dog, cow, and fowl," and wished that he had never been born; and was even tempted for a time, both day and night, to lay violent hands upon his own person. Indeed, we may say that some of his temptations were of an awful nature, and his distress of mind, whilst enduring them, was so overwhelming, that he felt "as though hell could be no worse."

It was on one of these solemn occasions of being peculiarly tempted, and when he appeared to be on the very point of yielding to the dreadful temptation, that the Lord caused the first ray of hope to dawn on his benighted soul. He had cast his eyes up, in a perilous moment, to a certain thing which, but for a marvellous interposition of providence, would have proved fatal to his natural existence; when, to give his own account of what took place, he says:

"These words dropped into my heart and soul: 'Who can tell but what God may have mercy on such a hell-deserving sinner as I have felt myself to be before a heart-searching God?' I cast my eyes up to the beam where the execution was to take place. All of a sudden the Lord brought before my mind all the vile characters that he had saved, as they are set forth in the Bible; such as the harlot Rahab, Manasseh, Mary Magdalene, Saul, and others. Down I fell upon my knees once more, and the publican's prayer was put into my heart and soul. My heart was broken all to pieces. The tears ran down my cheeks in streams, and a hope was raised up in my soul in the free mercy of God."

He now felt that God was *able* to save him; but he thought, "Art thou *willing* to save such a black sinner as I am?" He could see now more clearly than before that God was "a God of mercy to his people"; and yet *felt* little else "but the strict justice of God against" himself; so that his "soul sank lower and deeper than before"; and the same awful temptation, and even worse than that, tormented his soul day and night. And having no spiritual friend to give him counsel, and there being "no truth to hear on the Lord's day," he says,

"I went to the parish church twice a day, and sometimes used to go out between the services into fields, creep into the ditch, and try to cry for mercy. . . . If any one asked me what was the matter, I used to say, 'I am lost, and going to hell.' The byword was,

respecting me, 'Godwin has gone out of his mind;' and I thought so too, and that I should be taken off to an asylum, and die there, and that my wife and two children would die in a poor-house."

Having touched upon his "conviction of sin," his distress of soul, and temptations whilst under the condemnation of the law, we shall finish our notice, for the present month, of the autobiographical part of the volume, with an extract, which contains an account of our author's "deliverance from the law:"

"Now the time drew near that the Lord had fixed for my deliverance. My soul was suffering a hell upon earth, between the guilt of sin, the weight of transgression, the strict justice of God, the wrath of the law, the power of temptations, the terrors of God, the fears of death, the pains of hell, a never-ending eternity, and everlasting separation from God and my poor wife and children. These things sank me into black despair. But the memorable morning was come. I walked round my garden and my nice little cottage at Shaw, which the Lord had given me, for the last time, I thought; for I expected to be in hell in a few minutes. But, honours for ever crown the dear Lamb of God! I staggered into my shop. I passed my front door, and looked upon my wife and children, for the last time, as I thought. But just as I stepped into my shop, the Lord Jesus came down into my heart and soul, and took off my burden of sin and guilt, and blotted out my transgression. He removed the curse and terrors of the law out of my conscience, and brought pardon and peace into my soul; and these words came with such power: 'O that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away and be at rest.' My soul mounted up on the wings of love and faith, and upon the wings of the Holy Ghost, and entered into the dear bosom of the precious Jesus. My soul was so happy, and as full of the love of God in Christ Jesus as it could hold. I sang, I danced, I shouted; and I loved, I blessed the dear Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

"For over twelve months my soul walked in the life, liberty, and love of the gospel of the Three-One God, eating and drinking the truths of the everlasting Son of the Father, full of grace and truth. Although my mourning days were many under the burden of sin and the hard bondage and curse of the law, yet my glorious days of life, love, and liberty weighed down all my sorrow, mourning, grief, and torment. And the continual operations and applications of the Holy Ghost, the dear Comforter, made my soul dance like the poor prodigal son, when he entered into his father's house, and had his filthy garments taken off and the best robe put on. And although it is nearly forty years since this took place in my soul, yet it is as fresh and clear as though it was but yesterday. Under this enjoyment I fell to work with my hands to try to get out of debt, and pay every man twenty shillings in the pound. I worked eighteen and twenty hours out of the twenty-four for years together."

(To be continued.)

WHERE grace is in any degree, there is life; and where life is, there is activity in proportion to its strength. If its workings are weak and imperceptible, it is a proof that it is greatly decayed, either through want of proper spiritual food, or through some dreadful disorder. What a dangerous state to be in,—weak in ourselves, and not strong in the Lord; at the same time surrounded with enemies, unweariedly watchful; and plagued also with internal foes, always present with us, and ready to betray us.—*T. Charles.*

A WILLING EXPLANATION AND APOLOGY.

WE consider it only just to the friends at Cricklade, and others whose names were mentioned in the obituary of J. Keylock, to say that we have received undeniable proof that certain statements in that account were extremely incorrect. We have seen a letter of J. Keylock's, dated Aug. 23rd, 1878, which distinctly shows that he considered he had acted hastily and improperly in separating himself from the church, and desired to be received into church fellowship again. At the same time, that letter, which is a good and remarkable one, intimates his opinion that Maria Strong had been harshly dealt with on his account. The statements in connection with Mr. Aikman's visit were very inaccurate, and did not do Mr. Aikman justice. J. K. was evidently in a dying state when Mr. A. went to see him; and that visit appears to have originated in nothing but brotherly love and goodwill. There seems to have been much union of heart existing at one time between Mr. Aikman and the departed, the ministry of Mr. A. having been at various times useful to him. J. Keylock was unconscious when Mr. Aikman saw him; and we are bound to record what we have heard of Mr. A.'s tender attention to him in his dying moments.

We can now only express our regret that such incorrect statements should have appeared in our pages; but we must remind our readers and correspondents that we insert these obituaries confiding in the truthfulness and *accuracy* of those who send them. We cannot possibly investigate all the statements contained in obituaries; and as we seek not only to edify our readers, but gratify the friends of the departed, by inserting these accounts, the least we can expect is that those who send them shall be very careful themselves to obtain *accurate* information, and shall only communicate what they *really* know, upon good grounds, to be the truth.

We must add one word more. Thinking that the account which we received might be considered by some to cast a reflection upon Mr. Aikman, we were careful to guard against being supposed to sanction any such thoughts. Even if Mr. Aikman had, as we supposed, called to see J. Keylock upon church matters, or to converse upon disputed points, we could not see that this in itself was to be blamed; but as the case really stands, in all fairness to Mr. Aikman, we must say that his visit appears to have originated in the most kindly and amiable feelings. We cannot but think it displayed that readiness of self-sacrifice in doing what appeared to him the Lord's will, and according to Christian kindness, which we believe is one of his characteristics. We felt it only right, then, to Mr. Aikman and the friends at Cricklade to make these remarks; and we feel the more free in making them as our sentiments in respect to doctrinal and disputed matters are, or ought to be, by this time so thoroughly well known as to be beyond question. We must express, then, our regret that we should have even involuntarily caused others grief or annoyance by inserting the incorrect statements contained in the obituary.

THE church was brought to the banqueting house, and Christ's banner over her was love; yet afterwards she comes to the dark shadow, where she cries, "I sought him; but I found him not."—*Erskine*.

I CAN never complain too much of my vile sinful body and mind; but in doing this I must not blemish the free grace of God in Christ. Yea, I am sorry I have done it too much wrong hitherto. Devils are against it; flesh and blood are against it; and shall I do so too?—*Dorney*.

Obituary.

WILLIAM DOE.—On Nov. 30th, 1878, aged 85, William Doe, of South Moreton, minister of the gospel at Stadhampton, Oxon.

William Doe was born at Upton. Having a godly father, he was doubtless a child of many prayers; and those prayers were answered after the parent was laid silent in the grave. Nevertheless, he grew up to manhood a stranger to his father's God, and would, according to his own confession, have lived and died an infidel. As he himself has said, he did not mean to be a religious man, nor a believer in the Bible. He therefore fulfilled the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and was by nature and practice a child of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved him, stopped him in his downward course by revealing his majesty and holiness unto his soul, convincing him that there was a God in the heavens that took account of the ways of man upon the earth. Thus he was brought to feel himself a sinner in the sight of a heart-searching Jehovah; and so hot was the anger of God felt in his soul that, as he one day passed through some meadows, it seemed to him as though the grass would be scorched at his feet; and he cried out in the agony of his soul, "I am a lost man."

The more he was led to ponder upon his state, the more the holiness of God shone into his soul, which led him to be a believer in the Bible. After this, whenever he read its contents, which he did very frequently, he felt his own condemnation sealed, as the holiness and justice of God shone in every page. He had not at this time heard a gospel sermon; nor had the Holy Ghost opened up the way to him whereby a holy God could justify an unholy man, and his righteous law be honoured. But the set time came for him to see the way of escape. The Eternal Spirit fulfilled his covenant office towards him, by taking of the things of Jesus, and showing them to him. He was first shown the promise made to Abraham and his seed, and in him to all the nations of the earth. He was favoured to see how this promise was fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ. Then, like good old Simeon, he viewed the salvation of God in the seed of Abraham; and believing that God would bless in him all the nations of the earth, he exclaimed, "If I had known this before, I might have seen that I could be saved." He had previously felt he could *not*, because he was not a Jew.

Some time after this the words: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness" being powerfully applied to his mind, he cried out, "I don't know that I sha'n't be saved." And about this time these words dropped into his soul, and much confirmed him: "Who shall ascend into heaven (that is, to bring Christ down from above)? Or who shall descend into the deep (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead)? But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." He then saw more clearly that Christ was God, and that if he asked Christ Jesus for anything in faith, God would give it him.

From this time his prayers and earnest breathings for the pardon of his sins and justification of his soul were presented before the throne in the Name and for the sake of Jesus Christ. At length, the Lord made himself manifest as his Redeemer in a very remarkable manner; and answered his prayers in many things in a conspicuous way, confirming and establishing him very clearly in the Divinity of the Lord

Jesus. Having received the pardon of his sins, and the love of God being shed abroad in his heart, he was led to run in the way of God's commandments. About this time the late Mr. Gadsby came to preach in Wallingford. He went to hear him; and that good and faithful servant of the Lord entered so marvellously into his feelings that he felt sure the preacher was a man of God, and himself in the way to heaven. This, with other circumstances, brought him out amongst the people of God; and in a short time he cast in his lot with them, and was baptized at Goring Heath. He often referred to a season of darkness which came upon him one Sabbath morning. He sat down on the road, feeling he could not go to chapel; and the Lord came to him with these words: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light?" He answered aloud, "It is I, Lord;" and then went on with the rest of the verse: "Let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." He immediately got up and went to chapel.

Soon after this, his mind was exercised about the ministry; and in due time the Lord opened his mouth to testify of him who had done so much for such a sinner. His first attempt was in his own house. Then the Lord's people seeing the gift and the grace that was in him, he was called out by the different churches in the neighbourhood, in which he laboured with great acceptance.

About this time Mr. Philpot left the Church of England, and was made the instrument of calling many poor sinners from darkness into light at Stadhampton and the villages around. Mr. Doe came to preach at Chalgrave, a village about two miles off. Mr. P. took the opportunity of hearing him, and remarked, "Now I can see my way from Stadhampton. This man will be your pastor." From time to time Mr. D. preached among them until Mr. P. was removed. Then the friends moved forward; and by the help of the Lord built a chapel and engaged Mr. Doe to be their pastor. The chapel was opened by Mr. Philpot on July 30th, 1837; and from that time to the day of his death Mr. D. was pastor over the little flock, taking the oversight thereof willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; ruling faithfully, but not lording it over the heritage. His ministry was very useful in establishing the church in the doctrines of the everlasting gospel, especially the doctrine of the Trinity. He set forth plainly the glorious equality of the Three Persons in the Unity of the Godhead. He also dwelt much upon the fall of mankind in Adam, and their being totally blinded and alienated by sin, shut up in unbelief, and without hope according to the first covenant. This led up to the grand subject on which he dwelt so blessedly,—the Gift of the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the covenant of grace; setting him forth, as he had been so experimentally taught, as the Seed of Abraham; but showing to a demonstration by his miraculous birth, words, and ways, that he was the Son of God. He showed also that the Spirit must prepare the heart of a sinner for the reception of the atonement by opening up the nature of the old covenant, and therein revealing the majesty, the justice and perfection of the great and terrible God.

In his little business as a farmer he had many trials, which caused him numerous errands to a throne of grace. The Lord heard his cry, and many times delivered him out of his troubles, according to the portion he gave him in his younger days: "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." He proved the word of the Lord true where it is said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of

the mouth of God." At one time, in the midst of his temporal trials, the Lord powerfully applied these words to his soul: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." This was verified in many instances, even down to the last; for his mind was very much exercised relative to his circumstances the last few months of his life. He poured out many a prayer to God; and one morning, in the month of October, he came down stairs, and said to his housekeeper, "Manoah and his wife looked on while the angel of the Lord wrought wondrously; so must we." After this, sweet to relate, the Lord laid his case on the minds of some of his friends, who communicated with others. Thus a sum of money was raised, the free-will offerings of those throughout the Midland counties where his labours had been so abundant, and so abundantly blessed of the Lord. In this way, then, he stood still, and saw the hand of the Lord working wondrously. When the gift came to hand, Satan suggested to his mind that, if he should die, and the money be found in the house, he would be thought the greatest hypocrite in the world. But this weapon formed against him did not prosper; for the Lord delivered his soul, spared him to see every demand met, and then took him home to himself.

He was often laid on a bed of sickness during his long pilgrimage, and many were the sweet seasons and precious words the Lord favoured him with on these occasions. Thus were fulfilled the words the Lord applied to his soul soon after he knew him: "Though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more; but thine eyes shall see thy teachers."

Now a few words respecting his last days. He proved the truth we have on record: "And if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." He often said, "My dying day will be my happiest day." He was at Stadhampton preaching the gospel on the 29th of October; and in the afternoon spoke from Isa. li. 6, dilating very sweetly upon the latter clause of the verse. Feeling very unwell he concluded briefly, and many of the friends feared they should never see him in the pulpit again. And so it proved; although he was again restored to his usual strength for a little time. On the Saturday week previous to his death, he was taken rather suddenly ill with jaundice, accompanied with bronchitis. He lay very prostrate in bed, for the most part deprived of the power of speech, but said a few very precious things. One was, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Another, "I have found him whom my soul loveth." Later he was heard to say, "Crown him! Crown him!" Then, "Come, Come." The sentence being finished for him, he assented. Thus he passed away from this mortal state to enter into the joy of his Lord; our loss being his gain.

Stadhampton.

JAMES TUTTY.

JOHN ROBERTS.—On Jan. 17th, 1878, aged 70, John Roberts, of Balderstone.

When he was a boy, about six years old, he was afraid to die, and could not play with the other children, because of the thoughts of death and eternity. He lost his parents when about nine years old, and went to live with his uncle. As time went on, he began to be convicted in his conscience, and set to work to be religious, attending church, and reading his Bible. Through the Holy Spirit's teaching he began to see the sin of his thoughts. He said one time to himself, "I have sinned twenty times before breakfast," and he concluded in his mind to give it all up. Then the work began to deepen in his mind,

and he had views of a holy God, and what a holy God required in his holy law; and with these views he was troubled. About this time he heard of a man getting killed; and he said to himself, "Where is his soul?" And something said within, "Where is thy soul?" This, he said, came home. Then he began to think more about his own soul, and was more troubled and in deeper distress of mind.

One day, when he was going to plough, he was cast down in his soul's feelings; and as he was passing a certain place, these words were as if spoken to him: "Blessed are they that mourn." So powerful were they that he looked over the hedge to see if any one could be seen. He was at the time mourning because he was a sinner. On one occasion, he said to a friend, "If the Lord thinks about me as I think about myself, I am lost." His friend replied, "The Lord thinks about thee a deal worse than thou dost of thyself." "By this," he said, "I was cast down lower than ever." Whilst in this distress of mind these words came to him: "My thoughts are not your thoughts." Then he began to think what the Lord's thoughts were. He found they were contrary to his own; and there was a hope raised up in his mind. Then he had a view of Christ, as born a babe at Bethlehem, and he saw that those for whom Christ was born at Bethlehem, being united to him, could never be lost. This he lived to prove, and that Christ is the Resurrection and the Life.

After this he joined the Independents at Preston; but came out of the Independent church at the same time as Mr. M'Kenzie did. They went into a room, where Mr. M'Kenzie spoke to them. One Sunday, after preaching, Mr. M'K. gave each of them a sermon. This sermon was the means, in the Lord's hand, of opening his eyes to see the doctrines of grace, and his interest in God's everlasting love and acceptance through a precious Christ. It was the sermon of Mr. Tiptaft's, preached at the great Church at Abingdon, on the evening of Christmas day, 1829, commencing with the words: "I stand before you this evening as the servant of Christ or the servant of the devil." My father often spoke of this sermon.

After this, he heard Mr. Tiptaft preach; and at length was baptized at Blackburn by Mr. Worrall, March 12th, 1837. He remained a member of Blackburn church to the last; but during the latter part of his life he lived near Chorley. He was a man who loved a free grace gospel. He loved Mr. M'Kenzie and other ministers of God for the truth's sake, because they extolled the Man Christ Jesus. He loved to hear a minister speak of a covenant-keeping God, of the Father's predestinating grace, of God's holy law being fulfilled in Christ's finished work, and of the work of the Holy Ghost upon a poor sinner's heart, with the experience of a living soul. His favourite hymns were the 164th, 171st, and 410th (Gadsby's Selection).

At the beginning of his affliction, he suffered sharp cutting pains, and the enemy tried him at times; but the dear Lord appeared for him with these words: "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life." After this he was taken worse, having in succession nine or ten days and nights of excessive pain, which sometimes would abate a little. At another time, he was dark in his mind, and suffering very much in body, and longing for the dear Lord to appear for him; when all at once these words came: "Thy King cometh." He thought Jesus was coming for him. He said, "O the glory and majesty that appeared to me in the King of glory!" This was a few weeks before his end. Afterwards he was taken with a stroke, which paralyzed one side, and he almost lost his speech. He was asked if he was on the Rock. "Yes," he replied, "on the Rock."

He survived the stroke about a week. On Thursday night, Jan. 17th, he breathed his last. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

W. R.

We add to this account of J. Roberts two letters written by him to his son. We believe they indicate plainly the grace and godliness of the writer. They are selected from a number sent us:—

"Feb. 4th, 1867.—My dear Son,—I am sorry to hear you are unwell; but I hope your sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God. Sometimes in bodily sickness and soul sickness we learn the best lessons of God's love and mercy. It is a great work of God to teach us what mercy meaneth. We are all living this moment on free mercy. Weak and humbled souls are those that prize mercy most. God saith, 'Go, learn what that meaneth: I will have mercy.' The dear Lord saith he delighteth in mercy; and if we examine our hearts, we find that they really and truly delight in the same thing which a holy God delights in. O how encouraging it is to find we are, in this respect, of the same mind with our dear loving Lord! O that the dear Lord would teach us to seek to have our title made clear by his own Spirit bearing witness with our spirits that we are his in Christ!"

"J. R."

"Nov. 3, 1867.—I do hope a lover of the Lord Jesus Christ to my son William, in the same hope, sendeth greeting. You say you are cast down. If so, you are just in the right place for a good lifting up. You know you must be on the dunghill before you can be raised up from it. If we are in the right way to Zion, we are sure to meet with Zion's foes. Are we in darkness? A living child will cry in the dark. Crying is a proof of life. We have nothing to prove the reality of our religion but marks and evidences. If we can find true marks of a living child, it gives us hope. You know we have to grow two ways,—downwards and upwards. A tree, when we cannot see either leaves or fruit, has roots growing deeper and deeper. O that we may grow deeper and deeper into the love, power, wisdom, faithfulness, and patience of a covenant-keeping God and Father. I had a pleasant morning from reading Jno. xv. May the dear Lord favour you with many precious lifts by the way. This is the prayer of your unworthy father,

JOHN ROBERTS."

ERRATUM.—On p. 19, Jan. No., line 3 from foot of page, for "now" read "bow." This slight error occurred during the printing of the sheet, after it had been revised.

WE should be careful for nothing, but make known our requests to God (Phil. iv. 6); praying for what we want, and giving thanks for what we have.—*Manton*.

As the Lord is pleased to usher in sweet manifestations of himself with a dark night, so generally a dark night follows upon these sweet manifestations.—*Erskine*.

"THOU shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." Love commandeth the whole man, and honour and support will be given to those by whom you receive Christ Jesus the Lord. You cannot but love the food by which you live; and if the food be sweet you will scarce grudge the charge of it.—*J. Hill*.

WHAT can come amiss to that soul which Christ undertakes by all things, and through all things, to bring to himself? For this end he died; this is the great end of every trial you meet with; and upon this ground the Spirit saith, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations."—*Dorney*.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

MARCH, 1879.

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

SALVATION COMETH.

A SERMON PREACHED BY MR. HAZLERIGG, IN ZION CHAPEL, LEICESTER,
ON CHRISTMAS MORNING, 1878.

“He will come and save you.”—ISA. XXXV. 4.

THESE are sweet words, and a blessed promise; but to whom are they spoken? The context shows. The Lord, by his blessed Spirit, gives a charge to Isaiah and his other ministers: “Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not.” But how are they to be strengthened and encouraged? Why, by the sweet good news: “He will come and save you.”

Here, then, we have the people to whom the message of our text is sent. They have hands, but weak ones. They pray; but O how feebly! How discouraged, at times, they are in their prayers! Satan sometimes frightens them from their knees, so that they dare not even come to God.

“I know the Lord is nigh,
And *would*, but *cannot* pray;
For Satan tempts me when I try,
And frights my soul away.”

They have knees, but feeble ones. They are really walking in heart heavenward; as Job says, “He knoweth the way that I take,” or, as in the margin, “the way that is in me;” the way I would take if I could. But O how feeble they seem to themselves to be! How hard they find it to hold on their way! They have hearts, true hearts, hearts towards God in Christ; but O what fearful ones, at times! They are afraid they shall never get to heaven, and escape from hell; never find peace with God; never sing the song of salvation. Well, these are the persons to whom Isaiah is charged to speak the words of our text: “He will come and save you.” Think what you will; let your discouragements be ever so great; let sin and Satan make you weak, and feeble, and fearful, and sad; still, my promise, in spite of all opposition, shall be fulfilled: “I will come and save you.”

Now let us go rather more fully into these words, and make some remarks upon the following points:

I. As coming implies coming into some place or locality, *what is the place into which Christ, of whom these words are spoken, promises to come?*

II. Let us consider more fully *the state of those to whom it is said: "He will come."*

III. Let us consider *his coming.*

IV. *Some effects of this coming.*

I. *The place into which Christ comes.* This Isaiah himself describes to us; giving us four similitudes to set it forth. Let us follow his expressions.

"*The wilderness.*" There may be some allusion here to the preaching of John the Baptist in the wilderness of Judæa, and the Lord by his instrumentality thus preparing a people for the Lord Jesus Christ; but we may enlarge upon this, and apply it much more widely to the states and conditions of the Lord's people when he comes in any age, and experimentally saves them. Doubtless John's ministry in the wilderness affords us a representation of the Lord's methods of working in the hearts of his people in all ages.

Let us, then, consider this expression, "the wilderness," in a figurative sense. And here we notice first two things. As a city often signifies the inhabitants of the city, so a wilderness signifies the people in that wilderness; a solitary place, the people in that solitary place; a desert, a people in that desert.

Again; observe the expressions are all definite. It is not, then, every wilderness, solitary place, and desert into which Christ comes; but *the wilderness, the solitary place, the desert.* It is, in other words, to a people prepared by himself for the Lord.

Now, a wilderness is a wild, uncultivated spot; a pathless, dangerous place, in which the poor creature wandering loses his way, and is oppressed with great fears of being finally lost, and meeting with some dreadful destruction. How accurately, then, as a figure, a wilderness represents the conditions of God's people at various times; the sort of spiritual localities they may be in! They wander, feelingly, as in a wilderness. Sometimes, especially in earlier stages of his experience, a poor child of God, a quickened sinner, is in great confusion and bewilderment of mind. He cannot see what he is or where he is. The poet accurately expresses this:

"What am I, and where am I?
Strange myself and paths appear."

And another writes:

"In this bewildered state,
He pushes at the door."

Everything to the poor man is, as Job writes, full of confusion. He is perplexed as to the very truth itself. "What is truth?" is the sincere language of his heart. He cannot see how God can be just, and justify a sinner. He cannot see how a poor vile wretch like he feels himself to be can go acceptably to God.

He cannot reconcile his feelings with a work of grace upon his heart, and the Lord himself being there. He cannot see the way in which he should walk, or that whereby he may get to heaven. This man is in a wilderness feelingly. This man is afraid he shall never attain to peace, never find a city for his poor soul to dwell for ever at rest in. But the Lord has his eye upon this man. The Lord is really guiding him. The Lord will, as he says, make for him a way in the wilderness, and lead him forth by a right way to a city of habitation.

But not only does Isaiah speak of the wilderness; but goes on: "And the *solitary* place." Again, how descriptive this is of a child of God's experience! Quickened by the Spirit, and taught of God, he is obliged to come out from amongst his former companions and friends. Like Abraham, he has, in a spiritual sense, to leave the land of his nativity, and go forth into a country of which at present he has no distinct and definite knowledge. He knows, with the fabled pilgrim, that his own country is the City of Destruction, and flees, like him, into the plain; but at present he has not found a place amongst the dear children of God. He is in the solitary place of separation from former persons and former ways, and of no association at present with those with whom the Lord by and by will bring him into a blessed union. These are the solitary ones whom God setteth in due season in families. But at present they wander not only in a wilderness, but in a solitary way.

Isaiah further represents the case by describing it as "*the desert*." Now, a desert is a place of drought. There are no streams of water to refresh, no food to sustain. Here, then, the poor man is in a sad condition. He cannot drink of the old streams of sin and self-righteousness. He cannot satisfy his soul with anything which this world or mere nature can yield to him. Therefore, as in Ps. cvii., "hungry and thirsty, his soul faints within him."

But Isaiah gives one more picture, making up the dismal condition of the man at this time. He describes it as "*the place of dragons, where each lay*." Here, then, is not only a wilderness, a solitary place, a desert, but a place of dragons; and such a place of dragons that it appears to be their very home. They not only come there occasionally; but it says, "where each lay." It is their very abode, their den, their resting-place. Ah! how this describes the felt experience of the child of God's soul at certain times! His heart appears to him the very habitation of sin and Satan. The man

"Feeleth his hell,

And groweth afflicted more than he can tell."

Job styles himself "a brother to dragons, and companion of owls." And the psalmist represents the saints of God as smitten into the place of dragons. This, then, is indeed a place of fear. We do not wonder that these poor creatures have fearful hearts. Bunyan thought concerning himself that surely he was possessed

by the devil; and many a poor child of God, in his feelings, has been as sure of going to hell as the devil, that great dragon, himself. O the doleful sights and sounds which abound in a wilderness, a solitary place, a desert, a place of dragons, where each lies! Ah! friends, some of you know a good deal about these things; some more, some less; but say, do not these experiences make

“Salvation great, and mercy sweet?”

O this place of dragons, this spot where the poor man feels as one free amongst the dead; as one given over unto sins, lusts, and perdition! O this word, this strong, yet suitably descriptive expression: “The place of dragons, where each lay.” Freewill, self-righteousness, vainglory, cannot live here. And to this very place the Lord Jesus says he will come. Yea, the Three blessed Persons in the Godhead testify to the poor man concerning this almost incredible good news: “He will come and save you.”

II. But now let us look a little closer at these people inhabiting the wilderness; these companions of dragons and owls. The prophet describes them for us; and may we not, do we not, at times, say, Blessed be God for an experimentally written Bible?

We have four things said of these apparently poor and miserable, yet really rich and blessed people.

1. They are *blind*. “Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened.” Now these blind are the same as those spoken of elsewhere by the same prophet: “Bring forth the blind people which have eyes.” And again: “I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not.” So, then, these blind people are not those who are dead in trespasses and sins, or those Paul writes about: “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not.” No! These are the feelingly, consciously blind. They have life, and therefore light to in some degree see, and feel their own blindness. They want to see. They cry piteously, at times, for sight. Like the poor blind man in the gospel, when the Lord draws a little nigh to them in his Word and by his Spirit, O how they cry, “Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy upon me!” And if the dear Lord Jesus says as to their hearts: “What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?” “O!” they say, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.”

David was a consciously blind man of this sort, and therefore cries: “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” As blind men naturally, when they hear of the bright and glorious sun, and the fields and flowers, long to see these things, so these sensibly blind persons long to see the blessed and glorious things of the kingdom of heaven. “Sirs,” say their hearts, “we would see Jesus.”

2. They are *deaf*. “The ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.” These, again, are not dead persons. Neither are they like the deaf adder, which stoppeth her ears. No. These poor creatures are consciously deaf, and want to hear. They have indeed already heard, and do still hear, many a doleful sound. They know some-

thing of the dismal sounds of the horrible pit,—the pit of noise. They have heard to some degree the voice of God in the law, and the terrible trumpet of Mount Sinai, sounding louder and louder. They hear, alas! too much of the voice of the accuser, and the testimony of a guilty conscience; they are familiar enough with such sounds as these. But, O! they want to hear the joyful sound of the gospel; the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride; the voice of joy and gladness; that the bones which God has broken may rejoice. But these sweet sounds, guilt, and unbelief, and fear, stop their ears against. The music is in the Father's house for these dear people; but at present they are not in a king's palace, but a waste howling wilderness.

3. They are *lame*. "Then shall the lame man leap as a hart." These poor creatures are really on the road to God and heaven. They have legs, but, as Solomon says, "the legs of the lame man are not equal." No! the will of the man is far beyond his capability. He would pray, but cannot as he would. He would sing, but cannot as he would; guilt has untuned his tongue. He would walk in God's ways. He would believe, repent, and hope, and love God and the brethren; but, alas! he is lame; he cannot get forward in divine things as he would wish. The avenger of blood is behind him. He would flee much faster than he does to a city of refuge. His will, in fact, in all these things is long before his capability. But O! What a mercy that where there is first a willing mind, it is counted according to that which a man hath, and not what he hath not. So it is here. God really sees him as in the city he is fleeing in desire unto; there, too, he shall see himself in due time; and then the lame man shall be glad and sing. But at present,

4. He is *dumb*. Again, we see that it is a living man who is spoken of,—spiritually living. We do not say of the dead that they are blind, and deaf, and lame, and dumb. This man is the man who is in the place of stopping of mouths. Sometimes

"To pray he thinks too bold."

He cannot praise God for his mercies as he could wish, though sometimes his mouth is opened a little, and he says, with Jeremiah, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed." O! he thanks God that he is out of hell. But he often cannot do even this. Guilt and sin, and law, and temptation, and terrors strike him dumb. He has nothing to say for himself why God should not send him into hell; nothing to say of himself but *Sinner*. Thus all self-justifying pleas are stopped. He cannot, does not, will not, either deny or lessen his guilt. At times, too, he can say, with the psalmist, "I said, I will confess my transgression unto the Lord." O how he wants to add: "And thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin!" But at the present time he is in the wilderness, the desert, the solitary place, the place of dragons; he feels blind, and deaf, and lame, and dumb. Like the psalmist, when he writes: "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through

my roaring all the day long." O sad condition! but O sweet place, really, of manifested mercy!

Now, then, having seen the *place* and the *characters* which the text refers to, we pass on to the more cheering parts of our subject, and notice—

III. *The Lord's coming.* "He will come and save you." Observe, first of all, the certainty. Here is no conditional promise. God by his own work prepares a people for the Lord, and then the Lord comes to this prepared people. No doubt these words had a fulfilment when the Lord Jesus came upon earth; when that promise in Malachi was fulfilled: "And the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple." But let us consider this coming in a more universal application of it to the entire family of God. Now, in what characters, in what points of view, does the Lord Jesus come experimentally to his people? When he comes into the hearts of his people, how do they, as taught and enabled by the Holy Spirit, apprehend him? What is he unto their souls?

He comes as *God the Lord*. O! they do not question whether he is God or not. They feel assured that he is a Person in the glorious Godhead; one with the Father and the Holy Spirit. He comes with a divine power and evidence into their hearts. They know that he is God.

He comes as *the Son of God*, as *God the Son*. They receive him into their hearts as he is spoken of in the Word,—as the "Only-begotten of the Father." They know that the Son of God hath come, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. They say with Peter, "And we know and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of God, the living God." Yes, they receive him as the One who, lying in his Father's bosom, knows the Father's mind, and can assure them of the Father's good will, his approbation and eternal love.

He comes as *the Christ of God*, the *Lord's Christ*. So old Simeon apprehended him to be when he took him up as a babe in the arms of his faith. He is the Father's Son, and the Father's gift to sinners. "Thanks be unto God," says Paul, "for his unspeakable gift." "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me," says Christ; "because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted."

As the Christ of God, he comes as *the Prophet of Israel*, divinely instructing his people in the sweet truths of God. None teacheth like him. His word is with power. O to sit daily at the feet of Jesus, and hear his words! He can make the most ignorant and naturally foolish person wise unto salvation. He not only gives the lesson, but the capacity for learning it. He is himself that lesson; he gives the power to understand it. We would sooner sit for five minutes at the feet of Jesus, hearing the truth from his lips, than sit for a year at those of any master in Israel, unless Jesus so accompanied the teaching of the latter that the human teacher should be lost sight of in the glory of the Divine.

Blessed was it with the spouse when she could say, "It was but a little I passed from them, and I found Him whom my soul loveth." O to find Jesus! What is all teaching that does not lead to Jesus? What is all knowledge which does not bring Jesus into the heart? All true wisdom and knowledge centre in him. All true teaching, then, must lead to him. Erskine truthfully gives this as a mark of espousals to Jesus:

"All things within earth's spacious womb
Dost count but loss and dung,
For one sweet word in season from
Thy Husband's learned tongue?"

"Skill to discern and know his voice
From words of wit and art,
Will clearly prove thou art his choice;
Thy Husband thine in heart."

Show us the men and women who can answer the above question satisfactorily, and we will show you the souls that really love and are wedded to the Lord Jesus. Christ comes to speak good words and acceptable ones into the hearts of the poor, the needy, and the afflicted. Full of grace are his lips, as the Prophet of Israel.

As the Christ of God, he comes as *the Great High Priest* of the spiritual Israel to bless them. When he came into the world at his incarnation, he came as both Priest and Sacrifice in one to atone for his people; now he comes, as ever living to intercede for them, to speak a word of peace by virtue of that atonement into their hearts. No peace really but through that precious blood; it is only as atoning for them that he speaks peace to his people. Thus in Isaiah we have the Lord Jesus saying, "I that speak in righteousness;" and yet "mighty to save." On the great day of atonement (Lev. xvi.) in Israel, after the high priest had gone into the sanctuary with the blood of bulls and goats, and made atonement for the holy place because of the sins of the children of Israel, then, and not till then, he put on his garments for beauty and glory, and came forth, and blessed the people. Answerably to this, we read in Jno. xx. that the Lord Jesus came again and again to his apostles, saying, "Peace be unto you." Blessing is peculiarly the work of a priest, as we read in Num. vi. Aaron and his sons were not told to curse the people, but to bless them, saying, "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee," &c. This, then, is the work of the priest; and so Paul says, even to Christ's priestly people, "Bless and curse not."

But what a sweet view all this gives us of the Lord Jesus Christ! He is, in the spirit of things, that great High Priest taken from among men, and ordained for men, his own poor and needy, and troubled, and tempted people, in things pertaining unto God. He, too, can have compassion upon the ignorant, and those that are out of the way; for he has been "in all points tempted as we are," says Paul, "yet without sin."

When he comes as a Christ, he comes as a *King*; but it is a King to save. "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness," says the prophet. But does not this seem a terrible view of Christ for sinners? How can they bear righteousness and judgment? But here, through our legal hearts, we make a mistake. The righteousness is his own, that which God imputes to Christ's people. Therefore, he reigns over sinners as their Righteousness, the Lord their eternally justifying Righteousness, and reigns to save them. He is a King of grace; full of grace are his lips. Fury is not in him towards his poor and needy people. Therefore, says Isaiah again, The eyes that see Jesus the King shall not grow dim. God's people are never tired of seeing that King in his true and gracious beauty. He is a King for, not against, them; a King to subdue their sins, overpower by grace their stubborn wills, melt their hearts, mould them to his will, write his laws within them, transform them into his image, subdue all their enemies, manage all their affairs, and at length present them faultless in his glory.

He comes, then, as a *Saviour*. He is his people's Salvation. When he comes, salvation comes. He is the Resurrection and the Life. When he comes, their life comes. He is health, he is strength, he is wisdom, he is peace and joy, and all glory and blessedness for his people. Well, then, he comes, and comes to save them. Saving is his work. Saving is his glory. How sweet, then, the news to those who need salvation! To the blind, the deaf, the lame, the dumb, the poor, the needy, the destitute, and wretched, are the words of the Lord by Isaiah: "He will come and save you."

IV. We have now, in conclusion, to say a few things about *the effects of his coming*. "Behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts." But what are the results? The prophet gives us several.

"*Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened.*" We have seen already that these blind persons have eyes; but, then, for a time they can only, or at any rate principally, see doleful things. They cannot see the sweet blessed light of God's everlasting love and mercy, and grace, and beauty, and glory, as shining in the face of the Lord Jesus Christ. But now Christ comes, as in the text, to them. Then their eyes are indeed opened. Then they see God's salvation. Then, with Jesus in the arms of their faith, they can say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." The Bible is as a new book to them.

"There mines of knowledge, love, and joy,
Are opened to their sight."

O the sweet discoveries of grace and mercy which now are made to them! They now see Christ in that true point of view in which he is set forth in the Word of God,—as "full of grace and truth." O what a discovery is this! Before, they had some thoughts of him as an austere man, gathering where he had not strayed; exacting ever so much hard obedience. Now they see him as full of grace, all grace, a Giver of all he requires, and not a hard

exacter. Now they see him as *for* the sinner in those very things in which he previously appeared *against* him. They view him as holy, harmless, and undefiled, and separate from sinners; but then in all this he is *for* the sinner, making him holy, and reconciling him unto God.

They see the glory of his finished work, that the sinner has nothing whatever to do to make himself acceptable to God. Christ is the Lord his Righteousness. He sees himself as accepted in the Beloved. Christ has already done everything necessary in order that God might be just, and yet justify the ungodly. Christ has magnified the law, and made it honourable, in his spotless life and death for the sins of his people. Nothing more is required; nothing can be added to Christ's finished work. He has made an end of his people's sins, and brought in everlasting righteousness. Now the dear children of God having in this matter nothing to do but stand and look on, behold till their hearts are ravished with delight, and overwhelmed with love, what Christ has done. Now the Father is seen to be nothing to them but love. "God is love;" to his children nothing else but love. Love when he frowns, love when he smiles; love when he scourges, love when he embraces; love when he sends them a cross to bear, love when he crowns them with the sense of his love,—with loving kindness and tender mercies. Now the eternal covenant, ordered in all things and sure, comes to view; and in its boundless endless provisions the sinner sees his happiness secure. Now the blessed Spirit's undertakings in that covenant are beheld; so that the Lord becomes not only the sinner's righteousness, but his strength and song. Now heaven opens to his view, and the way to heaven is seen in a crucified, risen Christ; now the poor sinner expects one day or other to enter in by the gates into the city, and there dwell for ever, being shut in with God.

But what shall we say more? Those who have had the experience of Christ's coming as in the text: "He shall come and save you," know full well that a thousandth part of the glories and blessedness which break upon the eyes thus opened cannot be told. If the queen of Sheba's spirit failed when she saw the glories of Solomon, what must be the case with those upon whose astonished eyes break forth, in this sweet gracious way, the glories of Jesus! O! all is changed. The wilderness blossoms as the rose; for Christ is there. The Rose of Sharon fills the soul with his fragrance. All glories at once come into the heart. We see in Jesus the excellency of our God. But language is faint to express these things. As one well writes:

"Living tongues are dumb at best;
We must die to speak of Christ."

"*And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.*" Now the poor sinner hears the joyful sound. The gospel of Jesus Christ is not merely words to him, but the very melody of heaven in his heart. "The time of the singing of birds is come." Before, the poor man heard the voice of God's terrors in the law, of the accuser

of the brethren, of an upbraiding conscience. But O how different now! In the conscience is the voice of peace; in the heart the sound of love. Every page of the Bible, which at one time seemed to speak of nothing but condemnation, now speaks of nothing but love, and Jesus' blood and glorious righteousness.

"*Then shall the lame man leap as a hart.*" Yes; just as it was with the poor cripple who sat at the Beautiful gate of the temple, when Peter and John were there, so it is spiritually with this man. He asked an alms; and so do we. He was a cripple; so are we. Peter and John said to him, "Look on us;" so do we at Christ's bidding, when he opens our ears, look up expectingly unto God in the heavens. Then Peter said to him, "In the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, arise and walk." So God says in and by Christ to us. Power came with Peter's words, for God was with them; and the poor man's ankle-bones received strength; and leaping, and walking, and praising and blessing God, he entered into the temple. So Christ speaks to us; and the blessed Spirit comes with his powerful influences into our souls in the Name of the Father and the Son; and healing virtue comes into our hearts. Peace enters the conscience, joy enters into the soul, and we too leap and dance before the Lord. There is music and dancing in the Father's house for returning prodigals. So it was with David. O how he danced of old before the ark! Michal, Saul's daughter, was scandalized and mocked, and thought and said that David's acts were unseemly. But, said the dear man, "If to dance before my God is unseemly, I will make myself yet more vile; and the handmaids of God shall not despise, but honour, me." So say we. O! We must dance, we will dance in our inmost spirit before our God. Must not the lame man leap for joy when God in Christ, such a God as our God is, such a Christ as the most sweet Lord Jesus, comes into our desert, ruined, most wretched hearts?

"*And the tongue of the dumb sing.*" Yes; sing, and sing to God. There is no singing of what we have done, or what we can do. No singing of self and creature glorification. The song is the song of heaven, the new sweet song of what God and Christ have done. David learnt this song and how to sing it, when God brought him up out of the horrible pit and the miry clay. Hezekiah learnt this song and how to sing it, when God heard his cry, and cast all his sins behind his back. Jonah learnt this song and how to sing it, when God brought him up from the bottoms of the mountains, from the belly of hell, from the place where the bars of the earth seemed about him for ever. Then he sang sweetly, "Salvation is of the Lord." Here, too, we have learnt this song and how to sing it. In the place of dragons, in the belly of hell, as to soul feeling, in sickness, deaths, miseries, destructions, we have again and again learnt the new song and how to sing it, when Jesus Christ has come to us as the Resurrection and the Life; has brought us health and cure; has breathed upon the dry bones, and sprinkled the guilty filthy conscience with his blood.

Well, then, we see what blessed effects accompany this coming of Jesus. All things are changed. A wilderness, solitary, desolate condition is transformed into one of comfort, joy, and peace. Streams flow, rivers rise, where all before seemed like the burning desert. The eyes are opened, the ears unstopped, the lame man leaps, the dumb sings; and all this results from the sweet fulfilment of the text: "He shall come and save you."

O! dear friends, what know we of these things? True religion is more than notion, more than a dry dead empty form of words. Have we been in the wilderness, the solitary place, the desert, the place of dragons, in soul experience? Have we then been encouraged and enabled to wait for the coming of Christ, till he has come with divine and gracious power to save us? O! this waiting is the work of God. Has he at length fulfilled his promise? Has he come to us? Has he done as he has said? Have we cried, "Behold he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills"? Has he visited us with a "Lo! I come"! and have our hearts rejoiced and leapt for joy within us? Have we then returned and come in the spirit to Zion with songs, and had the noise of dragons turned into thanksgiving and the voice of melody? If we have, we may well say, "Blessed be God; and blessed promise of God: He will come and save you!"

TAKING STOCK.

Dear Friend,—It is hard work now for me to write. My right hand has forgot its cunning. The nerves catch it up and draw it aside, so that it becomes disobedient and unmanageable. I have also got a cold and a slow fever. The City chapel being low, damp, and cold, it doth not suit the infirmities of old age.

I often think of my dismissal from the field of action; and hope for an honourable discharge and an eternal pension on the footing of grace, and according to the promise in Christ. These things prompt me to collect my evidences and good qualifications together, as is the usual method of all the self-righteous.

1. I gratefully confide in the singular piety of my forefather Abraham, who was God's friend, and whose blessing is come upon me through faith; but, above all, the Everlasting Father, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him. My mother, also, was a most venerable and honourable matron,—the handmaid of the Lord, in the best sense; I mean the heavenly Jerusalem, who is the mother of us all. So much for my pedigree.

2. I thank my God also that I am not as other men, for I am the chief of all sinners. Nor am I like that poor publican; for I can lift up my eyes to God with pleasure, which he dared not do.

3. I can say to the most refined Pharisee, and even to the god of this world, "Stand by thyself; come not near to me; for I am

holier than thou." And yet even this is not a smoke in the Lord's nose, nor a fire that burns to his displeasure.

4. I can look back upon a well-spent life also; believing in my conscience that Christ lived a life of unspotted obedience for poor sinful me.

5. I can bless God for an honest and good heart, being persuaded that the Lord has taken away the stony heart and given me a heart of flesh, and that Christ dwells in it by faith; therefore it must be good.

6. I do comfort myself with my own righteousness, being more than sure that I have received the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness. And what God gives me, that I call my own; for "not as the world giveth" giveth he unto us.

7. I have obtained a good name in the world, in spite of all mine enemies,—a *new* name, which malice, with all her venom, cannot spoil me of. God predestinated me to the adoption of a son; the Spirit of God has cried, "Abba, Father;" and Christ has given me power in faith to become one. This is the "new name, which the mouth of the Lord (not man) shall name." Yea, more. Many men, eminent for piety, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, have called me a child of God. In all these instances, it appears to be a new name; and in all these ways, the mouth of the Lord names it, and no other.

8. I am constrained also to acknowledge that God's free Spirit has made me a willing and loyal subject of Christ in the day of his power; so that I do engage and abound in the work of the Lord most freely, willingly, and cheerfully, under the operation of a free spirit, which greatly inclines my heart to this doctrine of free-will.

9. I do declare that no man shall stop me of this boasting in all the regions of Britain, namely, that I am a member of the Church of England; for she says that the church of God is a company of faithful men, such as God did constantly decree, before the foundations of the world were laid, to deliver from curse and damnation,—those whom he has chosen in Christ out of mankind, to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation as vessels made to honour. This God himself has made known to me; for I have prayed to God the Holy Ghost the Comforter to have mercy upon me, a miserable sinner; and he has heard my prayer, and given me a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, and a most thankful remembrance of his death.

These are some of the evidences, tokens, and good qualifications that I am scraping together against that day, to serve as a cordial, a prop, and a support in my conflict with our last enemy.

Ever yours,

(No date, post-mark, or superscription.)

W. H.

SIN makes a man poor, weak, and fearful. The grace of God which bringeth salvation makes a soul rich, strong, and confident; for the covenant of grace and the promises are more than words.—*Dorney.*

PEACE WITH PEACEABLENESS.

My dear Friend,—Your letter reached me at Brighton, where, after preaching, I was laid up at Mrs. Grace's with such a violent cold that I was compelled to have Dr. Winter, not knowing what was coming on me. It was one of the most favoured times in my own soul that I have had since that memorable time in the latter part of the year 1870, after being released from prison in hearing you from Jno. xvi. 22.

The last two and a half years have been, for the most part, times of darkness; the best seasons being in the pulpit; yet when out of it again tossed with fears, with swarms of doubts, &c. I thought, last 31st of March, being favoured in my soul whilst speaking at Maidstone, that I should afterwards have more liberty, and that what I had earnestly sought would be granted me. What I had wanted was an especial sealing time, that I might have all mountains levelled, and those things which were so crooked made straight by the mercy of my God. But even after this sweet time at Maidstone, when speaking from Rev. vii. 17, such fearful temptations came upon me about hypocrisy, and such suggestions that I was yet sitting on an egg which would eventually be hatched to my destruction, that I feared I should be proved to be only a scaffold man. The cries, groans, and sighs that I have put up to God for two and a half years and more that he would in mercy bring me right out in a right way, my God only knows; and, blessings on his Name, he has done it, so that my soul is at rest. (Isa. xxvi. 3.)

I was helped in speaking on the Sabbath; but on the Monday evening I felt such firm ground under my feet whilst speaking from Ps. xxiii., last verse, that I was quite astonished; and after speaking, these words were so sweet to me:

“Yes, I shall see his face,
And never never sin;
And from the river of his grace
Drink endless pleasures in.”

I was very poorly in body, and went to bed directly I got back to Mrs. Grace's, and from this sick bed I did not rise until Thursday night. And during that time, the sweet and blessed meltings I had I think I shall never forget. Such holy converse was held with the Best of friends that ever mortal knew. The 23rd and 103rd Psalms were so suitable to my experience; and those hymns of Hart's:

“How high a privilege 'tis to know
Our sins are all forgiven!”

And

“Blessed are they whose guilt is gone,
Whose sins are washed away with blood.”

These were some of the sweet feelings I had when your note reached me; and I said, “If poor creatures only knew the sweet peace that I was then enjoying, they would retire from the din and bustle of war.” I felt, too, such a soft-hearted persuasion

that God would protect, and man not be permitted to do any ultimate injury, that I was led to pray more for men than against them. If God be for us, as I felt again last Sabbath (see Micah vii. 18, 19), it will be in vain for men to try and destroy our *hope*. Our sins are cast into the depth of the sea of God's love and mercy. Our hope is in the Lord our God, who made heaven and earth; "who by his strength setteth fast the mountains," whether it be a Nebuchadnezzar or any one else; "and stilleth the tumult of the people" that may follow in their wake. If, too, our souls are visited with his power, love, and grace, we can leave others to their feast, and let them eat up the sin of God's people, whilst we enjoy his blissful smiles, and shout for joy, and sing of his mercy which endureth for ever.

Mrs. Wakeley unites in kind love to you and yours; and wishing you a gale from the everlasting hills, I remain,

Your affectionate friend,

Rainham, Kent, Jan. 14th, 1879.

T. S. WAKELEY.

" THE RIGHT WAY TO A CITY OF HABITATION."

(Concluded from p. 68.)

But it is time to say a little upon the bright side of the question. One evening, as I was sitting by the fireside, musing on my forlorn condition, and envying those around me who seemed so happy, all at once there appeared as a light shining all around me; and I felt such peace, joy, comfort, and love shed abroad in my heart as I had never before tasted; and these words were spoken within me: "Your peace is made with God." I believed it was God himself that spoke them. My burden was gone; my fears fled; and I felt unspeakably happy.

"What an amazing change was here!

I looked for hell; he brought me heaven!"

But sin again breaking forth in me soon after, through the power of Satan's temptations, I lost all my comfort, and sank in fears. This scripture was suggested to me: "He that is born of God doth not commit sin;" and not being sufficiently enlightened into the mystery of the two natures in a believer, I thought it applied to myself; and also that I had, by sinning after the Holy Ghost had comforted me, committed the great transgression, had sinned away the day of grace, and was not one of the elect. But soon after, in the kind providence of God, I met with that blessed work of Bunyan's, called "Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners;" and in reading it I found he had been exercised in a similar way; and the Lord blessed it to me. I was delivered again from my fears, and had joy and peace in believing.

I was now greatly favoured under the preached word, which came with power to my heart; but, instead of feeling condemnation, &c., I heard the still small voice of the gospel speaking peace, pardon, reconciliation, and friendship with God. Thus I began to enjoy the fulfilment of such promises as these in Isa.

xxxv. 1: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing." Also: "The Lord shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places," &c. I will just name two or three sermons that were made special blessings to me. Once when hearing Mr. C. from Isa. lxi. 10, the blessed Spirit was pleased to bear his witness with my spirit so powerfully, and enabled me so to mix faith with the word, that I could adopt that blessed language of the prophet, and say, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation; he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness; as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels;" and I felt, like Naphtali, "satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord." I was possessed of that peace which is the work of righteousness, and the effect of it, which is quietness and assurance for ever; and came into the experience of Rom. v. 1, 2: "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." O what love I felt to the Lord, to the dear minister, and to all the people of God! What a blessing is a pure gospel ministry! Bless the Lord, O my soul; and forget not all his benefits.

On another occasion I was greatly comforted in hearing Mr. C. from Deut. xxxii. 2, 3. I made a few remarks at the time, which I will here name: "O what a blessed discourse this was to me! as showing how I might know my election of God; having all the marks that he named. O that the Lord would be pleased to magnify this grace in me more, that I might declare his goodness and majesty. Praise the Lord, O my soul!"

At another time, I was filled with joy and peace in believing when hearing him dwell upon the last verse of Psalm xxiii.; so that I felt sure the Lord was my Shepherd, and could say with the psalmist: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." O the infinite goodness of God! Thus I was led into the experience of the words: "Blessed are 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."

I might enlarge much here, but am afraid of being tedious. My mountain stood strong, and I thought I should never be moved as I have been. For since that time the Lord hath led me, and brought me into darkness, and not into light. I have been left to walk in darkness, and have had no light; and have said, "My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord." Instead of enjoying sweet access at the throne of grace, and holding blessed communion with God, under the influence of the

Spirit of all grace, and through the spirit of adoption, crying, "Abba, Father!" and experiencing the fulfilment of this precious promise: "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are speaking, I will hear;" my language has been: "O that I knew where I might find him;" and I have had to complain that, when I cry and shout, the Lord shutteth out my prayers. The heavens above have appeared as brass, and the earth as iron under my feet; and I have feared his mercies were clean gone for ever, &c. I have felt more of the depravity of my carnal nature than ever, and have been left to feel more deeply that my heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, and to be exercised with dreadful temptations, &c. But, praise his holy name, he has returned again, and has taught me that "where sin abounds, there grace does much more abound;" and "though we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." The Lord has blessedly fulfilled this word in my experience: "But the God of all grace, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." And the following lines are very precious to me:

"The Lord will scourge us if we stray,
And wound us with distress;
But he will never take away
His covenant of peace."

And also:

"A moment he hid the light of his face;
Yet firmly decreed to save us by grace;
And though he reproved us, and still may reprove,
For ever he loved us, and ever will love."

Thus hath the dear Redeemer turned again my captivity, as the streams in the south, and hath set my feet on the Rock, and put this song into my mouth: "O Lord, I will praise thee; though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation," &c.

Dear Sir, I feel that this is a very imperfect letter, and hope you will excuse me speaking so freely to you, and overlook all defects, as I hope the language of my heart is: "Come unto me, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." And: "Not unto me, not unto me, O Lord, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake." That the Lord may give unto you a double portion of his Spirit, make you a burning and shining light in this dark day, and instrumental in turning many from darkness to light, and building up the saints in Christ, who is the Alpha and Omega; that you may fight a good fight, finish your course with joy, and receive the incorruptible crown laid up for all that overcome through the blood of the Lamb, &c., is the sincere prayer of

Yours affectionately for the truth's sake,

R. T. HACK.

Leicester Road, Loughborough, May 10th, 1858.

THE SMITTEN TREE.

*A few thoughts on visiting a tree that was struck with lightning,
Aug. 25th, 1877, on the Whiligh Estate.*

ALL you that fear the Lord, the mighty God,
Behold his works, and tremble at his rod.
How strong his hand! how loud his thunders roll!
Nor men nor angels can his power control.
What he ordain'd most surely must take place,
Both in his providence and in his grace.
Our hairs are number'd; and his wise decrees
Have birds included, and the fate of trees.
Behold that tree, which many years had stood,
Ordain'd to show the mighty power of God.
At his command the storm-cloud gather'd round,
And lightnings falling split it to the ground.
The loud report declared the deed was done,
While scatter'd boughs in awful grandeur shone.
The tree was fair, and large, and very high;
But had no crimes for which it ought to die;
While trees of wickedness in numbers stand,
Deserving death by his Almighty hand.

The smitten tree an emblem apt may be
Of Him who bore the storm of wrath for thee;
For thee, poor sinner, who can nowhere hide,
Save in the sacred wounds of Him that died.
The Tree of life, that ever-fruitful tree,
Was smit to death, from death to set thee free.
The oak we saw will never live again;
But Jesus *lives*, and does our life maintain.
We eat his fruit, and sit beneath his shade;
Nor sin nor Satan dares our souls invade.

The fallen tree may other lessons give
To those who still in sins and follies live.
For years it stood, and wide its branches spread;
Now see it fell'd, and number'd with the dead.
Its fate was seal'd; it might no longer stand;
And thus it fell by God's Almighty hand.
From fiercer doom, where can those sinners hide,
Who mock the Lord, and all his truth deride?
Ye stubborn sinners, who the Lord defy,
The thunders roll, the storm indeed is nigh;
Unless repentance lay you at his feet,
From wrath to come you'll find there's no retreat.
The dreadful storm of death will on you fall,
While you in vain to rocks and mountains call;
And ever-flowing waves of wrath will roll,
And sink your guilty never-dying soul!
O wondrous grace, that saves from such an end,
That leads the soul to Christ, the sinner's Friend!

“NONE TEACHETH LIKE GOD.”

(Concluded from page 77.)

The last few years of her life she went, when able, to Mr. Mockford's chapel, at Heathfield, and sat down with them there at the Lord's table. Though she could not hear the sermon, or even the hymns, she would say, "I like to meet with his people, to commemorate his dying love in the ordinances of his house." Mr. Mockford also occasionally visited her. She felt much union to him, and often pleaded for him in her prayers, that the blessing of the Lord might rest upon him and his ministry.

In October, 1876, she came to visit us at Burgess Hill, and sat down with us at the Lord's table on the first Sabbath in November. As she could not hear, a friend found her the hymns; and while at the table, the Lord sweetly visited her. "Ah!" she said, "his dying love seemed too much for such a poor old sinner as me. Bless his holy Name! I love the place where his honour dwelleth." After we got home, and the next day, she spoke of his love, power, and mercy to poor lost sinners. How true it is that the heart teaches the mouth, and addeth learning to the lips!

When the Lord first opened my mouth to preach in his great Name, she was much cast down about it, fearing I should run before I was sent. After I had been in the ministry some months, she felt she must write to me, to warn and admonish me. She called her niece, who used to write for her; and while she was reaching the ink from a shelf, these words came to my mother with some power: "Shall we leave the ministry, and serve tables?" She said, "No, Lord; nor yet come to see a poor old mother." This reconciled her mind to the Lord's will in the matter.

On Feb. 2nd, 1877, she was much favoured, and said:

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

I can truly say the Lord's ministers have lost a praying friend in my dear mother.

When my sister, Mrs. Springate, who then lived with her, was leaving for chapel on a Lord's day morning, she would say, "Go begging; beg for yourself, and beg for your minister, and beg for your poor old mother." When she returned home, she would often say, "How have you got on?" And when the answer was, "I can hardly tell;" or, "Not much," she would say, "I am afraid you did not beg. Remember

"Prayer was appointed to convey
The blessings God designs to give."

In the beginning of this year, 1878, her health and strength began to fail. She wrote the following letter to me and my dear wife:

"My dear and beloved Children,—We received your welcome letter. The contents did my heart good, though I felt in a very dead

state before I read it. But it seemed to communicate a little life to my poor soul. I bless and praise the Lord for the least crumb of mercy to me, a poor old sinner. Ah! my dear children, these little sips are worth waiting for. They make me anticipate the time when we shall drink a full draught.

"On the 6th inst. I spent a part of the day with a dear old friend, Mr. T——. It would have done you good to have heard him talk to his afflicted brother. I came home far lighter than I went. Though poorly then, I am much worse now. I have bronchitis, and also erysipelas; and it lies so in my head that I am tempted to think I shall lose my rationality. My old body is brought down to be very weak and low. The doctor says I must take wine, &c. My poor girl gets me everything she can to nourish my poor body. I wish to return the Lord thanks for all his temporal mercies to me. I get up a little the latter part of the day; but find it difficult to sit.

"My dear boy, I have [thought much about this London journey ever since I knew you were engaged. I hope you will be enabled to leave it with the Lord. When we are nothing in ourselves then Christ is All in all. But I often think my old sinful self sticks closer to me than the skin of my body; and nothing but an Almighty power can strip me of it.

"My dear boy, you beg an interest in my prayers. I can assure you I follow you about wherever you go, begging, in my poor way, that the Lord may be pleased to go with you, and make his word a blessing.

"My love to you, my dear children; also to dear Miss K——; wishing you every new covenant blessing.

"Your affectionate mother,

"Cross-in-Hand, Feb. 20th, 1878."

"H. ASHDOWN.

After she returned home from the visit spoken of in the above letter, a friend called in to see her. She began to tell her of the sweet communion she had felt that day with her friend, and how the Lord drew near, and how their hearts were made to burn within them. After this friend was gone, her daughter said to her, "You have had a lift to-day, mother. The Lord is worth waiting for, is he not?" She answered, "Ah! bless his dear Name, I can bless him now; and I shall bless him for ever and ever."

About this time, while walking out at the back of the house one morning, this verse was applied to her soul with power:

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

This verse she often repeated afterwards; it seemed to well suit her case. Although she had these sweet visits from the Lord, at times she was much cast down with darkness of soul and temptations of the enemy, and would bemoan her sad state, and fear she was deceived after all. Then some portion of the Word was brought to her mind, or a verse of a hymn, which would give her a little comfort. In one of these dark seasons these lines came with power:

"And can he have taught me to trust in his Name,
And thus far have brought me, to put me to shame?"

They were a great comfort to her. Also these:

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

The day after she visited the friends, as named in the letter of Feb. 7th, she was taken quite ill, and never was well again. She often said her time would be short here; but she knew He was faithful who had promised.

About a week before she died, she took to her bed with bronchitis. The first two days she was very dark and cast down in soul. On Thursday, April 18th, she took her daughter, Mrs. Springate, by the hand, and said with great earnestness, being so weary and faint in her affliction, “Do you, do you, my dear girl, try to beg and pray for your poor old mother?” Her daughter replied, “My dear mother, I do as well as I can; and I believe the Lord will appear for you again.” She would often put her hands together, and pray most earnestly, as long as her breath would allow; then her hands would drop. Her daughter read to her Isa. lx. When she came to the 20th verse: “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,” my mother said, “Read that again.” This being done, she said, “That is comforting.” Hope again sprung up in her soul, and she said, “He can bring all things to my remembrance without these anxious thoughts.” At another time she remarked, “I do not wish to murmur; but O! weary, weary. Lord, thou canst bring all things to my remembrance, as well as visit my poor soul.”

On Saturday, April 20th, a friend called to see her, to whom she said, “Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?”

“Jesus answered, Set them free,
And pardon them, and punish me.”

He is able to save to the uttermost. The Lord has blessed the poor.

“Fear not; his merits must prevail;
Ask what thou wilt, it shall be done.”

Yes, shall be done. I can grasp him now with the hand of faith.”

She was very comfortable on Lord's day, the 21st. In the afternoon, a friend called to see her. She signified that her mind was quiet; and said, “I will sing of mercy and judgment;” and spoke very feelingly of the Lord's mercies to her. In the evening, she put her hands together, and said, “Now, then, let us thank and praise him for the mercies of another day.” This she did in a most solemn earnest manner. Afterwards, her daughter said to her, “Mother, you can give all up here?” She answered, “I think I can. We will ask the Lord to give me a little quiet sleep.” She had after this a nice refreshing sleep.

On Monday, the 22nd, I went to see her; but did not think I should find her so ill. She took my hand, and said, “It won't

be long. I am very ill." I had not seen her since December, being much engaged. She went on to tell me of the Lord's mercies to her, until we wept together. She said, "Ah! now to have a God to go to, through a dear Redeemer.

"His goodness how immense
To those that fear his Name!
His love surpasses thought or sense,
And always is the same."

A friend leaving her room, she said to her, "Trust in him; cast all your care upon him. None need despair, since I have mercy found." Her two daughters and myself being with her, she said, "My dear children, keep close to the Lord. Pray to him; give him no rest until he arise and have mercy upon you. Don't leave off seeking him. I called upon the Lord in distress; and he heard me; and brought me up, and set my feet upon a Rock,—a precious Christ. Ah! unworthy me; sinful me; saved through the blood of a dear Redeemer! Bless his holy and precious Name!" Speaking of the Lord's enemies and general professors, she said, "The Lord's word is: 'Ah! I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.' Good Mr. Fowler used to say, 'It won't be asked, Do you belong to a church? Have you been baptized? But, Are you in Christ? Do you know him?' Ah! do you know a precious Christ? Not but that his ordinances are to be attended to, in obedience of faith."

Again looking at me, she said, "Ah! my dear boy, you preach in his great Name to poor perishing sinners. O that he may bless souls! I look at the 'Gospel Standard' to see where you are; I follow you about with my poor prayers. Be faithful to poor dying sinners. O! Preach a precious Christ. O what a fulness! what a fulness!" She also said, "My poor head! I have begged that the Lord will let me have my reason at the last. It won't be long. Do, Lord, help a poor old sinner to hang on thee. Ah! unworthy! unworthy! 'Tis all free grace, free grace. Ah! when I look back, I am ashamed of my conduct towards him." While I was bathing her hands and her head with a little vinegar and water, she said, "What comfort for a poor old sinner!" I said, "Are you happy, mother?" She said, "No; there are many things to make me unhappy. Why tarry his chariot wheels? Do come, Lord. Come and take my poor soul home."

About midnight, she became very restless. We got her out of bed, and remade it; and when we got her in again, she said, "How nice! What comfort for your poor old mother. Thanks to his great Name."

On April 23rd, in the morning, we saw she was fast sinking. We sent for all her family, except my dear wife, who was too far away, and very unwell. They all came. When my eldest brother, who had been very ill, came to her bedside, she took his hand, and said, "I have fought a good fight: I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." She looked around on us all with great pleasure,

and said, "I shall go to David's Lord, and my Lord; yes, I can say, to *my* Lord. Ah! a precious Redeemer. Not for worthiness; no, no, no; through the blood of a dear Redeemer. Ah! a precious Christ for poor needy guilty sinners. O! Bless his Name."

During the morning, she was six times in earnest prayer and praise to the Lord, with most solemn reverence on her countenance and in her words. Some of her expressions were as follows: "I called upon the Lord in trouble; I poured out my complaint before him; and he heard me. He brought me up, through the blood of a dear Redeemer, into his precious promises. O what a fulness! I went in and out, and found pasture. Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly. Help me to trust thee. Do help me, Lord; do deliver me, through thy precious blood, thou God of my salvation. Amen and Amen."

Again, she said, "Lord Jesus, look upon us through thy blessed merits,—poor helpless sinners. We come to thee to save us, to wash us. Help me, O Lord, through thy blood, through thy finished work. Do help me; do strengthen me, thou God of my salvation. I will praise thee; I will glorify thee for ever and ever, through a precious Christ. Amen and Amen. . . . Let us go up; let us go up to Zion, and to Zion's Lord. He will save us. We will rejoice in him. I cried to him in trouble, and he heard me. He is able to save to the uttermost; all through a dear Redeemer. . . . Do come quickly, O Lord, and deliver me, through thy righteousness. Ah! what love! what goodness! what power! and all through a precious Christ. . . . Do come, Lord; come quickly, and take a poor sinner home, through a precious Redeemer."

The last time, her words were scarcely audible; but with deep solemnity and reverence on her countenance, I could hear her say, "Thy holy Majesty," and other words.

At 10.15, a.m., we were all around her bed, and two other dear friends. As we sat watching her, I could see, at intervals, as she lay with her eyes partly closed, a sweet smile and peace come over her countenance, then through weakness and affliction go off again; then return for a few minutes together. She was quite sensible, and could recognize me when bathing her forehead and hands. About an hour before she departed I saw her lips move; and her countenance was as if engaged in mental prayer, with her eyes shut. After this she never moved, but seemed to be in peace; until her ransomed soul took its flight, at 12.35, to be for ever with her dear Lord and Redeemer. "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

Thus she entered into rest, to prove the sweetness of the promise: "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."

Burgess Hill, Sussex, Sept. 10th, 1878.

ELI ASHDOWN.

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

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

My dear Brother,—I have had you in my mind, I know not how many times, well knowing I had not written to you to thank you for your kind letter and photograph, which came safe to hand. My only reason for the delay is on account of not having seen Mrs. E., for she has been away three or four Sabbaths, and I have not seen her on the week day.

I certainly have seen some one much like you, but cannot recollect who. Some one belonging to Adam, I am sure. I have put you among my other friends, and shall often look at your outward man, which will naturally lead to thoughts about the inner man; and then direct me still higher to thoughts about Him whose workmanship we are. The inner man is the new creature in Christ; and he is far beyond the old man of sin and death. The old man stands in Adam, and will not, at times, bear the looking at, in any measure; for says Paul, “I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.” How often is the new man cast down, burdened, and even fettered by the old man, which makes him groan, and cry for deliverance! “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Instead of this old man getting better, he gets worse and worse; and at this I sometimes stagger, and am in no small amazement; because, for years past, I have really been hoping, earnestly hoping, that I should get more feelingly humble, more consciously spiritual, more devotional, and more sensibly childlike in the things of God. Instead of this, I seem to myself dark, blind, dumb, lame, wretched, foolish, brutish, and more like Satan’s tribe than the sanctified remnant of the King of Zion. I keep praying, preaching, reading, thinking, wishing, groaning, hoping, and wondering where the scene will end. I sometimes feel so sick of myself, because I find everything there so hostile to my better interests, that I am ready to wish I could drop the vile tabernacle, and fly to the better land. I want brighter signs, clearer evidences, stronger faith, a softer heart, an affectionate confidence, and a holy boldness; but, alas! my heart is so hard, I follow the blessed Jesus at such a distance, am so cold, careless and indifferent, and so carnal and worldly, that I have to examine myself severely, and wonder if all the past is not a work of the flesh, a Satanic delusion, and a name to live whilst I am dead. The joy of the Lord is the Christian’s strength; and the fruit of the Spirit, which he bears, is love, peace, and righteousness. But where are these? Can they be found? “Nothing but leaves; nothing but leaves.” All I can groan out sometimes is, “Spare me, O Lord, that I may recover strength before I go hence, and be no more.” O what a path is the Christian’s, if I am one! Here are bodily ailments, mental ailments; fears within, and fightings without; troubles within, and troubles without; doubts about the past,

doubts about the present, and fears concerning the future. O ye saints of God, are you thus exercised?

“If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do;
Ye that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it thus with you?”

But the meaning of the dove, or the sad tale of the complainer, or the groaning of the prisoner, may grate on the ear of my brother, and tire out his patience; and so I must only just say now, I still hope to be better.

Faithfully yours in Jesus,

Pulham St. Mary, Aug. 9th, 1878.

B. TAYLOR.

My dear Friend and Brother,—There are times when I find writing pleasant and refreshing; and to hear from one whose heart answers to our heart is also pleasant. Your welcome letter refreshed my bowels, as also our dear friend Mr. Moore's. Truly it is pleasant to see each other running in that course which must end well; each striving for communion with God, and provoked to love and good works, without which how can we be justified by works, and not by faith only?*

In looking back upon the year that is fast ending, I must say, goodness and mercy have followed me to the present moment. I have had no special visitations, but hope the Lord hath been with me, according to his promise: “He shall cover thee with his feathers; and under his wings shalt thou trust; his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.” This precious psalm was to me marrow and fatness at the commencement of the year; and, like its Author, is inexhaustible, for it contains all my salvation and all my desire. My prayer is that we may be kept cleaving to the Lord, and that nothing may separate between us and him; but that our union may be made closer yet; that to me to live may be Christ, and after that to die will be gain.

If ever there was a time in my experience when to be sober and vigilant seemed necessary, it appears to be now that I am in this dark neighbourhood, in which it hath pleased God to cast my lot. I would gladly have stayed at Croydon, but am made to say, “Choose thou the way; but still lead on.” Not that I can do anything; but the Lord hath said, “Ye are my witnesses;” and our lives and actions speak louder than words, both for good and for evil. O what a mercy to be called out of the world that lieth in the wicked one! How plainly can we see it was not our own choice, but his, who said to the apostles, “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; that whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he may give it you.” We can say at times, “I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplication. Because he hath inclined

* We understand our correspondent to mean, How can our making a profession of faith be justified?

his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live." This strengthens our faith, and emboldens us to ask for more, causing us to prove the difference between faith in liberty and lively hope, and faith in trial. Like poor Job, I have known what it is to say in feeling, if not in words, "If I had called, and he had answered me, yet would I not have believed that he had hearkened to my voice." Well might Peter call it "precious faith." Such a gift is precious in the eyes of him that hath it; whithersoever it turneth it prospereth; for "they that honour me," saith God, "I will honour." We cannot honour him more than by a Spirit-wrought believing in him; neither can we dishonour him more than by unbelief. What brazen gates and iron bars are those of unbelief! But the blessed Spirit can break them in pieces, and clear the way of the Lord Jesus, that he may come to his temple, driving out all buyers and sellers, making it a house of prayer where he records his Name, dwelling in the same, and purifying it by faith.

Next to communion with God is communion with saints. And I must say I have found it good, at times, to exchange thoughts with friend Welman, with whom I continue to meet once in the week. He is as well as usual, and desires his Christian love to you. We feel, at times, we should like you to drop in amongst us, and exchange thoughts; but there is one thing we can by grace do. Though absent in body, 'tis sweet, at times, to commend each other to the Lord; which proves the Christian's love to be a uniting love. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

I am thankful to say I and my family are well; which is a great mercy. I hope, if the Lord's will, you are well in body and soul. I should like, if the Lord pleased, to see you again shortly; but not knowing what a day may bring forth, for "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," I leave it with him who disposeth of all things after the counsel of his own will, and causeth all things to work together for good to them that love him and fear him. Mr. Dickinson is in bed from a fall. His daughter, who has just come from India, is confined to her room; and Mrs. D. is not well. So that you will see, according to human appearance, things are not looking promising just now. Give my best love to Mr. Covell and the friends, wishing you a happy new year, in the best sense of the word.

The judgments of the Lord are in the land. We may inquire, "Watchman, what of the night?"

"Pause, my soul, and ask the question,
Art thou ready to meet God?"

May we not say, "Lord, to whom can we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life?"

"No other help have I beside;
If this can alter, I must fall."

"Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to thy cross I cling;"

and if I perish, I perish there. But, blessed be God, this cannot be; for

“The hope of our happiness rises from fear;
And our life we receive from the dead.”

I am afraid you will think me long in answering your last; for until it was returned to me from a friend of mine here, I did not think it was so long since I received it. As it is late, I conclude, lest I should break into another week. May grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you. I remain

Yours affectionately,

Godalming, Dec. 27th, 1867.

W. PEARSON.

My dearly-beloved Friend,—I am so anxious to know how you are, and how you travel onward, that I cannot forbear writing a few lines to inquire into your welfare, as well as into that of all my dear brothers and sisters in the Lord in the city of Bath. I have been longing and waiting and expecting a few lines from you, or, at any rate from some of you, but have been disappointed in that, as I am in almost everything I put my hand or apply my mind unto. I find that my life is almost made up of losses, crosses, troubles, and disappointments. A very mysterious riddle it is. I am, at times, like Abram of old. I am on a journey, and know not whither I am going. My path appears to be hedged up. All signs and waymarks appear to be clouded or hid in obscurity; so that I know not which way to steer my course. Friends and helpers stand aloof from my sore, and my acquaintance are hidden in darkness, so that I grope for the wall. I look and long for something; but know not where or how to obtain it. I look backward and forward, and on every hand, but I cannot behold him. All my bones, at times, appear to be out of joint. I try and strive to replace them, but I cannot get them together; at any rate, I cannot fit them. I am truly brought, at times, to my wit's end, and find myself to be a perfect bungler. All my foolish refuges fail me. The more I lean upon them, the more they deceive and cheat me; so that I am left hanging, as it were, by the skin of my teeth. O! dear, dear brother, how has the truth of Prov. xix. 7 been verified in my experience of late: “All the brethren of the poor do hate him; how much more do his friends go far from him! He pursueth them with words, yet they are wanting to him.” But what a distinguishing mercy it is that there is a Friend that loveth at all times; one that sticketh closer than a brother; that loveth in all states and conditions, in sickness and health, in darkness and light, in adversity and poverty, in losses and crosses, in life and death, and through a never-ending eternity!

My dear companion, brother, and friend, how true it is that “if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most miserable!” But, blessed be his dear and precious Name, he hath not left us altogether without a good hope. This he hath by his own blessed Spirit begotten in us by shedding

abroad in our hearts his precious love. This hope, too, will never make us ashamed, in this life or in the world to come; but is as an anchor, both sure and steadfast, a nail in a sure place, fastened there by the master of assemblies. So that all things must and will work together for our eternal good, and all redound to the honour and glory of our Triune Jehovah, who worketh all things, and ordereth all things according to his most holy and righteous will, both in the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth. Therefore, there is nothing out of order; all is in perfect harmony. All creation is but as a well-tuned instrument, tuned with a heavenly art; so that no string, fret, or stop, chord or discord, is out of place. All is sweetly and harmoniously set and played by the Master of all arts and sciences. However grating and doleful it may appear or sound unto us, each sound has its use and place. Flats, sharps, accidentals and naturals, concords and discords, as well as binding notes, all rightly touched, make up a perfect harmony. Thus some one must have my place, and your place, otherwise there would be a vacant place and a deficiency. However base and contemptible we may appear to ourselves or others, the harmony cannot be complete without us.

You very wisely said, in the precious note you sent last, that dark clouds often brought rain when bright ones produced none. O that our eyes were always open to see the things that make for our peace! But alas! how often are they hid from our eyes, and veiled over by the things that are seen, which are temporal, fading, and distracting, and dreadful, at times, as flesh and blood! Indeed, this cannot be otherwise, inasmuch as all things are full of confusion as to the flesh. All that appertains merely to nature is contaminated and defiled. All is under the curse, and has the sentence and image of death stamped upon it. Therefore all earthly things are precarious and uncertain. Neither poverty nor riches have any continuance in them. In the midst of life we are in death: Man fleeth as a shadow, and never continueth long at one stay. No one knows what a day may bring forth. The Lord hath fixed the bounds of our habitation; and over them we cannot pass. The lot is cast into the lap, and the Lord is the Disposer thereof. Our carefulness will not add to, our want of burdening carefulness will not diminish from, our portion. No one by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature; neither can he make one hair white or black; for "by strength shall no man prevail." "Thou maintainest my lot," says David.

Thus, dear friend, we may learn from these premises the foolishness of our ways, and the inconsistency of over-much carefulness. But ah! dear friend, how often do we run counter in these things to the exhortation of Scripture, which saith, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." Here is our misery; here is the evil; we cast the net

the wrong side of the ship; and is it any wonder that we catch nothing? Outside the veil there is nothing but trouble, toil, and labour; no rest without. Rest is within the veil, whither Christ the Forerunner has entered; and he that believeth entereth in with Christ, and ceaseth from his own works, as God did from his. Within the veil there is rest, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Within the veil we look on things that are not seen by mortal eyes, because they are spiritual, heavenly, and divine. The natural man cannot discern them; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But, through rich grace, we have been enabled by his blessed Spirit to look on them, and have been changed from glory to glory by the selfsame Spirit, who leads and guides into all truth, and keeps and preserves in the truth for ever and ever.

Thus, dear friend, we may and can with propriety say that the lines are fallen unto us in pleasant places, and that we have, in spite of all transitory things, a goodly heritage. "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear," saith Christ. Thus, dear friend, we are blessed; and blessed we shall be; for the Lord hath blessed us, and raised us up by his Spirit, and hath made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ, and enabled us to feed and feast on heavenly things. O, blessed eyes that see! O, blessed ears that hear! O, blessed hands that handle! O, blessed souls that taste and feast on such refined soul-satisfying things! "My flesh," says Christ, "is meat indeed; and my blood is drink indeed." And again, "He that eateth me, even he shall live by me." And again, "He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." "I give unto them," he says, "eternal life; and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hands."

O, my dear brother, what soul-ravishing language is this, when applied by God the Holy Ghost to the immortal spirit! Are we not, through rich grace, living witnesses of this? Have we not seen, tasted, and handled the Word of life? Are we not, then, children? This bread is not given to dogs; it is children's bread. None but the children have any appetite for it. All the world really hate it, and hate those who are the happy recipients thereof. But not so with us. We have received it, have loved it, have delighted and triumphed in it. Thus, loving Him that begetteth, we love those who are begotten of him.

But I must conclude, for I find the more I give forth the more I gain. Give my kind respects to brother Fry and his wife. May the choicest of blessings rest upon them. Give my love to my brother and companion Belsher and his wife, and tell him that Ephraim's moth (Hos. v. 12) will not consume him; it will only ease him of some of his burdensome lumber, that he may walk more at large. What heavy-laden one is there, think you, who would not be glad to be rid of his burden? Well, a little time longer, and

all burdens will fall off the back of Ephraim for ever. The Lord sees the end of troubles. They go and come at his beck; and after all they are but short and transitory, like the crackling of thorns under a pot, which consume away by the vehemency of the fire that reduces them to ashes. Thus, dear friend, all things work together for the eternal good of those who love God, and are the called according to his purpose. No erasures in the Lamb's book of life. "Though we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." Amen.

I wonder where brother C. is. I trust he has not forgotten me. I have been hoping and waiting a long time for the fulfilment of his promise. I hope he will remember me, and do what he has said shortly. Give my kind love and affection to him, and tell him I sincerely wish him every blessing. And now may the God of all grace bless you and your wife.

Your poor, but open, Friend,

Badminton, May 5th, 1839.

J. REED.

My dear Friend,—It was three weeks ago last night since I came to Oakham. The friends say that I look better, although my voice still remains much the same. Rest is most likely to prove profitable. I take medicine, and apply ointment to my throat at night. I need patience. I have been quiet and retired. God has been very good and merciful to me. I have been blessed in my soul in a particular manner. On last Saturday night, I was praising and blessing God. Christ was very precious; and in this house I never had so great a blessing. I lay awake, praising and blessing God for a long time. On the 19th, the next day, I gave out the 251st hymn:

"When Jesus, with his mighty love,
Visits my troubled breast," &c.

The friends were glad to hear it, and see me so happy; and I feel melted with a sense of God's lovingkindness whilst I am writing this. "Bless the Lord, O my soul," &c.

Ministers need encouragement, as well as castings down. I hope that I shall again and again be blessed in my soul. The love of God shed abroad in the heart makes all things right. We can then say,

"My Jesus has done all things well."

On the Monday night previous, I was blessed in my soul, but not like the Saturday. I wish that I could pray earnestly that my last days might be my best. I wish that my heart might be more filled with gratitude for all the blessings and mercies that I have had for 60 years; but nevertheless there are no blessings like spiritual blessings. If we are to be in heaven, we must be made fit; and the Lord will lead us in right paths. It is through much tribulation that God's people have to travel to glory. We cannot change God's plans. May we kiss the rod, and know who has appointed it.

On Tuesday night, I gave out the hymn (282) that ends with the following words :

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

What a very great mercy to have a religion of the right sort ; for we must die. How many keep falling about my age ; and we must follow, fit or not. O Lord, make us fit.

This afternoon I have enjoyed much the 158th hymn :

“ Sweet the moments, rich in blessing.”

A real enjoyment of such a hymn is a proof of a work of grace on the soul.

“ Thy sweet communion charms the soul,
And gives true peace and joy.”

There are no blessings like spiritual blessings. I wish that I could be very grateful for the least evidence God has favoured me with. I wish to love Christ more, and value my interest in the great work upon the cross. I have no hope of going to heaven but through Christ. What a Friend he is ! But how little loved and valued, even by the lovers of truth. “ Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” In any way that the Lord may lead us to a knowledge of divine enjoyments we cannot find fault. We buy the truth, and would not sell it. “ It is the Lord ; let him do what seemeth him good.”

At present I scarcely know what to say about any plans. May the Lord direct me. Sanctified afflictions are great mercies.

It will be twenty-five years to-morrow since I came to Oakham in that long illness. It was made a great blessing to me. May the Lord sanctify this trial and cross more and more. May the Lord bless those who love and fear his Name who come to the Abbey chapel. Give my love to friend Doe and friend Viner, and any inquiring friends, specially those afflicted.

Yours affectionately,

Oakham, July 24th, 1863.

WM. TIPTAFT.

My dear Friend,—I received yours of the 29th, and am sure you know that all vital godliness is by the operation of the Holy Ghost. I thank you for your kind epistle, and the spirit of sympathy that pervades it ; but, my dear brother, to reach the heart is the work of God. Our kindness is an offshoot from the wonderful love of a Triune Jehovah.

The commandment (1 Jno. iii. 23) you quote is delightful ; and we find the profit of it when we are enabled to walk therein.

The whole of God's salvation is learned in necessities, and trials, and afflictions, and straits, and darkness, and fears, and bondage, and terror, and temptations ; and, as Erskine says,

“ Before he suffer pride that swells,
He'll drag thee through the mire
Of sins, temptations, little hells ;
Thy Husband saves by fire.”

How dreadful it is, and yet how true, that we are bent upon backsliding! After all our enjoyments, and reproofs, and helps, and deliverances, and enlargements, and bedewings, and renewings, and embraces, still we have the traitor within, the bitter foe that Paul spoke of: "It is no more I that do it, but *sin* that dwelleth in me." The long-suffering and forbearance of a most gracious covenant God is manifested in coming over all our ingratitude and mountainous offences, to bless and deliver us again and again. And I have often said, "I am sure he will come no more." Again and again I am desponding, and my soul has been in such states that I have dreaded that I had committed the unpardonable sin; and it came upon me like a mountain to crush me out of existence, my sins appeared so great. I durst not open the Bible upon Heb. vi., Ps. xix., Heb. x. 26, and other places. Yet the dear Lord appeared again, showed himself my God and Friend; and still I am the same doubting fearing worm I was.

I am longing for his blessed return, and waiting for him; but O! my soul faints for him. Yet he is the faithful God. I could tell you some dreadful experiences of sin and its effects; and the blessed effects of a precious Jesus. Yours in Love,

THE COLLIER.

GRATITUDE PRODUCED BY MERCY.

How God's sweet Word reverses
 My estimate of things!
 How numberless the mercies
 His constant goodness brings!
 If but my faith were firmer,
 More humble, more sincere,
 No vile uprising murmur
 Should find a list'ning ear.
 But, often so unheedful
 Of my increasing debt,
 I ask for something needful,
 Receive, and then forget.
 If thus to man ungrateful,
 'Twould prove me base and blind;
 But to my God, how hateful,—
 A God so good and kind!
 Dear Lord, thy love disperses
 My base ingratitude,
 And shows ten thousand mercies
 Upon my pathway strew'd.
 And though I have no fitness
 Thy worthy praise to tell,
 This I will bear thee witness,—
 Thou doest all things well.

Aug. 28th, 1878.

W. WILEMAN.

REVIEW.

(Concluded from page 94.)

The Autobiography and Letters of the late Thomas Godwin, for Forty-Two Years Minister of the Gospel; with some Account of his Last Days.—London: J. Gadsby, 18, Bouverie Street. Brighton: Mrs. Godwin, 44, Buckingham Road.

IN resuming our notice this month of Mr. Godwin's "Life and Letters," we shall venture, before referring to the letters, to dip a little further into the narrative part of the work. So far as we have gone with our notice of his "Autobiography," it will be seen that his experience whilst under the law was deep and bitter in the extreme, and that some of his temptations were of a fearful nature. The Lord, knowing from the beginning what particular sphere of usefulness for the glory of God and the good of his church our author was to be fitted for, no doubt saw that there was a needs-be that the work of the law, in his particular case, should assume the depth and form it did. Had the Lord from all eternity had no purpose to have called our brother to the ministry of the gospel, or in any way to have distinguished him in his life and experience, then it might have been God's way, as it certainly is with many, to have brought him into gospel liberty with less legal terror, and with less fearful temptations. It is well to be enabled to recognize the blessed work of God, in whatever form he is sovereignly pleased to produce it, and to present it to our observation. If it come under our observation in the much more gentle and milder form as was no doubt the case with Lydia, when her heart was opened to attend unto the things which were spoken by Paul, it is not for us to reject it on that account, but to be quite sure that the all-wise God is the best judge how deep or otherwise it is needful to make the work of the law in every case.

Some young and sincere believers in Jesus, after reading such an experience as Mr. Godwin's, might be more discouraged than otherwise; they might be tempted to conclude that, because they had never passed through such depths of terror and distress under the law, and had never been blessed with such manifestations of pardon, their religion was wrong altogether, and that they had no right religion at all. But such conclusion would arise from making another person's experience, in depth and form, too much a standard in their own minds of what their own *must be* in order to be right. We hope such young Christians will try and remember that, just as,

"Faith and repentance all must find;
But yet we daily see
They differ in their time and kind,
Duration and degree;"

so, no doubt, it is, as it respects the "duration and degree" of the work of the law in the consciences of different sinners whose souls are quickened into spiritual life by the Holy Ghost.

Whether the law operates like a "mighty wind," and sounds like a "rushing noise" in the conscience, or operates with less boisterousness, yet it is in either case a real law-work, when a sinner is condemned in his conscience as a sinner in the sight of God, and is made to renounce all hope of salvation "by the deeds of the law," and is brought, in spirit and truth, to sincerely desire, and seek, as dear Hart says, in another hymn, "after Jesus' love:"

"The soul that with sincere desires
Seeks after Jesus' love,
That soul the Holy Ghost inspires
With breathings from above."

But to return to the "Autobiography." Our author having basked in the sunshine of his deliverance from his first bondage under the law for a blessed twelve months, God's time came for him to be "weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts;" so that, after a year of happy liberty and joy in the Lord, his former darkness returned upon him, and his temptations became as painful to endure as ever. Though his conscience was kept tender, and the fear of God was kept in exercise, yet he says, "The Lord began to hide his face, shut up his Word, and let a cloud down upon the mercy-seat;" and what made his painful experience at this time even more cutting in some respects than his first bondage, was the greater hardness of heart which he felt whilst passing through it. "My heart," he says, "was so hard, I could not cry here, as my soul did under the law." With awful temptations levelled against the sacred Trinity, with blasphemous thoughts rolling in upon him "like so many mountains," and with many fears that he had committed the unpardonable sin, he used to walk about, month after month, "wringing his hands, and stamping his feet like a mad man." But, after about twelve months of such painful endurance and suffering, the Lord was pleased to liberate his "poor devil-tempted, sin-tormented soul," and once more to fill his heart with peace and joy. He describes his deliverance at this time in the following way:

"One day, I could not sit in my shop, but walked into my house in bitter agony of soul. The New Testament lay on the table, and I took hold of it and threw it open. These words took hold of my soul: 'Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.' My poor devil-tempted, sin-tormented soul was delivered in a moment. My soul danced within me. O how my heart and soul thanked, blessed, and praised my dear Lord and Saviour for coming down into my heart once more, to give me peace and rest! The Holy Ghost showed my soul that Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness on purpose to be tempted of the devil. And he also showed me that going through all these temptations that my soul had been passing through, was following Jesus through the wilderness; and I could clearly see that the Holy Ghost was leading my soul all through these cutting and killing temptations, and that divine grace enabled my soul to fight against them from the commencement of this hot war in my heart."

From the time of this second deliverance, our author was more led on by the blessed Spirit in divine things. The Lord enabled him to learn to read the letter of the Word, and at the same time opened up its discriminating truths to his understanding, and made them "spirit and life" in his soul. Although the enmity of his heart had boiled up against the doctrine of election, which had made him say that he "would never believe such a doctrine, that God was such a God as that, to save one and not another, without giving all a chance," yet "God," he says, "made my soul believe it; for 'it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.'"

Having been reared, like Mr. Huntington, in the lap of the Church of England, it was hard for him to believe that there was any gospel outside its walls; but not being able to hear the "precious doctrines" which his heart was being opened to receive within the walls of the Church, he was tempted to go and hear a dissenting minister preach, who had come to Swindon, and who, as he had heard, preached the doctrines of grace. And although his venturing into a dissenting place of worship made him feel, through being so strict a Churchman, as if it was an offence to be punished by the judge, and made him look up and down the street to see if any one whom he knew would see him go in, yet, when he got in, he heard more about "the blackness of the heart, the preciousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God towards his elect people," than what he had ever done before.

For some time after this, he divides his conscience, so to speak; between church and chapel; he keeps to his parish church on a Sunday, but slips into the chapel at Swindon on week evenings. But, as the truth he hears preached at the chapel spoils him for what he hears at the church, the church rapidly begins to wane in its glory, and our author becomes more and more ready and willing to catch every opportunity of hearing the real and pure gospel preached wherever he could, making less point about the mere building, wherever it might be faithfully proclaimed.

It was about this time that he first hears that man of blessed memory, dear Mr. Tiptaft. He says:

"I was told that Mr. Tiptaft had not long left the Church of England. I felt such a desire in my soul to go and hear him, particularly as he had been in the Church of England; so I went to hear him. When he began to read, every word came with power and weight. I had never heard any one read so before. Then he began to pray, and I could not keep my eyes off him. Then he read this text: 'And they shall call them the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord; and thou shalt be called Sought out, a city not forsaken.' (Isa. lxii. 12.) He went into it in such a feeling way and manner, and knocked everything down as he went that stood in his way, and rooted out, and pulled down, and destroyed; and then began to plant. As he went on, he beat down infant sprinkling, and set up believers' baptism; and this had a firm hold on my conscience, for I had seen it in the Word of God. And when Mr. Tiptaft entered into it, and opened it up as a Bible ordinance for believers only, then my soul was led more and more to the Word, to see whether the things that he spoke of were

true. 'They searched the Scriptures daily,' to see 'whether those things were so.'

Our author being at last compelled to leave the Church altogether for the want of food for his soul, troubles began between him and the clergyman, who "was filled with rage" against him for going astray, and for holding erroneous doctrines. He said one day, "Godwin, you are led by the devil." "If I am led by the devil," replied Mr. Godwin, "Christ is precious to me; and if that is being led by the devil, may God give my soul more of it." He relates a good deal about what took place between him and the clergyman, and how, through being cut off for conscience sake from the Church of England, and in consequence of seldom being able to hear what he wanted for his soul's good at any other place of worship, he was led to open his own house for "prayer and reading;" and how the Lord was pleased to bless their worship by calling "five or six by his grace," so that they "had some blessed times together."

We have thought that perhaps this particular step in opening his house for prayer, may have been one of the first links in the chain and order of divine providence to his being brought out in a more public way to preach the everlasting gospel of the grace of God. For it was just about the time of his opening his house for the worship of God, or very soon after, that we find him telling us that, "all at once," the thought of preaching fell upon him, and "sprang up" in him.

Having felt believers' baptism laid on his conscience before quitting the Establishment, he was brought to feel that he "must go through it;" and hearing that the ordinance was going to be attended to in Berkshire, he went off on a cold winter's morning; and, after relating his experience to the minister, was baptized with some others. This, with other things, brought upon him still more persecution from "the Church people;" but, as if to enable him the better to bear it, and the better to distinguish between minister and minister, the Lord sends at this time the late Mr. Gadsby to preach at Swindon. Our author relates some interesting particulars of his hearing Mr. Gadsby preach, and what his impressions were, and how Mr. Gadsby entered into all the ins and outs of his pathway. Certainly, if we consider under what peculiar circumstances our author heard Mr. Gadsby, we can easily understand how he must have thought and felt Mr. Gadsby's preaching to be preaching indeed, in comparison with what he had long been accustomed to hear in the Church. We know that his preaching was preaching indeed, in comparison with the preaching of such poor things as ourselves, who love and preach the same glorious truths of grace which he did; but to have heard him preach under such particular circumstances, as in Mr. Godwin's case, when he heard him at Swindon, his voice must have been to our author as the voice of God.

The narrative, interesting as it is, yet, being somewhat brief, it would be neither an act of justice towards the sale of the volume,

nor of kindness towards the surviving widow, who has been at the expense of bringing it out, were we to increase the number of extracts we have already given from its pages. Passing over, then, that part of the narrative in which the author gives a full account of his "deep exercises of soul about the ministry," and coming on to the time when his exercises were bringing him to a point about complying with invitations to go out to speak, we find him saying :

"As I had an invitation to go out to speak some time before this took place (meaning a spiritual revelation of Christ to his soul), at once I said, 'Lord, I will go and tell the people what thou hast done, since thou hast done so much for my soul.' I said to my soul that I would not consult with flesh and blood any longer. This took place in the month of August, 1834."

What he passed through in his poor mind from the above date until the following December was, as he states, more than he could tell to any; but being made, like the prophet of the Lord, to feel God's word in his heart like a burning fire shut up in his bones, he became weary with forbearing, and he could not stay. The minister at Swindon being taken ill, our brother was pressed by the people to go and fill his place; and he was obliged to say, "Well, if the Lord inclines my mind to do so, and will give me a text, I will try to come and speak." So that on December 25th, 1834, he stands in the pulpit for the first time; and his labours fairly commenced from that very Sunday.

He receives other invitations; and very soon one to go and preach at Pewsey, in the county of Wilts; and it was at this place that his first settlement took place. But the interesting particulars leading to his settlement at Pewsey; his trials, hardships, sorrows, and joys, during his sojourn there; his calls from other churches to supply; the references he makes to such personal friends as Mr. Warburton, Philpot, Parry of Allington, and others; his settlement at Woburn; and his ultimate settlement at Godmanchester, with all else that is related of the way he was led about in the wilderness, and of God's dealings with him, both in providence and grace, beyond what we have been able to touch upon, we must leave to be read by our friends from the pages of the book itself.

Mr. Godwin, both as a Christian and a minister of the gospel, was too well known and esteemed in our own particular denomination for his "Life and Letters" to require much commendation from a pen like ours. No doubt very many have already obtained a copy of his book, and will probably have read it through before our remarks upon it come under their eye. We can only say that we should have been very glad to have forestalled them, by calling attention to its publication at the time it came from the press; but, partly through affliction and other obstacles, we have, without the least unkind feeling towards either the memory of the author or his surviving widow, been prevented until last month from taking the work in hand. Had we noticed it at the

time we first read it for ourselves, it would have been with many tears, and some of which were shed through the power and sweetness we felt in our soul in reading some parts of the "Autobiography," and some of the letters. It is a real work of God that we read of in the first part of the volume; and a real gracious experience, deep and full too, that is related. Others, who knew the author personally better than we did, might have seen personal peculiarities in him as a man, which we have found less traceable in reading his written experience; but with *all* who love God's discriminating truth, and can admire God's work in the soul, we have no doubt that the testimony which the author has left behind him to the truth and faithfulness of God, will cause them to admire the grace of God in him, and to value his work on that account.

It now only remains to make a brief reference to the "Letters;" and which we shall do with few remarks. We shall simply express an opinion of them as a whole, and in that way bring our notice of the volume to a close.

In giving, then, our candid opinion of the "Letters," or at least in speaking of them according to what our impression of them was when we first read them during a time of sore affliction, we can say that we found them to be "weighty and powerful," very experimental, and very comforting to our own mind.

Mr. Godwin being a man of neither learning nor education, he was sufficiently humbled by grace to be content to be known as having neither. Neither in his preaching nor in his published letters could it be said that he aimed at a style and manner that were unnatural to him; and the natural simplicity of expression and diction which are so observable in his published letters stamp them, as much as do other characteristics which they bear, with being the real and true effusions of the writer's heart, and not merely what tact and skill would put together.

The only time that we ever heard Mr. Godwin preach, we remember hearing him say that he never once asked God for mere ability. We quite felt at the time that he meant what he said. He quite gave us the idea of being a man who aspired more after greatness in grace, and real vital experience, than in gifts and human parts.

Some, in reading the whole of the letters, may think there is more or less sameness in them. We a little thought so ourselves at the time we read the volume through; but then we presume that few volumes of spiritual letters are ever published but what in every volume there will be a certain amount of sameness in expression and matter between some letters and others.

If, then, any apology should be needed for any amount of sameness that may be manifest between different letters of Mr. Godwin's, the best apology that we can offer is the one which has been already made, and which stands in the preface to the work, viz.: "That the matter contained in them is pretty much the subject of grace and salvation. Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and

for ever. His atonement is the same; his justifying righteousness is the same; his sufferings are the same; regeneration is the same; the love of God is the same; the power of the Spirit is the same; and it is the same Lord who is rich unto all that call upon him in truth. So the sameness of his letters need not surprise."

That most judicious of letter-writers, John Newton, makes an observation in his "advertisement" to his most valuable volume of letters, called "Cardiphonia," which would, in our judgment, apply to many of the published volumes of letters that have come under our notice. He says: "Posthumous letters are usually published to a disadvantage. If it be supposed that the author has friends, whose regard to his memory will make them willing to purchase (or collect) what appears under his name, that circumstance has sometimes given occasion to an indiscriminate and injudicious publication of letters collected from all quarters, in which more attention is paid to the bulk than the value."

We are glad to be able to say that we have traced no such defect as this in the "Letters" of the late Mr. Godwin. A little sameness there may be; but his surviving widow is not chargeable with having exercised an "injudicious" and "indiscriminate" choice of the letters she has collected for publication.

Another feature in them which much struck our mind is the abundance of spiritual comfort and joy, and blessed liberty in the Lord, which many of them breathe forth. The dear man was indeed remarkably blessed and favoured in his soul, at times. He knew in his own experience what real wounding and healing were; what it was to be killed, and what it was to be made alive; and what it was to be obliged to preach and write to his friends about both sides. The malady and the remedy; depths and heights of sorrow and joy; darkness and light, run through his letters, correspondingly with such heights and depths in his own soul's experience, thereby making his letters the faithful utterances of his heart.

This last feature in them will, we have no doubt, be their chief commendation; the spiritual matter they contain will most in-value them to the many friends of the departed author.

We hope the sale of the volume will be large, and that our notice of it in the pages of this magazine may somewhat help to stimulate its circulation. It is a nice book to give away, and a nice one to keep; and those of our spiritual friends and readers who have not yet obtained a copy, but may be induced by our recommendation to do so, we sincerely desire may find the reading of it attended with a real blessing to their own souls.

IN the face of Jesus the believer sees the assembled glories of God in happiest concert.—*Hardy*.

HERE, then, is the fountain. It is the most precious blood of Christ, which is always sending out its virtue, as a fountain is always sending out water.—*Romaine*.

LOVE INFINITE.

JESUS' love and Zion's sinning
 Were in heaven's balance tried;
 And, though grievous was the sinning,
 Love outweigh'd when Jesus died.
 "It is finish'd!"
 'Turn'd the scale on Mercy's side.
 Be his love my meditation;
 May my song his love recite;
 Let the Saviour's cross and passion
 Every grateful thought incite.
 Hallelujah!
 Jesus' love is infinite.

—From the Welsh of W. WILLIAMS, Author of "Guide me, O thou great Jehovah."

Obituary.

GEORGE BROWN.—On Aug. 1st, 1878; aged 39, George Brown, of Braughing.

Like the rest of Adam's fallen race, he was born in sin, and shapen in iniquity. But God, of his infinite mercy, quickened his soul when dead in trespasses and sin. No doubt he was the son of many prayers, his mother being a gracious woman. An account of her death appeared in the "Gospel Standard" wrapper for 1859. When a youth he was fond of bell-ringing, which led to rioting and drunkenness; and he became quite a profane character, the works of the flesh being manifest in him. What induced him to join the Primitive Methodists I know not. He was with them for some time. Afterwards he joined the Wesleyans, and was a zealous preacher amongst them for several years. He was not an idle worker, sometimes walking seven miles to preach, having to return home afterwards. Thus he went on, wearing himself out with such blind zeal; for he knew not then that the flesh profiteth nothing, and that by the deeds of the law no flesh living can be justified. He worked for life and salvation; holding the doctrine that all mankind may be saved if they like, and that it is their own fault if they are not. He knew not that man is as unable to perform spiritual acts as a corpse in the grave to perform the functions of natural life.

About seven years ago, I first became acquainted with my dear friend, whom I loved in gospel bonds. We had blessed fellowship together; and as time went on our union became stronger. During the first part of our acquaintanceship, he held very strongly to his old views, and great was his enmity against the sovereignty of God and the freeness of his grace. How often afterwards he confessed his blindness and ignorance! The enmity of his mind was such that, after hearing men of truth preach, he would try and pick out some point in which he could not see with them. He was principally convinced of his errors by reading the Scriptures of truth. Huntington's "Justification of a Sinner" was very much blessed to him; also Mr. Hart's hymns, particularly the author's experience.

He knew nothing of the life and power of the truth as it is in Jesus, until it was brought home to him after the Lord placed his afflicting hand upon him in the form of a lingering consumption. Mr. Vinall's

ministry, which he attended for some time, was much prized by him. He was also blessed in hearing Mr. Covell's sermons read.

About two years ago, the dear Lord deepened the work in his soul. The personality of the Holy Ghost was made very plain to him by these words being applied to his heart: "And they shall not any more say every man to his brother, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me." The dear Lord brought him down, and made him see something of the evil of his heart and the corruptness of his nature. He stripped him of his false coverings, and tore from him his supposed righteousness, which he had gone about to establish; giving him to see that all his righteousnesses were as filthy rags. Then the free favour and mercy of God became his only theme. "O!" he said, "the long-suffering mercy of God to such a vile guilty wretch as I am and feel myself to be!"

The enemy thrust sore at him, on various occasions, whilst suffering from a very trying cough, and fearing he should be choked. It seemed to him as if all was going wrong with him, that the enemy would spoil his soul and make a wreck of him. But again and again the dear Lord appeared to him, assuring him that the Lord Jesus had put all things under his feet, conquered Satan, and delivered the poor captive from him that was stronger than he. The enemy at one time seemed to gain great ground upon him, stirring up the carnality of his mind, so that he seemed to himself made up of everything which the devil could work upon. The devil came as an angel of light, acting upon what seemed to be his love to the souls of his fellow-men, and stirring him up to a high pitch of rebellion against God. But he was brought to see how he fought against God in thus replying against him.

After some time, the Lord broke in again upon his poor soul, and humbled him in the dust before him. Thus the sovereignty of the Almighty, and God's free choice in election, were opened up to him. He saw that men were as clay in the hands of the Potter, and that God would have mercy on whom he would have mercy, and whom he would he hardened. He saw that it was Jehovah's right to give the thief a place in paradise; that in the mind of the Infinite Jehovah all was settled before all worlds in the eternal covenant engagements and transactions of the Eternal Three; and that the saints were predestinated unto the adoption of children, and chosen in Christ to be the partners of his throne. As it is written: "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." O! what a blessed bond,—bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord their God! "The dear Lord," he said, "is my wisdom, my righteousness, my sanctification, and my redemption." The Holy Ghost blessedly opened up Paul's words unto him, so that he was brought to see how all his unrighteousness was made to commend the righteousness of God. "O!" he said, "how merciful the dear Lord is to me! Here I am, tossed about, and wondering in my mind about the things of this life. The common supplies are almost run out; but then the Lord has moved the hearts of his people towards me." He often wept at the great goodness of God towards him, saying, "Look, how good the dear Lord is to me! Bless his holy Name. He has put it into the hearts of these people so many miles off; and thus provided for me at this time of my necessity." I was favoured to convey to him, at times, tokens of kindness from several friends who felt a union to him. "Why," said he, "you are something like the prophet's ravens." We have often wept together at the Lord's goodness and mercy to such poor sinful worms.

About a month before his death, he became very weak, and wasted in body. His cough was very distressing, and breathing difficult. He was weary of earth, himself, and sin, and longing to be free from this cum-

brous clay, and to enter into that rest which the Lord assured him of, even that blessed rest which remaineth for the people of God. Being very much wasted in body, he said, "I am like the poor man at the gate, whose sores the dogs licked. I am very sore; but there is an appointed time for men upon the earth. They cannot die one moment before the time; all events are in his blessed hands. This world is nothing to me. Now the dear Lord is my everything. O that I had the wings of a dove! then would I fly away, and be at rest." His wife having said to him, "Your sufferings are great," he replied, "O! nothing to be compared with that which my blessed Jesus suffered for me. No tongue can tell what he endured."

On Tuesday morning, about four o'clock, he became faint and low; and his wife said to him, "Are you going to die?" He replied, "I hope so; I long to be gone." On Wednesday morning, a friend called upon him. He desired him to read part of Ps. xxxvii., which he much enjoyed. The Word of God was very precious to him. Towards evening, not being so well, he lifted up his hands towards heaven, saying, "Is this death? Is this death? Dear Jesus!" This he repeated twice. He continued most of the night in prayer for the dear Lord to take him to himself, from this suffering body. On Thursday afternoon, about four, he looked earnestly at his wife, with fixed eyes, a mortal paleness being on his cheek, and glory in his soul; and seeing her cry, his countenance brightened up; and being perfectly sensible, he said, "Do not cry. I am going to Jesus." Thus he breathed his last, without a sigh or a groan.

Braughting.

J. CHALKLEY.

ANN BUDDEN.—On July 20th, aged 60, Ann Budden.

She was one who, early in life, was the subject of conviction; but being brought up a regular attendant at the Church of England, and taught to regard all other sects as heretics, her early years were marked by that bitter hatred of dissent and dissenters which has been, and still is, a characteristic feature of many adherents of that system.

She was born at Loders, near Bridport. Nothing remarkable took place in her experience until, in the year 1836, she was brought to visit Chard. There it was that, according to the purposes of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, the means were employed, and the work begun, which was to issue in her deliverance from the bondage of sin, and being brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God. In a letter dated Aug. 6th, 1876, she writes:

"I have indeed been led this morning to look back to the first Sunday in Aug., 1836, which was my first in Chard. I can truly say that goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. My first visit to Chard in God's providence brought about my marriage with my dear husband; and I have reason to bless the Lord for giving me such a dear partner till Dec. 26th, 1874, a time never to be forgotten by me. O! If the dear Lord had not been my helper, I should have sunk under what I passed through.

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

At Chard, she was brought into contact with a member of the Independent church, and was by her induced to attend the chapel; Mr. W. H. Griffiths being the pastor, under whose ministry she was convinced of her state as a sinner. She now began to withdraw herself from the Established Church, and regularly attended the chapel, having, at times, to secretly slip away to the week-night services. Her soul was now

longing for spiritual food, and an application of the precious balm of Gilead, as set forth in the gospel of the grace of God.

She was not long satisfied with the preaching at the Independent chapel. Being made to feel and know the plague of her own heart, and the incurableness of the wound, and her own helpless and totally ruined condition, she was made to experience her need of a complete salvation, such as could meet her case.

She was now removed in the providence of God to Leicester. Whilst there, a portion of an old "Gospel Standard" was, in a most remarkable manner, placed in her hands; which she read, and was so delighted with it that an intense desire was awakened thereby to obtain the work; for she found in it something which met the cravings of her soul, and food such as she had long been earnestly seeking. This led to her discovery of a place where she might hear for herself the same precious truths preached. Under this preaching her soul was greatly blessed, and built up on the precious and confirming truths of the everlasting gospel.

It was not her lot long to remain in Leicester; and with her family she returned again to Chard. As she was no longer able to sit under the sound of a Yea and Nay gospel, she attended the little chapel at Broadlake.

At length, another removal from Chard was made, and thus the hopes and expectations which she had formerly cherished, that on becoming married she should be settled for life, were blighted. She was made largely to share in the trials, sorrows, and tribulations which are the appointed heritage of all the Lord's people; but found that they endeared to her soul the precious Word of God, and kindled in her heart a tender affection and regard for his dear children, whenever and wherever she met with them. She had, from the time of her marriage, known what it was to pass through troubles and changes of a painful character, both in providence and in grace. A weakly frame, and a large family added greatly to her burdens; but she had been taught through grace, and blessed with a praying heart. Many times has she been heard by her children pouring out her prayers and petitions to him who is the Burden-bearer of his people. She was one who spent much time in secret with God, and spake the true language of Canaan.

After many and various changes, her husband took a confectionery and baking business at Banwell. Here it pleased the Lord to smile upon and bless them providentially, so that they soon became comfortably settled. Her soul, however, had to mourn over the isolation she experienced as regards spiritual things. She found nothing but Wesleyans and Church people; and amongst all the professors by whom she was surrounded, she met with none with whom she could feel a spiritual union, or converse on the things of God. She had been taught in the school of Christ, and made a sincere lover of the distinguishing truths of the gospel, and was enabled to be very bold in contending for the same; so that, whilst winning the affections of most by her candour and kindness in other matters, she was marked as a woman holding dangerous doctrines. Whilst speaking thus of her, it is not the aim of the writer simply, or in the least degree, to exalt the creature, for she, most of all, would have subscribed to the humbling truth that, in and of herself, she was nothing but a mass of uncleanness, and that what she was as a Christian she was by the grace of God.

Being thus deprived of the privilege of sitting under the preached word endeared to her the Bible, "Gospel Standard," and Gadsby's Hymns; and her sabbaths were mostly spent at home, reading these, and the sermons of Philpot, Warburton, and other men of truth.

The following is her own account of a special visit from the Lord in July, 1869 :

"July 6th.—Not having been able to rest after retiring to bed, about two o'clock in the morning those precious words came with such sweetness: 'Rest in God'; and my heart, ere I was aware, responded:

"For ever here my rest shall be,
Close to thy bleeding side;
This all my hope and all my plea,—
For me, the Saviour died.'

I did indeed feel he died for worthless me. My daughter came up, and I was so over-filled with joy. She saw I had been weeping, and asked what was the matter. 'O!' I said, 'they are tears of joy; the Lord puts them all in his bottle.'

"7th.—I awoke this morning, desiring the Lord would be pleased to give poor unworthy me some precious word to comfort and strengthen my soul in him; when this was given me: 'I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands.' May the dear Lord still draw my soul out after him.

"8th.—I again asked the Lord to give my hungering soul a morning blessing; and this was the portion: 'I have redeemed thee. Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.'"

On April 30th, 1871, a room was opened at Weston-super-Mare as a place of truth, by eight persons, Mrs. Budden being one of the number. She attended as regularly as circumstances would permit, as she lived about six miles distant. She was a warm supporter of the little cause until the death of her husband in 1874, when trouble arose in the church, and the members became scattered. This was a grievous trial to her, for she loved everything connected with the cause of God, and was greatly attached to ministers of the gospel. On several occasions the late Mr. Gorton preached in the above room, and was exceedingly well heard by her, and, indeed, all besides; for the word came in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power.

She became of late years afflicted in her eyes, and this made her anxious to study whilst able, and retain in her memory the precious truth; as she used to say that, if ever wholly deprived of sight, she could then meditate upon what she knew of the word. She was one of those who, through fear of death, are all their lifetime subject to bondage; and often spoke in a solemn manner of death, an event which, at times, she apprehended to be near at hand.

Although often laid aside, she continued to carry on her business until, in July last, it was considered necessary for her to have a change. Accordingly, she went to spend a short time with her daughter, Mrs. Hatch, at Chapel Allerton. Whilst there, she had an interview with her son, whom she had not seen for some time; and before they separated she wished them all to join in singing the hymn commencing:

"When on my Beloved I gaze."

And also this one:

"Jehovah God, Eternal Lord Most High, &c."

A portion of the July "Gospel Standard" was specially blessed to her soul; and on the Friday before she died, she told her daughter that this text had been applied to her: "Set thine house in order," &c. The same night she was led to speak freely of death, and mentioned several things which it was her desire should be attended to after her departure; but her daughter tried to divert her mind, not liking to dwell upon the thought of a separation, especially as her mother seemed improved in health. They all retired to rest about ten o'clock. About two in the

morning Mrs. Budden came into her daughter's room, and partook of some food, and then lay down again. At seven o'clock her daughter went to see if her mother was still sleeping, and found her dead, having apparently passed away without a struggle. Without doubt, in her case sudden death was sudden glory.

A. RADDON.

CAROLINE STEPHENS.—On June 4th, 1878, aged 39, Caroline Stephens, of Lindfield, Sussex.

The subject of the following was like the rest of Adam's children, and followed the course of this world for about 26 years. What dear Kent said was true of her:

"Judgments nor mercies ne'er can sway
Their roving feet to wisdom's way."

When at the above age, her husband was removed from time into an eternal world, leaving her a widow, with two children. We have reason to believe that his death was, so to speak, her life; for then the fountains of the great deep began to be broken up, and her heart to see and feel sin in the light of truth. She was very much taken from grieving over her loss through mourning over herself and sin, and the miserable condition she was in by sinning against the Lord. Not being willing as yet to know the worst of her condition, she strove with all her might to stifle these convictions, gadding about and going into carnal amusement to drown her miseries. She would therefore say in after days, that what Mr. Hart said of himself was true of her:

"I strove to fling my life away,
And damn my soul; but strove in vain."

In this condition she went on for some time sinning and repenting; so much so, that her poor life was a burden; and many awful temptations she had to put an end to her miserable existence. But the dear Lord did not leave her here. To deepen his own work, she was laid upon a bed of affliction with small-pox, which brought her near to death's door. She has many times told me that the pains of her body were nothing in comparison with the pangs of a guilty conscience. So great was her misery, with the sense of an angry God as revealed against sin in a broken law, that she felt to be on the very borders of despair, with all the sins of her life rising like pointed mountains before her eyes, and not a glimpse of hope.

But, honours crown the Name of the Lord, having thus brought down her heart with labour, he then began to show her something of his blessed salvation. The first words that gave her any hope were: "Trust in Christ." Then new glories opened on her eyes. There was revealed a blessed Mediator between God and man. There was revealed a willing and able Saviour; one who could save to the uttermost. Then the scales of ignorance dropped from her eyes, so that she knew something of that scripture: "A just God and a Saviour." Two or three days after this, she felt the blood of sprinkling by faith applied to her conscience with a real power, and thus she seemed to be brought into a new world; old things were passed away, and behold, all things were become new, and she felt that neither sin, death, nor hell had any dominion over her.

In this blessed frame she continued for some time; and this season of sweet and blessed intercourse with her Lord was one never to be forgotten by her. But she soon had to learn another lesson; for the days of darkness began to come on. As she sat under a legal ministry, there was nothing to meet her case, or take the stumbling blocks out of her way, as they could not describe the deep travail of her soul. Thus she found that they were physicians of no value. However, the Lord did not

leave her; for about this time that portion was applied with power to her soul: "Now the just shall live by faith." Here again new mysteries opened upon her mind, so that she saw and felt that her standing was safe upon the Rock of eternal ages, Christ Jesus, even though she was not enjoying the same comfort which she had so recently possessed.

She now went from place to place in search of truth, and was well-nigh wearied in the pursuit. The enemy of souls, on account of this, set in upon her with the temptation that all she had experienced was a delusion, as she could not find a fellow-traveller. She almost came to the conclusion to give all up; when this scripture came with some power to her mind: "Will ye also go away?" She exclaimed, "No, my blessed Lord; I cannot leave thee. But O! do show me the way wherein I should go."

About this time she heard of some friends meeting at Skaynes Hill; but as they were Baptists, and held such high doctrine, she was afraid to go and hear them. At length, being starved out, she ventured to go. I think the first minister she heard there was the late Mr. Blanchard; and this was the first gospel sermon she had ever listened to. "Now," she said, "I have found the man who has walked the same road as myself." Here arose a new trial, as her parents were members of the Congregational chapel. She was dependent in a great measure upon them for a livelihood, having an affliction which often rendered her unable to labour for the bread which perisheth; so that she found it very hard to flesh and blood to come out and leave them.

In the midst of this perplexity, she came to Skaynes Hill one Sabbath afternoon, when Mr. S. Kevill, of Deptford, was supplying there. He had spoken from a portion in the morning which he intended to resume in the afternoon; but in the interval between the times of worship his mind was altogether taken away from that text, and fixed upon another portion of the Word. He therefore said, when he began in the afternoon, that he was persuaded there was a blessing for some one present; which was true in the case of our departed friend. She has said that he so traced out her path that the Lord had brought her from the very commencement that she fell down before the Word, and reported that God was in the minister of a truth. This altogether settled the point about leaving her friends, and nailed her ear to the door-post.

After this, the subject of believers' baptism began to press heavily upon her mind; and she longed to lay herself out to the glory of God. In the course of time, she was baptized, with three others, by Mr. K., and lived a consistent life till her death.

Our departed friend was a dear lover of what is often called "*only a prayer-meeting*," as well as of the preached word. It was a rare thing to find her seat empty, either week-night or Sabbath, although she had a distance of about 2½ miles to walk. We might just state that, although our friend was so singularly blessed with the light of the Lord's countenance, she had afterwards to travel much by night, which was a great affliction to her soul. She would often cry out with the prophet, "My leanness! my leanness! woe is me." Once, in hearing Mr. Chris. Sharp, the Lord was pleased to bless the word to her soul; and she had a solemn conviction that she should have a season of great darkness to pass through; but that when she came into the swellings of Jordan, she would be blessed as at the beginning, when first the Lord was pleased to speak peace to her soul. This conviction was fulfilled to the very letter.

We must pass over a great deal of our friend's history, and come to her last days. Her death was rather sudden, and to us unlooked-for, as

she was in tolerably good health up to last May; when she was called upon to attend an afflicted friend. There she fell sick, and came home. Just as she reached home, she had a remarkable spirit of prayer poured out upon her, to a degree she had seldom experienced in her life. This made her feel certain there was something very heavy before her. A few days after, a portion of the hymn beginning:

“Hark, my soul; it is the Lord,”

came with power to her mind, especially the last two verses:

“Thou shalt see my glory soon,
When the work of grace is done;
Partner of my throne shalt be;
Say, poor sinner, lov'st thou me?”

Her heart responded:

“Lord, it is my chief complaint,
That my love is cold and faint;
Yet I love thee, and adore;
O for grace to love thee more!”

She continued to get worse, and her bodily sufferings were very great; but she was never heard to murmur or complain. She accepted it as the punishment of her iniquity; for she knew she had departed from the Lord in her affections, though not outwardly. She was naturally of a very cheerful disposition; and was sometimes carried beyond the bounds of prudence. This made bitter work for her in her last days. When asked how she was by a friend, she replied that she needed every breath to be prayer. It was quite heartrending to hear her pleading with the Lord to appear again, to strengthen and support her soul under this heavy affliction, and to make her faithful to the end, as he knew her soul's desire was to serve him in spirit and in truth. She besought him to be with her in the valley of the shadow of death, and to bless her dear children, that they might be born again of the Spirit. Her dear mother saying hers had been a path of affliction, she replied that it had been all in mercy. Her breathing was very difficult, and made it trying for her to converse much. She seemed to revive a little, and we were in hopes of her recovery.

On Sunday night she was taken worse, and her pains were excruciating; and all through the week she scarcely closed her eyes. When she did not pray aloud, she seemed in inward prayer. She cried out, “Lord, do come, I pray thee, and bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thee. Do not leave the work of thine own hands. In wrath remember mercy. Bring me out from all spiritual pride. If I am in any wrong, show me. Don't let me be deceived, or others be deceived by me.” It was remarked to her, “You are a witness for God's truth.” “Yes,” she said, “what God has burnt into my heart can never be erased; but God would be just if he sent me to hell, but for everlasting love.” She said to one of the friends, “Don't I groan, and make a noise?” “Yes,” was the reply, “you do; but Jesus groaned on the cross.” She repeated,

“Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to save my soul from danger,
Interposed his precious blood.”

And I do want the bread of life. Do, Lord, forgive me, and give me an abundant entrance into thy everlasting kingdom.”

On another occasion, when I was taking leave of her, she said, “Give my love to brother W. and his wife; and tell them the things I have professed, and the ministry of Mr. S. Kevill will do to live and die upon.”

On Monday her breathing was so distressing, and her bodily weakness so great, that she was obliged to be supported by the arms of kind

friends. She was getting almost too weak to speak. A friend who was with her heard her say, "He has weakened my strength in the way. Nothing in my hands I bring." Shortly afterwards, the dear Lord manifested himself in a very blessed manner. She sat up without our help, and broke out singing for quite half an hour, her friends looking at her with astonishment. Her eyes were sparkling, and her countenance shone with such glory that we thought every moment she would sing herself away to everlasting bliss. Almost the last words she said were, "Jesus is All in all to me."

"Let all the ransomed of the Lord
Exalt his Name with one accord,
And Hallelujah sing;
Adore the dying Friend of man,
And bless him highly as you can;
He is your God and King."

Her last words were: "Hallelujah! Amen." WILLIAM TINLEY.

RICHARD GIBBS.—On Aug. 30th, 1878, aged 68, Richard Gibbs, of Winslow, Bucks.

My beloved father was a sincere lover of a free-grace gospel for 44 years. He was led by the Holy Spirit of God to see very clearly where sins and transgressions had placed him, through the fall in Adam, and that nothing short of the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ could save him from the awful consequences. He well knew his own weakness against the power of sin; and in his pilgrimage he had many an encounter with the adversary of his soul, and proved the enemy to be more than a match for him. Thus he knew, as the psalmist did, that unless the Lord held him up, he could not stand. His path was one of great tribulation. He had many losses and crosses in business, and much family trouble; and as he was much chastened in his spirit on account of his own infirmities, it could be truly said of him that the blessed Lord gathered him into his garner like a shock of corn fully ripe.

Whilst labouring under God's holy law, and feeling what a hell-deserving sinner he was, he was led to Woburn to hear the late Mr. Gadsby, of whom he had heard the report. Mr. G. took for his text Matt. xi. 28; and was led to speak in such a blessed way that it was the means of setting his soul at liberty. After this he occasionally attended Woburn, and subsequently became a member and a deacon of the church in that place. He sat under the ministry of the late Mr. Godwin till the latter was removed to Godmanchester. He was greatly attached to him, and would speak of him in affectionate terms.

My dear father was severely afflicted in his last illness, suffering for more than three years with cancers in the bowels,—a disease which he had hoped never to suffer from. But he found the Lord faithful to his promise: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Whilst suffering acute pain and agony, he wrote to his friend Mr. Dennett. The following is a copy of the letter:

"Dear Friend in the bonds of the gospel,—I received your kind and welcome letter with much gratitude, and return many thanks for your kindness to a poor sinner, lost and ruined in himself, but saved by grace through faith unto salvation. My bodily afflictions are very great and painful at present, but I have a hope they will cease before long.

"And then O how pleasant the conqueror's song!"

"But this blessed hope, amidst all the confusion I am passing through in my afflicted state, originates in the love of God my Father, and comes

through his dear Co-equal and Beloved Son, by the teaching of God the Holy Ghost; which has many times led my poor soul back into the covenant of grace. Though my house be not with God as I would have it to be, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, sealed, ratified by the blood of his dear Son. This breaks the stony heart, and makes the tears overflow, when I feel that my wretched sins have pierced the harmless Lamb of God. And if I had not his blood to plead, sin would sink my soul to rise no more.

“I hope the dear Lord is blessing your ministry and giving you the peace of God, and also to the church over which he has made you an overseer. This is the sincere prayer of Your loving friend,

“R. GIBBS.”

The dear Lord favoured him much with his presence in his affliction, and did not suffer the enemy to distress him much in his mind. When asked how he felt in his soul, he would say, “It is all right. It is all right. The trial is the poor body. O that the Lord would be pleased to take me to himself! But I can’t die till he sees fit.” When first I saw him after he had taken to his bed, as soon as I entered the room, he burst into tears, as he frequently did when speaking of God’s mercy to his poor soul, and said, “O! my boy, it is all right. The dear Son of God came down from heaven to die for me. Yes, for me, as though there was not another poor sinner on the face of the earth. And I am persuaded that neither men nor devils can separate me from his love.”

On another occasion, when he was speaking of the love of Christ to poor sinners, with much emphasis he said, “He even condescended to dwell in the heart of a poor mad Gadarene.” So ready and willing was he to depart and be with his Lord that some time before his death he made arrangements for his funeral, and chose the hymns which were to be sung: 468, 201, and 463; requesting Mr. Dennett to bury him, which he kindly consented to do. After this, he was drawn out in a chair, and taken to the little chapel-yard, when he chose the spot where he is buried.

A few weeks before he died, as he was walking round his bed, he had a fall, and fractured one of his ribs. After he was lifted into bed, he said, “That is one token,” meaning a token of death.

On the Sunday before he died, my brother and I went to see him. When asked how he was, he said, with tears in his eyes, “O! mine is not pain; it is agony;” but immediately added, “But being in an agony, he prayed the more earnestly.” We left him this time with the solemn impression that he could not last long; which proved to be the case, as we had a telegram on the following Friday to say he had departed this life. His last words that could be understood were: “The gates of heaven are open. Can’t you see him? can’t you see him?—‘Truth.’” Soon after this, his ransomed spirit took its flight, to be for ever with its Lord.

We have lost an affectionate, faithful, and loving parent. May the Lord answer the solemn and earnest prayers that he has put up from time to time on behalf of his own family.

PRAYING in the spirit is opposed to lip-labour. The melodiousness of prayer comes from within the man; and the deeper the groans are that come from thence, the sweeter the melody.—*Gurnall*.

YOU owe your minister your prayers. His furniture is in Christ the Lord, as your strength is; let your prayers be fetching it in for him from day to day. It is a blessed thing when there is a stock of prayers going up from the church daily for their pastor; this relieves our spirits often when we can scarce pray for ourselves.—*J. Hill*.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

APRIL, 1879.

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

MINISTERIAL AND CHRISTIAN EXERCISE.

“But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that, by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.”—1 COR. ix. 27.

MAY the dear Lord grant to us and our brethren, to whom we especially address these few lines, the outpouring of his blessed Spirit, that we may walk in Paul's steps, as represented in our text.

These are not the words of one who was under the influence of a legal spirit, or imagined his salvation a conditional and precarious thing. He knew well that salvation was entirely of the Lord, that all was settled in God's determinate counsels before the foundation of the world. The same dear man of God who wrote these words, as descriptive of his daily life, wrote those blessed sentences at the end of Romans viii., and the glorious truths in the epistle to the Ephesians. This man of God, this divinely-inspired apostle, knew, too, his own interest in Christ, and his standing in God's grace and everlasting covenant. He could write, O so sweetly! “Am I not free?”—a freedman of Christ. And again: “Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise.” “But Jerusalem,” dear mother of the true saints of God, “which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.” Well Paul knew what he was about in his journey heavenward. He knew that he was on that journey, and that the end was alike most blessed and most sure. He knew, too, that he was an apostle of Christ. “Am I not an apostle?” Here, again, he writes with confidence. He was an apostle, not of man, but of God and of his dear Son Jesus Christ. He could appeal, too, in evidence of his apostleship, to these Corinthian saints as the seal which God had himself set upon his apostleship.

Here, then, we have a man who writes about his sonship, his portion in Christ, and his call to the ministry, with no uncertainty; therefore the words of our text are not the words of one who counted his eternal interests to be in suspense, much less in dependence upon a poor wretched creature's, fallen creature's will and efforts. To suppose that Paul wrote these words

as expressive of a servile fear and legal strivings and workings would be to subvert God's truth, and miss the blessed practical lessons contained in them and given to God's children.

We lay it down, then, as a first principle, in considering these words, that Paul describes in them not the workings and leadings of a legal spirit or the flesh, but those of the blessed Holy Spirit in his people and his ministers. We ought to be very careful not rashly to say such and such things are legal and fleshly. There ought to be much circumspection and tender fear in pronouncing judgment upon the ways and writings of godly men and ministers. We fear it often shows a somewhat rash and dangerous state of mind when men say, "O! that is legal; that is fleshly; that was of Satan himself," concerning the words and works of the godly. All we plead for, mind, is this,—care, and caution, and godly fear. We may tread with unholy, unshodden feet upon the things of the Spirit of God. We may grieve the Spirit; we may quench the Spirit.

"We may unkindly quench the same;
We may, my friends, indeed."

Now, then, having signified that these leadings in the case of Paul were those of the Holy Spirit of God, that he was led of the Spirit, both in what he describes as his daily life, and in the description; let us see what blessed lessons his words afford to God's people, especially to those who are ministers.

I. What a solemn thing it really is to be in any office in the church of God! The work of the ministry, then, is no light thing.

"What contradictions meet
In ministers' employ!
It is a bitter sweet,
A sorrow full of joy.
No other post affords a place
For equal honour or disgrace."

Positions of responsibility in the church of God are in one sense rather to be trembled at than coveted. They are positions of numerous snares and dangers. But, of course, in another sense they are even to be desired. All children of God are made in due season earnestly desirous to glorify God in Christ with their bodies and their spirits, which are his. The poet's words have often expressed the feeling of our own hearts in respect to our place in the ministry, and in other things:

"I stand upon a mountain's edge;
Lord, save me, or I fall."

What a mercy it is to be found faithful! How blessed to hear at last the sweet words: "Well done, good and faithful servant!" and when we die to be able to say with the apostle Paul: "I have fought a good fight . . . Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." Those are blessed words of Peter to faithful ministers: "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

O, friends, it is no light thing to bear any office in the church

of God. O that we could serve God more diligently, faithfully, fervently, as sons, not slaves. If earthly posts of trust require in those who hold them diligence, wisdom, and fidelity, are these things not a thousand times more requisite in those who bear office in the church of God? We would serve God more earnestly, fervently, and devotedly; this is what we especially feel when he is most with us. How good to answer to what Paul writes of himself: "Whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son!" If he is our Father, we would serve him with the reverence of a loving child; if he is a Master, with the godly fear of one who knows what a great and good Master he is, and who loves to serve him properly.

There is, and to this Paul directs our attention, a ministerial crown, a prize to be aimed at by a minister. Its principal jewels are these. In the first place, a sense of the divine approbation. Ministers of the right sort seek to please not man, but God. Secondly, usefulness;—in the winning souls, as Solomon puts it: "He that winneth souls is wise;" and in the building up the saints of God on their most holy faith. Thirdly, acceptance with the dear living family of God. That was a sweet blessing Moses gave, directed of the Lord, to Asher: "Let him be acceptable unto his brethren." This crown, with these fair jewels, the ministers of God, in their ministerial work, when in their right minds, are aiming after.

II. But what hindrances the ministers of God meet with, not only from without, but, alas! far, far worse from within! Whilst we dwell upon earth, we must bear about with us a body of sin and death; a body of *sin*, actively soliciting and seducing to all sorts of evil; as one has well said, "never resting, conquering, or conquered." After a conquest, pressing on and on to greater victories; after being conquered, indefatigably endeavouring to recover lost ground, and to turn defeat itself into a victory. Such is the nature of indwelling sin; such we find it to be. O how dangerous an inmate to have in one's own bosom! As the poet says of pride, so we may say of the whole body of indwelling sin:

"Seen or unseen, it dwells within,
And works by fraud or force."

But it is also a body of *death*, incessantly hindering; so that an apostle cried out in anguish: "When I would do good, evil is present with me." As indwelling sin restlessly lusts and works, and seduces to all kinds of evil, so it incessantly is present to mar all good. O! friends and brethren in the ministry, may we remember continually that we are men of like passions as others; that we have a principle within us which is enmity against God, which lusts to all that is evil. There is not one sin that can be committed by the sons of men but the principle of that sin is in our own hearts. Indwelling sin is a body of sin, perfect in its imperfection; no member wanting; universal in its actings, incessant in its opposition to all of God in our souls.

We need not add to this that we dwell in a world fearfully calculated to act upon and animate this corruption of our natures in its rebellion, and that we have a never-resting adversary, the devil, with his legions of fallen spirits, ever watching, ever plotting, and ever at hand to injure us.

III. Now let us contemplate the consequences to us as Christians, and especially as ministers, if by any means, as Paul writes, this dreadful deadly enemy gets the upper hand. But, perhaps, some one will rashly say, "There is no danger of that." No danger? Can a man with the Bible in his hand, present, almost every-day facts before his eyes, and a tender fear of God in his heart, say such a thing as "No danger"? The Lord keep us from those Satanic opiates, which men may extract even from the doctrines of grace, and which lull the soul into the sleep of carnal security.

"Lulled in a soft and fatal sleep,
They sin, and yet rejoice."

No danger? Look at that great and godly man, Noah;—that second father of the human race, and, in many respects, eminent type of Christ. See that man overcome with wine. See him drunk and exposed to shame; and then let men say if they dare, "There is no danger." If Noah fell, and fell so sadly, into drunkenness, let us never say that there is no danger in the wine-cup, and of strong drink, which Solomon calls a mocker, and possibly may deceive, seduce, and overcome us who are ministers and Christians. Look at David, that dear man of God; that man whom God raised up on high, and made the sweet psalmist of Israel; that kingly man of God, who was a shepherd of God's people after his own heart. Now see him falling into adultery and murder; and then say, "There is no danger." What are we that we should feel secure of standing where David fell? Are we better than he? more gracious, more deeply instructed?

Now look at Peter.

"Behold Peter boasting, yet falling at length."

See that excellent apostle of our Lord Jesus Christ, so warm-hearted, so zealous, denying his Master with oaths and cursings through the fear of men. Does not such an instance speak loudly, and say, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall"? The child of God's, the minister's security is not in a blind unconsciousness and insensibility to danger, or a foolish self-reliance; it is not in possessing a mere high doctrinal assurance, or a vain confidence in the flesh; but in having a deep prevailing sense of danger and weakness, and a looking, on account of that sense, unto the Lord Jesus. As long as the heart can truly say, "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not;" "Lead us not into temptation," the saint walks securely, because he cleaves, in a sense of infirmity, unto Jesus. When pride and carnal security and a blind boldness come in,

then, then the child of God is in danger of falling, even to the breaking of his bones.

But turn to the present day, and, painful as the view is, does it not confirm us in the persuasion that it is the utmost folly in us, ministers or Christians, to think we are in no danger of falling into sins of various kinds, even of an outward nature? What! Have we no sad grievous examples of ministers, deacons, and others overcome by the dreadful evil of drunkenness? No examples of them as falling beneath the power and prevalency of lust in its grosser forms? No examples of ministers, deacons, members of churches, and others, becoming covetous and worldly? No examples of them as carried away with pride, vain-glory, envy, censoriousness, love of strife, and other most injurious evils? We need not enlarge. We have no inclination to parade the falls and follies of others, especially of the ministers and children of God. No; we would love their persons and be jealous of their reputations; but we write these things to admonish ourselves and others. Forewarned, they say, is fore-armed. O! it is not ill-nature, but love and brotherly regard, to warn our brethren in the ministry especially, that, as they are in posts of trust and places of prominence, so they are in places of the greatest danger, which call for much prayer and circumspection. Peter, who knew what over-confidence had cost him, cries aloud, "Be ye, therefore, sober, and watch unto prayer. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

Now, then, let us consider the sad consequences which result from a minister's being overcome by scandal-producing evils. This, too, we believe, will show us plainly what Paul means by the Greek word which he uses, and which our translators have rendered by the English one, "reprobate." It is a something disapproved upon trial, useless, too, and rendered unfit for any service; like the salt which has lost its savour, and which, consequently, has become unfit for the land and for the dunghill. Mind, we consider principally the case of a minister, because of the greater danger and sadder results which follow if he becomes thus as one disapproved (*ἀδόκιμος*); but what we write will also apply in various degrees to deacons, members of churches, and Christians generally.

What, then, do you think, friends, would be the effect of Noah's drunkenness upon his own son Ham? Read the account. No doubt Ham became a confirmed scorners through it, and entailed that scornful spirit upon his posterity. This, awakened Noah saw and foresaw to the breaking of his heart; therefore he cries, "Cursed be Canaan." What, think ye, must have been Noah's feelings at such a sad contemplation? Upbraided by his own conscience, scorned by his youngest son, his testimony to righteousness weakened by his own folly, no doubt his reflections would be most bitter; and many times he might even, though God restored him, fear that all his usefulness as to his own

descendants would be greatly marred through his own intemperance.

Would not this be the case also with David? He laments, saying, "The drunkards make songs upon me." When he saw Absalom and others of his children going wrong, would not all these things be painful reminders of his folly? O! he would feel it was no light thing for him, a king, a prophet, to have acted as he had done, and caused the enemies of God to blaspheme. Thus he cries out in his anguish, "Make me not the reproach of the foolish."

But come to the present day; and what is the effect of scandal-producing sin in the case of a minister of God? What is the result before God, as to his own conscience? Is there not a sting in that conscience? Is there not bitter self-upbraiding? Is there not the sense that, as in the case of David, the thing which the man has done displeases the Lord? Then, again, how is his ministerial usefulness marred! How is a holy boldness in reproving sin hindered! As the heart has a bitter sense of having displeased the Lord, so this will cling to the man's thoughts: "O! how will persons now regard what I say to them? My usefulness is ended." Indeed, how certain it is that a minister's fall must tend to counteract his usefulness in the ministry.

Here, then, we seem clearly to see what Paul meant. It was not that he feared to be a reprobate as to the eternal covenant. He knew he was enrolled from everlasting to everlasting in the Lamb's book of life. No! It is his ministerial position and usefulness to which he alludes. To this he is referring principally all through the chapter, from the very beginning of it. He wanted to please God; he thirsted after usefulness to the saints of God. He had a ministerial crown in view. For the sake of the ministry he made himself all things to all men, so far as truth and goodness of conscience would permit, that by all proper means he might win some. For this he denied himself; for this he was willing to suffer; in order that, through his ministry, God blessing it, others might be partakers with him in the blessings of the gospel. (ix. 23.) He did not want to eat his morsel alone, but to be a partaker of the sweet things of the gospel together with others of the saints of God. Well, then, this being his great desire, he was afraid of everything which might interfere with that ministerial usefulness; which might make him, so far as the ministry went, as one running in vain, the especial sense and intention, we believe, of the Greek word used. It appears in this place principally to refer to one running in a race, but not approved in that race by the judge of the games, and, therefore, not crowned. (vers. 24, 25.)

Here, then, we see how the apostle's words bear upon God's people, and especially upon us ministers. May we not add that in this very sense just lately they came, as from the Lord, with power into our own hearts? They made us see our danger, and, we hope, stirred up earnest prayer. The Lord's ministers have

reason to dread any conduct which may make them ministerially as disapproved persons, displeasing in their ways to the Lord, unacceptable to the Lord's people, and a reproach to the carnal. The reproach of the cross is one thing; the just reproach for unworthy conduct, unbecoming in a minister, is another. It is one thing to suffer truly for righteousness sake; but quite another to suffer, as Peter shows, for things in themselves blameable and unworthy. (1 Pet. iv. 15.)

But let us turn to our own experiences, which are often the best and soundest expositors of Scripture, and may to a certain extent illustrate the words of Paul. Have we, then, never found, dear friends, our souls discouraged in our work through some light and trifling or otherwise inconsistent behaviour? Have we never felt and said, "O! what good will my ministry do?" after such and such actions, in which we have displayed anger, unkindness, and an improper spirit? Have we never feared that we should be altogether struck dumb before the people? Never found that, if just enabled to speak and go through some particular work, whether in family or public worship, there has been little liberty, little comfort? We have been more like Saul, when he asked Samuel to honour him before the people, than like dear children, with the sweet cheerfulness of a conscience void of offence towards God and man. Have we not also found that, to a certain extent, our ministerial or Christian influence and usefulness have been injured by our own lightness or other inconsistencies? Thos. Hardy says, "Guilt in the pulpit will not be able to condemn sin in the pew." The sins of the priests in old times made the sacrifices of God to be abhorred. Paul charges Timothy to take heed to himself, as well as to his doctrine. "Woe is me," may a minister cry, "if I preach not the gospel; but woe, woe is me if I make the gospel I preach a stench and a stumbling-block to others through my vain, trifling, worldly, covetous, unbecoming, and inconsistent course of conduct!" Christians who desire to be useful to others have great need to pray about themselves. It is not only what we say, but what we do, will influence others. Usefulness in a Christian will assuredly be affected by his course of life.

We do not say that in these things the real state of the case answers always to a man's feelings and fears. By such an assertion we might burden some of the most tender-hearted and really estimable of God's saints and ministers. Often those fear the most, and feel the most acutely, who have, through tenderness of heart, life, and conscience, the least real cause. But too often there may be sufficient reason, from the course of a man's life, and the state of a man's soul, why his heart should reproach him, and his fears should say, "I have seen the end of my usefulness." Paul admonishes the Corinthians to give "none offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed." Both ministers and people may misrepresent the gospel by their lives as well as words. We may be erroneous in conduct, as well as in speech

or writing. Our lips may proclaim free grace, our lives free sin; the sweetness of the gospel be on the tongue, the sourness of the old leaven in our hearts and lives. Thus, then, our unloving, unlovely lives may make us, as to usefulness towards others, of very little profit. If we look back upon the past, probably most of us will have to deplore something of this kind, and to feel that inconsistencies in our lives have marred our usefulness, have made us well-nigh dumb at seasons, and often weak and dispirited.

Well, then, our experiences will both explain to us and illustrate Paul's words. O! how anxious he was to be able to say, as in 2 Cor. ii.: "Thanks be unto God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ!" He means ministerially. How he dreaded, then, lest he should be like Samson when his locks were shorn! How he prayed, and was deeply exercised on this account, to keep under his body, and bring it into subjection! How his words admonish us! May the Lord help us to walk in his steps, lest, as one writes,

"We should go mourning, whilst Canaanites boast."

IV. But now let us see the course of life these considerations, as enforced by the Holy Spirit, led to. And, mind, here, though the apostle does not mention in so many words the Holy Spirit, no one led by that Spirit will mistake his meaning. The blessed Spirit can interpret to the minds of his children his own writings. He will not leave them when he is with them, and they look to him, to suppose that in spiritual writings creature-power or legal workings are intended. It is the Spirit that quickeneth. The mere letter is a killing thing. We have no doubt that by the unnecessary insertion of words, and alteration of expressions to adapt them to our own straitened ideas, we may really turn the living utterances of the Spirit of God into the dead letter of a mere formalism. It was not necessary for an apostle, whose entire ministry was instinct with the spirit embodied in the sentence: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves," to be perpetually asserting this in so many words when writing to the saints at Corinth.

Well, then, made wise by the divine teaching, and led by the Spirit of God, Paul was enabled to act as he states: "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection." The allusion here, again, is evidently to those who ran in the Isthmian Games, and contended in them for the mastery. As in our boat-races, to which we may refer as an illustration, the persons contending for the prize in those games, a corruptible crown, as Paul calls it, subjected themselves to a severe discipline in order that they might not be impeded in the race, and rejected as to the prize awarded in it. So it was with the apostle, in respect to aiming at ministerial usefulness and spiritual success in this life. He kept under his body, and brought it into subjection; not merely, as we understand it, the material and literal body,

but the old man in all respects, with its bodily appetites, fleshly affections, and carnal lusts. He did not act as the monks and hermits, and put the poor material body to all sorts of pains and penalties. No; he fought not in such a mere beating-the-air fashion. He aimed, through divine grace, his blows at the whole man of sin; the wisdom, strength, righteousness, as well as grosser lusts and appetites of the flesh. He did, through a divine power working in him, what, led by the Spirit, he exhorts others to do. He put off day by day, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. He well knew that indwelling sin was no trifling power, and to fight successfully against it no mere child's play. He well knew that, unless resisted, it conquered; when yielded to, it increased in power and importunity. He well knew that, sloth indulged, the sluggard of the soul would cry, "A little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep;" that a worldly spirit allowed would, naturally speaking, overspread the soul with worldliness; that carnality of any kind sanctioned would tend to carnalize the mind more and more. He knew, too, what, in his case as a child of God and a minister of Jesus, this indwelling sin aimed at,—the ruin of his ministerial usefulness; the robbing him of the crown of ministerial honour and prosperity. Hence, taught and led and enabled by the Spirit of God, he aimed his blows at the old man of sin day by day. He kept under his body, and allowed it not to get him under; he brought it into subjection, and allowed it not to reign over him. This he did; this he was enabled to do; this he prayed for and practised from day to day; lest by any means, when he had preached to others, he himself should be, as to spiritual prosperity and ministerial success, a castaway.

To sum up, dear friends and brethren in the ministry. Here we have the true minister's thoughts and feelings as to the importance of the ministry. Here we have a divine estimate of the dangers besetting us in the ministerial work, and threatening our usefulness. Here, ye children of God, we have the true leadings of the Spirit of God. Here we have no mere fleshly and legal strivings; here we have no licentious conclusions. Here we have no carelessness, no carnal security, and ungodly presumption; but an apostle declaring what, under a sense of the importance of the ministry, and animated with the desire to commend himself to the Lord Jesus therein and be useful to others, he was led to do. Deeply conscious of the danger in which a minister stands of being, through the prevalency of the flesh, made as a reprobate, as one no longer of any use, one robbed of all honour, and reduced to impotency in the ministry, he kept under his body, and brought it into subjection, lest by any means, when he had preached to others, he himself should be a castaway. Depend upon it, dear brethren, the apostle's pathway is the path of God, of ministerial success, and of a true Christian security.

MY SOUL THROUGH MANY CHANGES GOES.

Dear Mr. Editor,—The other night, as I lay on my bed, thinking much about my present path, I felt greatly inclined to write a few lines to you concerning it, and for you to do with them what you think good. If you consider it desirable to give them a place in the "Gospel Standard," well; but if not, please cast them to the moles and the bats. I do pray the God of Israel to give you all that wisdom that you need, not only in this, but in all other matters, that you may know what to bring forth for the good of his Zion, and what to keep back. And who, my friend, is sufficient for these things, unless the Lord God be with him? No man; it matters not how good or how great he may be. May the Eternal Spirit give you all that spiritual discernment that you need in your solemn position; for you need the boldness of the lion, yet to be blest with all tenderness and sympathy, so that you may have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way. May the dear Lord grant you much of his soul-humbling grace; and this, I know, will enable you to bear with the many infirmities of others.

I have been laid aside for about five weeks with bronchitis; and during this time I have been much exercised in my mind about my present state and standing before God. At the commencement of my present affliction, those precious words in Matt. xxviii. 5, 6, were most sweetly blessed unto my soul: "Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here, for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." O! that sweet and tender word, "Come," melted my hard heart, and I wept before God. I had a sweet view of a glorious risen Jesus as my eternal and everlasting salvation. These words were like good news from a far country.

But one night, a short time after this, I lay thinking over my present state of soul and body, and wondering how this solemn affliction might terminate, being at the time in a most dark, dismal state. I wanted to groan feelingly before God, but my dark state of mind seemed to swallow up all bright hopes of every kind. All was dark as midnight. In this sad state, the solemn subject of death presented itself before my mind, accompanied by a deep sense of my own vile, sinful, dark, withering state, both of soul and body. It was a darkness that could be felt. I could see no light on this side the grave, nor any on the other. The thoughts of death darkened all the path. I could see nothing but dismal darkness, look which way I would. Not one ray of light. In the very midst of all this trouble, something in the form of a question seemed suggested to my mind, and seemed to say, "What would deliver you out of this present trouble and distress?" In a moment I felt a response in my soul, which said, "A sweet visit from the dear Lord, such as I was blessed with a short time since." Then at once those

precious words in Ps. l. 15 rose up as it were out of the dense darkness, and feelingly stood on my side: "And call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." These sweet words seemed to be put right into the hand of my poor dried-up and withered faith; which replied: "And is not this a day of trouble? And can God go back from his own faithful promises?" And I replied in a moment, "No; bless his dear and holy Name, he cannot; he will not."

Then other precious promises, which God had graciously blessed unto my soul, rose up as witnesses before me; such as Nahum i. 7: "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him;" and my poor little faith did rejoice in the faithfulness of a covenant God. Thus was I once more raised up out of the dark shades of gloom and death to a comfortable reliance on the God of my salvation.

It has been said:

"The Christian man is seldom long at ease;
When one trouble's o'er, another doth him seize."

So have I found it. Sometimes my path has looked as straight as an arrow. No dark clouds between my soul and God. I have in my feelings stood as the eagle on the strong rock, and blessed and praised the God of my salvation until my poor frame has felt very faint and feeble. But it has not been long before some dark rolling clouds have come between my soul and my Lord; so that all the bright light has been hidden from view.

Not many days after this last deliverance, I arose one morning very dark in soul-feeling. As soon as I could, I took up the Word of God, in hopes that the Lord would once more speak to my soul. At the same time I begged God to direct me where to read. At once I felt inclined to look into the book of Psalms. I opened the book, as I may say promiscuously, and fastened my eyes upon Ps. cii. 19, 20: "For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death." All in a moment, such a ray of light shone upon these words that my mind was led back nearly 40 years, to the time when God was graciously pleased to make use of them to deliver my soul from going down into the pit; and the sweet sealing power that God was pleased to bring into my soul, I hope never to forget. I could both see and believe that what was done then was wrought by the Eternal Spirit, and that this present sweetness was by the same sealing power. O what blessed looking was this! Not only a looking at the deliverance, but what I was then delivered from. O how my soul and body bowed before God, with the most solemn reverence and holy awe that a sinful creature could do, whilst tears of love flowed abundantly. In the simplicity of my feelings I took up the precious Word of God and kissed it. O! sweet moments and

indescribable feelings, which some mock at, and others call great weakness! Well, be it so; but God, who alone can soften so vile and so hard a heart as mine, knows what power it takes to accomplish this in and upon me.

Through these sweet anointings of the blessed Spirit, I have not only been enabled to look back, but forward also, through life, and have said with the poet,

“Yes, I to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given;
More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven.”

At the time to which I have referred, when God delivered my soul, I had gone to the house of God, as I thought, for the very last time, never to enter that place again; never, never; as it was quite clear to me that I was justly condemned by a holy and righteous God, and was only averting for a moment the solemn hour when the dreadful words would be pronounced by the justice of God: “Cut him down.” But instead of this, the mercy of God flowed into my soul like a river, and took away the dreadful burden of my sin; with all the piercing guilt connected with it. Every accuser that stood against me fled. Not one left. “O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” (Ps. cvii. 8.)

Wolverhampton.

J. BEECH.

KIND AND CHEERING WORDS FROM OVER THE WATERS.

To the Editor of the “Gospel Standard.”

Dear Sir,—In John vi. 12 we read our Lord said, “Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.” I write this article therefore for your pages, should you think proper to insert it.

At the time of the late outbreak, a few days before the New York riot took place, I left my home to spend a few days in the city. On the same morning as that of the riot, knowing nothing of it at the time, I rose rather early, intending to visit a brother of mine who was living about 40 miles from New York. Before I had dressed myself, these words came powerfully into my mind:

“This tried Almighty arm
Is raised for thy defence.”

What it meant I could not imagine; but it caused me to agonize in prayer, that the Lord would be pleased to make it plain to me. These words still kept coming so strongly to my mind, that I thought perhaps it was not the will of the Lord for me to go and visit my brother; though I knew no reason why this should be the case. As soon as the family had risen, I asked a dear sister in the Lord whether she could see any reason why I should not visit my brother that day; at the same time telling her of the words that had been so powerfully brought to my mind.

She said she could not; adding this remark,—“That religion did not prevent our having natural affection for our relatives.”

Accordingly, I set out to visit my brother. I went to the ferry and asked the ticket-agent for a ticket; and he directed me to the ticket-office opposite. I accordingly went and asked for a ticket at that office as directed. The ticket-agent there replied, “This is not the right office;” and directed me to the office which I had just left. I cannot now remember how many times I went from one office to the other; and neither office would let me have a ticket, referring me to the other office. I stood amazed. I thought to myself, What can this mean? It commenced to rain; I took a stage, and returned to the friend's house I had left that morning.

Later in the day, another brother of mine came to me, and said, “There is rioting in the city. You cannot go home on the cars, as the rioters have torn the track up.” He also said, “I will come to-morrow morning and see you safe on the boat, as I want to get you out of the city as soon as possible. Whilst in the city, I was told that the same morning I was expecting to visit my brother there were three or four thousand rioters crossed that very ferry. Had I not then been so wonderfully prevented crossing that morning, I must have come in contact with them.

The next day my brother saw me safe on board the boat on my way home. After going as far as Bridgeport by water, I took the cars. In about two minutes after the cars had started, with a full head of steam, the tender broke down while crossing the tressel-work over the river. The passengers were hurried out of the cars, and the firemen commenced hauling out the fire. I looked out of the window, and thought that my power of balancing myself was not equal to walking over the tressel-work; so I remained alone in the car till such time as they brought another engine, and took the train back to the depot. After waiting about six hours, we started again on our way, and I reached home about midnight. I felt in the midst of all this strengthened to believe that I should get home all safe, from the words that the Lord had given me when in the city; for those words still abode by me, so that I feared no evil. O that I felt the same blessed trust always! But “power belongeth unto God.”

Before closing this letter, I wish to say that those two pieces on “God Working in Answer to Prayer,” in the November and December numbers of the “Gospel Standard,” have been made a great blessing to me. Peter, in his second epistle, ch. iii., says, “Beloved . . . I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance.” In this way, my dear Sir, your papers on prayer, &c., have been made so strengthening to me. I was enabled for a little while to drink so freely of the wine of the kingdom, that I almost forgot my poverty of spirit. I shall be glad to see more written on the same subject, should you be so led.

The Lord "giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." So I find it. I believe, as far as I can judge of my own motives, I have written this with the honour of God in view; leaving the result with him to make it a blessing as he shall see fit.

"Though short my petitions, and feeble they be,
Yet prayer of necessity's laid upon me;
Lord, help me to pray, and to firmly believe
That the things which I ask I shall surely receive."

(Matt. xxi. 22.)

A FRIEND IN AMERICA.

Naugatuck, Conn., U.S., Dec. 31st., 1878.

To the Editor of the "Gospel Standard."

Dear Friend,—According to a desire for some time felt, I take up my pen to address you. Why I have this desire I know not; unless it be to add my feeble testimony to that of many others to whom the "Gospel Standard" has been an instrument, in the Lord's hands, of comforting, instructing, and building up their souls in the faith of the gospel. I am an American, and if there is a people of God in this country, which I believe there is, I am far removed from them; with no church privileges, no preached gospel, and in the place where I now reside not a soul whom I can call friend in a spiritual sense. Nevertheless, I can truly say that "goodness and mercy" have followed me "all the days of my life." Mercy has, I trust, sought and found me, separated me from friends and kindred, and led me in a way that I knew not of.

In reviewing the past 23 years of my life, I feel to say, with the poet,

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform."

Mysterious indeed has been my path. Called to forsake kindred and friends, as none of my family knew Him whom to know is life eternal, I had to stand alone. To-day finds me in the same solitary path. But the words with which God first delivered my soul have been verified: "My grace is sufficient for thee." Yes; that grace has been sufficient. When I have strayed, it has brought me to the fold again; when fallen, it has raised me up; when in thick darkness, so that I could not see the guiding hand, or feel the everlasting arms beneath, I have afterwards found they were still there. Here, then, I would raise my Ebenezer. Hitherto the Lord hath helped me.

Since 1866 the "Gospel Standard" has come to me monthly, as a beacon light on my journey; and I have known in this way a people across the waters to whom I have felt united in bonds of love and affection. Often have I felt a strong desire to address the dear people of God there; but many things have arisen in my mind to prevent, the strongest of which were unworthiness and inability. The sermon in the October No. of the "Gospel Standard" was especially blessed to my soul, as I was then in a

frame of mind whereunto it was peculiarly applicable. My unbelieving and rebellious heart was by God's mercy made tender, and my eyes overflowed with tears whilst reading that sermon; and love to God and his dear servant, the instrument, melted my stubborn heart. What a mercy that God does again visit us, verifying his promise: "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and give you a heart of flesh."

Mr. Hemington's account of his domestic trials in the past year touched, too, a chord which vibrated in my bosom. To have the hand of God heavy upon us in family affliction, with a heart as hard as adamant, to be bound in spirit, with no access to God, is indeed a trying spot. All this was mine to feel some three years since, whilst a darling, only, and too-much idolized daughter was laid upon a sick bed, from which, if she ever recovered, and had her life protracted, it would evidently be to live in the greatest of suffering. I cannot, I dare not tell the dreadful rebellion I felt; and this, with a hard heart and the hidings of God's face, the misery I felt, seemed as if it would deprive me of reason. But God does not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear, but makes a way for our escape. How many times in my life have I thought that it was all over with me, that God never could look upon me in mercy again! And I am sure, if he was like the Arminians' God, he never would. But he is not a man, that he should repent.

"Whom once he loves he never leaves."

By many slips and falls God, I trust, has taught me the truth concerning his unchangeable character; his faithfulness and my own unfaithfulness. Though I had never heard it preached, I saw this truth as the noonday sun; and though I mourned my wretched state, I was led to rejoice in God my Saviour. I feel now that I knew but little then of either, and often fear that I know nothing as yet aright; but I find no other resting-place for the soles of my feet.

"In vain we search creation o'er,
In hopes of solid rest;
The whole creation is too poor,
Too mean to make me blest."

Please accept this letter as a token of love and affection to you as editor of the "Gospel Standard," and a labourer in Christ's vineyard. May God indeed bless you. Excuse the liberty I have taken in writing to you, and in which I have felt great hesitancy; but if I could speak one encouraging word, though in great weakness, how gladly would I do it. I hope God's people in England prize their gospel privileges. I have not heard a gospel sermon during many years, and very few in my life. For many years, as I knew no churches but those in England which were gospel churches, my mind on a Sabbath day would often go across the waters when I thought the people of God were there assembled for worship; and I have felt what the psalmist wrote: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the

house of the Lord." Can those truly appreciate such privileges who have never been deprived of them? Not, I think, as they would were they once deprived of them. I have rejoiced to know there are those who have these blessings, if I have not; and sometimes sweet contentment with my lot has been given. When that is the case, in whatsoever state we are, we are content.

I have been more lengthy than I intended. But bear with me. This is my first letter to England, and will probably be the last. I have always sent for the "Gospel Standard" through another. This is not for publication.*

Yours in the path of tribulation,
Cleveland, Ohio, U.S., Jan. 24th, 1879. L. H.

To the Editor of the "Gospel Standard."

Dear Friend,—Fourteen years ago, soon after I first received a hope in the dear Saviour, I was given liberty of soul to use these words of the psalmist as my own: "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts." And also these words: "They that fear thee will be glad when they see me, because I have hoped in thy word." Since that day, the sweetness and comfort of which I can never forget, I have had many dark seasons, during which I could not feel the assurance thus expressed that I had the love and fellowship of the people of God, nor that confidence in seeking their society; but felt rather to cry, with Job, "I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls." Yet when the light and comfort return, I find, always to my surprise, that the precious words of the psalmist, which were given me then, are still mine. As my hope remains the same in every particular as on the day when I first received it, so nothing that the Lord has given me in connection with it has been taken away, nor changed in any particular, except in the measure of experience and knowledge.

For the past ten years and more I have read the "Gospel Standard," and have felt for the most of the time that I was a companion of those whose experience and doctrine have been presented in its pages. It is something more to be a companion than to be either brother or friend; for one who bears to us either of those dear names may be separated far from us for days or even years. But a companion is one who walks by our side. I can never express the joy of my heart when I could say of Abraham, and Jacob, and David, and all whose spiritual journeys are mapped out in the Bible, I am their companion. Their experience is mine.

"Thou givest me the lot
Of them that fear thy name;
If endless life be their reward,
I shall possess the same."

* We hardly know whether we ought to apologize to our correspondent for publishing her letter or not. If we have transgressed, she must forgive us. Editors are dangerous persons to write such letters to. We are almost sure to give our readers the benefit of reading what we ourselves approve.

What unspeakable joy and comfort I then felt in reading the Scriptures! The word was sweeter than honey to my taste; more precious than thousands of gold and silver. It was the joy and rejoicing of my soul. For I was walking by the side of those whose spiritual journeys were described in the inspired words I read; or at least I was their delighted companion in so much of their travel as I had experienced. I walked with Abraham from his native land to the land of promise; but I did not then know of the famine that sent him down to Egypt, and could not return with him, as I have since, from Egypt "into the south," nor partake of that joy with which he came "even to Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; unto the place of the altar which he had made there at the first," that he might again call upon the Name of the Lord. I could walk with the saints in the pleasant fields of experience, in sweet paths of peace, lying down with them in green pastures, and being sweetly led in their company by the still waters. But sin, trouble, bitter affliction, I only then knew as belonging to the past, the merciful deliverance from which filled my glad heart with thanksgiving and praise.

I have since been with the same dear saints of old in some awful journeys through deep, dark, desolate, terrible places that I then knew nothing about, and whose description therefore I could not then appreciate. But when I have cried unto the Lord, with David, "out of the depths;" with Jonah, from the "bottom of the mountains,"—"out of the belly of hell;" with Jeremiah, from within the walls of hewn stone, heavily chained; with Job, from the bitterness of desolation, corruption, and self-abhorrence; then I have travelled with them on that sweet return journey to the light of the dear Saviour's manifested presence and favour. And O! what humility, what broken-heartedness, what tender thankfulness, what grateful, joyful wonder at the enduring mercy of our God, attend us in that journey back! Only as we know by a terribly painful and killing experience the depths of the vileness of our hearts, can we know the manner of love, the riches of grace, and the depths of mercy that have been bestowed upon us by a just and holy God, that we should be called his children.

When I have met those who manifested that they have passed from death unto life, and that they have been exercised by chastisements and afflictions, I have felt that I was their companion, and have experienced a love for them to which no natural affection can compare. I have been glad to see them, and in my seasons of spiritual assurance I have known that they would be glad when they saw me,—an assurance which does not belong to my natural disposition. I have had the same experiences with reference to those whom I never saw in the flesh, but whose travels in the land of spiritual Canaan I have read in the pages of periodicals, such as the "Gospel Standard," the "Signs of the Times" (which has been for forty-six years a kind of family

paper to the Old School Baptists in this country), "Zion's Landmark," and the like.

I am well aware that in all of this I am alluding to an experience which is common to poor sinners in whose hearts the love of God has been shed abroad by the Holy Ghost, in whatever part of the world they may dwell. For all the children of God are one family, more closely united than any earthly family can possibly be, being born of one Spirit, and exactly alike in their spiritual features and disposition. They are the only family of brethren who can dwell together in unity, for their fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. Their dwelling together is compared to the precious ointment that was poured upon Aaron's head; which represents the Spirit, by which our great High Priest was anointed, through whom life for evermore was commanded upon the mountains of Zion, the church of the living God. This precious anointing goes down to the skirts of his priestly garments, enveloping the whole body, teaching every saint of all things; and is copious and refreshing as the dew of Hermon.

I have desired from time to time to address some expressions of fellowship to the dear spiritual friends who write for, and who read the "Gospel Standard;" and have done so occasionally for the past nine years, with the desire and prayer that the few words of mine which should be presented among the good things in your pages might be blessed to the spiritual comfort of some of that dear family, and manifest in some degree the unity in which it is their comfort to dwell.

Your Address in the January number, which we have just read, brings you with your responsible duties and anxieties as editor near to us. May you and your readers realize from month to month that the God of all grace prepares you for the work, and sustains you in it. We also are brought to see clearly in that Address the gift for edification and comfort to the church through writing, as well as the gift which is to be exercised only in the public assemblies of the saints. I felt in my own soul the power of that gift to stir up the pure mind by way of remembrance; to encourage the Christian in self-denial; in mortifying the deeds of the body; in putting off the old man as a leader, and in putting on the new man; in putting away wrath, malice, covetousness, and all evil, and in putting on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering. And in the giving of exhortations and applying reproofs, there is necessarily a setting forth the way of salvation, and a drawing the line between merely natural emotions and spiritual exercises, which is very comforting and strengthening to the poor tried soul whose only desire is to be right before God, and to enjoy tokens of his favour in a good conscience.

Well do I remember the reading of the last Address of Mr. Philpot, published in January, 1869. It cut sharply; it burned as a clear blaze; but it left unhurt all that is true spiritual work.

It was very powerful and comforting. What tender regard for the spiritual health and welfare of the Lord's people was manifest in it! Many a precious, well-remembered journey have I taken with that servant of our dear Lord, as well as with the present editor.

And when, with the exhortation, the reproof, and the describing of the Holy Spirit's work upon the soul, and its effects upon the life, the writer is enabled to bring forth to the view of tried and weary souls the dear Jesus whom they have known and loved above all else, in all his glorious beauty, in his delivering power, in his faithful, never-failing love, in his tender mercy which endures for ever, O what sweet, restful, heavenly joy and consolation are experienced!

Many an afflicted one of the dear family scattered abroad will read "A Fragment of Last Year's Experience" with tender sympathy, and with fellowship, not only in the great afflictions and sufferings of the dear friend who wrote it, but also in the sweet relief and heavenly comfort which were experienced through the manifestation of the precious Saviour. O! what can compare with such an hour as that there described, when the darkest and bitterest night of earthly sorrow has led the poor soul so unexpectedly to the sweet sunrise of a spiritual light and joy beyond any former experience; when the sobs of suffering from the grief-laden heart are changed suddenly to sweet sobs of prayer and thankfulness, and songs of praise to the loving, glorious Jesus who has appeared for our help? What an awful thing is suffering when we are left alone with it! But when the Lord is pleased to exercise us spiritually thereby, and to bring us through its darkness to the lovely morning beyond, making our affliction a measure of his grace, and power, and love, then we can thank him even for the heaviest weight of sorrow.

May the Lord bless you and all his dear servants there in your labour of love, and abundantly manifest his tender care for the poor of the flock. This is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

Your brother, I trust, though unworthy, and fellow-labourer in the gospel,

SILAS H. DURAND.

Herrick, Bradford County, Pennsylvania, Jan. 23rd, 1879.

[This truly excellent letter of friend Durand will, we are sure, commend itself to our spiritual readers. He is the author of an able and interesting little book, "The Trial of Job." This was reviewed some years back in our periodical. Being then entirely ignorant of the author, we dwelt, so we have feared since, *too much* upon what we thought blemishes in that work, such as a degree of undue spiritualization. But this letter plainly shows that our brother could write of Job's trial from a feeling heart; and what are spots in a sun? What are incidental blemishes in the work of a companion of those who fear God in the path of tribulation? We thank our friend for his letter and good wishes; which we sincerely reciprocate.]

A PRAYERLESS spirit is not the spirit of Christ.—Hart.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

Jno. x. 14.

With tender heart and gentle hand,
 And eyes that never sleep,
 Our Shepherd leads to Canaan's land
 His weak and helpless sheep.

Of him they love to sing each day;
 Of him they love to learn;
 And when he talketh by the way,
 O how their bosoms burn!

A word from Jesus fires the heart,
 And sweetly tunes the tongue;
 Bids every anxious care depart,
 And helps the feet along.

He knows his sheep, and tells their names,
 And will not lose his own;
 The bleating ewes and tender lambs
 Are marked every one.

And Jesus' sheep their Shepherd know,
 And follow out of choice;
 They will not after strangers go,
 Nor heed an hireling's voice.

— BERRIDGE (*slightly altered*).

We have inserted this sweet hymn of Berridge's with the hope that it may have the same indescribable sweetness to the hearts of some of our spiritual readers which it has had just lately to our own. But how sovereign is the Lord in these things! We may read or hear, or even sing a hymn many times, and find no especial sweetness in it. There is no peculiar beauty, so it seems, that we should admire it. But when the Lord accompanies it with his own sweet unction and voice of power, O how different! We never noticed this hymn particularly until we heard it given out by our friend, R. T. Hack—whose excellent letter we lately inserted—in the little chapel at Loughborough. It struck us at the time as having a peculiar sweetness and tenderness about it. And since that day, time after time, there has been an especial sweetness in it to our heart. O how we could feel the truth of the words:

“Of him they love to sing each day;
 Of him they love to learn;
 And when he talketh by the way,
 O how their bosoms burn!”

And again:

“A word from Jesus fires the heart.”

Yes, this is true. Even whilst we write, we hope we feel something of that glow of the fire of the sanctuary which warms the heart and cheers the soul; is so gentle that it destroys not anything but sin; but so powerful that it makes even such a heart as mine in love with God, and burn with the foretastes of heaven. We would not write a word beyond the truth. We would not speak of feelings which we do not possess, or vainly exaggerate what we do. But we do hope these are words of truth and soberness, of calmness, sweetness, joy, and delight

combined, and that we can truthfully adopt the language of another poet as our own:

“My labouring spirit vainly seeks
To tell but half the joy.

“But this with boldness I proclaim,
Nor care if thousands hear,
Sweet is the ointment of his Name,
Nor life is half so dear.”

ON THE APPLICATION OF CHRIST'S BLOOD.

A FURTHER REPLY TO M. M.

We gather from your remarks and question that you believed yourself to have been convinced of sin, and raised to a hope of being saved through the Lord Jesus; that you considered you were enabled to fly for refuge to him as a sinner, and to commit the keeping of your soul into his hands as an all-sufficient Saviour; but, having heard some insist upon the application of the blood of Christ as alone giving true peace with God, and not having had such a distinct application thereof as some have spoken about, you have been brought to question the reality of the work of grace upon your heart, and the scripturalness of your hope and joy in God. Now, we never attempt to pronounce too positively and peremptorily upon the genuineness of a work of grace in others, as we understand it to be the Lord's prerogative to witness in the sinner's heart to the truth of his own work. He writes the living epistle, and seals it. He alone can with infallible certainty discern between the true and the false, and show to the former his uprightness. We shall confine ourselves, therefore, to making a few remarks, which, with the Lord's blessing, may give you some help in coming to a satisfactory conclusion concerning your own state.

There is a tendency in the mind of an exercised tried child of God to reject that which is of the Lord in his experience, because of what is deficient, or, rather, has not at present been attained unto. Now, Scripture speaks of babes, little children, young men, and fathers. A babe naturally is as much a human being and a living person as a young man, or father. So in spiritual things; he that hath a true work of grace upon his heart, however small, comparatively, it may be, is as truly declared thereby to be a vessel of mercy, and is as really a spiritually living person as the most eminent apostle. The grand passage, after all, is from a state of death into a state of life. This takes place at the first quickening of the soul into the life of God, and then all the rest is but the development of the life thus implanted. This you seem to have lost sight of, or, perhaps, it is a view of the matter never up to the present time entertained by you.

Now, where this divine work is begun in the soul, the Lord will fulfil his promise, and teach the person so quickened unto profit. The two great lessons to be learnt are what the man is in him-

self, and what Jesus is of God made unto him. As sin is discovered in ourselves, a foundation is laid for the true knowledge of the Lord Jesus.

Well, then, we at once see how great must be the difference between the knowledge of a babe and a father; between one in whom the good work has lately begun, and who has at present seen comparatively little of sinful self, and a father in Israel who has gone down deeply into the discovery of the mystery of iniquity in his heart and life, and seen himself a mass of sin, guilt, pollution, and misery. Well, then, though there is only one Saviour, a crucified risen Christ Jesus, and one way of salvation through his life and death, and one way of pardon of sins and peace with God through his atoning work on Calvary; how different will be the degrees of distinct acquaintanceship with these things in different persons! Look at the apostles themselves. How different were their apprehensions of the atoning work of Christ before and after the day of Pentecost. Had Peter had distinct views of these matters, he never would have said to the Lord Jesus, "Spare thyself." He would have dreaded the very thought of Christ sparing himself, and leaving his people unatoned for.

Well, then, supposing, as we do, that you have had the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, who died and rose again, in some measure revealed to you as an able willing Saviour, so that you felt in your soul to go forth unto him, trusting sincerely in him through his grace and mercy to save you; though you may not have had such a distinct application of his blood to your conscience as some have had, we should be sorry for you to cast away a proper confidence. The great thing is to hold fast that which we have from God, and press forward to greater things:

"Be thankful for present, and then ask for more."

Mind, we have no wish to encourage you to trust in anything but the precious blood of God's Son as taking away your sins, or his adorable righteousness as justifying your person; but we do not suppose that you dare put your trust for a moment in in anything but Jesus's blood and righteousness for pardon of sins and acceptance with God. The point is, you have not had such a clear definite application of that blood to your conscience as you suppose some have had. The blood of Christ has not been really absent, for it was a crucified Christ you looked unto as a Saviour; but still it was not so much the distinct and special thing your mind was fixed upon in its contemplations. You saw him who once was crucified to be a gracious, mighty, willing, glorious Saviour, now in heaven; and as such your soul was drawn out unto him, as such you embraced him in your heart's desire and confidence.

Now a word about the application of Christ's most precious blood. Possibly you are not quite clear as to what you yourself or others mean by such expressions. We may speak in figurative language until we actually lose sight of the meaning of our own

words. No doubt such an expression is taken from the Old Testament and applied most sweetly to that which takes place under the New. The blood of the sacrifices under the law was not only poured out, but literally sprinkled both *before* the Lord and *upon* the worshipper. It was thus typically a satisfaction to God to whom it was offered, and a satisfaction *in* the worshipper to whom it was applied. Thus, spiritually, it is with the blood of Jesus; and by this we understand and include all his bitter sufferings and death undergone for the sake of his people upon Calvary; the shedding of his blood, in his great atoning work, when he made his soul an offering for sin. This atonement was made unto God. Thus Christ's blood was, as it were, sprinkled before the Lord. Through this atoning sacrifice alone sin is made an end of in its guilt or damning power; and through it alone God has any dealings in manifested favour with the sons of men.

"No other sacrifice for sin
Will God accept but this."

But now, how is this precious death, this sweet atoning work of Christ, brought into the conscience of the sinner? How is the precious blood of Christ, in other words, experimentally sprinkled on the heart, so as to purge it from dead works, or self-condemnation as before God, to serve the living God? In a distinct application of the blood, or receiving, as Paul says, the atonement, which no awakened sinner should rest satisfied without, there will, for the substance of the matter, come in the following things:

1. In the first place, there is the divine testimony in God's Word to the infinite preciousness and efficacy of that blood of Christ, as it is the blood of God's own Son. It is impossible to set too high a value upon that blood. If precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints, how infinitely precious must be the sufferings and death of his own Son! Mr. Hart most truly says, pleading with the Lord,

"Thou hast in better blood been paid."

And the psalmist, therefore, writes: "What profit is there in my blood?" The eternal punishment of myriads of lost sinners in hell cannot exalt the justice and holiness of God as these attributes, with all the other glorious perfections of God, have been exalted in the death of God's own Son, a Person one with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the Eternal Godhead.

2. There is the testimony in the same Scriptures to what that blood of Christ was shed for. "A fountain," says the prophet, "shall be opened for sin and for uncleanness." The blood-shedding of Christ, his death upon Calvary, must, then, according to its own inestimable preciousness, and in accordance with the counsels of the Three blessed Persons in the Godhead, be infinitely efficacious to remove the guilt and filth of sin, both from before God and from the sinner's conscience. For this it was shed. The house of Israel were to experience the virtue of it. But, then,

3. How is this effected? The blessed Spirit himself testifies to

these blessed truths in the sinner's heart. He gives him an understanding of them as a Spirit of revelation; so that he, spiritually, and in a divine light, perceives the truth as it is in God's Word concerning the precious death of the Son of God, his precious blood-shedding on the cross of Calvary. Now,

4. Answerably to this divine revelation, and, indeed, in proportion to the degree of it, will a blessed confidence in the inestimable value of the blood of Christ spring up in the poor sinner's heart. His will and affections, as well as his judgment, are all brought over to the side of Christ, and his sweet atonement is now blessedly embraced in heart, will, and affections, and the conscience is at peace with God; or, in other words, the heart is now sprinkled from an evil conscience, and the poor sinner has a sweet and blessed peace in believing.

This, then, is the receiving the atonement; this is having the blood of sprinkling applied. It is to have the truth concerning Christ's sufferings and death for sins on Calvary so revealed to the heart by the Holy Spirit of God, as it is set forth in the Word of God, that the heart is brought to a blessed confidence in Christ's death, and by it and through it drawn near to God. We wash in the fountain when we truly, in our hearts, believe in its opening on Calvary, acknowledge its divine virtue, and trust in it. The blood is sprinkled upon the conscience in a way of true believing. Revelation of this mystery in the Word and by the Spirit produces this confidence, this believing; and thus the sinner obeys that sweet exhortation of Mr. Hart:

"Bathe here and be whole; wash here and be white."

And then, according to the degree of his faith in the blessed truth concerning Jesus' blood, and, therefore, in proportion to the Spirit's revelation of and witness to it, he comes up in his heart from the washing, and says,

"I'm clean, great God, I'm clean."

But now, we must never suppose that faith is always in the same triumphant degree in this matter. Sometimes faith is strong, sometimes weak; sometimes blessedly free in its actings, sometimes terribly impeded. So it will be in different believers; so it will be in the same child of God, at different times. This leads us to throw out a few hints, in order, if the Lord pleases, to take up some stumbling-blocks to their confidence out of the way of the tried, and yet believing, family of God.

1. A child of God may get a view of the precious truth concerning the atoning work, the precious death of Christ, and a blessed faith in it may be springing up in his heart, and a sweet confidence through it towards God, and then Satan may come in with the suggestion: You have no right to this confidence; you cannot say Christ died for you. Your trust, then, in his blood, and your peace are both vain.

Now, here comes in the inestimable value, as we well know by experience, of the free invitation and promise: "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." He who really wills is

freely welcome. The fountain is made over as opened for sin and uncleanness. Those, therefore, who feel sin and uncleanness are the very persons who are welcome to wash therein. The perfect freeness of the fountain of the Redeemer's blood for those who feel a need of it to wash and cleanse them as before God, when perceived by the poor coming sinner, encourages him to confide in the fountain, and thus he experiences the virtue of it.

2. Then Satan will perhaps suggest: But Christ died only for the elect. He laid down his life for the sheep. This is perfectly true. But a truth *out of place and out of season* may work, in Satan's hands, like a lie. The poor believer often cannot see his election of God. In fact, he often can see and feel nothing but two things,—himself a sinner; Christ, a dying Christ, a precious, suitable, and most desirable Saviour. As a sinner, he feels a need of Christ's blood; as a sinner, he wants to confide in it, and experience its virtue. Here, then, again comes in the value of God's Word. It is as a sinner, a poor wretched creature, that a man is welcome to Christ. All his precious sweetness is made over to persons under the character of sinners:

“Sinners are freely welcome still
To Christ, the sinner's Friend.”

It is not as elect, or as saints, but as miserable, lost, and ruined sinners, in and through the fall, that we go to him by his grace, confide in his atonement, wash in his blood, and are made whole. Through the experience of the virtue of his blood, and of the peace and love of God flowing into our bosoms in a way of believing in it, we have a humble hope arise in our bosoms that we are the elect of God, holy and beloved, and venture to believe, as the poet writes:

“Not only that he shed his blood,
But each shall say, For me.”

We believe these views are very essential to the peace of God's children. We have felt to be treading upon tender ground, as we have attempted to write about so sweet, yet solemn, a subject as the blood-shedding of Christ, and the application thereof to the conscience. But we have tried to set these matters as plainly as possible before you, and our readers generally, in this reply to your questions. We have also endeavoured to remove some obstacles in the way of a poor exercised sinner's faith and confidence. We hope we know what it is to have had Christ's most precious blood applied many, many times to our own heart. We have known, too, the mighty opposition which faith meets with from the unbelief of the natural heart, and also from the many devices of Satan. But we have triumphed, we believe, many times through the blessed Spirit's discovering to us the truth concerning that blood as we have represented it. We have felt that, though our sins appeared to us greater than those of any other man on the face of the earth, and though they seemed to rise to heaven, we dare not put an indignity upon the blood of God's dear Son by pronouncing it insufficient

to take them away. No; we have felt concerning that blood that it was as the waters of Noah unto God and our own conscience. By faith, at times,

“It rises high, and drowns the hills;
Has neither shore nor bound;
Now, if our sins should e'er be sought,
Our sins can ne'er be found.”

And again, and O the divine peace flowing in with the thought! through that precious blood,

“O'er sins unnumber'd as the sand,
And like the mountains for their size,
The seas of sovereign grace expand,
The seas of sovereign grace arise.”

We have felt how Satan, by interposing questions, by, in fact, putting the right thing in the wrong place, has at times robbed us of our joy and confidence, and cast down our souls. O friends, for we now address ourselves to all who feel like we do, poor, lost, ruined, guilty sinners, may God give us by his Spirit a clear knowledge of the truth concerning the infinite virtue of the blood of Jesus, and concerning the free, sweet way it is made over to us as poor lost sinners. May he save us from Satan's devices, and the horrible unbelief and opposition of our hearts, and enable us to say with the apostle, as we experience the infinite efficacy of Christ's blood: “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” May the precious blood of Christ, as believed in by our hearts, be our joy and confidence before God during our lives, the balm for our sorrows, the medicine for our sins, the strength of our obedience, and the weapon of our victorious warfare against the accuser of the brethren. Then, when we come to die, may that blood which has supported us in life, and disarmed death many times of its fears, sweetly comfort our hearts, and make a dying bed most sweet and soft. O to live a life of faith upon the Son of God as dying for our sins on Calvary, and then to breathe out our souls in death into the hands of a faithful covenant-keeping God! May we sing, even now, the poet's words of expected triumph, and anticipate the time when, as washed in blood, we shall join the songs of angels:

“I, too, in the season ordained,
Shall join in the chorus divine,
And praise and adore without end
Their faithful Creator and mine.”

IT (indwelling sin in its actings) is endless and restless; never quiet conquering or conquered; it gives not over, but rebels being overcome, or assaults afresh having prevailed.—*Owen*.

WHERE love is not cultivated and kept up amongst professors, the church is shaking and growing ruinous. As there is a communion we all have with Christ the Head, so there is a communion we all have one with another, on which the beauty and strength of a church in great measure depends.—*J. Hill*.

A CHAPTER OF EXPERIENCE.

I have above shown that Satan, who had often tempted me to pride, when he found it for his interest, turned himself another way, and made it his work to drive to a spurious sort of humility. When I was caught in the thicket of his temptations about the truth of the Scriptures, and other things of a like nature, and was using means to get my mind relieved, he often, with much importunity, urged upon me this thought: To what purpose do you seek for satisfaction? Or how can you be so vain as to expect it about these things, wherein men of incomparably greater reach, abilities, diligence, and opportunities, have been obliged to remain unsatisfied, and upon that account have given up with them? This temptation was often urged with that hellish violence that I had no spirit left in me by it. I was ready to let my hands hang down; my knees turned feeble; and my mouth was often at speaking it out, that there was no hope; and I went about to make myself despair of any good fruit of any labour taken, or that could by me be exercised and laid out under the sun.

When the Lord made the foregoing discovery of himself to me, the force of this temptation was quite broken by seeing the truths of God in his own light. But I got not a particular discovery of the weakness of this temptation till some time after, reading in my ordinary course the three first chapters of the first epistle to the Corinthians, the Lord was pleased to open mine eyes, and make me understand its weakness. The light that then shined upon my soul from and by this portion of Scripture, and the satisfaction of soul it gave, as to this temptation, no words can express; nor can I at this distance of time narrate all that the Lord made convincingly clear to me from his word. Yet the substance I do remember, and shall represent in the following remarks.

1. God here represented to me that his great design in the method of salvation made choice of by infinite wisdom, was to stain the pride of all glory, that "no flesh might glory in his sight," but that he "that glories might glory in the Lord" only. (1 Cor. i. 29-31.)

2. The Lord discovered that a vain ambition to be wise above what God allowed was the spring and principal part of our apostacy from God; and that ever since Satan first dropped that poison into our natures, it has wrought strongly: "Vain man would be wise." "The Jews ask a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom." (1 Cor. i. 22.)

3. That in order to the attainment of the foregoing designs, and, indeed, for the recovery of man, it was plainly necessary that man's ambition in this matter should be effectually checked. This being a principal branch of our corruption, if it were not cured, we were not completely recovered. This lying in a plain opposition to the designs of God, if it were not levelled, this design could not be reached. Herein it became necessary that God

should “destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.” (1 Cor. i. 19.)

4. God, to vindicate his own wisdom, which was reproached by this vain ambition of man;—to fix an eternal blot on this wisdom of man set up in opposition to it, and effectually discover its vanity, in the depth of his wisdom and holy severity in punishing this ambition and other wickednesses of vain man, suffered for many ages all nations to walk in their own ways, and try them, whether they were better than God’s ways; whether they could supply the defects which they fondly imagined God at first had made them with, or relieve themselves from the misery their apostacy had brought them under. He said, “I will hide my face from them; I will see what their end shall be; for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith.” (Deut. xxxii. 20.) And the event was every way answerable to the foreknowledge and design of infinite wisdom and justice, and the desert of the folly and wickedness of men who made the attempt; for after near 4000 years’ fruitless endeavours spent, through the wise forbearance of God, “the world by wisdom knew not God.” They in the wisdom of God quite missed the mark. Their “foolish minds were darkened; seeking to be wise, they became fools” (Rom. i. 22); and instead of getting their eyes opened to see and know more than God allowed them, they could see nothing but their own nakedness; and so imperfect were their discoveries, that their wisdom suggested to them that fig-leaves could cure that.

5. After, in the wisdom of God, “the world by wisdom knew not God;” after they had spent the time allotted them for the trial and discovery of the vanity of their own wisdom, with a success answerable to the vanity of the attempt;—God, in the depth of his compassion, stepped in for the relief of mankind; and for the furtherance of the glorious design above-mentioned, was pleased to proceed in a way quite opposite to all that the wisdom of foolish man aimed at. The means he made use of were not such as man’s wisdom would or could expect, prescribe, or approve of. He made not choice of the enticing words of man’s wisdom or eloquence,—*i. e.*, human eloquence. It was no way suitable to the majesty, truth, and sincerity of God, to make choice of that mean art whereby the affections of weak men are inveigled, and their judgments biassed, and led blindfold in a subjection to those passions which they should govern. He made no choice of artificial reasonings,—the other eye of human wisdom. It did not become the majesty of God to dispute men into their duty, or a compliance with his will. And albeit he wrought signs to awaken the attention of a world drowned in security, to conciliate respect to his ambassadors, to strengthen the faith of his own, and cut off all seemingly rational pleas for unbelief; yet he chose not them, nor did he principally insist on them as the means of converting and recovering the world; not being willing to derogate so far from

his Word as to encourage an opinion that the devil would and has forwardly propagated, that God's word is not upon its own evidence, without miracles worthy of the acceptation of rational creatures. Nor would he gratify the unbelieving curiosity of men, who would put God to the drudgery of altering the course of nature, and please their humour on every turn.

6. God, having rejected all these, made choice of the foolishness of preaching; that is, a plain declaration of his mind and will in his Name, in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, and not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, by persons commissioned for that effect by him. "After that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor. i. 21.) Now this was every way worthy of God. Man was injurious to God, by crediting the devil rather than God. The devil seemed to have gained a considerable advantage in persuading man in his integrity to credit him and discredit God. God, on the other hand, rubbed shame on him, by engaging fallen man to reject the devil, and credit him on his bare word; and upon this to give up Satan, and all that adhered to him.

7. God, yet further to manifest his design, as he made use of the foolishness of preaching, that means, which, though it is really the wisdom and power of God, yet men look on as foolish and weak; so he made choice not of the scribes, the learned wise disputers to be his ambassadors, but of foolish, weak, illiterate men, that by things which in appearance are not, he might bring to nought those that are. (1 Cor. i. 28.)

8. In a further agreement with this design, God saw meet to disappoint men's expectation and wisdom with respect to the Saviour whom he raised up, as well as with respect to the means of discovering him. He made choice of a crucified Christ, "a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;" and passed by all the great and high potentates of the earth, and the worldly pomp and grandeur which men respect and dote upon.

9. To lay man yet lower, that the Lord alone might be exalted, he chose not such persons as the world would have thought stood fairest for mercy, but he chose the most miserable and contemptible, for the most part. "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 the things that are." (1 Cor. i. 26-28.)

10. The Lord herein let me see—First, That it was to be expected, and was indeed inevitable, that a great opposition should be made to the gospel, and whole revelation of himself in the Word. 2. That this opposition was principally to be by the pretenders to wisdom, learned men. 3. That their objections

would be against all the concerns of the gospel,—matter, manner, means, all being opposite to their expectations; and that therefore it was no wonder to see some stumble at the cross, some at preaching, some at preachers. 4. That their pleas and objections would be very different and various;—the Jews seeking signs, and the Greeks wisdom, according as their different principles and inclinations led them. 5. That it was to be expected that their objections would be specious, they being suited to the wisdom, the natural apprehensions of all men unrenewed, and not brought to a compliance with the grand design of God. 6. That it was impossible for any man that was not brought to be a fool in his own eyes to be wise in the matters of God, or to discern and approve of the wisdom of God in this whole matter.

Upon this discovery, I was fully satisfied that, though these things were, in the wisdom of God, hid from the wise and prudent, yet babes might have a satisfying discovery of them; because it hath pleased the Father to reveal these things to them.

I was made to see that this opposition of learned men, and their unsuccessfulness in their inquiries, were so far from being a just prejudice to the truth of God, that, on the contrary, it was a strong confirmation of the truth of Christ's religion. Thus out of the eater came forth meat, and sweet out of the strong. While I thought to know this, it was too hard for me. Then went I to the sanctuary; and there I saw their end. Hence I was made to hope that, though my heart and flesh should and did fail me, God would be the strength of my heart, and portion for ever;—that he would guide me by his counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory. And, therefore, surely it is good for me to draw near to God, who has not said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain. He is good to the soul that seeks him, to them that wait for him. "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." (Judg. xiv. 14; Ps. lxxiii. 15, 16, 24, 26–28; Gen. xxii. 14.)—*Halyburton's Memoirs*.

[We give the foregoing extract, with only one or two verbal alterations for clearness sake, believing it may prove very useful to some of our spiritual readers, particularly those who may have experienced similar temptations. We commend it to the attention of our friends simply as setting forth the way in which a dear child of God, of no mean abilities and reasoning powers, was entangled in the snare of infidelity, and afterwards freed from it,—first by that sudden, irresistible, overpowering, self-evidencing manifestation of the glory of God in Christ Jesus, to which he alludes in the second section of this extract, and most fully and blessedly describes in its nature and effects in previous chapters; and then by seeing, as in this quotation he sets forth, how inevitable it was, according to the purpose and declaration of God himself, that the gospel of his grace should prove a stumbling-stone to the wise and learned of this world; so much so, that the gospel itself could not be true was the wisdom of man to approve, and not take offence at it.]

WE may as well expect a crop and harvest without sowing, as any liveliness of grace where there is not seeking of God.—*Munton*.

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

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

My dear Rebecca,—Yours I received, and was glad to hear that you and all the rest were well; but was sorry for the sad news of Catherine. Poor thing! cut down in youth. We know not why such things should be. But we do know that it is to teach the living a lesson,—that they may think of their latter end. May it be sanctified to all; then it will be a blessing.

What a mercy to know in whom we have believed; so that, let death come when and where it may, we are prepared. Yes; not prepared by a vain profession, as some think; but to know that we are so founded on the Rock by almighty grace that the gates of hell cannot prevail against us; to know that we are one with our blessed Jesus, joint-heirs with him, and heirs of God. O to be able to take those title-deeds, and read in them for ourselves: “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” “And him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.” I say, to read this, and read one’s title to that inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and which cannot fade away, makes a man’s heart rejoice, and feel that he would cast around that all-loving and blessed Jesus the arms of faith and love, and sing,

“In darkest shades, if he appear,
My dawning is begun.”

O thou child of many, many prayers, and now also the one that giveth cause for praise! I thank God, my child, that he hath established thee in word and doctrine. He hath not suffered thee to be carried about with every wind that blows; but hath put thee in Christ’s school, and there hath taught thee by his blessed Spirit. It was and is his blessed promise: “All thy children shall be taught of the Lord;”—so taught, too, in this our day, when men stand up and deny the atonement. What should we be without the blood of that great Redeemer? Was it not the redemption price paid for our sins? I feel very jealous for the honour of that precious blood; for without that there is no remission of sin.

Seek, then, to keep the cross in view; and pray to maintain thy standing firm upon the Rock. It will stand every storm, even death itself. Look up, O child of God, to the hills. “Thy God reigneth.” He is thy Father, and will never, no, never, no, never forsake thee. He will be with thee in every storm, and bear thy frail bark over the sea of life, and waft thee into the haven of everlasting rest, where

“Not a wave of trouble rolls
Across the peaceful breast.”

Blessed heirship this,—to be an heir of glory! Is it nothing to have Christ as our life, to be one with that almighty Person? So that, when he appears, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Excuse all mistakes. I am very well, excepting a cold. With kindest love,

Your ever-loving and affectionate Father,

Aldersgate Street, E.C., July 12th, 1875.

H. SWINSON.

My dear Friend,—How wonderfully free is the grace of God! This, I trust, my soul is learning almost day by day in an experimental manner. O to be a scholar in Christ's own school! What a mercy to be taught of God! What a mercy to be blessed with a teachable spirit! This morning, as is so frequently the case with me, when I began as usual to attempt to seek the Lord, I felt so carnal, distant, and dead, that my heart was ready to sink and cry out that it was impossible for such a one to be a child of God, and to be saved. O how overrun with all sorts of evils, atheism, infidelity, and I know not what besides, was my poor soul! Then, to make all worse, there was the consciousness of folly, stubbornness, remissness, bringing guilt into my conscience. Thus I was in a poor and miserable condition, and yet not half properly sensible of it. Erskine admirably paints my spiritual portrait in these lines:

“Was e'er one pressed with such a load,
Or pierced with such an unseen dart,
To find at once an absent God,
And yet, alas! a careless heart?
Such grief as mine, a griefless grief,
Did ever any mortal share?
A hopeless hope, a lifeless life,
Or such unwonted careless care?”

But now, what surprised me was that the dear Lord, as I believe he did, should come to me in such a state, and visit my soul, not with severe rebukes, but a touch of mercy, grace, and love. The words he came to me with were these: “And pray to thy Father which is in secret.” But, said my heart, can it be really the case? Is God my Father? I assure you it is hard work for me, at times, to give a complete admission to the word of God's grace, even when Christ comes in it to the door and knocks; yea, even when the heart a little rises up at his voice, and begins to want to open to him, so that the hands drop with myrrh, and the fingers with sweet smelling myrrh on the handle of the lock. But, I trust, in this case the Lord would come in; and we well know, when the dear Lord will come in, he can overcome all opposition, and make his way into our hearts.

Well, the word began with a greater power to take possession of my heart, and I hope that with some little degree of faith, even if it was with tremblings and hesitations, my heart could use the language of adoption, crying, “Father.” It is in grace as in nature. One child can say “Father” very clearly; another only lips it out; and another has a child's heart, but cannot say the word. All are alike children. So, amongst God's people, some say, some cry, some lisp, some have a very little knowledge

of God as a Father in Christ, and would, but cannot, say "Father" to him. Indeed, the same dear child of God cannot always say, "Father, my Father," with the same degree of faith and decision. No; as a sick child cannot speak with the strong voice of a healthy one, so a poor sickly saint cannot say "Father" like a healthy one. Guilt often untunes my tongue, and

"I lisp and falter in my prayer;
And sick and faint am I."

But O how sweet it is to go to the Father as our Father! Then all is right. Then mercies are mercies. Then crosses lose half their weight. A child's heart can confide in a Father's care. So it was with me. When the earlier verses of Matt. vi. had come in: "Pray to thy Father which is in secret," bringing my heart, I trust, into a little holy communion with the Father, *then* how easy to entertain the last part of the chapter: "Take no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself." I did not want then to halve my service between God and mammon. I did not want to be over-anxious about the things of this life. A prudent care, I know, is right; a burdening anxiety, I know, is injurious. Besides, it is perfectly unnecessary. If God will provide, why should I be careful?

Then, again, another sweet preceptive word was precious to me: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." Yes, I felt in my heart, at the same time as there were in it searchings as to this matter, a desire, I hope an earnest one, to bear no ill-will to any man. This was not bondage, but liberty. It was not the anxiety of a slave to do something to purchase pardon with; but the desire of a son, who wanted to be as becometh the gospel of Christ,—to walk in liberty and in love. Ah! dear friend, is your heart with my heart in these matters? Is your heart in love with the realities of religion? Five minutes' communion with God as a Father in Christ in secret is worth more than all the busy fussy religion which some are taken up with. I remember the words of good John Newton: "Let us leave the busy hot spirits to do their work; but let you and me follow after peace and holiness; and these have a closer connection than some persons imagine." This is good advice; may the Lord grant us grace to comply with it. And may we daily learn his sweet lessons, and the exceeding riches and freeness of his grace, and daily be enabled to say to him, "Abba, Father." Hawker's lines are sweet; O for more experience of them!

"Abba, Father, Lord, we call thee,
(Hallowed Name!) from day to day;
'Tis thy children's right to know thee,
None but children 'Abba' say.
This high blessing we inherit,—
God's free gift through Jesus' blood;
God the Spirit with our spirit
Witnesses we're sons of God."

Wishing you much of the liberty with which Christ makes his
people free, Believe me, Yours in Sincerity,

OMICRON.

My dear Friend,—How many times have I purposed writing to you, but have not! I took up your last letter again this morning, and found it very sweet indeed. No doubt you have proved, and will prove to the very end of your journey, that "the eternal God is thy Refuge;" if not, down you must go. The weakest of all the enemy's forces will be far too strong for my daughter, if the Lord God of her father be not her defence. But I feel persuaded that he is; that he has granted her repentance unto life, making sin her chief burden, and Jesus Christ her only trust; and blessed are all they that put their trust in him. And you are of the blessed number.

Through divine mercy, I am yet under the chastising hand of the Lord. I am still proving that the Lamb and the bitter herbs must be eaten together. "Through honour and dishonour, evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things," was the apostle's lot when upon earth; and something very like it seems to be my lot also. But I was made very easy concerning everything one day from these words: "And the government shall be upon his shoulder." For I saw then, and felt too, that everything that day, and every day, would fall out according as he had purposed in himself from eternity; and this most blessed truth of his sacred Word was sweeter to my heart than honey to my taste. Such was its power on my soul that it dissolved every bond, and took off every load. It strengthened every part; it healed every wound; it made my eyes to weep, my heart to leap, and my tongue to honour and adore his most holy and wonderful Name. It was a help to me for many days; and the remembrance of it is sweet even now.

My poor Mary is still on her bed. The 15th of this month made it a year and five months she has been there.

With kind love to your mother and all friends, I remain,
Yours truly and affectionately in the truth,

JAMES SHORTER.

17, Manchester Terrace, Liverpool Road, Islington, Oct. 29th, 1850.

My dear Friend,—I feel I must tell you a little of the goodness, mercy, and long-suffering of a faithful God towards me. I fain would exalt a precious Christ, and leave sinful self out; but my religion has two sides,—a dark and a light one. On opening the "Gospel Standard" for October, I saw Mr. Bennett's letter, and my heart was sweetly drawn to him in love and union. Then, on looking a little farther, I saw Mr. Hazlerigg's sermon upon "the Cup Passing Away in the Drinking it;" and I saw such

beauty, and felt so much sweetness in reading it, that I felt persuaded something was coming upon me.

In a few days, a circumstance occurred in which I thought we were being imposed upon; and that soon stirred up all the hidden evils of my heart. I said, "If you show a little kindness to some persons, how soon they will impose upon you;" and the words came: "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" This stopped my mouth, and humbled me in the dust; and I felt pity and sympathy spring up; for it seemed ignorance on their part, or, as I might say, for the want of knowing better.

But, after this, I soon fell into a fit of rebellion; and the rebellious dwell in a dry land. I had hard thoughts of the dear Lord for allowing it to take place; and the enemy was permitted to come with his magnifying glass. Dear friend, I did indeed sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; or, as we read: "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end." Well might Peter say, "Kept by the power of God;" for who else can keep us in the hour of temptation? If the enemy is permitted to get us into his sieve, he will handle us very roughly, and we shall know something of his power. Then the spirit of prayer came over me; and I felt such a wrestling with the dear Lord, that I could not let him go except he blessed me. My cry was, "Do help me, even me;" and I tried to look back to the time when I humbly hope the Lord spoke those words home with power: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I pleaded with him, and said, "Didst thou not speak it? or am I deceived? If thou didst, do let me hear thy voice again. And didst thou not help me at such and such a time? And who could have held me up but thyself?"

"Thou hast helped in every need;
This emboldens me to plead;
After so much mercy past,
Canst thou let me sink at last?"

On the Thursday evening, I went and heard Mr. N.; and the words he spoke from were: "The cause that is too hard for thee, bring it unto me, and I will hear thee." Dear friend, I could say mine *was* too hard; but I felt strengthened and encouraged, and persuaded that all would be well. But shortly after, the enemy was permitted to come again with renewed force, and it seemed for a time that he would crush me beneath his feet; but at last I was enabled to say, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; though I fall, I shall arise again." Then I could say, the cup has passed away in the drinking it. Not in avoiding or passing by, but passing *through* the trial. Dear friend, that sermon has been very sweet and precious to my never-dying soul.

On Tuesday, Nov. 12th, I had an attack of bilious diarrhoea, which very soon pulled me down. On Wednesday morning, for a short time, I felt very ill; and I said, "Is this death? Can

this be death?" And the words came: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God;" and I felt so humbled and so melted down that I cannot find words to express my feelings. Then it came:

"Rest thou on Jesus, sink or swim."

Dear friend, it was a sweet resting, and for a time I could leave everything in the Lord's hand.

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this;
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

But on the following Saturday, I felt in such a barren, cold, lifeless, indifferent state; and the next day had another attack of bilious diarrhœa. Then I thought, "Am I deceived in those words: 'This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God?' Did I not understand them rightly? or have I something more to learn from them?" A few days after, I opened Gadsby's hymn-book on hymn 838, and that was the very feeling of my soul. And a few days ago, the words came: "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice." "The day of adversity is set over against the day of prosperity;" "that no flesh should glory in his presence."

Dear friend, I must put down my pen, or I shall weary you with my scribble; if I have not done so already. I understand you are expected at Hanover to-morrow. I hope the Lord will be with you and bless the word spoken to the comforting and edifying of some sin-bitten, devil-dragged soul; and to his Name be all the praise.

Yours most unworthily,

Tunbridge Wells, Nov. 30th, 1878.
To Mr. Swonnell.

— KEMP.

My dear Friend,—I received yours safely on Monday, and take the present opportunity of writing a line to thank you for your kindness to one who is unworthy of the least of God's mercies.

Since I saw you last in Bath, family afflictions have been many and great with me; and I am myself at present so unwell that with difficulty I fulfil my engagements. Yet I am, through mercy, enabled as yet to do so. But the time will come when I shall not be able, as it is appointed unto man once to die. Therefore my end will come one day. It is a solemn thought; but with the righteous it must be well. Last Saturday morning, as I was getting up, and thinking a little about how blessed the glorified spirits in heaven are, the following words dropped suddenly on my mind, and gave me some encouragement:

"Once they were mourning here below,
And wet their couch with tears;
They wrestled hard, as we do now,
With sins, and doubts, and fears."

I seemed to have some view of their former state, when they

were in this world of sins and woes, and thought that mine was now like theirs had been, and a sweet hope arose in my heart that in due time mine would be changed to the same, as theirs is. It is a good hymn. It begins with:

“Give me the wings of faith to rise.”

I am glad to find by yours that you are following after the best things. “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find,” are the Saviour’s words; and he spake as never man spake. “Heaven and earth shall pass away,” he says; “but my words shall not pass away.” His truth must endure for ever. The church of old said, “His merciful kindness is great towards us; the truth of the Lord endureth for ever; praise ye the Lord.” (Ps. cxvii.) You say that your cry from day to day is: “Quicken thou me, for thy Name’s sake.” O! my young friend, the same has been my cry for many years; and it still continues to be the same. So that Ps. cxliii. has been a comfort to me many times; also Ps. xxv. If you read them, they may be a means of help to you also. The blessed Spirit is the only sure Guide into all truth. This you know, and therefore feel your need of him to be your Teacher.

May the God of all grace and peace be with you. This is the desire of

Yours in hope of a better world,

CORNELIUS COWLEY.

32, Southampton Street, Pentonville, N., May 12th, 1870.

PEACE IN THE END.

A BRIEF MEMOIR OF WILLIAM WEST.

WILLIAM WEST was born at Croydon, Feb. 24th, 1838. When a child, he was put out to nurse, but was so neglected by the person that took charge of him that when his parents took him away his life was despaired of; and his parents sat up one night to see the end of him, and even prayed to the Lord to take him; not in the least expecting he could live till the morning. But the Lord’s time was not come, for from that time he began to recover.

I will now let him tell his own tale in his own words.

“I was brought up under the sound of the gospel. Our father was very honest to his children, telling us what would be our end if God in his mercy did not change our hearts. He always discouraged our talking about such things if we did not know them for ourselves. I used to get sick and tired of hearing so much about religion and chapel going. I also saw and felt that to be made to follow in my parents’ footsteps would put the knife to all my carnal pleasures and lusts; therefore I said to God, in my heart and feelings, ‘Depart from me, for I desire not the knowledge of thy ways.’ I thought it would be time enough to think about these things when I get old.

“One Saturday, when about 14 years of age, I went out to solicit orders with the horse and cart, when part of the harness broke, and let the shaft fall down. This set the horse kicking, and I was thrown out on my head on a loose stone in the road, which broke and entered the

skull. I was carried home senseless; and while lying in bed, some of the brains came out of the wound. There were three doctors, besides my mother, who witnessed this fact. Here is a proof, when God has a special favour to any one, that that man is immortal till God fulfils the same to his soul. I lay one week senseless and speechless. All the doctors gave me up. One said, if spared to live, I should ever afterwards be an idiot; and another said I was past their skill; but he did not know what God might do for me.

“After this week, to the surprise of all, I began to come to myself again. I then saw how near I had been to the grave, and asked myself, if I had died, where would my soul have been found, seeing I had followed the vanities and follies of childhood, and had not sought after God. Then I made a vow, if it would please the Lord to raise me up again, that I would mend my life, and never do the things I had done before; and I meant to keep it. But alas! as I got better all my vows and promises wore off, and I found no power, will, or mind to deny myself. Therefore I used to think, if ever it should please the Lord to begin a work upon my soul, that it would be when I was in health; for I could see how mere sick-bed repentances ended in the flesh.

“One Sunday, Mr. Crouch was speaking at the chapel, and gave an account of his daughter’s deliverance from soul trouble, and related how Jesus had visited and blessed her soul. As he was giving the account they all wept; and so did I; and for the first time I saw a beauty in these things I never saw before; but I felt I did not know them for myself. From this time there arose an inquiry in my mind; and I began to be in trouble about my never-dying soul.

“In the eighteenth year of my life, on Nov. 9th, a day never to be forgotten by me, the Lord was pleased to raise me up to a hope in his mercy. It was in this wise. I had been in great concern about my soul; and on the Saturday preceding Sunday, Nov. 9th, I dreamed that I was continually crying and sighing on account of my sins; for I thought it was impossible for me to go to heaven, and that I must be damned. On Sunday afternoon I read a sermon of Mr. McKenzie’s on the sealing of the Spirit. When I came to three marks given as proofs of life, I clearly saw and felt I was destitute of any of them; so I concluded I was not an heir of heaven, but a child of the wicked one. This brought me into soul trouble indeed. I felt such a cry and longing desire in my heart that God would give me his grace as I never before had, and such a desire to know on which side I was. I had in the morning asked the Lord that he would send a word by the minister’s mouth for the good of my soul; and the Lord graciously answered my prayer. In the evening Mr. Clifford took his text from 1 John iii. 1-3. In showing the nature of the kingdom of God in the heart, and at last coming down as low as the Word of God allowed, and pointing out that if there was a desire to know God, and a longing desire to find him, this sprung from a holy principle within; and that such a person was as much a child of God as a great believer, and should have the longing of his heart satisfied. This just described my state, and I believed that I should go to heaven. It made my heart to break, and the tears to flow down my cheeks for joy. It so softened my heart to think that I should be saved. I thought, What! Me, who have committed so many sins? Is it possible? And it seemed to echo in my heart that I should be saved according to my faith. If any one had come and said I was a child of the devil, I should have said it was a lie; as I had the witness within that God had begun a good work in my soul. I thought at this time if any one was to offer me the crown of England, I should refuse it, and prefer rather to be a servant

to one of the poorest of God's children as regards the things of this life. The minister said he was sent on account of some one; and I felt it was for me, and none else. It seemed to me he was preaching to me only, and taking up my state and case, and showing me what I was an heir to.

"This gave me great encouragement to go on seeking the Lord; for I felt that I should not seek in vain. I spent the night blessing and praising God while awake, and prayed that I might never be left to doubt this visit, as it was so real and so sure. I rose early next morning to take a relative to Wimbledon station; and on parting he said, 'Good-bye, William; God bless you.' I replied, 'God *hath* blessed me;' and drove off in a happy frame of mind. Whilst coming across Mitcham Common at daybreak, I thought, if the clouds would open, I was ready to go. I wanted not to live any longer.

"When evening came, I felt I could keep it to myself no longer; having never opened my mouth to any one on the subject of religion. So I went to tell an aged man who I believed feared God, that we might rejoice together. I asked him how he got on in hearing on the previous night. He said, 'Not much.' I then said, 'I did hear so well; for it seemed all for me.' He replied, 'If it was a right hearing, it will do.' I sensibly felt in my feelings like a bird that is shot; so did I fall. I do not think another word passed between us. I went home with all my comforts gone, and mourning and begging of God, if it was his work in my soul, that he would appear and again put his hand to the work.

"This I trust he did, in hearing Mr. Gorton preach from Habakkuk iii., last clause of verse 19: 'To the chief singer on my stringed instruments.' This again revived that hope in my soul.

"For the next 16 years of my life, I was kept hoping and waiting on, and found it was 'here a little, and there a little;' and all to teach me in some measure what a desperately wicked heart mine is. So that I can say in some measure,

"Without him I nothing can do."

Many ups and downs in my soul's feelings have I passed through during these 16 years; sometimes fearing, then believing; sometimes sorrowing, then rejoicing. Now what I long for is to feel what Paul writes in the Epistle to the Ephesians (i. 3.)

"I come now to the beginning of 1872, when it pleased the Lord to bless the word to my soul by Mr. Covell, whilst hearing him preach. I felt such a love to him and to the Lord's people, his house, his ordinances, and ways, that I felt constrained in my mind to speak to Mr. Covell on the matter of believers' baptism. I proposed to do so on the following Tuesday night. When the time came, I had lost the feeling of comfort I had enjoyed, and some trifle hindered me; but I felt at that time fully persuaded the time would come when I should have to go through the ordinance. After this I sank in my feelings,—fearing that if I did come I should not be the right character it was intended for. I begged the Lord to give me a word, that I might know; but could get none; and many prayers did I put up on that account. On the first Sabbath in November, 1872, whilst sitting behind during the ordinance of the Lord's supper, I felt the same love again, with a rebuke in my feelings that I had not attended to it. On the following night, after the prayer meeting, I went to Mr. Covell to tell him my desire; and came out of his house with all the burden of the matter taken off my mind.

"In the course of a few days Mr. C. called upon me to say there would be a church meeting on the following Monday week; but after

he was gone, my fears came on again with double force. O! I thought, the Lord will leave me, and I shall be made manifest that I am nothing but a professor. I wished I had said nothing about the matter at all. I looked at one member, and then at another, and felt sure they did not receive my religion; and I greatly feared coming before the church; till this prayer came out of my heart: 'Lord, I trust it was thou that didst persuade me in this matter; and now it is for thee to bring me through by bringing to my mind those things thou hast spoken to me of, and giving me to feel the savour of them in my soul, and granting the same to flow with savour from my lips into the hearts of the friends, that there may be a uniting of heart and affection.'

"The Lord heard and answered my petition in a wonderful way. At the church meeting, on Monday evening, Nov. 25th, as soon as I began to tell out what God had done for my soul, I felt the snare was broken; and such love, peace, and comfort flowed in, with such a persuasion that it was God's work in convincing me of my state as a sinner, and in all the leadings and teachings of his Holy Spirit in my soul, in bringing me to feel my need of Jesus Christ, and raising me to a hope in his mercy, that it was with difficulty I could speak at all; and I trust the little I said was commended to the souls of the people. When I left off, Mr. Covell asked if any of the friends wished to put any questions to me. One of the deacons and some others said, 'No; we can say Amen to that.' My feelings I cannot describe. My doubts and fears were removed; and I proved the devil to be a liar.

"The savour and dew of this visit rested some time on my soul. It was with difficulty I could serve the customers in the shop the next day. My heart was so broken under a sense of the Lord's goodness to me that the tears kept flowing from my eyes. What a desire did I feel at that time to live to the honour and glory of his Name, and if it was possible, to be as holy as he is holy! This especial season I believe will never entirely be erased from my mind.

"I was baptized on Dec. 11th, 1872, by Mr. Godwin, with four others. I felt a hope whilst going to the ordinance that I should again receive another blessing; but I did not as before; though I felt a sweet, solemn frame of mind. As I looked at the water I felt a desire to go through it, and to be found walking in those steps Christ had commanded we should walk in. I had no fear or doubt in my mind respecting the matter. I proved it to be the answer of a good conscience.

"The next deliverance was as follows: On Sunday, Sept. 17th, 1873, I had a very barren day, and felt at night all my hearing and praying were in vain; for nothing had come in. Then, on Monday evening, I went to the prayer meeting, and was called upon to speak in prayer. I felt something of my need of a blessing, a special lift, and pleaded for the same, but got nothing; and afterwards feared I had used language which was too strong, and consequently language which was hypocritical and mockery before the great God and his people. This made me beseech the Lord that he would pardon the iniquity of my prayer. Another opportunity occurred to hear Mr. Clough at Forest Hill on Tuesday night. I went, beseeching the Lord to hear me, and to speak to my soul by the man; but nothing much did I get. All seemingly went over my head, and I sat barren, cold, and lifeless. But one thing suited me: 'Faith,' he said, 'was the gift of God; and when God bestowed it on a poor sinner, all came with it he wanted, and it did something for him.' That was just such a faith as I wanted, but could not get it. On Wednesday afternoon I went to my bedroom,

and fell on my knees at my bedside, and tried to supplicate the Lord to look upon me if I was his; for I felt I could do nothing to gain his favour; and if he did not appear I should be lost. He must come and bring everything with him. I looked back to former visits, but could not feel anything or see anything in them to rest upon them; and thought if the Lord did not appear for my help, I must give all up. There was at the same time a going out for a blessing, and an entreaty that he would bless me. I went in the evening to chapel. Mr. Hemington preached, and took for his text 2 Cor. i. 9: 'But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, &c.;' and indeed he did reach my heart. I could see how God by his Spirit had been writing death in my heart for years gone by, upon my hopes and expectations, from things that arise from the flesh. He had, I saw, been teaching me, 'here a little, and there a little.' Although I went to chapel fearing that I knew nothing of the Spirit's work in reality, he so pointed out my exercises respecting this matter, that I once more did believe it was the finger of God in my soul; that I should make a good end, and that I was one of those included in those words of Paul, when he said, 'Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.' This lifted me above all my doubts and fears, and God gave me strong faith to believe that I did believe. I felt I could speak a little of his goodness to me from a sense of the feeling of it in my heart. My desire was that he might be glorified in, by, and through me; and what I felt coming out of chapel, and walking by myself, I cannot describe. His goodness, love, and mercy in the heart are better felt than described."

Here ends his own account of himself. I continue the narrative.

He went on in the old beaten path, and had several good hearings, whereby his soul was established in the things of God, and confirmed in the truth, and as to the work of God in his own soul. He used often to say he had 15 ounces, but 16 went to the pound, and he wanted full weight.

For some weeks before he died his health seemed to decline, and the doctor advised a little change. But he felt worse away, and soon returned. He led the singing at the chapel about a month before, the usual leader being away from home at the time; and from that time he declined fast. Mr. Hazlerigg was preaching for me the latter end of Sept. of this year (1878), and he was there to hear. Mr. H. asked in his preaching some solemn questions, and they exercised him much; for when he dined with Mr. H. at my house a few days after, he told us of his exercise, and how in the night he weighed up matters; and then he felt he could answer the questions. He spoke with much feeling and emotion.

About 10 days before he died I called to see him. He was then in the garden; and as we sat together, he said, "Covell, last night in the night I looked matters hard in the face, to see what I had to die with, and to meet death, God, and judgment with if I died. While thus weighing matters up, the comforts of God came into my soul, with such sweet promises; and such a spirit of faith sprung up in my heart that I said, 'Father, I will drink the cup; thy will be done.' I then thought, What have I said?"

Claimed God as my Father? But I felt the Spirit's witness in my soul, and a sweet peace, and that the Lord was not displeased with me for it." "Why, William," I said, "you have now the 16 ounces you have so long wanted." Many other things he said, so that I felt I should lose him.

Next day, when I called to see him, he said his comfort was gone, but that he had a good hope, and no fear of going to hell. As I left him, I felt, "O! cruel death, to take from me one that I thought would be so useful, even after I was removed"; and I kicked and rebelled in my feelings.

I saw him again two days before he died, when he was full of peace and comfort. "O!" he said, "what fears and doubts I have had that, when I came to die, I should find my religion a delusion, and that I should be abandoned of God! Now I have none. My wife, children, and business (and he had a prosperous one) are nothing to me. O how I long to be gone to be with him, to love and praise him as I desire! I have been, so to speak, an unbeliever all my days, now I am a believer." He then had his children to see him, and spoke to them solemnly and kindly, and then said, "May the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob bless you."

The next day I saw him again, which was the day before he died; and as he was sitting in his chair he said, "I was thinking yesterday of the great and glorious things of God, and of going to heaven to enjoy them; and they seemed too much to expect for such as me; and I tried to put it away; but I cannot. O how I long to be there! I have had a short nap, and I dreamed I was just going into heaven. I made a move towards it, and I awoke; and O how disappointed I was to find I was here."

At times he suffered much on account of his breath, from the weakness of the heart—his disease being Bright's disease of the kidneys. The night before he died, he cried out, "Lord Jesus, take my ransomed soul home to thyself. O! do come." His speech now became feeble; and the last thing he said, in answer to his brother, who spoke to him, was, "An abiding peace. I feel faint." He closed his eyes, and in a moment was absent from the body, and present with the Lord. The spirit dropped its clay, and fled,—fled off triumphant home. He died Oct. 13th, 1878, aged 40.

"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

F. COVELL.

ALL true mourners will be found to have the root of assurance so grafted in them, that in its proper season (a time, perhaps, of trouble) it will undoubtedly flourish.—*Owen*.

FURTHER, in these days, I would find my heart to shut itself up against the Lord, and against his holy Word. I have found my unbelief to set, as it were, the shoulder to the door, to keep him out; and that, too, even then, when I have, with many a bitter sigh, cried, "Good Lord, break it open. Lord, break these gates of brass, and cut these bars of iron asunder." Ps. cvii. 16.—*Bunyan's "Grace Abounding."*

"THE VOICE OF MY BELOVED."

CANT. II. 8-15.

THY voice, O Belov'd of my heart,
 Is sweeter than music to me:
 What ecstasy does it impart
 To hear a soft whisper from thee!

O'er mountains of guilt and of sin
 He leaps like the hart or the roe;
 And descends to the depths I am in,
 His pardoning love to bestow.

Ah! Well I remember the day
 When, sunk in delusion and sin,
 In death and in darkness I lay,
 Nor felt the sad state I was in.

A voice, with awakening power,
 Spoke of sin and the terrors of God.
 Ah me! 'Twas a sorrowful hour,
 When under his terrible rod.

I toil'd at the works of the law;
 But the law could no comfort afford;
 Till by faith my Beloved I saw,
 And his voice of deliverance heard.

How he lifted me up by a word,
 And call'd me from sorrow away!
 As soon as its music was heard,
 My soul could no longer delay.

My winter and storms were all o'er;
 The rain and the tempest were gone;
 I fell at his feet to adore,
 And my spirit broke forth in a song.

C. SPIRE.

Obituary.

ROBERT HINDLE.—On Aug. 2nd, 1878, aged 76, Robert Hindle, of Accrington.

When the Lord met him, he was a young man, little over 20 years of age. At that time he went amongst a people then called Ranters; and, being one of them, he was full of zeal; but he used to say, when the law was brought with power into his conscience, it knocked his ranting out of him; and in the trouble and distress of his soul, the Ranters were to him no better than Job's comforters. He then began to go from one chapel to another, in search of a word of relief and comfort for his troubled heart; but all were to him miserable comforters, until it pleased God to direct him to Blackburn to hear Mr. Worrall. There he found the one thing needful; and under Mr. Worrall's ministry was brought out of bondage into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

At the time the dear Lord set his soul at liberty, he lived with his

young wife in a cellar; but such was the sweetness of the streams of love, blood, grace, and mercy, flowing into his soul, he said the cellar was like a heaven to him.

Some time after this he was baptized, and admitted as a member of the church at Blackburn. Thither he and five others from Accrington travelled, a distance of six miles, in all kinds of weather, for the word of God was precious in those days. On one occasion, when these pilgrims were going to Blackburn to hear the late Mr. Kershaw, the night was very stormy and wet, and the road was very rough. On coming to a hilly part of the road, one of them said, "Let us sing;" and they sang a verse out of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress":

"Who would true valour see,
Let him come hither;
One here will constant be,
Come wind, come weather.
There's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent
His first avow'd intent
To be a pilgrim."

Shortly afterwards these six—Mr. Taylor, of Manchester, being one of them—with the consent of the church at Blackburn, agreed to open a room in Accrington; but it was with great difficulty that one was procured; for they were looked upon as a very strange people. But the eternal God had determined that his truth should be established in the town, and the same truth remains there to the present day.

On Lord's-day, Feb. 14, 1834, the room was opened, and a church formed. God Almighty so blessed and prospered his own cause, that in 1850 a commodious chapel was built, which at the present is too small. In 1842, Robert was chosen to be a deacon of the church, and for many years he attended to all communications. For this work of corresponding he had a special gift, and by this means he became widely and well known to many of our ministers, and also to other friends.

His path was one of great tribulation; yet, notwithstanding his many trials and conflicts, he never was driven from the truth. At one time, when I called upon him, he was in deep trouble. He said, "Whatever could I do now if I had no God to go to? But God is our Refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. He has not left me in a trouble yet; no! nor never will."

For some years before his death he suffered much from bronchitis. A few months before he died, he said to me, "I shall not be here long. The Lord is taking down my tabernacle gently; but I hope I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." I repeated the first verse of hymn 103. "Yes," he said, "what could I do without that now? What an awful position those must be in that have no God! And what has been done for me is not of my doing. It is all of grace."

At another time, he had a desire to sit down at the ordinance of the Lord's supper on the first Lord's-day in July. "Then," he said, "I shall have sat down with the Lord's dear people fifty years." But he was not able to do this. He gradually got worse. The doctor came in, and in conversation said, "He will soon bring you home." "Yes," he replied, with all the strength he had, "and the devil cannot stop it."

Shortly before he died, he read 1 Cor. xiii., and prayed earnestly for his sorrowing, but kind and affectionate wife and family, and the church with which he was united as a member and a deacon. Then his speech began to fail. He could not speak distinctly, but patiently waited for the coming of the Lord, to bid him come up higher.

As one that did believe he has now entered into that rest,

“ Where ransom'd sinners sound God's praise,
 The angelic host among;
 Sing the rich wonders of his grace,
 And Jesus leads the song;”

I remain, yours, &c.,

J. EDDISON.

ANN BROWN.—On May 11th, 1878, aged 78, Ann Brown.

The following account is furnished by her dear friend, Miss Toms, and corroborated by the experience and testimony of the members of the church and congregation at Zoar, whose affectionate member, friend, faithful servant, and chapel-keeper, she had, in connection with her mother, been for a period of nearly 60 years. In this humble capacity, as we can bear an honourable testimony, she displayed the value of the religion she possessed and professed, and by which she, through the Spirit, worked out her own salvation with fear and trembling, and adorned the doctrine of God her Saviour in the exhibition of godly fear, meekness, humility, and love. The Lord was very gracious to her, in sending many Phœbes to succour her, in connection with the church's care over her in the Lord. In the City of London cemetery, followed by the senior deacon and a goodly number of the members of the church and congregation, she was well laid in the grave by Mr. Vaughan, of Bradford, awaiting

“ That great rising day,
 That shall her flesh restore;
 When death will all be done away,
 And bodies part no more.”

D. P. GLADWIN.

Mrs. Brown was well taught in the things of God, and had much of the Master's loving spirit. We felt a great union to her; and although of late years we were not able, by reason of distance, to see so much of her as we wished, yet the opportunities we had of conversation with her were much valued by us, and we invariably left her presence encouraged, strengthened, and refreshed. She had usually some new instance of the Lord's goodness to relate. Well do we remember her delight and thankfulness when she received an account of the conversion of a beloved daughter, the child of many prayers, who had accompanied her husband to America some years before. It had been a sore trial to part with her; but she felt the Lord had dealt kindly with her in taking her child to a distant land, there to meet with her; and this display of his favour to her and hers much affected her. Frequently in our interviews has she alluded to the promise given her by the Lord many years before: “ 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.” And in the midst of trial, to which she was no stranger, she has been enabled to testify to the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God.

In one of her many attacks of illness, the Lord's manifest presence being withdrawn, she was for a time so weighed down with a sense of her own unworthiness and unfitness to appear in the presence of a holy God, that she was unable to rest, and was almost worn out with mental anguish and want of sleep. It pleased the Lord after a while to appear for her, and apply the following words with power to her:

“ For we, as sons in Christ, are made

As pure as he is pure.”

Her soul was enraptured; her trouble gone. Sound sleep was mercifully

given, from which she awoke refreshed; and later in the day we found her in the full enjoyment of the blessing to which she has since reverted many times.

But to come to our dear friend's last illness. Being informed that she was apparently sinking fast, we hastened to her house, and found her very weak in body, but in a calm and peaceful frame of mind. She had no great ecstasies; but could say with Paul, "I know whom I have believed; and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." She had in former illnesses desired, if the Lord's will, to be again raised up, on account of the beloved daughter who lived with her and so devotedly nursed her; but now all care and anxiety about earthly things were taken away, and she felt she could resign her dear one to the Lord's keeping, and longed "to depart, and to be with Christ."

We scarcely expected the next day to find her still in the body; but she had rallied a little, and, while desiring patience to wait the Lord's time, expressed a fear that she should not, as she had anticipated, spend the morrow, the Lord's day, in heaven. She repeated on this and on subsequent occasions (for, contrary to all expectation, she lingered three weeks) the following verses, which were much on her mind:

"O happy saints, who dwell in light,
And walk with Jesus, clothed in white;
Safe landed on that peaceful shore,
Where pilgrims meet to part no more!

"Released from sin, and toil, and grief,
Death was their gate to endless life,—
An opened cage to let them fly,
And build their happy nest on high."

She also very often repeated these words:

"No rude alarms of raging foes;
No cares to break the long repose;
No midnight shade, no clouded sun,
But sacred, high, eternal noon.

"O long-expected day, begin!
Dawn on these realms of woe and sin;
Fain would I leave this weary road,
And sleep in death to rest with God."

We had several interviews with her after this, and although, by reason of great bodily prostration, a trying cough, and occasional severe spasm of the heart, she was at times unable to talk much, at other times we held sweet converse together, bending over her to catch her feeble utterances. There were moments when she would speak with wonder and gratitude of the Lord's good hand upon her during her long pilgrimage; and on one occasion, after alluding to some in our family circle, and also amongst our friends, who had arrived at the end of life's journey before her, and had already entered into rest, she spoke of her late dear husband, who was removed by death at a time when error was disturbing the churches, and how on his dying bed he witnessed for truth. She also mentioned two dear daughters, both of whom had become concerned about their souls under Mr. Smart's preaching. One died at the age of twelve. She was set at happy liberty just at the last, and with her latest breath exclaimed, slightly altering the original:

"Now I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I bid farewell to every fear,
He'll wipe my weeping eyes."

The other was some years older, and she too made a good end. Shortly before her ransomed spirit winged its way to realms of light, she begged her mother to sing to her the beautiful hymn beginning :

“When languor and disease invade,” &c.

As a rule, however, our dear friend’s thoughts were more fixed on the great change awaiting herself. She once remarked :

“Death, ’tis a melancholy day
To those who have no God;”

adding : “And it is a solemn day to those who *have* a God.”

When her suffering was great, owing to her extreme weakness, and her being obliged to keep continuously in a sitting posture, she would sometimes repeat, speaking with difficulty :

“The joy prepared for suffering saints
Will make amends for *all*.”

She often repeated the following verse :

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

Also this :

“Yet a season, and we know,
Happy entrance shall be given ;
All our sorrows left below,
And earth exchange’d for heaven.”

She once greeted us with the remark : “I am like a schoolboy going home for the holidays. He has donned his holiday jacket, mounted to the top of the coach, shouted ‘Good-bye!’ to his companions, and is eager to be gone.” Another time she observed, “The enemy has been trying to make me believe that it is all a delusion.” I replied, “I hope you do not listen to him.” Her countenance visibly brightened as she answered, “No; he was a liar from the beginning.” I think this was the only occasion during our dear friend’s illness that he was permitted to approach her. She once asked us to sing to her :

“O happy saints, who dwell in light.”

Also :

“When languor and disease invade;”

remarking that it seemed so long since she had heard a hymn sung.

The last time we saw her in life, she was too weak to bear the sound of singing ; but enjoyed the reading of the hymn :

“Yes, I shall soon be landed.”

Thinking each interview our last, we were accustomed to bid each other an affectionate farewell at the close ; and this afternoon, after the usual parting words, she added emphatically, “I wish you all a *good* night ; we shall meet again;” alluding, as we understood, to the night of time, in contradistinction to the day of eternity.

Ere we could repeat our visit, our dear friend had entered into the joy of her Lord ; and as we gazed upon her placid countenance, we felt that for her “to die” had indeed been *gain*; that now indeed were

“All her sorrows left below,
And earth exchange’d for heaven.”

JAMES BLACKBURN.—On Nov. 4th, 1878, aged 70, James Blackburn, of Preston.

The subject of the following brief notice was a plain, honest, God-fearing man. He belonged in his younger days to the Established Church, and afterwards joined, I believe, the General Baptists. In 1845, he was led to cast in his lot with the despised few in Vauxhall Road, Mr.

McKenzie being at that time the pastor. He was truly one of the quiet in the land, one who highly valued the means, both the preaching of the pure gospel, and also the prayer-meetings. He greatly missed these during his latter days.

The writer visited him on various occasions during his last illness. On my first two calls he spoke to me of being in darkness, and said that he prayed again and again, but could get nothing. This was a solemn position to be in when approaching an unseen world; but, nevertheless, he was not without hope, as he was convinced that it must have been the Lord who brought him from his pharisaical state. He could remember his zeal in attending the Church of England, and repeating after the clergyman, &c.; although at that time quite ignorant of himself and of God's way of saving sensible sinners.

He was confined to his bed five weeks. About three weeks before his departure, he had these words spoken to him four times. "My record is on high." (Job. xvi. 19.) He felt such a mysterious power, such a softening, refreshing, and strengthening influence of the Spirit accompany the words, that they caused him to desire to depart whenever the Lord saw fit to take him to himself.

His only surviving daughter says she used to hear him speaking at times; but when she inquired if he wanted anything, he said, "No; I was not speaking to you." He was, in fact, often speaking to One whom his soul loved, and who spoke to him in a way which removed his fears, and caused him to be reconciled to his heavenly Father's will.

Many years ago, he had Ps. xxxvii. 3 given him as a portion, when in the furnace of affliction, and saw it blessedly fulfilled.

On the Friday evening before his departure, he spoke to us of how his parents wondered before they died what would become of him; but, reviewing the Lord's goodness in supplying all his needs, he could say he had wanted nothing. He had a kind daughter to nurse him in his affliction, and said he was never so well off in his life. Whilst we were in his chamber he began to speak in his childlike way to his God, saying, "Thou art good to me, Lord," &c. He seemed astonished at the Lord's goodness to such a sinner as he knew himself to be. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord," as I believe our late friend did.

J. SOWERBUTTS.

THE eternal love of God, like the long and well-kept fruit of the vintage, comes better to the believer's taste by its antiquity.—*Hardy.*

It (indwelling sin) hath also in its actings an universality. This also surpriseth; there is an universality in the actings of sin even in believers. There is no evil that it will not move to; there is no good that it will not attempt to hinder; no duty that it will not defile.—*Owen.*

ALL gospel doctrines centre in Christ; and so far as one is perverted, another neglected, and a third denied, so far there is a weakness and a decay in the foundation. The building must grow loose, one stone cannot support the other, if there be no foundation which supports the weight of the whole.—*J. Hill.*

BUT cannot Christ be hid? Not of himself. It is hard to hide a great fire, or to cast a covering upon sweet odours, that they smell not. Christ's Name is as ointment poured out; he is a mountain of spices, and he is a strong savour of heaven, and of the higher paradise. You may hide the man, that he shall not see the sun; but you cannot cast a garment over the body of the sun, and hide daylight. From which it appeareth that Christ cannot be hid.—*Rutherford.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

MAY, 1879.

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

THOUGHTS UPON THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

(Continued from p. 274, 1877.)

CHAPTER V.

Verse 2. "I sleep, but my heart waketh. It is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled; for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night."

"I sleep." In the previous verse, as we have already seen, the child of God is represented as enjoying the sweets of communion with the Lord Jesus. "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved" was his sweet word to the spouse when, in answer to his soul's request, he had come into his garden,—into her heart. But now we have a remarkable change. The soul is no longer in a blessed lively state. On the contrary, a spiritual drowsiness has come over it; or, in other words, carnality has greatly prevailed. This, of course, is not the sleep of death. It is the sleep of a living child of God, a dull, lifeless state prevailing in one who has enjoyed the most blessed communion with the Lord Jesus. Now here notice two things.

1. *The changes a true child of God in this life is liable to.* Now feasting sweetly upon Christ's love; anon asleep upon the bed of indolence, in a state of fleshly ease and carnal security. Well might one write:

"My soul through many changes goes."

Another expresses himself in these words:

"And thus my life is nothing else
Than heaven and hell by turns;
My soul, which now in Goshen dwells,
Anon in Egypt mourns."

This is just our own experience. O! we hope we know something of the feast of fat things, the banquet of Christ's truth and love; but, then, what seasons of dulness and stupidity, and, we are ashamed to write it, of apparent undesirousness; no goings out of soul-desire after Christ; no vehement longings as at other times. Truly we are daily made to feel the badness of our heart, and to understand deeply and experimentally the words of our Lord: "Without me ye can do nothing."

2. *The suddenness of these changes.* This is one of the most surprising things in our experience,—the rapidity with which a child of God may pass from one state of soul into another. This holds good both ways. We have been astonished, as well as perplexed, to find that after the most blessed experiences of Christ's love we have got into the most deplorable states; so that we have been ready to question whether the former experience could be genuine. Is it possible, our hearts have said, that Christ really can have been with us? that our souls went out in sincere and earnest desires after him? Was the love which inflamed our souls genuine? Or did we mock him and deceive our own selves when our hearts expressed such longings after him, such admiration of him? Were our words the light, vain expressions of those who, in days of old, said to him, "Lord, evermore give us this bread"; "What is truth?" and then turned away from him? Was ours the kiss of Orpah, who kissed her mother-in-law, Naomi, and went back to her own gods and her country? Such have been many times the anxious inquiries of our heart; inquiries extremely difficult to answer satisfactorily.

But, then, on the other hand, what sudden and remarkable changes in the opposite direction! We have many, many times felt so carnal, so deathful, that the cry of the heart has been: "Can ever God dwell here? Can life divine be in one so apparently entirely dead?" Thus we have sat in our own room; nor could we upon searching find one grain of grace or godliness. As Erskine writes:

"No marks of love I find;
No grains of grace, but wracks;*
No track of heaven is left behind;
No groan, no smoking flax."

Then we have felt no inclination to read, or pray, or attend to divine things. Nay, we have felt as if it was a profanation of those things to attempt to handle them. It seemed as if, in reading God's holy Word, we were only bringing condemnation upon ourselves, and heaping up displeasure. But we have almost forced ourselves to take up the blessed Scriptures and read; and, perhaps, no sooner have we opened the book and begun to read, than the blessed Spirit has come into our heart, and enlivened our soul, and both given a spiritual appetite, and satisfied the appetite he has given with living bread.

Or, again, even before taking up the Word, the Lord has come into the heart with some lines of a hymn, some words of his grace, some divine communications; then, "or ever we have been aware, our souls have made us as the chariots of Amminadib." Well may one say:

"Strange and mysterious is my life;
What opposites I feel within!
A stable peace, a constant strife;
The reign of peace, the power of sin."

* Scotch, wrecks.

This, we believe we can honestly say is, in a considerable degree, our own experience; though we should like a little more of the "stable peace" and "reign of grace," in their sweet and blessed predominance. Alas! the "opposites," things of a dull, stupid, carnal, deathful nature, have a sad prevalency in our experience. We may count the seasons of sweetness and enjoyed blessedness by minutes, we were almost going to write moments, and we don't know whether this would not have been the most correct expression; the seasons of darkness by hours, and sometimes by days, yea, longer periods.

But, now, what profitable reflections may arise from the due consideration of these changes? In the first place, how they instruct and confirm us in the truth concerning the two natures! We not only believe in the truth of there being two natures in a child of God because we read it in the Bible, or hear of it from others; we feel and experience the workings and effects of these two natures in ourselves. We have the seventh of Romans in our own hearts. We know, too, by the same experience that these two natures are entirely distinct and opposite one to the other. The one is flesh, the other is spirit.

Then, again, how clearly we are made to understand that the old nature never improves. It is and ever will be in complete rebellion against God. It is a principle of enmity against him. It has been crucified on Christ's cross. It is mortified by God's grace in the child of God's heart. It is to be put off in his life; as Paul writes: "Put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man;" but it never is, never can be, altered in its nature, or improved in its character. It was, is, and will be an old man of sin.

We learn, too, the constant state of danger we, as it respects experience, are in. To-day we may be like burning seraphs before the throne, inflamed with love and enraptured with spiritual discoveries of the Lord Jesus; to-morrow, if grace prevents not, if Christ gives not a present supply of divine power to uphold us, we may fall into worldliness, carnality, sin, to the breaking of our bones, or beneath the assaults of Satan, law, and terrors in our feelings, into the very belly of hell. All this we know by sad, painful experience.

But, then, there is another thought arises: O what a mercy, if these things are so, to be kept tender, watchful, prayerful; to feel our insecurity, and thus be really secure, as being led to look to and lean upon the Lord Jesus! We see the force of Paul's words: "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." "Be not high-minded, but fear;" and of our Lord's own words of admonition: "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Yes, it is these exercised saints of God who really are most secure. The felt conflict between two natures in their own hearts; the bitter fruits they too often taste, which spring out from sloth, carnal-security, and fleshly-indulgence; the deep consciousness that the old nature never improves, never

really sleeps; but is always ready, under the influence of the world and Satan, and of its own inherent abominableness, to seduce and solicit to all sorts of sin, to hinder and mar all sorts of good, and to plunge them into shame, disgrace, and misery; make them fear in a godly manner, and tenderly tremble. Thus they are often kept from evils a carnal, sleepy state would bring them into, and are made to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who thus worketh in them to will and to do of his good pleasure.

"But my heart waketh." The speaker, as we have already remarked, is not one dead in trespasses and sins, but a living child of God in a drowsy, carnal state of soul. This person has a heart and a heart;—an old heart and a new one; or, what is really the same thing, two different and opposite principles within. In the same person is flesh and spirit, carnality and spirituality; a something that thinks, judges, feels, is affected and wills in one way; a something which thinks, judges, feels, is affected and wills in quite another. The natural man, and that which is natural in a child of God, receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. This natural and fleshly principle cannot see or know anything properly, as it respects these things, because they are and must be spiritually discerned. "The light," says John, "shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." The light of life shines in the heart of a child of God. He is light in the Lord, and a child of light; but the old nature in him is in darkness still. That nature comprehends not the light that is shining in the child of God's own soul. He is renewed in knowledge after the image of him who has created him; he is created, as after the new man, in righteousness and true holiness, and yet has within him still a principle of evil, an old nature, which is darkness itself, and averse to righteousness, true holiness, and God.

Mind, too, these principles are no inactive things. Both these natures are incessantly operating in various degrees. "The flesh lusteth"—it is the present tense—"against the spirit; and the spirit against the flesh; and these two are contrary the one to the other." Now, from all this necessarily arise incessant changes, and most fluctuating experiences, as long as the child of God is in this world. The Holy Spirit working in the new man; Satan and the world working upon and in the old; O what a mighty conflict must there be! And as it pleases God to give the blessed Spirit, as to his communications, in varying degrees, what variations will take place in the Christian's frames and feelings! So it is in the words we are noticing. Through the prevalency of the fleshly principle, the child of God, after enjoying most sweet communion, is thrown into a dull, drowsy state; but there is a living, waking principle within. Hence the spouse cries, "I sleep, but my heart waketh." She is rousing up from the sleepy state. Her slumber is as it were broken. But what has done this? Let the spouse herself reply to the question.

"It is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh." How long she would have continued in this drowsy state, but for Christ thus coming to her, we cannot say. Indeed, we find that indulgence of the flesh invariably has a tendency to strengthen it. The more indulged, the more importunate it becomes. "A little more sleep, a little more slumber," cries the carnal heart; and often beguiles us by saying, "After this, then you shall be active and diligent, and self- and flesh-denying;" but the wise man points to a different issue: "So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man." The flesh indulged, under the vain idea of after mortification of it, will press on with increased rapidity unto a final conquest. O what a mercy that grace interposes in due season! Never should it be forgotten that the end which the flesh in all its various forms aims at is the total conquest of the soul. The issue that all sin drives unto is the final full apostasy of the heart from God. The little stream of evil, as it appears in its rise, unimpeded becomes the torrent, and swells into the mighty stream, which at length sweeps all before it into the ocean of perdition. We are here describing the natural effects of sin, the issue that carnality aims at. Again we say, What a mercy for a child of God that in his case grace bounds the issue, and Christ comes again to the sleepy, drowsy soul, and says,

"Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled!" In this visit of Christ there are two things to be distinguished; his knock and his voice. "It is the voice of my Beloved;" he speaks then to the spouse. "That knocketh;" this appears to be something additional. The fact is, as the concluding part of the verse shows, the child of God is in a very sleepy state. Thus the spouse is represented as keeping Christ standing at the door until his head is filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night. No doubt these words here point to the long time Christ has been standing at the door, and, therefore, to the exceedingly drowsy state of the spouse. Well, then, Christ seems to accompany his speech with something else;—"that knocketh." He knocks at the door, as well as speaks to his spouse.

This knocking, we have little doubt, refers to some adversity or other; some trouble he brings upon the child of God. This, at any rate, we know is an ordinary course which he takes in dealing with his poor careless children. He seeks to rouse them up by afflictive and trying dispensations. The blessed Lord, mind, has pleasure in the prosperity of his people. He does not afflict willingly or grieve unnecessarily the children of men. The heart of the tenderest earthly parent is hard in comparison with the heart of Christ.

"His is an unchanging love,
Higher than the heights above."

Mothers may forget and be neglectful of their offspring; yet will not Christ forget his people. Not a feather weight of unnecessary trouble or sorrow ever yet came upon a child of God, the spouse of Jesus. O! we wrong God, we wrong the Lord Jesus, to sup-

pose that God takes any delight in afflicting and tormenting his saints. The tenderest and most infinite love is present in the severest trial, as well as in the sweetest consolation.

Christ, then, sends an adversity because the child of God is in a wrong and injurious state; a state alike opposed to God's glory and the child's own good. God will not allow his saints to die of sloth and sin; therefore he will come in with adversities,

“If no milder means will do.”

All Scripture points to this as one of God's methods of proceeding with his people. So it was of old with Israel as a nation, and also with individual saints, a David or a Hezekiah; and so it is at the present day in our own experiences. Christ stands at the door, at times, and knocks by adversities.

But not only was there the *knock*; there was also the *voice*. The knock tended to arouse the slumbering faculties of the soul; the voice reached the awakened ear. Thus, by the knock and the voice, at length the soul is roused up to some degree of attention.

“*But my heart waketh; it is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh.*”

Now, arising from all this, we have a very mixed state of mind. Previously, drowsiness and carnality were so prevalent as to have almost their own way in the soul. Now a *conscious conflict* commences between sleepiness and wakefulness, between carnality and spirituality, between the old and the new. There is a *consciousness* now of the drowsy carnal state which has been indulged, a struggle with it, a wish to throw it off, and yet a feeling of being much under the influence of it. It is as when a person who has a day of business or gratification before him is aroused to a sense that it is high time to get up, but feels a great inclination to further indulgence in sleep; and so, instead of rising at once, sinks back half overpowered by the torpor which is upon him. The child of God, in fact, is half awake and half asleep. The old nature, with its self-indulgence, carnality, and sloth, is very prevalent; but the new nature is aroused and struggling against it. The heart, through the workings of the new man, is awakened to some desires after communion; the old man, who cares for nothing of this kind, would plead loudly for further fleshly indulgence.

This, then, is the experimental unfolding of the child of God's state of mind. In the first place, and this occurs after a sweet time of blessing, the soul is represented as overpowered by carnality, and sunk into a deep sleep; then at Christ's knock and voice it is partially aroused, and brought into a half-asleep, half-awake condition: “I sleep, but my heart waketh.”

We just turn our attention for a moment to the voice of Christ. Christ speaks to the case of a child of God. His speech at any time is to the point, and has a suitability about it. It is not all or always piping with Christ, nor all or always mourning. Sometimes it may be one, sometimes the other; sometimes, yea, oftentimes, a mixture of both.

.By the way, what a pattern is this for God's ministers! We are not always to be preaching smooth things, lest we heal the wound of the daughter of God's people slightly, crying, Peace, peace, where there is no proper peace. We are not always to be touching the mournful string, as if Christ's religion had no joys, no sweet consolation attending it. A true and spiritual ministry will, as inspired by the Holy Spirit of Christ, answer to his own speech. The grand characteristic of the ministry of the Spirit is its suitability to the states and conditions of the hearers.

We observe, then, in Christ's speech here, two things exactly answerable to the spouse's state.

1. There is a word of *tenderest affection and encouragement*. "My sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled." We shall not enlarge here upon these words, only observing that they signify two most blessed things,—Christ's unchangeable love, and the child of God's unchangeable standing in him and in that love. Though so cold, so careless, so neglectful, so indifferent, his *sister*, his *love*. Though so unspiritual and cleaving to the dust, his *dove*. Though so sinful and consciously defiled, for all sin and fleshliness is defiling, and felt by the awakened heart to be so, his *undefiled*.

2. There is a word of *gentle reproof*. "For my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night." As we have before said, this indicates here the poor, cold, negligent, unspiritual state the child of God had fallen into, and is designed in a way of reproof concerning it.

Here, then, we have a model of gospel speech. No denial of the child of God's standing, no mere legal voice, no harsh chiding, no flattering speech, no making sin, and sloth, and carnality into trifling things. The evil of the condition is reprov'd and indicated; but the child of God still acknowledged as Christ's love, his dove, and undefiled.

Now, how wonderfully adapted is such a speech to the object in view,—the rousing up the poor slumbering saint to spiritual activity, and a returning to Christ, with weeping and supplications, and desires for renewed communion with him from whom she had grievously wandered.

The law is for those under the law, and it speaks in its own particular way unto them. Christ speaks always, when he himself speaks, in a gospel voice to the hearts of his own people. He reprov's concerning sin and evil. He will not suffer sin, that deadly disease of the soul, upon his children. He loves them too well to spare that enemy of their souls, that destroyer of their peace and welfare. But he will not deny them as his children. The Elder Brother will not deny his younger brother; the Bridegroom his poor infirm spouse; the Everlasting Lover his love, his dove, his undefiled. He has implanted gracious principles in their hearts. To these he really speaks. These he arouses and strengthens. To these he intends to give the victory. He has other ways with gracious hearts than those legal com-

mands and threats and terrors, which the law utters to natural men, to those under it. Indeed, from these voices the new man of grace in the heart will flee away. It knows not the voice of strangers. Full of grace are Christ's lips; and when he comes to his poor wandering, sleepy spouse, he still comes as a Christ to her, gently reproving and sweetly alluring: "*Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled; for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.*"

CHRIST, BOTH ALPHA AND OMEGA.

"They saw no man, save Jesus only."—MATT. XVII. 8.

If ever I needed thee, Jesus, 'tis now;
 Years, sickness, and trial have furrowed my brow;
 The arrows of death, by God hitherto bound,
 Are smiting both aged and young to the ground.
 I need thee; I need thee; sin only appears;
 Though great my delight in thy service through years,
 Contemptible, vile, chief of sinners I bow;
 If ever I needed thee, Jesus, 'tis now.

No semblance of worth in good works can I trace;
 Salvation, salvation, is wholly of grace.
 My wisdom and righteousness, Saviour, art thou;
 If ever I needed thee, Jesus, 'tis now.

No glorified saints in those regions above
 Can minister comfort, or share in my love;
 Or who on the earth, as endeared as art thou?
 If ever I needed thee, Jesus, 'tis now.

Weak, weary, and worn, at the close of life's day,
 The powers of nature fast fading away;
 'The war nearly over, in death I must bow;
 If ever I needed thee, Jesus, 'tis now.

I hang on thy word; and that word is to me
 Like a plank to the wreck'd, drowning sailor at sea;
 More needful than gold, or the root to the bough;
 If ever I needed thee, Jesus, 'tis now.

Thy smile I implore, Lord, and arms underneath,
 To bear me above the dark river of death;
 Then I'll sing, as I place a new crown on thy brow,
If ever I needed to praise thee, 'tis now!

December, 1878.

ANN HENNAH.

Dear Christian Editor,—In sending the enclosed hymn, which the blessed Holy Spirit condescended to drop into my heart in the Christmas week of last year, 1878, when the afflicting hand of the Lord was upon me, when great bodily prostration made it evident that "there was but a step betwixt me and death," I feel, as I then did, that some of the Lord's dear people may be led, as I then was, by a way not passed heretofore. Should you consider the great Head

of the church would be glorified, and the weak members of his body be edified, by its insertion in the "Gospel Standard," I desire also, by your kind permission, to make a few observations, which I trust to do "with reverence and godly fear."

It is the writer's blessed privilege to remark, that the sense of need for the precious presence of Jesus, as expressed in the first and concluding lines of the verses of the hymn, was not the language of a heart which had *not* been spiritually made alive by the quickening power of the Holy Ghost; not of one who was crushed beneath the weight of unpardoned sin; not of one who apprehended only the wrath of God, as "revealed against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men;" nor of one who knew God only as a "consuming fire." No, none of these sad experiences were then ours, for the blessed Spirit brought to our remembrance years of old; we were permitted to plead with our precious Lord Jesus, that he had manifested his pardoning grace; that his precious blood had blotted out our transgressions; that his atonement and death had reconciled us to an offended God, whose laws we had cast aside, and who had been year after year to us as an "Unknown God." We were also permitted to remind the blessed Saviour that he had "betrothed us unto himself in righteousness;" that he promised never to leave, nor to forsake us; that he had often told us we were "loved with an everlasting love;" and that, as he "hated putting away," he could not but love us even to the end. It was, moreover, our privilege to remind the Lord Jesus that he had always proved himself faithful to all his promises; that he had kept us as the apple of his eye in the hour of temptation; that he had shielded us in danger; had raised us up when sick; had provided for our earthly wants; had multiplied the few loaves and fishes into a sufficiency; had been our companion in seasons of loneliness, our brother in times of adversity; a bosom friend to whom we had access, and who had given us a full and free invitation to pour into his ears every tale of sorrow. That, through the long period of nearly thirty years of widowhood, we had never found him fail in his engagement to be our Husband, followed by the pressing importunity: "Wilt thou not, dear Lord, come unto me *now*, now, in this my time of need, when nothing on earth, and nothing in the heaven of heavens is needful but thyself?" The need of Jesus outweighed every other consideration; it was of too absorbing a character for language to describe, and is only faintly embodied in the enclosed hymn.

How precious and how suitable then did those words in the Canticles appear: "Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth?" "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon." (Song i. 7.) Again: "What is thy Beloved more than another beloved?" (v. 9). Most truly then could my soul reply, "He is to me the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely." The value of the Lord Jesus to myself as a poor needy sinner could not be equalled by the gold of Ophir, the crystal, or jewels of fine gold, the sapphire and the topaz (Job xxviii. 17-19); yea, all the treasures of earth were but as the dust in the balance in comparison to the superabounding excellencies the eye of faith could behold in Jesus.

But let it not be supposed that at this very time the enemy of souls stood aloof; far from it; he was close at hand. As the accuser of the brethren, charge after charge did he bring against us for sins of omission, as well as of commission; attempting to persuade us that it was presumption for one so utterly worthless to love a Being so supremely holy; who was so highly exalted; whose name was above every name;

whose power was so infinite, that in a moment he could banish us into everlasting perdition. The Holy Spirit witnessed these buffetings of the evil one, and in effect said, "The Lord rebuke thee," by bringing to our remembrance the apostle's words, "We love him because he first loved us;" and Peter's assertion, "To you, therefore, who believe he is precious." We could then see that it was *not* presumption to love with all our heart and soul and strength *Him* who had given himself for our sins, and who had said, "Son, give me thine heart."

Weak and incompetent as we knew our faith was to grapple with the taunts and reproaches of Satan, and earnest as were our prayers for divine strength, yet, notwithstanding all the "castings down" of the soul, we felt our faith was the faith of God's elect; the same faith which prompted Job to exclaim, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;" the same faith which led the poor woman in the gospel to press through every obstacle, to surmount every difficulty, so that she might touch but the hem of the divine Saviour's garment; the same faith which enabled the Syro-Phœnician woman to hope on for ultimate mercy, though Christ answered her not a word; the same faith which taught Peter to cry out, "Lord, save, or I perish;" the same blessed principle of faith which extorted the cry from the dying thief, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom;" and the same faith which led the mother of the celebrated Reformer, Melancthon, to say, "I am clinging to Christ as the burr does to the cloth."

Should these few simple remarks meet the eye of any dear children of God who have been brought into confusion of mind, soul-exercise and trouble, because they are being spiritually led, as we ourselves were, in paths they had not before known, we would affectionately encourage them to cleave in heart, in prayer, yes, with tears, to the precious Christ of God, and to hang their whole hope of salvation on the efficacy of his work, and on his merits. He has said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden." Oh! may you plead his own gracious assurance, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Be your case and state what they may, he is God's appointed "balm in Gilead;" God's appointed Physician for sin-sick souls; the chief Corner-stone laid by God the Father in Zion; and the only glorious One as Saviour of sinners whom the Holy Spirit will glorify. Keep close to those revelations of what he is, was, and will be, given for the comfort of his poor sheep in the wilderness, and remember that God is the God of truth. Heaven and earth, therefore, shall pass away before any power in earth or in the kingdom of darkness shall separate you from the love of Christ, or snatch you out of his hands, who loved you before the foundation of the world, redeemed you by his precious blood, pleads your cause in heaven, and promises not only to give continuous grace here, but glory hereafter.

With sincere Christian esteem and affection, believe me, my dear Mr. Editor,

Your Companion in the Wilderness,

Torquay, Feb. 14th, 1879.

A. H.

THAT God hath willed a man's blessedness gives him wonder and joy.—*Hardy*.

SOME men seem to place gospel assurance in a high unassaulted confidence of acceptance with God. Hence some conclude that there are very few believers who have any assurance, because they have not this confidence, or are more free to mention the opposition they meet with than the support they enjoy.—*Owen*.

A MEDITATION.

"Our God is a consuming fire."—HEB. xii. 29.

"For the Lord our God is holy."—PS. xcix. 9.

"But I would be holy."—MR. HART.

O how infinitely holy is God! How infinite is the divine purity! The purity of the holiest angel in heaven is only a derived purity; the holiness of God is a self-purity, a holiness essential to him. My heart has, I trust, some true apprehensions of this incomprehensible holiness; but O, how faint they are! I would earnestly desire and pray that they might be greater, and would stir up the hearts of others, as well as my own, to some contemplations of this adorable perfection of God.

But do I not seem to myself to sin in the very attempt to handle such a matter? Do I not, as it were, defile the holy things I attempt to touch, through my inherent pollutedness? Alas! it is so. I feel this to be the case. But here is a relief. The high priest of Israel, in the days of old, bore the iniquity of the holy things of that people, and thus made them holy and acceptable unto God. So it is now, in the spirit and substance of things. What would any of our attempts to serve and please God be, what acceptance could we hope our prayers or praises would find, did not the Lord Jesus, the great High Priest of the Israel of God, make them pure in presenting them, and render them acceptable? How sweet, at times, it is to think that when we pray, our prayers are as sweet odours, because they ascend up to heaven perfumed by the much incense of Christ's intercession! Our praises, too, are melodious, because all that is wanting of melody, and discordant about them, is drowned as it were in the sweet music of the golden bells of the garment of our great High Priest. Thus the saints pray prevailingly, and make an acceptable melody even in their hearts unto God. The blessed Spirit is the Inspirer of these prayers and praises. They are sweet, then, in their origin; nevertheless, as they proceed from us they contract defilement; but Jesus takes all this away, and makes up all deficiencies. Thus holy prayers and holy praises ascend from feeble saints, who are in themselves most wretched sinners, to the Most High God.

In the fourth chapter of the book of Revelation, when John was bidden by the voice of the great trumpet to "come up hither," and saw the holy heavenly places of God, O how sweet must it have been to see there the "sea of glass like unto crystal"! How poor sinners like we are shrink into nothingness, yea, tremble, when we have a nearer view of, and access unto, the true and holy things of God! Excellent saints have cried out, "We shall surely die," when they have held intercourse with a holy angel. Peter cried out, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." How then can such worms of the dust endure the burning purity of those holy places and things of God which John saw, as he declares to us in that blessed deep mys-

terious book of the Revelation? To our mind, the sweet relief and support is afforded by that crystal sea. This surely is, in a figure, the ocean of Christ's blood; infinitely pure, and infinitely purifying.

" For Jesus' blood, that crimson sea,
Takes all my guilt and filth away."

O! through eternity that blessed sea will never be lost sight of. It will always be present before the eyes of saints in the holy and heavenly places. O! what would heaven be to us who have sinned if the blood of Jesus Christ were not for ever present in the heavenly places before God, and the eyes of saints, to maintain an everlasting purity, peace, and felicity? How sweet, from time to time, whilst we are upon earth, to see by faith this sweet fountain of Christ's blood! A sea, so to speak, an ocean, for its infinite abundance; a fountain for its purity and everflowing virtues and constant efficacy.

Daily we contract fresh defilements; daily, if we are kept conscious of the purity and holiness of God, we shall feel that such defilements have a tendency, necessary tendency, to separate between God and us. Daily, then, we shall feel a need of fresh applications to that fountain, and shall appreciate the poet's words:

" Fast by this fountain let me stay,
And drink, and wash my sores away;
If but a moment I depart,
Sick is my head, and faint my heart."

If an Israelite in days of old came in contact with a defiling thing, such as a dead body, or bone of a man, he became defiled. He was no longer privileged to worship God as beforetime with his people. He was separated from God and the holy things and places as unclean. Nor could he regain his position, or return as an acceptable worshipper to those holy places, unless he obeyed the divine directions, and used the appointed remedy,—“the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean.” But, this divinely-appointed remedy used, he was restored to his full rights, and could worship amongst the people again; and with them in their ceremonies and services draw near to God.

Now, what do we learn from this? Why, our need of continual applications of the atonement to maintain our purity and peace of conscience, and sustain our souls in a blessed communion with a holy God. Every moment we are in contact with the defiling thing. We bear it about with us in a body of sin and death. The defilement is ever with us. We are always in contact with that dead and deadening thing, sin. What, then, can maintain the conscience in purity, the heart in peace, and the man in communion with a holy God, but a continual application by precious faith, the Holy Spirit's work, of the atonement? Why, why is the blood-shedding of Christ upon the cross so little thought of? so little cared for? Why are not our pulpits more filled with the sweet theme of a Saviour's blood? Why are not our lips more like a thread of scarlet, still speaking of Christ's

blood and its peace-speaking purging power upon the conscience? Why are not our churches more like vineyards of red wine, where Jesus's blood is testified of in all its life and joy-giving virtues? The answer, we believe, is this:—that our hearts are not deeply and constantly affected by the views of the divine holiness. Was that infinite purity of God, who is, as John writes, light, without any darkness at all, purity without the shadow of the reverse, more before our eyes, we should be more sensitively alive to the impurity that constantly cleaves to us, and all with which we have to do. Then we should either sink into a despairing state, and cry with the men of Bethshemesh as in days of old, "Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?" or we should fly, and this the Holy Spirit would bring us to, to the only remedy, the fountain of the blood of Jesus. Then we should be like Isaiah, who, when he saw the vision of the King, the Lord of hosts, straightway cried out, "Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Thus to himself he was, when in the presence of an infinite purity, like an unclean thing. Now what relieved this man? Why, a live coal from the altar; a fresh application by the Holy Spirit of the atonement of Christ. So it was with Daniel; so it still is. Nothing but the blood of Christ applied to the conscience by the Holy Ghost can purge it from dead, defiling, deadening works, to serve the living God in peace and purity. O the miserable unconsciousness that a greater part of our days is spent in! No deep feeling of the divine purity; no deep sense of our own defilement; no awe-producing consciousness of the holiness of those things of God which we are, from time to time, attending to and in contact with; no sense, therefore, of the pollution and guilt contracted in connection with our prayers, praises, hearing, reading, and other holy things. Hence a blind boldness, a customariness, slovenliness, and carnal ease. But O! when God awakens our minds, and brings us again to a deeper, more affecting sense of the reality of things, the amazing holiness of God, the holiness of all that pertains unto him and of the defilement of our own hearts, lips, and lives, as measured in some degree by that infinite purity, O then we want, then we value, then we cry out for the fountain. Then our language feelingly is:

"Wash me, Saviour, or I die."

Sweet and blessed is the life of the daily-exercised child of God, when daily he sees and feels his pollutedness, and daily is enabled to wash in the open fountain of Christ's blood. We don't mean that such a life has no bitters about it. It has many. "The heart knows its own bitterness." It is indeed bitter and terrible, at times, to see and feel as in God's light how very polluted and vile we are. But, then, this leads to the sweetness. And who can describe the indescribable blessedness and joy of finding restored purity and peace through the blood of Jesus?

The poor woman in the gospel who drew virtue out of Jesus by a touch into her diseased body, faintly emblems in her joy the blessedness of the man who, by the Spirit-produced touch of faith, draws pardon and purity and peace into his burdened heart out of a dying, risen Jesus.

Then, O how sweet and blessed are the effects of these things ! John says : " Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." Man naturally knows nothing of, and cannot thirst, long, and pray for a divine purity. But now let a man under the teachings of the Holy Ghost have discoveries of the infinite purity of God, the amazing purity of the heavenly places ; let him get a glimpse of the city which John saw, where saints are to dwell for ever, where the holy pure light of God shines in its fulness as the light thereof, where nothing unclean can enter, where nothing which defiles can possibly dwell ; then let him in the same blessed light see himself in some degree as he is

" All over as any fiend black."

Let him under this amazing and appalling sight cry out, " Unclean ! unclean !" and say feelingly :

" O Lord ! how vile am I,
Unholy and unclean !"

Then let him have a most sweet application, by the Spirit, through faith, of the blood of Christ to his filthy guilty conscience, and O, how will the man's heart leap for gladness, and sing for joy ! And then, O how will his heart thirst for perfect conformity to the divine image, a perfect answerableness to the divine purity ! Now the man, not upon legal principles, but those of gospel love, will long and pray to be holy. In holiness God's saints delight. Now he will aim, as Peter writes, to be holy in all manner of conversation and godliness. He feels, in heart, in lip, and life unclean ; he longs in heart, and lip, and life to be perfectly purified. So far as, in a way of believing, the efficacy of Christ's blood is felt within, so far will a man in desires and aims purify himself, even as Christ is pure. He longs to be like him : He is in love with holiness. He thirsts for purity. He would not have one sin spared, one evil left to plague his heart, if he could help it. As the poet well writes :

" The prisoner sent to breathe fresh air,
And blessed with liberty again,
Would mourn, were he condemned to wear
One link of all his former chain."

Now indeed death becomes attractive and desirable, because in this life sin still, in the body of it, remains ; the old defiled, defiling nature is always there. Here the man must still be day by day in contact with the defiling thing ; here he must daily groan ; here he will need daily fresh applications of the atoning blood of Christ to purge, revive, and pacify his conscience. In heaven there will be no more sin ; nothing to defile ; no more death ; no more distance ; all will be purity, all will be peace ; for as the poet again sweetly writes :

"But O! no foe invades the bliss
 Where glory crowns the Christian's head;
 One view of Jesus as he is
 Will strike all sin for ever dead."

Brethren, may this brief inadequate meditation stir up your hearts as well as ours to cry and breathe out our souls even now, with David, for a divine purity; and when we come to die and rise again in Christ's image, and enter into his eternal rest, O how will our souls for ever be abundantly satisfied with it!

REFLECTIONS UPON JUDE 19, 20.

"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

JUDE in his epistle makes allusion to some that were very trying to him; and not only so, but who were opposed to the Lord, and fought against his truth. Some of these people, no doubt, had natural ability to do this then, so they would stagger God's people; and there are people now with natural ability who also try God's people.

In the third verse the apostle exhorts the Lord's people to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints; and then goes on to say, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." He continues to allude to these people to the end of the 19th verse, in which he says, "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." He does not mean, These are they who separate themselves from error; these are they who separate themselves from sin, or from the world; but, "These are they who separate themselves" from the Lord's people, and wish to walk in a way of their own. Then, in the 20th and 21st verses, he goes on to speak to God's dear children: "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

I. In the first place, I would notice *what he calls God's people: "Beloved,"—"But ye, beloved."*

II. *What is here meant by "your most holy faith"?*

III. *The building up in it.*

IV. I would speak a little about *praying in the Holy Spirit.* The people Jude was writing to were those who prayed in the Holy Ghost. It is not the length of a prayer that avails; it is the spirit of it. Sometimes I feel that I cannot pray in the Spirit. I do not seem to know how to pray. There may be days go over my head without real earnest prayer; although there are many things needed by myself and others which are

promised in the Word; and there is a sure foundation in the blood of Christ for faith's plea for every blessing.

V. About "*keeping yourselves in the love of God.*" Man is a helpless, lost, and ruined creature; yet Jude says, "*Keep yourselves.*"

VI. About the "*looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*"

I. Jude calls the Lord's people "*beloved.*" What a sweet name! What a mercy to be embraced in it! O to form a part of the bride of Jesus Christ, a part of God's building of mercy, a part of Christ's mystical body! What an unspeakable blessing!

These beloved ones are the favourites of heaven. Mr. Hart, in commenting upon Hezekiah's case, says,

"Favourite of heaven, in thee we see
The miracles of prayer, in thee
The omnipotence of faith."

When you feel the love of God in yourself, you are glad; and when you can see it in another, it makes you also glad. When Barnabas saw the grace of God in Paul, he was glad; and when the disciples saw the Lord, it says, "Then were they glad." Although Jude addressed them as "*beloved,*" it does not imply that they always felt they were the beloved of the Lord, of whom it is written: "The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders." How near God is to his people, even when he seems to be very far off, and when

"He hides the purpose of his grace,
To make it better known!"

These "*beloved*" are loved by the Father of all mercies, and by his Co-equal, Co-eternal, only-begotten Son.

"Loved of my God, for him again
With love intense I burn;
Chosen of thee ere time began,
I choose thee in return."—*Toptlady.*

Christ, in love to them, died for them. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." What more could the Father do than he has done? What more could Jesus Christ do than he has done, and is doing? And what more could the ever-blessed Spirit do than he does? What love there is in the glorious Trinity! And what a mercy it is that what God does is done for ever! It may appear to be undone; all may seem marred and spoiled; but God is love, and he rests in his love. Though souls beloved and quickened may feel dead, and may not believe, still, "God abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself."

"Sure ground, and sure foundation too,
We find in Jesus' Name;
Herein we every blessing view,
And every favour claim."

'Though you cannot always see your title to the promises, they are always yours in Jesus Christ. They are yours as the real children of God and his "beloved."

Some of these beloved ones are in feeling far away from the comforts of the gospel, and without an assurance of interest in Jesus Christ, and in his precious blood and righteousness. It seems to them, according to their feelings, that they never will enjoy it. They cannot persuade themselves that they will; neither can any creature persuade them; they have a felt need of God's strong hand. These are the beloved of God, though they cannot yet feel the sheddings abroad of his love in their hearts, drawing out their affection to the Lord, or to the things of God that they could wish. We do not believe it is a trial to the mere professor of religion that he does not feel the power of God, and that his affections do not go Christward. No; he has no real desire for the power of God in his heart. But some have this desire within; and this is a sign of a gracious state.

But some are brought into the enjoyment of the love and mercy of God. They find his heavenly help; and are blessed with a softness of heart that is indescribable through the unction of the Holy One. They then find the yoke is destroyed, and enter into the wealthy place. They are led into the green pastures, and beside the still waters. Thus a man may feel persuaded while here below that he shall wear an everlasting crown. But, perhaps, when you look at your experience, you may fear you have no grace, or that, if you have anything gracious, it is very little. We are full, alas! to overflowing of that which is inherited from the first Adam; and sometimes it seems to us we have received nothing from the Second Adam.

II. But we must pass on, and notice, secondly, the expression: "*Your most holy faith.*" Now, I do not think this refers so much to the grace of faith in the heart, as it does to that which divine faith believes. We would notice a few things that are assuredly believed among us.

It is a mercy to have the approbation of God in your conscience, to be a believer in his truth, and a receiver of it. It seems very needful that a minister of Christ should be transparent, that he should have no reserve, but should come out in his true colours, and say what he really believes. How plainly things are put in the Scripture! How clearly they are stated in the Word of God! What simplicity there is, yet what mysteries! And who can lead us into them but the Holy Spirit?

Now, with regard to our Articles of Faith; for our church, as well as most others, has its Articles. You that are members have, no doubt, read them, and have put your hand to them. Now, supposing there is one in which you do not believe, are you not acting dishonestly by remaining a member of the church? There are some of us who consider that the important doctrinal branches of truth are set forth in our Articles of Faith; and I, for one, can sign them with a very honest heart and conscience.

Can you? We want to be open and clear in our statements as to our belief, and will just refer to a few things pertaining to our most holy faith.

One thing in which we believe is *the Eternal Sonship of Christ*. This some deny. Some make Christ out to be a mere man. They say he was a good man, worthy of our imitation, but deny his Godhead and the atonement altogether. From such a faith as this you would do well to flee, as from poison. You would not like to drink that which would poison your body; O beware, then, of deadly error. Though with regard to God's people, it is said, "If they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them;" not finally, because the Holy Ghost will doubtless recover them. If we are left to drink any deadly thing, he will make us sick in smiting us, so that we shall have to vomit it up. What a good thing it is to share in the Holy Spirit's favours! One favour is correction. We should very soon get farther wrong, in our hearts, lives, and spirits, than we do, if it were not for the correction of the Holy Ghost. May the Lord's people revere and value this blessing, in which they are called to share.

Next, consider the doctrine of *the Trinity in Unity*. Each of these blessed Persons agreed in that covenant of grace, which is ordered in all things and sure, to sustain a part in man's salvation. Kent says of this covenant,

" 'Tis signed, and sealed, and ratified;
In all things ordered well."

Look at *the fall of man*. This is one part of our faith,—the entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin. Some people believe that man did not lose all the image of God when he fell; and some believe it would not be just of God to impute Adam's sin to all his posterity. But those taught of God know better. If God gives me a feeling religion, man will not be able to talk me out of it, or subvert my judgment, unless the Lord permits it for a time. Some of the Lord's people have been left even to deny some parts of truth; but they have vomited up their error before they have departed out of this life, having been made sick by the smiting hand of the Lord. I am not surprised that some should think man is not so dead, blind, lost, and far off from God by wicked works as we say he is, if they have not been made to feel their state by the Holy Ghost; but those he takes in hand will become believers in the imputation of Adam's sin and imputation of Adam's corruption to all his race.

With regard to the Second Adam, we believe in *the imputation of his obedience* to his family, his people, his sheep, his spouse.

" We sinn'd, and Jesus died;
He wrought the righteousness,
And we were justified;
We ran the score to lengths extreme,
And all the debt was charged on him."—*Hart*.

Jesus Christ, God in our nature, has satisfied the justice of God, and met all the demands of his law; and God, being just, will

never demand a second payment. Grace has blotted out the countless millions of the sins of the elect for ever. Now the sufferings, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ on behalf of his people; their resurrection in him; and the glory that follows, is no mean part of our most holy faith. We do not mean to say *any* part is mean; all is necessary; all is important. The Lord said to Moses, "See thou make all things after the pattern showed thee in the mount." Then ought not we to be particular, in the present dispensation, to keep to the pattern before us in the Word? Jesus Christ is now in heaven,

"Interceding for us there;
Not a moment intermitting
His compassion or his care."—*Hart*.

Some of us may have days of felt distance, and, perhaps, without being able to assign any particular reason; for God "giveth not account of his matters." And "secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed unto us and to our children." According to the Scriptures, it appears some go long without gracious deliverances; but God will come in due time, because Jesus Christ died, the Just for the unjust, and intercedes for transgressors.

Time would fail to treat here of effectual calling, of justification, of final perseverance, and many precious parts of our faith.

There are also *the ordinances of God's house*. And, upon one ordinance especially, some of the Lord's people differ in their views; and other persons, it seems, actually reject them both. Some, too, I hear, though we hope there are not many in this case, even go so far as to say family prayer is altogether unnecessary. If you suggest the propriety of their praying at night and morning with their families, they say it is all form and ceremony; "and the body is Christ."

"I want no work within, says one;
'Tis all in Christ the Head;
Thus, careless, he goes blindly on,
And trusts a faith that's dead."—*Hart*.

Now, with regard to believers' baptism. I believe in that quite as much as in any other branch of God's truth; for I trust I can appeal to the Lord, and say, "Thou hast taught me." Time was when I could not receive it any more than others; but now I can say I believe it is an ordinance Jesus Christ has instituted for his children to follow him in. If you let go any branch of truth because it is not popular, you may let every branch go; at one time one truth, and at another time another. Whatever may be said against God's truth, it can never be destroyed. Every part stands like a mighty rock. Winds may blow, and waves may beat upon it; but there it stands, immovable. Some say ordinances, especially baptism, are but a little matter; but if baptism is a part of God's truth, we must not call it a little matter. God will not be trifled with; he is jealous of his honour. All life, and all goodness, comes from him; but assuredly the Lord

is pleased to bless his own ordinances. He has done so in my case. When I first saw believers' baptism administered, after I had known something of Jesus Christ, as my Saviour, I was, so to speak, broken all to pieces. Tears would flow; I could not keep them back. Sometimes we feel unable to shed a tear about a great deal of trouble; but a sense of pardon of sin, and interest in Jesus Christ, produces what nature cannot produce; what we cannot give ourselves, and what no friend can give us.

Baptism is immersion. If we were not immersed, it would not be an emblem of Christ's sufferings; because Jesus Christ suffered altogether, in body and soul. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." Baptism sets forth the sufferings of Jesus Christ; his resurrection from the dead; the child of God's death to the law and sin by the body of Christ; and his rising through union with Jesus Christ.

The baptized believer has a right to the ordinance of the Lord's supper, even when very low in mind. The devil tried, a few years ago, to keep me from it by various things; yet I hope the Lord has enabled me to wait on him in this ordinance. The psalmist says, "My soul followeth hard after thee." If it is man's appointment, neglect it by all means; but if God's, let us attend to it. What does the Lord's supper set forth? The broken body of Christ, and his precious poured out blood; which is the ransom-price for the elect. The ordinances, then, form a part of our most holy faith.

We also believe in *the communion of saints*. Not in pulling one another to pieces; not in evil speaking; no good comes of that. Some have indulged in this again and again, until God has come to bring their sins to remembrance; then what trouble has been felt within! It is no little sin to speak evil of God's people. If one child of God is dear to him as was Paul or Peter, so is another. A babe in grace is as much interested in the covenant of grace as an apostle. Grace never makes people think themselves great; but the reverse. We know that God is truth, essentially so. "Every word of God is pure;" and we would be of those that revere the Lord, obey his Word, and cleave to him. When he withdraws, it is night to our soul. If he continue communing with us for weeks or days, it is our day. He is the length of our days. If you say, I do not know anything of this path, then would to God that you did. O, if you were blessed with a living cry: "What must we do to be saved?" what a mercy it would be! That was my first cry. I thought I must do something; so I tried; and I found, the more I did, the worse I got. My doings could not remove guilt, and fears of death and hell; but the blood of Jesus Christ did. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound."

(To be concluded.)

HE is not married to Christ who brings forth no fruit unto God.—Hardy.

“HEAVINESS MAY ENDURE FOR A NIGHT,
BUT JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING.”

A Brief Account of the Exercises of Soul of Rebekah Secker, during her Dying Illness.

ON January 7th, 1845, she was taken with coughing and raising of blood, and became so weak that, in the course of two or three days, she could not leave her bed. On January 17th, the writer of this received a note from her mother, stating that she was so weak as not to be able even to sit up in bed, and that she was much distressed in soul, crying for mercy, and wishing she had never been born; saying that there was no mercy for her, as her heart was so hard that she could not feel her awful state. The writer saw her in the after part of the day, when, with tears of anguish rolling down her cheeks, she exclaimed, “I get worse and worse. You see what a state my poor body is in. I cannot live in this state long; and yet my heart is so hard, that I cannot feel. O that I could feel! Then there would be a little hope for me; but I cannot feel. I am out of the secret altogether. What little I have known I have not learned in the right way. O! how I do wish I had never been born! I know what it is to envy everything that has no soul.”

There being recorded in a number of the “Gospel Standard” an account of a woman who had been exercised in a similar way, whose great distress was that she could not love the Lord, and who had been much tempted to destroy herself, but had been marvellously prevented, and fully delivered from distress, the writer read the account to her. But she put away all comfort that any one endeavoured to administer to her, saying there was no hope for her, as she had not been distressed aright, nor was she even now, when death and hell stared her in the face. She said, “I can think of any foolery as soon as the pains are a little abated. I have tried to pray, but cannot.”

At this time she was so weak as not to be able to raise herself in the bed, having taken nothing but a little tea for nine or ten days, besides being tormented with blisters and mustard plasters, as also with excruciating pains in her head. She had to labour hard for breath, and her speech was so much impeded that she could scarcely be understood.

On the afternoon of the 19th, she requested that her head might be raised; after which, clenching and wringing her hands, she cried out, “Why torment me thus? If I am to be in hell for ever, why not let me have a little ease here?” Looking at her mother, who was weeping over her, she said, “O! how I do wish I had never been born! How I envy the beasts! O that I were anything but what I am!” Her conscience condemned her for her rebellion, and she said, “There is no hope for me. I am sure to go to hell. You see what a rebellious wretch I am. What a fool I was to talk so! But I could not bear my-

self any longer. I was forced to cry out. No one but God knows what I suffer."

On the 20th she said, with tears in her eyes, "I am as lifeless as ever. I feel as though I could not cry for mercy feelingly, did I know I should die immediately. You know I wish to be honest, and do not wish anyone to be deceived about me. I am sure to be lost. I am out of the secret. These words came to my mind, as though they had been spoken in my ears, 'He is of one mind, and who can turn him?' And this solemn persuasion seized my poor soul,—There is no mercy for me; and it has been uppermost ever since. Were I an object of God's mercy, I should not be in this wretched state."

The writer was now obliged to leave her; but saw her again on the 25th, when she was somewhat revived, and able with assistance to get from her bed to a couch; yet she was still extremely weak. Calling the writer by name, she said, "I am still destitute of feeling of the right sort, and am persuaded I shall die without it." The writer's inmost soul groaned to see one that was dear in such bitter anguish, and cried to the Lord for a manifestation of her interest in the dear Redeemer, and felt a firm persuasion that the time was fast approaching when she would be in the enjoyment of it.

Her mother told me she had been greatly distressed on account of her rebellion during the week. She had wept, and wondered at the Lord's long-suffering in sparing her worthless life, and not cutting her off at the time of her rebellion, and sending her where hope never comes. She had also told her mother how she was exercised when she was a child, and went to school. She remarked that people said she had always been different from others, being so quiet and harmless when a child, and that she had never run into sin as others had. She said, "Poor things! They don't know what I do, or they would not talk in that way."

On February 9th, she was able to sit in an easy chair for the greater part of the day. Nevertheless, she believed she should not recover, and with tears of extreme anguish said, "My sufferings are great. None but God knows the pains I feel; yet they are nothing in comparison with what I must ere long suffer, and that to all eternity. Oh! piercing thought! How shall I endure it? O that I had never been born! My dear mother has prayed for me till she is worn out; and I have tried, and cannot. I am out of the reach of mercy. I have not had one word of consolation applied since I have been taken ill."

The writer of this now told her of some who had been greatly distressed in the same way as herself, but who had found mercy instead of wrath when they most expected the latter; and expressed a persuasion that such would be her case. But she could not believe it, and said, "You will be deceived. My distress is not of the right sort. It is not the repentance that God gives. It is only an Esau's or Cain's repentance."

In a note received from her by the writer on February 18th, she expressed herself in the following language: "I do not consider myself any better, in either body or mind. I have attempted to pray for weeks, yea, for months past; but I seem to be no forwarder. My weakness of body and anguish of mind I cannot express to any one. My dear mother and I weep aloud sometimes; but no relief."

On the 28rd, she said, "O! there can be no hope for me. O! what I suffered last night no tongue can tell. Nothing but the words, 'You are deceived,' sounded in my ears all night and all this morning, till my grief seems to be more than I can bear. I feel as though my heart would break. O! I have been such a deceitful wretch, even when I was but a child. If things went contrary to my desire, I was tempted to swear some filthy oath; and sometimes the temptation has been so strong, that I have been obliged to lay my hand on my mouth, lest my lips should utter what I felt. I remember that when about fifteen years of age, I was so overpowered with a sense of my vileness, that upon one occasion, being alone, and in a lonely place, I felt constrained to attempt to pray, and placed a piece of wood on the ground, on which I knelt, and in tears I begged the Lord to pardon me for the past, and to guide and protect me for the future, and to keep me from the vanity of this wicked world; and I wept very much. When I rose from my knees, I felt alarmed lest any one should have seen or heard me. I was glad I could not perceive any one. But I soon became thoughtless and light again, and from that concluded that God would not hear me. Last Lord's day I felt ardent desires, and poured out my very soul to the Lord that he would give me some relief of body, or a token for good in my soul. Instead of this, I was taken much worse on the next morning, so that I thought I could not live long; and my soul was in an agony, fearing I should soon be in the regions of the damned. From such answers, how can I expect mercy? I have my funeral pictured to me very often, and fancy I can see myself in the coffin, and the procession going to the grave, and, O! indescribably piercing thought, my spirit being tormented with the devil and his angels, and that to all eternity. O! how can I endure it? But I must. I am such a wretch, such a rebellious wretch. On Monday my rebellion was so great that I even said, 'Why make me suffer so? I suffer more than any one. I am tormented here, and must be tormented to all eternity. Why not let *me* have a little ease here as well as others?' " In the afternoon of March 31st, she said, "O that God would have mercy upon me! But he won't. O that he would grant me a little ease before I go hence! But I am such a rebellious wretch, and I have never been exercised aright; therefore there is no mercy for me; and I deserve to be sent to hell. God will be just in sending me there; but O! 'tis hard work."

The next morning she was taken worse, so that she thought she was dying; and those around her thought that she could not continue long. It pleased the Lord at this time of extremity to suffer the enemy to come in upon her like a mighty torrent. Indescribable horror seized her poor soul. She told the writer of this that the devil seemed to be standing over her so as to be even sensibly present; and the belief of this was so powerful that she cried out, saying, "There he is; he is come for me. He wants to have me before the breath is out of my body." She said that this was the sharpest conflict she had experienced; and it proved to be the last furious assault that her great adversary was allowed to make upon her. God fulfilled in her his promise: "When the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him."

From that day it was evident that the Lord had breathed a sweet serenity into her soul, and enabled her to hope in his mercy.

On April 3rd, she expressed herself in these words: "I have not a full assurance; but I seem to have a glimmer of God's mercy in my soul at times." At this time she was wasted to a mere skeleton, and able to take scarcely enough to support life. She was only able to lie on one side, and was very sore and tired. Just before this, she had felt a great cleaving to the earth, from which she was now delivered. She said, "I have not the least desire to get well, and I can freely part with all this world contains for a Saviour. O for a manifestation of his mercy! But I am such a wretch; I fear I shall not have it."

On the 10th, the Lord broke in upon her soul with these words: "He hath saved thee with an everlasting salvation." Her mother being in the room, she exclaimed in an ecstasy of joy, "O! mother, can it be possible that this can be for me? But it is for me, I know. He hath saved me with an everlasting salvation; even me, who but a short time since expected the pit to shut her mouth upon me! I am saved with an everlasting salvation." This was on the Saturday evening; and the sweetness of the manifestation rested on her soul through the following day. But on the Monday morning it was gone; and the enemy suggested to her: You are deceived; it was not of God. You only imagined that the Lord applied the words. This filled her soul with darkness and distress; but on that day the Lord administered some consolation to her, and she was encouraged and supported for a few days; after which she again sunk very low, and cried, "O! Eternity, how shall I endure thee? I fear it will be my portion to spend an eternity in torments." After this, the Comforter came to her relief with these words: "The vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." This blessed ex-

hortation and promise wrought a great change in her feelings, as it brought with it an assurance that all would be well.

She was now able to read the Bible with a solemn pleasure, and said with feeling, "Precious Bible! Book of books!"

On May 4 she was much depressed in spirit, and feared she had been deceived. She said, "It appeared to be too much and too great for a poor thing like me to expect to go to heaven."

On the 5th, she was enabled to read a considerable time, and was blessed with a peaceful hope through the week. She was also enabled to speak of her experience for the past two years, and to believe that it was of God. On the 10th, she said, "I believe there is something coming for me. I feel such peace and quietness, such as I have never felt before."

On the 11th, she was taken worse, and for some time appeared to be deep in thought; when quite suddenly she looked at her mother, and with a smile said, "I shall go to heaven. I have been begging for a portion of Scripture; and these words came with sweetness: 'Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness;' and this portion was followed with the words: 'I have chosen you from the foundation of the world. I have pardoned all your sins.'" She was then silent for some time, and afterwards said, "What a sight I have of Christian and Hopeful passing the river. I cannot explain it."

On the morning of the 13th her mother was sitting by her bedside. For some time she did not speak, but her look was very solemn. On a sudden she put out her hands, clapped them together, and said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul! for saving such a wretch. Do bless and praise him, mother. Do not cry! Bless him! praise him! Sing:

'How high a privilege 'tis to know
Our sins are all forgiven!'

These words have been on my mind all night." She then fell back exhausted. Somewhat recovering, she said, "I could cry if I had strength, but it would be for joy. I never ought to doubt again."

On the next day she said, "I don't feel so comfortable;" but on the day following, she felt a sweet peace, and a hope that all would be well. On the next day she expressed a desire to be gone. Two days after this she breathed her last, having about a quarter of an hour before her death said, "Arise, shine! I am now going."

Dear Mr. Editor,—The accompanying account of the trouble and deliverance of a departed sinner whose mother is now living here, has only recently come into my hands. May the Lord make use of it for the comfort and confirmation of some of his dear family, that so his Name may be glorified.

Yours very truly,

Lrakenheath.

S. SARGEANT.

A SWEET DELIVERANCE. (2 Cor. iv. 6.)

If this extremity had lasted much longer, my soul had sunk under the weight of it; and even while I was in this case, it would have ruined me, if the Lord had not secretly supported in times of the greatest extremity, and as it were held me by the hand, even while I carried myself most wickedly. "So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless . . . thou hast holden me by my right hand." (Ps. lxxiii. 22, 23.) And at this extremity the Lord stepped in; when I had destroyed myself, he let me see help in him. (Hos. xiii. 9.) He found me lying wallowing in my blood (Ezek. xvi. 6), in a helpless and hopeless condition. I had none that would or could save me. I was forsaken of all my lovers. I was caught in the thicket. I was quite overcome; neither was I in case to fight or flee. And then the Lord passed by me, cast his skirt over me, and made this time a time of love. "And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah Jireh; as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." (Gen. xxii. 14.)

I cannot be very positive about the day or hour of this deliverance, nor can I satisfy many other questions about the way and manner of it. But this is of no consequence, if the work is in substance sound; for "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." (John iii. 8.) Many things about the way and manner we may be ignorant of, while we are sufficiently sure of the effects. As to these things, I must say with the blind man, "I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." (John ix. 25.)

However, it was towards the close of January, or the beginning of February, 1698, that this seasonable relief came; and so far as I remember, I was at secret prayer in very great extremity, not far from despair, when the Lord seasonably stepped in, and gave this merciful turn to affairs: "When I said, My foot slippeth, thy mercy held me up." (Ps. xciv. 18.) And when there was none to save, then his own arm brought salvation. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined into my mind, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. iv. 6.)

That which yielded me this relief was a discovery of the Lord, as manifested in the Word. He said to me, "Thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help." Now the Lord discovered, in the manner afterwards to be mentioned, several things, which I shall here take notice of.

1. He let me see that "there is forgiveness with him;" that with him "there is mercy, and plenteous redemption." (Ps. cxxx. 4, 7.) He made "all his goodness pass before me;" and he proclaimed his Name, "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy

for thousands ; forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin ; who will be gracious to whom he will be gracious, and will show mercy to whom he will show mercy." (Ex. xxxiii. 19; xxxiv. 5.) This was a strange sight to one who before looked on God only as "a consuming fire" (Heb. xii. 29), which I could not see and live. (Ex. xxxiii. 20.)

2. He brought me from Sinai and its thundering to mount Zion, and to the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that cleanseth from all sin, and speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. (Heb. xii. 22-24.) He revealed Christ in his glory, as the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (John i. 14); and I was hereon made to say, "Thou art fairer than the children of men." (Ps. xlv. 2.)

3. Hereon he let me see that he who had before rejected all that I could offer was well pleased in the Beloved: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened; burnt offerings and sin offerings hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God." (Ps. xl. 6, 7.)

And 4, Hereby I was further fully satisfied that not only there was forgiveness of sins and justification by free grace "through the redemption that is in Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God (Rom. iii. 24); but, moreover, I saw with wonder and delight, in some measure, how God by this means might be just in justifying even the ungodly who believe in Jesus. (Rom. iv. 5.) How was I ravished with delight, when made to see that the God in whom, a little before, I thought there was no hope for me, or any sinner in my case, if there were any such, notwithstanding his spotless purity, his deep hatred of sin, his inflexible justice and righteousness, and his untainted faithfulness pledged in the threatening of the law, might not only pardon, but without prejudice to his justice or other attributes, be just in justifying even the ungodly! The reconciliation of those seemingly inconsistent attributes with one another, and with the salvation of sinners, quite surprised and astonished me.

And 5, The Lord further opened the gospel call to me, and let me see that to me, even to me, was "the word of this salvation sent." (Acts xiii. 26.) All this was offered to me, and I was invited secretly to come and "take the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17); and to come in my distress unto this blessed rest: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden; and ye shall find rest to your souls." (Matt. xi. 28.)

6. He to my great satisfaction gave a pleasant discovery of his design in the whole;—that it was "that no flesh might glory in his sight" (1 Cor. i. 29-31); but that he who glories should have occasion only to glory in the Lord; that he might manifest the riches of his grace, and be exalted in showing mercy; and that

we in the end might be saved, "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. i. 6, 7; Isa. xxx. 18.)

7. The Lord revealed to my soul that full and suitable provision made in this way against the power of sin; that as there is righteousness in him, so there is strength, even everlasting strength, in the Lord *JEHOVAH*, to secure against all enemies (Isa. xlv. 24); and that in him there is sweet provision made against the guilt of sins, which, through the power of temptation, his people may be inveigled into. "These things write I unto you, that ye sin not. But if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John ii. 1, 2.)

8. When this strange discovery was made of a relief, wherein full provision was made for all the concerns of God's glory, and my salvation in subordination thereto, my soul was by a glorious and sweet power carried out to rest in it, as worthy of God, and every way suitable and satisfying in my case. "They that know thy Name will put their trust in thee." (Ps. ix. 10; cxix. 93.)

All these discoveries were made to me only by the Word. It was not indeed by one particular testimony, or promise of the Word, but by the concurring light of a great many of the promises and testimonies of the Word seasonably set home, and most plainly expressing the truths above mentioned. The promises and truths of the Word in great abundance and variety were brought to remembrance, and the wonders contained in them were set before mine eyes in the light of the Word. (John xiv. 26; Ps. cxix. 18.) "He sent his Word and healed me." (Ps. cvii. 20.) This was the rod of his strength, that made me willing (Ps. cx. 2, 3); and it was the plain word of salvation that I found to be the power of God. (Rom. i. 16.) I cannot positively say that the particular places above mentioned were the words whereby these discoveries were conveyed to my soul; but by these, or such-like passages, and I believe by many even of those mentioned promises and truths, were the discoveries above named made to me. But it was not the word alone that conveyed the discovery; for most of the passages whereby I was relieved I had formerly in my distresses read and thought upon, without finding any relief in them. But now the Lord shined into my mind by them. (2 Cor. iv. 6.) Formerly I was only acquainted with the letter, which profits not; but now the Lord's words were spirit and life (Jno. vi. 63); and in his light I saw light (Ps. xxxvi. 9), God opening mine eyes to see wondrous things out of his law. (Ps. cxix. 18.) There was light in them; a burning light by them shone into my mind, to give me not merely some theoretical knowledge, but "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. iv. 6.) And many differences I found betwixt the discoveries now made and the notions I formerly entertained of the same truths.

1. It "*shone from heaven*" (Acts ix. 3); it was not a spark kindled by my own endeavours; but it shone suddenly about me. It came by the Word of God,—a heavenly mean; it opened heaven, and discovered heavenly things,—the glory of God; and it led me up as it were to heaven. Its whole tendency was heavenward.

2. It was a "*true light*" (John i. 9), giving true manifestations of God, even the One true God, and the one Mediator between God and man; and giving a true view of my state with respect to God, not according to the foolish conceits I had formerly entertained, but as they are represented in the Word.

3. It was a *pleasant and sweet* light. "Truly the light is sweet; and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." (Eccles. xi. 7.) It had a heavenly satisfaction in God attending it. It led to a pleasure in the fountain whence it came.

4. It was a *distinct and clear* light, representing not only spiritual things, but manifesting them in their glory, and in their comely order. (2 Cor. iv. 6.) It put all things in their due subordination to God, and gave distinct and sweet views of their genuine tendency.

5. It was a *satisfying* light. The soul rested in the discoveries it made, and was satisfied; it could not doubt if it saw, or if the things were so as it represented them. (1 John ii. 27.)

6. It was a *quickenng, refreshing, healing* light. When this Sun of righteousness arose, there was "*healing under his wings.*" It was like the summer's sun warming. In a word, it was the *light of life*. (John viii. 12; 2 Cor. iv. 6.)

7. It was a *great* light. It made great and clear discoveries, whereby it easily distinguished itself from any former knowledge of these things I had attained.

And, 8, it was a *powerful* light. It dissipated that thick darkness that overspread my mind, and made all those frightful temptations that had formerly disturbed me fly before it. When the Lord arose, "*his enemies were scattered,*" and fled before his face. (Ps. lxxviii. 1.)

9. It was *composing*. It did not, like a flash of lightning, suddenly appear, and fill the soul only with amazement and fear; but it composed and quieted my soul, and put all my faculties in a due posture, as it were, and gave me the exercise of them. It destroyed not, but improved my former knowledge.

These particulars might be explained and further amplified; but the nature of this narrative, and the brevity designed in it, will not allow me to insist; and I the more willingly stop here, and forbear to give any more large account of my small experience of this light, because I know that no words can express the notion that the weakest Christian who has his eyes opened, really has of its glory. The true notion of light is not conveyed by the ear. The ear tries words; the taste meats (Job xii. 11); but it is the eye that beholds the sun. No words can convey a true notion of light to the blind; and he that has eyes, at least while he sees it, will need no words to describe it. It

manifests itself and other things. (Eph. v. 18.) It is like the new name, that none knows save he who has it. (Rev. ii. 17.) And they who really see, but more dimly, because their light is weaker, and Satan raises mists to obscure it, will be more capable of judging of it by its effects, than by any account of its nature. Therefore I shall forbear to speak any more of that, and now proceed to the account of the effects, whereby its reality and difference from former light will more obviously, evidently, and convincingly appear. However, at least, while this shining brightness lasted, this one thing it convinced me fully of, and made me certainly know,—that, whereas I was blind, now I saw. (John ix. 25.)

[In our last number we gave our readers "A Chapter of Experience," extracted from Halyburton's Memoirs. In that extract he refers to a blessed manifestation of the glory of God in Christ, whereby his soul was sweetly set at liberty from the guilt of sin, and also freed from the powerful temptations of Satan and snares of infidelity which before had entangled him. We this month give, believing it will be acceptable to our friends, another extract, containing an account of that divine manifestation. We hope it will prove a blessing to them, and be as sweet and powerful to their souls as it has been to ours. There is just one word that some minds may feel a little tried with. It is the word "offered;" but we have not liked to alter the author's expressions, which he has made use of in setting forth the divine dealings with his soul, especially as we think that if a spiritually-minded man considers the author's use of the word, and its connections, all real objections to it must vanish. They will at once perceive that the author merely means he was shown that even such a poor utterly lost sinner as he felt himself to be was not excluded, but freely invited to partake of those blessed things in Christ which were then revealed to his soul. This, then, was not the legal and fleshly, the humanly acceptable or rejectable, offer of Arminianism; but the sweet, constraining, almightily efficacious offer, or, as we ourselves should have preferred to call it, bestowment of all-conquering free grace.]

"We have thus embodied our views of what the Gospel is, and, by implication, what experience is too. Objections have been raised to the name of our periodical, as assuming too much. *We* did not so christen it. It was neither originated nor named by us. It is true that unlooked-for, as well as unsought circumstances gradually, in a good measure, brought it under its present management; but if the name be faulty, let not that charge be laid at our door. But perhaps the objection itself may rest on an unfounded assumption that by it was intended that this periodical was indeed the *Gospel Standard* by which all writings were to be weighed. This, we have reason to believe, was not the meaning of those who so named it; but that the gospel, the gospel of Jesus Christ, the gospel as revealed in the Scriptures, the gospel as made known by the Holy Ghost to the soul, the gospel as implying in one comprehensive expression all the doctrine, all the experience, and all the practice of the New Testament, was to be its *standard*. In a word, that not the opinions or writings of frail, fallible man, not the 'shibboleth' of a sect or party, but the GOSPEL alone, in its length and breadth, was to be the STANDARD by which all its contents were to be weighed and adjusted; that to that bar, and to that alone, was it amenable; and that all which fell short of the gospel, whether in itself or others, was justly to be condemned."—*Ext. from Address in "Gospel Standard,"* p. 12, 1852.

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

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

My dear Friend,—I thought I must write to you a line or two this morning. It has pleased the Lord to lay upon me again his Fatherly chastening rod. The Lord has also discovered the needs-be of it unto me. Through the rod he has shown me there was a needs-be that he should thus deal with me, that it was not in anger; for though he was angry with me, that his anger is turned away (Isa. xii. 1), and his chastisement all in love.

I took a heavy cold about the 18th. Soon there followed bronchitis, and congestion of the liver; and very great pain of body attended it. On February 27th, whilst lying on my bed in most excruciating pain of body, these two lines of Hymn 668 came most sweetly to me :

“Compell’d I am on Christ alone to hang,
And plead the blood by which the church is freed.”

These seemed a great comfort and stay to my mind; and the divine compelling power was prized, and my soul comforted.

On March 3rd I took up the “Gospel Standard,” and opened upon “Salvation Cometh.” Finding it was one of your sermons, I began to read it, and as I read on it kept coming sweeter and sweeter. When you came to the wilderness, I felt I knew about that spot, for I had been there; and the blind, and the deaf, and the lame, and the dumb; I had been all that; and I did feel the coming of Christ in his suitability to my maladies and miseries. I, a mass of sin; a precious Christ, a fountain of healing virtues. Then, when you came to the effects of his coming, I hope I did know and feel what it was for the eyes of the blind to be opened, the ears of the deaf to be unstopped, the lame man to leap, and for the dumb to sing. The reading of that sermon was like drinking down a cordial, reviving my hopes, cheering my spirits, comforting my mind. And the blessing in reading the sermon led me back to the former visit from the hymn, and I felt my soul was blest; which has made the affliction, I trust, profitable to my soul.

It is to the praise of the glory of his grace that I have written these few lines, and that you may be encouraged still in your great work to now and then put a sermon of your own in the “Gospel Standard.” I think the one in October last was much blessed; and I hope many may receive a like blessing to myself from the one inserted this month. We cannot help loving those whose labours the Lord blesses to our souls. We feel a close union of soul to the instruments, and bless the Lord for them, and himself for the blessing by them.

I am thankful to tell you I am better, and gradually gaining my strength.

With sincere love, I am,

Yours affectionately,

Chiddingly, Hawkhurst, March 7th, 1879.

WILLIAM VINE.

We must again express a hope that our friends will not think us very egotistical when we insert letters or communications having some reference to our own writings. What has a sweet savour of Christ and his Spirit; what indicates a daily religion and exercise of soul before the Lord; what speaks freshly and feelingly of hopes and fears, castings down and liftings up, of the wilderness of trouble and visits of Christ to the soul in its desert-like and solitary states and conditions, we feel a union to, and desire to insert without any reference to the ministers or means the Lord may have used in these matters. If we could always keep in our minds, thro' divine grace, what Paul writes, there would not be much vaunting of ourselves, or being puffed up for one against another:—"Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth." A man cannot well be less than not anything, than a something in this divine work not to be accounted of. Where this creature-nothingness is seen and felt, then, as Paul further writes, "He that planteth and he that watereth are one." They become one in a blessed unity of humility and love; giving all the glory unto God.

"When is it Christians all agree,
And let distinctions fall?
When, nothing in themselves, they see
That Christ is All in all."

Having now made these remarks, we shall, in future, feel more free to insert anything into our periodical which appears savoury and good, independent of all other considerations. We wish for our readers the spouse's experience in all their hearing and reading: "It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found Him whom my soul loveth." They must get beyond men to find the Lord.

My dear Friend, and I hope I may say Brother in a precious Jesus,—O what a privilege, O what a blessing,

"That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity!"

We received your kind letter with thanks, and were glad to hear the Lord had favoured you with his blessing, both in communion and in preaching. May the dear Lord continue to bless you, is my soul's hearty prayer to him oftentimes. The Lord knoweth that I lie not. As you observe in yours, it is a path of trial. But in our right minds we are led to consider that this is the path the dear Lord has marked out in his Word, and that the saints in all ages have had to travel this way; yea, the dear Redeemer himself went to his glory by it. O! what a path of sorrow, trial, and suffering was his! Unasked, unsought by us, he became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He hid not his dear face from shame and spitting. And all to raise such wretched sinners as you and me to the realms of bliss. Honours crown his blessed brow for ever and ever!

When the dear Lord drops a little of his unctuous dew and dying love into our poor hearts, we are blessed, and we envy none; but, as dear William Gadsby says,

“ No creature on earth is more happy than he,
 Nor Gabriel himself is more blest.
 He lives on the bounties of grace, rich and free,
 A glorious, immortal repast.”

But with me these seasons are few and far between, and after them,

“ I to my own sad place return,
 My wretched state to feel.”

And this is faith's fight and struggle. And living faith, I believe, will never give it up until the soul is landed in the realms of bliss, where faith is turned into vision.

Now, my dear friend, I must tell you that my dear wife is much better, and I have some hope that she will be raised up again. She was taken much worse on Lord's-day while we were at chapel. A message was sent for me, and I sent for the doctor; and I do think that my heart went up to him who is the Physician of both souls and bodies. The Lord helped me with these words: “ This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of man may be glorified thereby.” God grant that it may be so in the manifest salvation of her soul.

May the Lord bless you and yours with all needful blessings. This is the desire of

Yours in love,

Lakenheath, May 5th, 1875.

JAS. TRUDGETT.

Dear Brother,—We received yours, and were exceeding glad to hear from you, and to find you are well, and that the Lord God of the Hebrews does cheer you by refreshing your soul amidst your wilderness sorrows. I can assure you, were it not for some of these refreshing seasons, I should be of all men the most miserable. I am often cast down; but not destroyed. A fortnight ago last Saturday I was in such a state that I very much feared I should go out of my mind; and I could not help telling my wife so. The enemy set in upon my poor soul, telling me that it was all over with me, and that I should not be able to preach any more. How my poor heart sank within me! But towards night I felt a little better. The Bible did not appear so dark as before; my hope was a little strengthened, and my expectation was raised; and I had a pretty comfortable Sabbath.

On Lord's-day week, in the morning after breakfast, I read a chapter, and went on my knees, according to my usual way, and attempted to go to prayer; but I hardly knew how to speak a word. Such a disproportion did I see and feel between a Holy God and me, an unholy, vile, unworthy, base, wandering sinner, that I did ask the Lord that if he could notice such a poor wretch as I was, he would be pleased to take me and form me for his own glory, and give me strength to bear up under whatever should be his pleasure to lay upon me. Then I went up into my room, and I do think I never can forget while in the body how my poor soul was feasted by faith. I believably saw the Lord Jesus in agony and blood, bearing and for ever removing my hel-

lish crimes and black transgressions. And that verse of dear Hart's came with such solemn sweetness :

“ See here the Victim panting lies,
His soul with bitter anguish prest ;
He sighs, he pants, he groans, he cries,
Dismayed, dejected, shock'd, distress'd.”

My heart melted ; my eyes flowed over with tears of unspeakable joy ; my very soul did leap within me ; and I really felt my cup running over. I felt the terrors of death and the gloom of the grave were vanquished. O friend ! it was heaven on earth to me. I did not then want a text, for I had these words in their sweetness (Rom. viii. 32) : “ He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ? ”

But what am I doing ? I am not answering yours ; you must forgive me. I was so glad to hear from you and the London friends. Give my kindest love to those friends that have been so kind as to notice such a worm as I am. Tell them I love them in the Lord, and I am hoping to meet them, if not in this world, when a few more storms are over, and earth's sorrows changed for heaven's triumphs, where God and angels dwell. O friend ! do pray for me.

Yours in the Lord,

Wolverhampton, Oct. 25th, 1850.

JOHN WIGMORE.

Dear Mrs. Peake,—Having a desire to send dear Sarah Adcock a trifle, by making you my almoner I may be favoured with a line from you. I should be pleased once more to hear of the welfare of yourself and sister from your pen. Doubtless you can tell of the Lord's goodness and your own baseness. He still bears with our daily provocations. Cannot we join with dear Micah, and say, “ Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage ? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.” Blessed scripture ! sweet, sweet truth ! After having known the sin-pardoning love of God in Christ 29 years, the publican's prayer still suits me. God, who knows my heart, knows also that I would do good ; I would be fruitful, I would indeed serve God in this my day and generation ; but evil seems to preponderate over all my good desires.

At times I feel the Lord is making good his precious promise made to me three times over in one day, 29 years ago this month : “ In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” (Prov. iii. 6.) This is in Christ an unconditional promise. Yet the devil has at times robbed me of the comfort of it, by making it into a legal and merely conditional one. That crafty foe has done it sometimes in this way. When I have been in any deep trial, in soul or providence, and I have had many of both kinds, then in steps Satan, and says, “ Thou art in this trouble because thou hast not acknowledged the Lord

in all thy ways"; giving a mere legal turn to the promise, and making out my troubles as a sort of legal judgments. Then, feeling my own shortcomings in many things, I have believed his lie, and so brought myself under the old yoke or covenant of works, as if I had myself to do something, and not the Lord do all. O the distress which is felt under that yoke! I can say, with dear Mr. Huntington, I would not pass through the same again for worlds. We have a taste of hell under that covenant. How fearful to all who die under the law! O! dear friend, great indeed is our mercy to be brought in such soul experience to embrace and love the blessed gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to believe that all the precious promises are unconditional in Christ in the gospel. 'Tis also true, the rod is for the fool's back. I know this by painful experience. When left to ourselves and our own ways, we bring it on our shoulders.

The week before last, when in deep soul distress, these words were a sweet relief: "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." (1 Pet. v. 7.) The latter part of the verse was precious indeed to my distressed soul; but alas! wretched unbelief soon robs the soul.

"Count the cost" was sent into my heart with great power in 1839. Yes, dear friend, we have to "buy the truth"; but must not sell it. A religion which costs nothing is worth nothing; so used dear Mr. Tiptaft to say. I was invited by a good man named Spackman, who lives a few miles from Allington, to pay him a visit during dear Mr. Philpot's stay in Wilts; but was too poorly to leave home. I have suffered from tender feet nearly two years. I also feel age and infirmity creep on fast. O to be enabled to say, with the dear apostle Paul, with a small measure of faith: "I have fought a good fight, &c." (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.) I know that death, to a believer, has lost its sting.

I heard from an afflicted friend, E. H., last week. The extreme heat was too much for her poor tabernacle. The saints are a company of poor afflicted creatures. Lord, help us to pray for each other. Those whose eyes the Lord has opened do indeed see and feel this to be a world of sin and sorrow. I feel persuaded, 'tis a "remnant small."

This is a solemn day in which our lot is cast. The Lord alone knows what is coming upon us. See the dreadful mockery under the garb of religion. Even amongst those we desire to hope well of, religion, in the power of it, seems at a low ebb. I hope there are conversions taking place. I never hear of any. I love to hear it said, "Such a man or woman is gone off his or her head." It was so reported of me. Thank God for the change! I fear we have but few ministers of the *spirit*. They don't "turn the world upside down." Paul did. When my lord Alvanly discharged me from his service, he said I had turned his house and neighbourhood upside down. I know the Lord turned me upside down and inside out.

I shall be pleased to hear a good account of yourself and

Miss Morris. I hope the dear Lord does, from time to time, visit your precious souls with the joys of his salvation. My poor housekeeper is quite dark. It is a trial for me, but greater for her; and I have no ground for hope that she has light in her soul. I hope you are suited with a God-fearing servant. They are hard to find. Please receive a P.O. Order for £1, with Christian love to S. A.

I am still a poor outcast. I rarely hear preaching. I know not where to hear the Yea and Amen gospel in the power of the Spirit. The ear tries words, as the mouth tasteth meat. My poor soul loves savoury meat, such as dear Mr. P. puts on the King's table, "warm from the spit," as dear William Gadsby used to say. May the Lord spare his valuable life. I feel for you, as you must have sustained a great loss in his ministry. I bless God for the "Gospel Standard." How deep and precious are the Meditations! O for grace to deny wretched self, to bear our daily cross, and wait patiently all our appointed days till our change come! Sure I am, if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most miserable. O! to be in possession of Christ, the true riches, is worth millions of worlds. Without it, all must sink to hell.

I am, dear Mrs. P.,

Yours in the Lord,

Shurdington, Aug. 23rd, 1868.

J. TURNER.

My dear Friend,—I received your unexpected but very welcome letter. I hope you will pardon me for not acknowledging it sooner, for I have been so exercised in various ways that I could not write. I have lately had to work long hours for the bread which perisheth, and then I have had to labour hard in sighs and groans, darkness and distress, in prayer and supplication, for the Lord to enable me to break the bread of life before his people. Then, at other times, I have felt as cold, barren, wretched, vile, graceless, and dead, as if I had never had a grain of real religion; and I need not say that, at such times as these, it is difficult to correspond with a friend. The spirit may be willing, at times, but the flesh is weak.

So, then, I can assure you I have not forgotten you, and, at times, I have been enabled to remember you at the throne of grace; and to-night I feel the desire and have the privilege to write a few lines to you. May the God of Israel guide and direct me, for without his heavenly wisdom and divine anointings we know nothing, and can do nothing to profit our own souls or those of others. But what a mercy if we are enabled to say, "We have an unction from the Holy One"; for this is the life, power, blessedness, and glory of God in the soul. Without this all religion is dead and worthless.

I cannot tell you how my poor heart was melted in reading your honest confession of some of the Lord's dealings with your soul, by which he is, I believe, cutting down and rooting up all self-

righteousness, fleshly confidence, and natural religion. Now, I know when the Lord does this, it is a painful work. O how often we ask the Lord to strip us, and empty us; but when he does it, how the soul is for the time distressed, beclouded, and full of fears! How Satan, too, works upon the carnal mind at such times as these! O how true are those words: "Thou makest darkness, and it is night, wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth"! The Lord makes darkness when he comes to strip us of those things which lie so near our carnal minds. He makes us fit subjects for the gracious and skilful Physician's healing balm, by the application of his Word to the conscience, and by chastening and teaching us out of the law. How the apostle experimentally opens this up in the seventh chapter of Romans, where he says, "Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence." O what darkness and wretchedness is then felt, until the Lord by precious faith gives the victory to the soul by a sight of, and a felt interest in, the dear Lord Jesus! Until then he maketh darkness, and it is night; yes, apparently without one gleam of hope; and whatever we may do, we cannot alter it. We may read the Bible; but it is night. We may meet with God's people, and sit under a gospel ministry; but it is night. We cannot, like dead professors, kindle a fire, and compass ourselves about with sparks, and walk in the light thereof. O no! God will not let his children rest in any natural system; but will take from them all shadows, that he may cause them to inherit substance.

But, under these operations, how we are constrained to cry out with the psalmist: "Thou hast showed thy people hard things; thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment." Now, my friend, I can see from your letter that the Lord has been leading you into some of these things, and has given you from time to time a sweet token, a little evidence, and an earnest of future blessings. In this way he is teaching you what you are, and the necessity of possessing a real religion,—a religion which he begins, carries on, and completes; and to hope, and quietly wait for his salvation. When the Lord blessedly manifests his salvation in the heart, it amply rewards for all the exercises, darkness, doubts, fears, and conflicts it has passed through, however long they may have been.

But I must conclude this letter, hoping the dear Lord may keep you, bless you, and enrich your precious soul with the bread and wine, the milk and honey of his glorious gospel. Like the apostle Paul, may you be enabled to say experimentally, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation." May your heart be enlarged by love to run in the way of his commandments.

I remain, as I trust,
Yours in the bonds of the everlasting gospel,

J. OLDFIELD.

4, Canning Street, Wall Street, Chester, Nov. 1st, 1872.

"I WILL FEAR NO EVIL."

Lord Jesus, who hast died,
 And livest now for me,
 Thou art my Shepherd and my Guide,
 Whate'er my lot may be.

What evil need I fear,
 Since thou art ever nigh,
 Gently to wipe the falling tear,
 And hush the rising sigh ;

To shield me by thy power,
 To keep me, lest I stray ;
 To lead me on, each passing hour,
 In the blest heavenward way ?

My name upon thy breast
 Thou, Great High Priest, dost bear,
 Protected by thine arm, I rest
 Safe from the tempter's snare.

I bless thy gracious Name ;
 On thee my soul I stay,
 Who art for evermore the same,
 Though all things pass away.

Let me still trust thy love,
 And cast on thee my care,
 Till I behold thy face above,
 And praise thee fully there.

R. J. H.

REVIEW.

The Papal Hierarchy: An Exposure of the Tactics of Rome. By Dr. Wylie, Author of "The History of Protestantism," &c.—London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co., Paternoster Row. Edinburgh: Andrew Elliott, 17, Princes Street. 1878.

We wish to bring this little work under the notice of our readers. We are no alarmists. We have no fears about the ultimate triumph of the Lord Jesus and his church over all their enemies. Nevertheless, we cannot, as lovers of our country, and as having those near and dear to us whose future welfare must be greatly bound up with England's weal or woe, help having at times great anxieties for it and them; and these fears have been further awakened and increased by reading this masterly exposure by Dr. Wylie of papal tactics. Dear friends, may the Lord stir up our hearts in a way of earnest prayer that our civil and religious liberties may be preserved to us; or if, as Dr. Wylie and others have indicated, the storm of papal ascendancy must again pass over our land, that God will preserve us faithful in the time of trial, and speedily bring forth a revived and more glorious Protestantism out of the ruins.

Dr. Wylie's work is divided into eight chapters, and is of a most readable and interesting nature. The first of these chapters is historical, and is entitled: "England Rises and Falls with Protestantism." The historic facts, we doubt not, are correct, and we believe the inference drawn, especially as to the later periods, is warrantable. That inference is that there is a special providence of God in respect to this country, and that God either blesses or blights this land, gives it glory or covers it with adversity and shame, according to the ascendancy of Protestantism or Popery in our midst. This we believe to be a perfectly Scriptural view of things. God raises up nations to power and eminence, or sinks them into obscurity and desolation; not to foster national vanity, or the reverse, or merely for a nation's sake; but as designing to carry out by that particular people the eternal counsels of his will in Christ.

It would appear plainly that God's purpose in raising up our nation to such eminence and influence has been to make it a bulwark, yea, citadel of Protestantism, as opposed to Popery, or of true religion as opposed to that which has upon it the odious mark of Antichrist. Well, then, we might *a priori* conclude that the national power and glory would rise or fall with Great Britain's answerableness or the reverse to this design of God. "O! England, England!" as John Knox passionately exclaimed, and Dr. Wylie quotes, "O! England, England! if thou obstinately wilt return into Egypt, if thou returnest to thine old abominations before used under the papistry, then assuredly, O England! thou wilt be plagued and brought to desolation by the means of those whose favours thou seekest, and by whom thou art procured to fall from Christ to serve Antichrist."

The second chapter dwells upon the warning voice of Robert Hall, of Leicester, uttered half a century ago. This voice of that most eloquent man pointed out the apathy and morbid charity which even in his day had paralysed Protestantism, and contrasted it with the energy and activity of the Papacy. He writes: "All the zeal and activity are on one side; and while every absurdity is retained, and every pretention defended, which formerly drew down upon Popery the indignation and abhorrence of enlightened Christians, we should be ready to conclude, from the altered state of public feeling, that a system, once so obnoxious, had undergone some momentous revolution." Well may Dr. Wylie say, "Had Hall lived to our day, how much more lively would have been his fears, and how much more energetic his warnings! The little cloud of 1824, which showed itself on the horizon no bigger than a man's hand, has since assumed prodigious dimensions, and now darkens great part of our sky, portending tempest, if not night." These are alarming words; but fully justified, as Dr. Wylie shows, in the remainder of the chapter and throughout this book.

In the third and fourth chapters we have the nature of the papal hierarchy explained. And it is shown how, by setting up

such an hierarchy, or appointing in England and Scotland, as well as Ireland, not merely titular bishops, but bishops in ordinary, territorial bishops, taking their titles, not from places afar off, and perhaps only existing in the papal fancy, but from places such as Westminster and St. Andrew's in England and Scotland, the pope is taking possession of our country with the design of enforcing in it his authority, to the overthrow of all our civil and religious liberty. Dr. Wylie well explains the difference between a priest and a bishop, and between a mere titular bishop and a territorial one, a bishop in ordinary. The latter is a sort of vice-pope, or rather resembles the prefect of ancient Rome sent to govern by the conqueror a subjugated province. Dr. Wylie well says: "It was the custom of pagan Rome, when she had conquered a province, to send a prefect to govern it. After this high and ancient precedent, papal Rome sends her prefects, whom she styles bishops, to govern the provinces into which she divides her far-extending realms. The territorial bishop is the pope's prefect."

Our author well points out, too, that the papal hierarchy thus set up again in these lands is, in every sense, according to Rome's own decision, the heir of the blood-stained hierarchy which our fathers abolished. The woman, when seen by John in Rev. xvii., still wore her robes of scarlet. In these popish bishops, Protestants should see the murderers of the godly of former days: they are by their own choice and showing the representatives of those who consigned Wishart and Latimer and Ridley and others to the flames. How vain to suppose that the tiger, having tasted blood, is satisfied! Popery, if it has the power, will again be drunk with the blood of saints.

At the end of this chapter, we have the canon law set before us in some of its fundamental particulars; a code of laws of a more infamous and cruel nature cannot be conceived. This is the sort of code that devastated the Netherlands, and lit the fires of martyrdom in which our fathers burned; and yet we, their degenerate and falsely charitable children, look on with a heartless apathy at the inroads of a power which is organized for, and fully bent upon, the enforcement of this code of iniquity. This code, mind, is the pope's law. This code is that which his prefects, his bishops, are appointed to enforce as far as possible. This code, as Dr. Wylie well shows, is not the law of our native country; the law under which we now live and enjoy our civil and religious liberties, our precious rights and privileges, the law for which our fathers struggled, and suffered, and bled; no, it is the law of a foreigner, the law of a man, the pope, who exalts himself above all laws and all kingdoms, and has now declared himself infallible. He has seated himself on the throne of Christ, and arrogates to himself, in the vilest presumption, the attributes of the Almighty. But here, as Dr. Wylie anticipates, may arise this question: How can the pope enforce this his law in a country like ours, which boasts of its liberty and

the paramount authority of its laws over all persons, high and low alike ?

The three next chapters ably explain this matter, and answer the question. We can only sketch the argument, referring our readers to this most interesting little work itself for a fuller satisfaction. In the first place, Dr. Wylie very properly insists upon the tremendous power the pope exercises over his votaries through the impious dogma of the infallibility. This man, seated at Rome, speaks to his deluded followers with the assumed authority of Christ himself. He is to them as in the place of God. Thus he can direct his thunderbolts against the conscience, and influence, as no earthly monarch can, through the terrors of the unseen world and of eternity. What cannot the throne of iniquity, which imagines mischief as a law, cause evil men to perform when it enforces its decrees with the most tremendous sanctions, holding the keys of heaven, hell, and purgatory ; opening heaven to the submissive, and shutting the refractory into hell, or for countless ages in the fierce fires of purgatory ? By means of this terrible infallibility, by the power he wields over the conscience, the pope can, as to his followers, override their allegiance to the state, and their subjection to its laws. The pope is really to them a king of kings, and his tyrannical laws virtually supersede the laws of their own country.

Now, this is no mere fanciful picture of what is possible, but unlikely to take place. Dr. Wylie shows that such a state of things actually exists. He points to Ireland. There the papal system is in full working order. There the canon law, the law of an infallible pontiff, is very effectually enforced, and virtually supersedes the law of the land. The laws of our country can only be enforced by human punishments attached to the breach of them ; the canon law, by the awful threatenings of a god. Murder may cease to be murder, and even service to God, when committed at the command of the pope. Thus canon law can and does override the law of the land, and acts of violence may take place through the power which the pope, by means of his territorial bishops and the priests, exercises over that unhappy and turbulent people. The pope has now re-established, contrary to law, the papal hierarchy, and appointed his territorial bishops, first in England, and just lately in Scotland, and thus he has abstracted virtually a large number of the queen's subjects from under her authority, and set up in this country a papal empire in opposition to the rights of the throne and to the laws of our country.

The last chapter of the book and part of the previous one unfold the schemes of the papacy for the complete subjection of our native land, and for the re-establishment of Popery. Our author shows that by means of mobs and parliamentary obstructions, the cause of Popery is made more and more to progress and triumph. Popery will ally itself with anything, even Socialism,

to force the hand of the state, or rather fasten iron fetters upon it. With a fixity of purpose, and a simplicity of design, it will enlist on its side the most apparently antagonistic things. And all this while Protestantism lies for the most part in a profound slumber; and Protestants, warned from time to time by the most distinct and earnest utterances, still only reply with the feeble exclamations of blind security: "We can see no danger."

Dr. Wylie, after dwelling upon the advances of Popery, whether through the agency of mob-violence, or the greatest treachery and duplicity, and indicating the approach of the terrible tempest that seems ready to burst upon us, writes: "All these considerations receive additional force from the condition of England, where we witness a portentous spread of Ritualism,—in other words, Popery; a rapidly-developing powerful popish influence; a million a year given for the support of popish priests and popish institutions; the all but entire cessation of the spirit of resistance to popish advance; the growing conviction in the minds of even good men that the battle is lost, and that it is needless to fight longer. And then, too, we have to think of the continent of Europe, where gigantic atheisms and communisms are lifting up their heads, overshadowing order, attempting the life of kings, and making powerful governments quail. Popery, if her cunning does not fail her, will, under pretence of inserting the curb, impose the harness, and make atheism and communism to draw in her car. There is not the slightest exaggeration in this picture. Whether it indicates boldness to contemplate it without alarm we shall not say. We who now write are too old to have any personal fear whatever. But to our thinking, this is a state of things which, sooner or later, will bring lightnings over the heavens, and make ruins upon the earth."

With Dr. Wylie's words of warning we thoroughly agree; we only take exception to one short sentence in the extract, wherein the Doctor pronounces himself too old for fear as to his own person. We can hardly think the man who wields such a vigorous pen is quite as safe as he imagines; particularly when we remember the astonishing rapidity with which the most extraordinary events and marvellous changes take place in our day. The wheels of the divine providence seem to move forward with a strangely accelerated rapidity; but whether we who are advancing in life are caught in the approaching tempest or not, may the Lord who, we trust, is our hiding-place, make us properly anxious about our beloved native land, and the loved ones who belong to us, and have their abode in it.

We cannot conclude this brief notice of Dr. Wylie's book without a few remarks. As we read that work, our mind naturally began to ponder upon the subject, and ask what could be done; or whether it really was come to this,—that the storm having gathered, and being now ready to break, we must bow to the inevitable. We said in our mind: Whither can we turn

for help against this inroad and progress of Popery? Shall we turn to the Church of England hopefully, and think now, as once we thought, that there we have, at any rate, a bulwark against Popery? O no! At one time we would not have lifted up a finger for disestablishment. We confess that now the evil state of things in the Established Church itself is more and more forcing us to believe that it would be a boon to Protestantism if some mighty hand would overthrow an establishment whose rulers and ministers are, we fear, even as to the majority of them, either utterly leavened with infidelity, or renegade as to the principles of the Reformation; a mixed multitude of Mr. Anythings, and virtual papists. Shall we turn to the general Dissenters? Alas! what do we find there? Nothing to stand firmly against the tremendous onslaught of Popery in the day of battle and of war. Shall we then derive a hope of shelter from the latitudinarian spirit of the age, its infidelity, its atheism, its irreverence, its socialism, and impiety? O no! As Dr. Wylie shows, Popery is not unlikely to use these very things as instruments for the furtherance of her own designs. What amount of success Popery will obtain, or for what length of time, or whether Popery or the grossest materialism will be the final manifestation of wickedness in the earth, we do not here pretend to decide. We would not be too dogmatic upon such points. We well know that through want of spirituality of mind, dim-sightedness, the extraordinary nature of the divine predictions, and the power, wisdom, and glory of God displayed in their accomplishment, we may be very much mistaken as to the meaning of unfulfilled prophecy. We have, like the Jews of old, certain ideas; but the things themselves surpass all our thoughts and conceptions. It appears to us greatly to accord with the Word of God that Popery shall for a brief season triumph, and will probably make use of even the atheism and communism of the age, as Dr. Wylie shows, to further her ends. But when and to what extent this will be, and whether the engineer will be finally "hoist with his own petard," will remain to be manifested. God's ways are just, deep, and inscrutable.

But now, the question for us is, what can we do? Is there no balm in Gilead? Shall we advise our readers to fold their hands, and shut their eyes in a hopeless apathy? No! whilst the evil day is not yet come, it is really the wisdom of the Lord's people to use all proper and appointed means. Joel ii. 14; 2 Samuel xiii. 12, 22, as well as other scriptures, clearly point this out. We will suggest, then, in conclusion, four ways plainly open to the Lord's people; may we have grace to walk in them.

1. Surely this is a time for those who fear God to dwell, as much as possible, together in unity. We advocate no denial of the truth, no giving up our principles, no confederacy with the general professors, with those who give no evidence of a work

of grace upon their hearts, and being divinely taught. But we do say it highly becomes the true children of God, who fear his Name, love his dear Son, and desire to walk in his ways, to cease from unnecessary strifes, and live as much as possible in brotherly unity. Surely it is our wisdom to bear and forbear, and forgive. May the Lord keep us from searching out iniquities, and examining diligently into, and magnifying to the utmost, all possible grounds of division, contention, and strife. Instead of rejoicing, apparently, in iniquity, may we rejoice rather in the truth. May we seek more after reasons for a godly amity than for those which foster bitterness and contention. Peacemakers, not strifemakers, are called the children of God.

2. Surely this is a time for prayer; particular prayer, private, social, and public, as it respects a danger which threatens alike our persons, our families, and our national and church privileges. Luther calls sighs and groans the artillery with which he, in his day, so mightily succeeded against the papacy. Prayer is still of the same efficacy when real and earnest. Still "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much;" and still

"The force of their united prayers,
No power can long withstand."

3. Surely this is a time for much individual effort. Let any child of God ask the question: "Can I do anything in furtherance of Christ's cause and for the hindrance of Popery?" We think that the feeblest, by the distribution of plain and forcible books, like this which we are noticing of Dr. Wylie, or tracts, such as those of friend Leigh and others, might aid in this good work. The earth itself is made up of very small particles. If each man who fears God aided by his little in this good work, the aggregate might, with God's blessing, for many a day, like the sand of the sea, stem the tide of iniquity.

4. Surely this is a time when Christians, those who really fear God, should subordinate their political bias and opinions in other matters to their duty to God and their country in this, the greatest matter of all. Shall we vote at the polling-booths, in our elections, for men who will vote in our parliaments for the very things which will tend to the advancement of Popery, and against any motions which might have the effect of staying that advancement? For men, for instance, who will vote for the endowment of a popish university, and against any inspection of monasteries? Shall we not make such things as these the test questions whereby our exercise of our power of voting for members of parliament shall be regulated? If we are negligent in this respect, or vote because of other considerations, for men who will aid and abet, or not resist the pope and his agents, are we not betraying our trust? and ourselves aiding in the advance of Popery? May we not, then, justly expect that either in our own persons, or in the persons of those we love, we may have, in some future day, deeply to deplore our folly, and want of principle, yea, our crime? Is it not our duty, as men of England and children of

God, to exercise the political powers committed to us for the divine glory, and the welfare of our country, and therefore for the overthrow of the giant iniquity of Popery?

In harmony with these views, Dr. Wylie writes: "Let us cry mightily to God, in whose hand alone is deliverance. But let us at the same time, if we expect to be heard, do our duty. And what can we do? We can urge our appeal in parliament, calling upon it to reverse its policy of fostering a system which has proved itself the deadliest enemy of liberty in all countries, and which, if it receives a few years more the encouragement which has been given it in the past, will assuredly shake to its foundations the fabric of British power. The coming dissolution of parliament will give every elector an opportunity of acquitting himself of his duty in this matter. Of all the questions that regard the welfare of our country, this is out of sight the greatest. Let every friend of religion and liberty weigh his vast responsibility, and vote for no man who will misrepresent him in this matter in the legislature." O that Protestants would attend to these words, and do what is right. Our country, our children, and our God all require us in such a crisis to do our duty.

Obituary.

ANN BURROWS.—On Nov. 23rd, 1878, Ann Burrows, after a five days' illness.

The following account is taken, partly from some things written down by her daughter, a member of our church, and partly from some memoranda made by one who was with her at the last. We shall give the daughter's account pretty much in her own words:

"The dear Lord permitted me to see my mother three days before her death. There had at other times been a flow of tears at the first sight of me; but, to my surprise, there was not one on this occasion. The dear Lord had wiped all tears away. I said, 'My dear mother, do you feel Jesus precious? Have you any doubts?' I think I shall never forget her look at me, as she replied, 'Why should I ever doubt? for he will in no wise cast me out. For he is the Chiefest of ten thousand, and the altogether lovely. Do you think he will leave me now? No! You do not know the precious promises he has given me, one passage after another.' She appeared as if she longed to go and be with Jesus. I said, 'You would desire to wait the Lord's time?' She answered, 'O yes.' I remarked, 'You don't mind leaving me behind;' and her reply was, 'I can leave you all. I know the Lord will take care of you. I am only going a little first.'

"She seemed to have a desire for me to stay the night; and as I thought it was the last night I should spend with her upon earth, though I felt leaving my dear mistress, Miss Tailby, I remained. My dear mother seemed much in prayer during the night. Much I could not hear, but I heard her say,

'Fain would my eyes my Saviour see;
I wait a visit, Lord, from thee.'

And also,

‘My faith is feeble, I confess;
I faintly trust thy word;
But wilt thou pity me the less?
Be that far from thee, Lord.’

She also repeated the words: ‘Put away from among you all malice, and guile, and all evil speaking; and let it not be once named amongst you.’ I think at the time she was passing under a cloud; for she said, ‘Can’t you do anything for me?’ I replied, ‘What, dear mother?’ She said, ‘Can’t you pray?’ I knelt down weeping before the Lord, and begged that he would give such prayer as he would hear and answer. I trust he condescended to do this; for my mother said,

‘My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus’ blood and righteousness.’

She also said, ‘Crown him. On his head are many crowns.’

“A short time after I left my mother, she had a further manifestation, and said, ‘I have found the pearl of greatest price;

‘My heart does sing for joy;
And sing I must, for Christ I have;
O what a Christ have I!’

“Ever since I can remember my mother prized her Bible, but more so after being at Leicester, and hearing my dear pastor. My sister told me there was such a change in her ever after, but she could not tell what had caused it. Her Bible and Gadsby’s hymn-book were more to her than ever. My sister, in giving me my mother’s Bible and hymn-book, said, ‘I give you *her treasure*.’ She expressed great love to my pastor. I believe the dear Lord did make him a blessing to her; and she never forgot his text. When I went home after this visit to Leicester, she said, ‘How is that dear man? Have you forgotten his text? I have not; and I never shall.’ She then repeated it: ‘We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous,’ &c. (1 John ii. 1, 2.) I believe the word was fastened upon her heart as a nail in a sure place.

“I wish I could write down all the Lord’s goodness to me in respect to my mother, but I can only say, ‘Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.’ It is now about four years since my father and mother were both ill. O the sorrow that filled my heart! I said, ‘O that the dear Lord would give me to know that he loved them!’ And he came in at once with the words in hymn 408, fifth verse; and also Isa. lxiii. 6. What joy then filled my breast! It lasted for days. The word abode with me; and I praised the Lord then, and thought I should not doubt the dear Lord any more. But when my father died, twelve months after, without leaving a dying testimony, for he lay panting for breath and unable to speak to me, O how my heart sank again! But the dear Lord did make the fulfilment of his word manifest in my mother’s case. He supported her, and supplied all her wants, and blessed her soul, and then took her to himself to be ever with the Lord. My desire, then, is to praise him, and say, ‘The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.’”

Such is the daughter’s account, to which we shall only add a few remarks, taken down by one who was with her in her last illness. Two days before her death, her medical attendant said to her, “Well, old lady, you’ll have to go this time; I think a parson would do you more good than a doctor.” “Parson, Sir,” she replied, “what could he do for me? Christ has done it all. He is mine, and I am his.” To a Christian friend she said, “We shall meet again where there is no sin, or sorrow, or pain. Jesus’ precious blood has made my title sure.” To the daughter who attended in the illness she said, “Though I walk through the valley of the

shadow of death, I will fear no evil; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." John xv. 13, 14 was a portion very precious to her; as also these lines:

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

A few hours before her death, seeing her children weeping around her, she said, "Dō nō fret; sing." After this she prayed for the blessed Saviour to comē quickly; and three or four hours afterwards quietly fell asleep in Jesus.

G. H.

DENNIS BARNES.—On Feb. 12th, 1878, aged 76, Dennis Barnes, of Accrington.

In his natural state he was a very wicked young man, and a frequent attender at the ale-bench, drinking and singing profane songs. At length it pleased the Almighty to bring his law in its power and spirituality into his conscience. Beneath the terrors of that law of God he lay a long time, feeling its curse; all his sins seeming to be set in the light of God's countenance. Thus he had the sentence of death in his conscience, as one that had sinned against God and broken his law, and trampled upon his authority. I have often heard him say that he tried to drown his sorrows; but the more he tried to do this, the more guilt and sin kept working and rankling in his heart, and the more he felt himself to be obnoxious to the wrath of God. The language of his heart was: "What must I do? Whither must I flee? What will become of me?" He could see nothing but death and destruction before him, and expected every moment that hell must be his portion.

But in the midst of his distress, it pleased the dear Lord to appear for him with these words: "I have betrothed thee unto me for ever; yea, I have betrothed thee unto me in loving-kindness and in mercy." He was favoured with a view by faith of Jesus Christ in his sufferings and death, and that the dear Redeemer had for ever put away his sin by the sacrifice of his blessed self. Then such was his joy that he could not describe what he felt.

Some time after this, believers' baptism was solemnly impressed upon his mind, and the dear Lord disposed his heart to come before the church to tell what God had done for his soul. He was received as a proper candidate for baptism, and was baptized in June, 1837, by Mr. Hatton, who was at that time the minister at Accrington.

Dennis had to struggle on with a large family through many days of adversity and trouble; but many times has he blessed God, and said his promise had never failed him yet.

For many years he was a deacon of the church, and several years before he died he was appointed superintendent of the Sunday school, and much respected.

His last affliction was of about 14 days' duration. The following are some of his last sayings. At one time, when I called to see him, he said, "But for the grace of God I should have been like the rest, who are left in sin and iniquity. Salvation is all of grace. Jesus is my Best friend. Jesus is more precious to me than gold. He is a Rock. Take away a precious Christ, and you take away my all. I have no other foundation for my soul's hope." He often prayed for the church and Sunday school with which he was connected. The following hymns in Gadsby's Selection were much blessed to him: 64, 96, 174, 202, 350; and as he drew nearer his end he repeated much of the 469th and 483rd hymns, as expressing

the language of his heart. At another time, upon my visiting him, he said,

“With joy shall I lift up my head,
Among the sons of God.”

I shall shout, Victory, victory, through the blood of the Lamb. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.”

After this he became gradually weaker, his speech beginning to fail. The last word we could gather distinctly was, “Sanctified.” After this he spoke no more, but sweetly slept in the arms of his beloved Lord.

Thus departed a saint of the Most High God, to possess a kingdom for ever and ever, and wear an everlasting crown. For him to die *was* gain.
J. EDDISON.

PRAYER BEFORE READING THE HOLY BIBLE.

“Thy Word is a lamp to my feet.”

O Father! I, thy erring child,
Who often from thee rove,
Oft wander in this desert wild,
Where false friends treacherous prove;
Implore thy sweet, thy loving look,
Which turns the night to day;
And whilst I read thy blessed Book,
Teach me in wisdom's way.

O lead me by thy loving hand,
And guide me by thy voice!
Give grace that I may sin withstand,
O'er Satan may rejoice.
Through all the chequered path of life,
In gladness or distress,
In peace and war, in rest and strife,
To me thy counsels bless.

Thy Word, the lamp to guide my feet,
My monitor and friend,
My solace when fierce ills I meet,
My joy unto the end!
Blest Bible! precious gift of thine,
My Father, God above!
A rich and an exhaustless mine
Of never-ending love.

Margate.

G. H. M. READ.

THE church's Spouse is bashful, and will not communicate his loves before company, but alone.—*Bernard*.

IT is notable that Pharaoh in his distress sent for Moses and Aaron, and not for the magicians.—*Manton*.

WHAT are they all who are now glorified? The fairest face that standeth before the throne of redeemed ones was once inked and blackened with sin. You should not know Paul now, with a crown of a king on his head. He looketh not now like a “blasphemer, a persecutor, an injurious person.” The woman that had once seven devils in her, is a Mary Magdalene far changed; and grace made the change.—*Rutherford*.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

JUNE, 1879.

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

THE GOOD GROUND.

A SERMON BY MR. DENNETT, AT GOWER STREET CHAPEL, ON SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 27TH, 1879.

“But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the Word and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit and bringeth forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”—MATT. XIII. 23.

No man ever preached the Gospel in such a solemn and separating way as the Lord Jesus Christ. He did indeed divide between the righteous and the wicked. Being God, he read the hearts of good and bad men. To the priests, elders, and scribes he administered reproofs and rebukes. He knew that with all their pretensions they were dead in their sins, dead in their profession, and enemies to himself and to God, being destitute of the Spirit. But he spake not a word against those souls who wanted to know his Person, taste his love, feel his power, and receive from his Godhead life and salvation. To such he preached most tenderly, and dealt with them most kindly, as he does now, that the prophecy of him might be fulfilled, “A bruised reed will he not break, and the smoking flax will he not quench.” Not a word of harshness nor rebuke did he speak against poor sensible sinners, no matter what sins they had committed, as he saw they were truly seeking him, but dropped a gracious promise for their encouragement, saying, “Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened.” Part of the ministry of Christ was directed against those who were hardened in sin and presumption, claiming Abraham for their earthly father, and God for their heavenly Father; but their hearts and minds being at enmity against Christ, he declared their relationship was with hell; as it is written, “Ye are of your father the devil, and the works of your father ye will do;” which were to hate him, reject him, crucify him, and shed his precious blood.

The Lord in this chapter speaks in a parable, saying, “Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured it up.” This character is one who heareth the word of the kingdom and understandeth it not. “Then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart.” This applies to pro-

fessors of religion who hear the pure truth, called the word of the kingdom, and will hear nothing else; but the *grace of life* not entering with the word, their understanding remains darkened, and Satan, having access to their hearts, catcheth away that which *was sown therein*. This is he which received seed by the wayside.

2. "Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprang up, because they had no deepness of earth." This also applies to those who hear the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ, have light upon what they hear, and are so far affected as to feel kindlings of joy, and become associates with the people of God; yet, not having root in themselves, they only endure for a while; that is, so long as things go easy; for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, by and bye they are offended. These immediately receive the Word with joy; they are not convicted, nor do they know soul trouble. As the Word says, "They are not in trouble as other men;" and having no root or the root of the matter within, then they, immediately when trouble ariseth, become offended.

3. "And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up and choked them." The Lord says, "He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word and he becomes unfruitful." This character comes nearer than the other two. He hears the word and receives it. Satan is not said to catch it out of his heart. He is not offended when trouble or persecution ariseth. He retains what he hears, and continues to sit under the gospel and meet with the saints of God, believing they are the only right people on earth; yet is he like the two former characters,—destitute of spiritual eternal life. Though a change had come over him, it was not a passing from death unto life. Even so it is with some now who sit all their days under the gospel, and yet never know the pure and saving grace of it. These three characters are said to have received the good seed, but it was not on good ground.

4. "But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold." "He that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit and bringeth forth some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." From this it is very clear that there are many whose religion wears out, and there are others whose religion wears in.

The Lord in this parable is not speaking of professors who sit under error; but specially and particularly of those who sit under the gospel of the kingdom. God makes his own people know the difference between truth and error, and between truth preached in the letter and truth preached in the Spirit. Hence they are called a wise and understanding people. When the Word is preached in the Spirit, it begets faith in the hearts of elect sinners; which makes them cleave to it, and love and ete-

brace it. As it is written, "So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." And those who rightly receive it are sure to believe it; and so it is called the *word of faith*, as Paul saith, "That is the word of faith which we preach." It is called the incorruptible seed or Word of God, by which the soul that has it is brought into a new life. Being born again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For 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; but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the Word which by the gospel is preached unto you." Not only will the Word endure for ever but all the gracious effects of it will endure.

Has God ever blessed you through his Word, humbled you and brought you near? If so, however tried your religion may be, it will never wear out. It is called a *quicken*ing word. "This is my comfort in my affliction, thy Word hath quickened me." O! How the poor needy soul wants to be led and fed by that Word, as David did, when he said, "Plead my cause and deliver me; quicken me, according to thy Word." O! How a poor helpless hell-deserving sinner loves the quickenings of God's Spirit in his soul. They are his meat and his drink. The more he has the more he wants; and yet all he has on earth is but a small taste of what is treasured up for him. It is the earnest of all the fullness of heaven. His soul, at times, thirsts for God, for more of his love, mercy, and power.

This Word is called a *lamp*: "Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple." This lamp shows us there is but one way to God, and that is through Christ Jesus. It shows us that all vessels are empty but Christ, and that there is in him all we can need or desire. The word by which he is preached is very, very precious to guilty sin-sick souls, as it was when he said, "How sweet are thy words to my taste; yea, sweeter than honey or the honey-comb." It is a *pure* word: "Thy word is very pure; therefore thy servant loveth it." Now where this word has been received in the love of it, that soul has been transformed into the image of God. "God is love, and he that loveth is born of God, and dwelleth in God, and God in him." The more simply the word of God is preached to such souls, the more they esteem it, the closer will the true children cleave to it, and the more highly do they think of those who so preach it. There are some who seem to want eloquence, natural ability, great gifts, a display of something beyond true simplicity. I never yet heard a man too simple. I have heard men aiming at greatness and apeing humility until I have been heartily glad when they have concluded; but I never heard a man lay me too low as a vile base wretch before God, nor exalt a precious Saviour too high. These are two extremes which preachers cannot fully reach. God's people know their sin and death, poverty

and ruin, that they can never abase themselves enough before God. This makes them love the pure Word preached in simplicity.

The hearers in my text are said to receive the Word into a *good and honest heart*. Surely this is the gift of God; for by nature there is no man who hath a good heart. "All have gone out of the way. There is none that doeth good, no, not one." It is called a *new heart*, or new bottle, as Christ said, "Men put new wine into new bottles." The new bottle is a new heart, and the new wine is his Spirit, which, when once tasted, brings a soul from self to God and makes him love the things of the Spirit of God; nor does he want another religion. "For no man having tasted old wine straightway desireth new; for he saith the old is better." It is a pure heart, and all who possess this gift will see the Lord. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Who can tell the indescribable happiness of a poor tried sin-sick, world-sick soul, when released from a body of sin in which his lusts and evils have dwelt and tried him when he enters into the immediate presence of God in Christ, to behold a glorious and glorified Jesus, on whom, whilst we wear these earthly clods, we could not look and live. Whilst Christ was a Man of Sorrows on earth, John could lean on his bosom; but when he saw the Man of Sorrows glorified, he was overcome. As it is written: "And when I saw him I fell at his feet as dead." Here John learned that the heart of Jesus in heaven was as tender and compassionate as when on earth. "And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last. I am he that liveth and was dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen! and have the keys of hell and of death." As if he had said, "John, into hell thou shalt never go, neither shall the sting of death touch thee."

My text says those who receive seed into good ground understand it. By nature we are without understanding. That is, a natural man hath no right understanding of God. He is a dark, dead, blind wretch, through sin. The God of this world hath blinded his mind and spread a vail over his heart and enveloped his understanding in ignorance and darkness; so that though he lives by God he lives without hope and without God in the world; having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. Every man walketh in a vain show. He hath no mind for God. The language of the heart of a natural man is, "Depart from us; we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." But the people of God undergo a vital saving change of heart; for as sin closed the eyes and darkened the understanding, even so doth grace enlighten them. As saith the Word, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling." Such souls, though not inspired as the holy prophets were, have in them the Spirit of God, making them wise to understand the word and

work of God and Christ. How clearly does Elihu set this forth: "But there is a Spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." The holy psalmist tells us the effect of the blessed, holy Word of God on the souls of men: "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."

Again, this understanding is accompanied with the fear of God and the knowledge of Christ. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the holy is understanding." Where this fear is there will be a knowledge of the Holy Trinity. There is a discovery of the holy justice and purity of God in his righteous law and of your sins and how unable you are to stand before him. There will also be a knowledge of salvation by the coming and death of Christ. "We know that the Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true. And we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." All worship that falls short of this is idolatry, therefore John concludes by saying, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

The Holy Ghost is also known; for only as we are led, instructed, enlightened, and prompted by his sacred eternal Majesty is our worship acceptable to God. Paul knew no fleshly stuff would stand, and that all acceptable prayer and singing must be in the spirit. So he says to the Corinthians, who were so desirous of gifts, "What is it then? I will pray with the Spirit and I will pray with the understanding also. I will sing with the Spirit and I will sing with the understanding also." Surely our souls have known something of this holy worship. Have we not had our very hearts drawn out to this God and drawn into him? Have we not, under the sweet influence of the Spirit, blessed and loved, worshipped and adored our God, not once nor twice but many times, and felt the Spirit of adoption in our inward parts, crying, "Abba, Father?"

How little is this religion known in the present day. Do we not know the difference between formal and spiritual prayer, when we draw near and when we are at a distance, between cold and heat, summer and winter? What heart-departures from the Lord! What rising of evil, as in the case of Asaph: "I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked, until I went into the sanctuary of the God; then understood I their end." Then he began to condemn himself, and call himself ignorant and brutish, yea, worse, says he, "I was as a beast before thee." There is a *sacredness* with a right knowledge of sin, which no man can bring on, for we can neither bring on a right burden for sin nor can we take it off. The work is the Lord's. What chastenings and humblings and convictions we need now to bring out the sacred cry and to bring on the sacred feeling, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" This is how God answers the prayer, "Give me understanding and I shall live."

These are the people who receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save their souls. These are effectually called by grace. The other characters in the parable were called, but not positively. "Many are called, but few are chosen." How solemn I felt the chapter which I read to you this morning (Acts i.) respecting Judas. Peter said, "He was numbered with us and had obtained part of this ministry." He was numbered by Christ. His ministry was not contrary to the ministry of the others; he obtained part of it. He must have preached the same things and prayed as the others prayed, or they would have detected him. Judas with the eleven were first disciples; they heard Christ and followed him. Afterwards they became apostles, being specially chosen of Christ; for the Word tells us he called unto him his disciples, and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles. So we see Judas was called, chosen, ordained, and sent to preach; and the other apostles thought him a child of God; for Peter seemed to speak of Judas as much as for his brethren when he said, "We believe and are sure that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." The Holy Ghost helped Judas in the way of *gifts* only. He was not born of the Spirit; he had not the least measure of saving grace; he saw no beauty in Christ to desire him; nor had he a true knowledge of the Deity of Christ; for it was upon this ground the Lord rebuked Peter when he said, "We believe that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Judas never prayed to Christ for himself, nor did he come to him as a poor, sensible, hungry, thirsty sinner; for as soon as he had partaken of the passover and had received the sop he went immediately out. He went his way, to his work. As it is written: "Then entered Satan into Judas, surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve; he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains how he might betray him unto them. And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money." So was the portion fulfilled, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Some will say, "If Judas fell, why may I not fall?" Well, you surely would if you were not kept. These things often make the people of God tremble, lest they should fall; and it makes them pray and cry that God will hold them up. They say, "Lord, let me not be deceived; hold thou me up. If there is any essential thing lacking, Lord, grant it me." Dear child of God, there is a promise to you. The Lord says, "To this man will I look, who is poor and of a contrite spirit and that trembleth at my word." Under the preached word the work of grace is often begun. Sinners come to hear. God begins to operate on their hearts, and they begin to feel want. This was an evidence of life in the prodigal. And so it is in many of the children of God now. "So is the kingdom of God as if a man should cast seed into the ground and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up he knoweth not how." These simple souls seek for eternity. They want to know things

for themselves. Such are invited as the guests of Jesus: "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither; as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish and live, and go in the way of understanding." The provision is for these, even the bread and the wine, the body and blood of Jesus Christ. It is evident such hunger and thirst. "The meek will he teach in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way."

The more a living soul knows of the way of God, the better he is satisfied with it and the closer he cleaves to it. He cannot be of another religion nor faith. He is compelled with a holy compulsion to be what he is, and to believe what he does, for the Spirit of God is his leader and teacher; nor will he, in his darkest and most sorrowful seasons, turn back nor deny the truth. "For we are not of them who turn back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

The teaching of God is purely spiritual: "I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths." This teaching and leading of the Spirit in the way of salvation can never be given up nor altogether departed from. No, not in old age. "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." The soul taught of God may be much tried and tempted about his interest in the truth; but he is assured what truth is and he is made to stick to it. Saith the soul, "Whether I am lost or saved, whether I rise to heaven or sink to hell, whether I am blessed or cursed, I know what truth is, and that there are only the righteous and the wicked, the sheep and the goats, the elect and the non-elect." This man says, "Lord, let me stand on the right side. Have mercy upon me, O God! Lord, I am a helpless sinner. Lord, if thou wouldest bless me as I desire to be blessed, it would be

"Till my full soul could hold no more
Of everlasting love."

I will ask my aged friends before me this morning, now you are crowned with hoary hairs, standing as you do with one foot, as it were, in the grave, not knowing how soon you may be called into an eternal world, sinners and transgressors as you have been, and now are, have you so much as *one desire* for another way to be saved? I am not tossed about nor wavering respecting the things I preach to you. But there may be some here this morning who may never have heard God's plan of salvation set forth,—how God, before the world was framed, before angels or men were created, before sin existed, foresaw that man would sin, and all Adam's posterity become enemies by wicked works; how he chose his own people in Christ Jesus his Son, and blessed them never to curse them, loved them never to hate them, and secured them that they could not in their carnal state lose their interest in his electing love. He predestinated them unto the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will; which purpose of predestination is as sure to be fulfilled as

that God sits on his throne. These people Christ came to redeem, he laid down his life for them, and for no others. His blood was shed exclusively for his sheep. O how greatly he loved them! His love is as great as the Father's: "I am the good Shepherd. I lay down my life for the sheep." There will not be one of them wanting when he comes at the last day. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the king say unto them on the right hand, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'"

The Holy Ghost, according to the purpose of God, calls all these people from among the wicked, he quickens their dead souls, humbles them for sin, nor will he omit to quicken them, nor will he fail to keep them. He never makes a mistake to call a goat and pass by a sheep. But you may say, "What will you do with all the rest?" Why, I can do nothing. God leaves them to perish in their sins. There is no unrighteousness with God; he gathers his own. As it is written: "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Now, as those who hear these things preached, see the blessed state of the righteous, God working in their hearts, desires and longings of soul come upon them, crying and prayer rise within them; they are convinced of the truth, and can find no rest in their souls until God assures them that they have a part and lot in the matter.

This is how God sometimes works with his people. May it be so in some of your hearts this morning. If so, you will have to say, "This people shall be my people, and their God my God," as Ruth did when she saw that her mother-in-law was one of this holy and blessed people. The desire to know this will bring out many cries from your inmost souls. Whilst preaching at B. I was once led to speak of this way of God, how all his own people were called into Christ, and all the others left to perish. Soon afterwards I was desired to visit a person. As soon as she saw me, she said, "Sir, you are the man." Seeing her in trouble, I said, "What is the matter?" The reply was, "O, Sir, I am lost! My soul is lost!" I said, "How do you know you are lost?" "I am not one of the people you spoke of the other Sunday. When you spoke of the people of God being gathered into Christ, and all others left out, it came into my soul with such force, and I had no hope." I said, "You cannot tell you will be lost." She said, "Sir, I am not one of the people. If I was but one of that people; but I am not. O my soul, my soul, my soul!" "Do you pray?" "No, Sir; I cannot pray. I am wicked, and God will not hear the prayers of the wicked." "Have you felt any hope in God?" "No, Sir. There is no hope for me. I am not one of that people you spoke of. O my sins, my sins!" "Did you

ever feel any trouble before?" "No; I was brought up to hear the truth. I used sometimes to hear Mr. Grace and Mr. Vinall; then I left it. I never felt in trouble. Now my sins are come upon me, and I am cut off."

I visited her again and found her still in trouble; and, though a little quieter in mind, she stuck hard and fast to her conviction that she was not one of the people; nor could I move her from it. I saw her again and found her still in trouble. I said, "Now tell me what you in this trouble are most wanting." "O Sir, to know that I am one of that people you spoke of. If I was sure of that, I would not mind what I went through in body."

Now this poor woman was just in the right place to be saved; and God graciously blessed her soul and melted it with his everlasting love and goodness. The soul that has a case for Christ and a true discernment will be led to Christ, as the Samaritans did, when that base woman left her outer waterpot and went back to the city with an inward waterpot and a little living water in it, crying, "Come, see a man that told me all that ever I did." Her whole heart was in it, "Is not this the Christ? Come and see him." She was not ashamed of him, who not only told her her sins but at the same time had won her very heart. So now, souls that know Christ go to him for themselves; they go to him as God; they pray to him as God; he is precious in their sight. In this their election shines, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." But O how these poor souls are tried with unbelief. But even in this there is something in their favour; for no man is tried and plagued with unbelief until faith enters his breast. What reasonings there are in the mind whether for some sins committed he will not cast out, but "*nowise*" takes in and goes beyond all sins and objections; so that it contains something infinite for encouragement and comfort, "Thus saith the Lord, If heaven above can be measured and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off *all* (not one or two of them) the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord." But those people who receive the Word into a good and honest heart will never be cast out nor cast off.

[The preacher spoke of the *fruits* brought forth; but this we are compelled to defer for a future No.]

A TASTE of personal interest reconciles a man to the sovereignty of the grace that saves him.—*Hardy*.

THE persons who feel no malady of sin see not their want of a Saviour.—*Romaine*.

THE pretended desires of many to behold the glory of Christ in heaven, who have no view of it by faith whilst they are here in this world, are nothing but self-deceiving imaginations.—*Dr. Owen*.

A CHURCH full of love is a church well built up. All parts, gifts, attainments, graces will not edify and establish without it. The enemies of Christ know this; therefore it has been their settled maxim: *First divide, then destroy*.—*J. Hill*.

THE LATE MR. BELL, OF FRAMLINGHAM.

My dear Sir,—The accompanying copy of a letter, written by Mr. Bell, was addressed to Mr. Freeman; but it was not sent; and I have been requested by friends to send it for insertion in the "Standard;" but I felt afraid to comply, knowing that letters written by a dear friend would have more weight to his immediate friends than to the general reader. But going a short time since, during the noon-time on a Sunday, to see one who I hope is a child of God, who is passing under heavy affliction, she spoke of how the Lord had blessed the few letters of Mr. Bell's which appeared in the "Standard; and this encouraged me to hope he might condescend to own and bless this, if it meet your approval. All I can say is, if it be for the honour of God and the good of his people, I shall be glad to see it.

I pray that the "Standard" may long continue what it has been, a blessing to thousands. I can say in truth and sincerity I love the work; and although I have it ever since 1838 I watch for the first of the month to see if there is anything for me. The day seems at hand spoken of by the prophet when there shall be a famine, not of bread, but of hearing the word of God.

That the Lord may grant you all that wisdom and strength that you need, that you may ever find him better to you than all your fears, and that while you are labouring for the good of others he may shine into your own soul, is the desire and prayer of

Brooke, Oct. 8th, 1872.

L. GOLDSMITH.

My dear and much-beloved and oft-remembered Brother in the strong and lasting Ties of the ever-blessed Gospel and Kingdom of Him who is beyond all Praise, Jesus the Christ of the ever-lasting Father,—I have written many letters to you in the thoughts of my mind; some in the dead of the night, when sleep has departed from my eyes, and pains and sorrow have filled my heart, and when my soul has tried to raise herself to the throne of grace to beg for help and comfort; but no power has come, nor one word has been spoken to relieve my burdened heart. I have thought the Lord had forsaken me, and would never more regard such a sinner. It is a solemn spot to come to, for a poor soul in distress to feel that the Lord shutteth out our prayer, and has no ears to hear us. I have no doubt my dear brother has often been there. Such feelings are past telling, too deep to describe, and painful to those who in days gone by have been favoured to see his face, taste his love, and kiss his feet, and wash them with tears of love and thankfulness.

Dear friend, it hath pleased the Lord to lay his afflicting hand on my house of clay, and to bring my soul to that spot David was in when he walked through this stormy wilderness. I have read the 42nd psalm with a melting feeling of a broken heart. Like him, I look back to past times, favoured seasons; but now sorrowful ones. I can go every step with him when he describes his soul's joy in verse 4; and I can go with him in a part of the

verse 5. I can go as far as this word: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me?" But I cannot go further. Hope is the gift of God, and to plant it and water it is the work of the Holy Spirit. I have no power to raise hope in my soul against the day of trouble, nor yet when trouble comes. I look back to the little hill of love where God in Christ revealed his blessed face, and filled my soul with peace and joy; but the wine that I drank yesterday will not do for me to-day. Past enjoyments will yield no present comfort. They must come to-day as they came yesterday, by the hand and arm of the Lord. I can read hymn 923 (Kent's), and say "Amen" to the truth of it; but I cannot sing it to-day.

"'Twas in the night, when trouble came,
I sought, my God, for thee;
But found no refuge in that name
That once supported me.
I sought thee, but I found thee not,
For all was dark within."

Solemn truth; my soul, seal it. I have tried to sing the 3rd verse of 911, by the same dear man; but I break down before I can begin:

"O bless'd devotion! thus to meet
And spread our woes at his dear feet,
Call him our own in ties of blood,
And hold sweet fellowship with God."

Truly, my dear brother, there is a real and sweet reality in the religion of Jesus Christ; and if I am deceived I am deceived indeed! With all solemnity I speak it, with all my darkness and all my unbelief, and all the vile workings of my corrupt heart, my soul often cries with Peter, "To whom, yes, to whom, shall we go? Thou only, yes, only thou, hast the words of eternal life." Without him my soul would soon be shipwrecked.

This day is a day often remembered by me; for on the first morning of July, 1850, I saw that morning the end of a dear child of God, a man in the prime of his life, a husband and the father of five children, brought down to his grave after some months of painful sufferings. I had seen him amongst my hearers when I had been at Brooke some time, and when he could not get out to hear I used to go and see him and sit and talk with him. The Lord had begun a work in his soul,—a real law-work. He felt himself a lost and ruined soul. No one could persuade him into a hope of pardon by Jesus Christ; not one promise could he dare to lay his hand upon, until the blessed Spirit wrought a hope, and blessed him with faith and power to lay hold of Jesus as the Saviour of his soul. Many long days and nights have I and the friends sat by his bedside watching to see when the Lord should condescend to pass by and drop pardon and peace into his poor distressed soul. Many parts of the Scripture and pieces out of the "Standard" were read to him, and many strong desires went up to the Lord for him. He would thank us for all kindnesses; but they were not for him. "No one can do me good," he would say, "only the Lord. It is he that must speak the

word with power, and save by his own arm." It pleased the Lord to keep him in this state between, I would say, hope and despair, but he could not believe he had any hope, until the last moments came. Life was fast ebbing out, death was seen in his dear face; when his mother put her mouth to his ear, and said, "James, is it well?" And then, with a feeble smile and in a whisper he said, "Yes;" and then, turning his eyes to the spot where I was standing, and gently raising his hand, he softly breathed out his soul. To describe my joy and sorrow, the tender feelings of my heart, I shall never be able; for the more I knew of him the stronger my feelings grew towards him; I might say, and say the truth, the more I loved him. If power was given, and the Lord was to bring to my remembrance all the solemn things I heard from his lips, it would fill this paper, and another and another.

When his happy soul was gone I cast one look at the calm peaceful clay, and went and looked out of the window. The sun was rising, the birds were singing their morning hymn to their Creator, when the first verses of a hymn out of Rippon's old Selection came with sweetness to my soul:

"Happy soul, thy days are ended,
All thy mourning hours below;
Go by angels-guards attended,
To the sight of Jesus go.

"Waiting to receive thy spirit,
Lo, thy Saviour stands above,
Shows the purchase of his merits,
Reaches out the crown of love.

"Struggle through thy latest passion
To thy dear Redeemer's breast;
Now he gives thee full salvation,
Grants thee everlasting rest."

I could look and believe he was enjoying the whole of it.

My dear friend, years have rolled away, and hundreds of things have been forgotten by me; but such scenes as these can never be forgotten by me. And now that a painful affliction is laid on my poor body, my thoughts go back to these scenes, and my own last days are before me, with a number of thoughts as to how it will be with me when I am brought to the river of death. Dear friend, we may never see one another in the flesh again. God only knows. May we lie near each other's heart, and plead at a throne of grace for each other; and may it be the will of the Lord that we may meet around that blessed throne of the Lamb where we hope many blessed souls are gone who once groaned and cried below, men that you and I have had the sweetest union with, and in the remembrance of them our tears sometimes will fall.

May the Lord abide with you, and make you a blessing to his poor hungry needy sheep. May the blessing of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob rest upon you, and their God be your God for ever and ever. So prays

Your Brother, W. BELL.

Framlingham, July 1st, 1871.

[For some particulars respecting Mr. Bell, see "G. S.," p. 307, 1872.]

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH.

Dear and Honoured Brother,—Yours I received, and return you thanks for it.

I rejoice in the Lord's lovingkindness to your soul, and that his hand is with you in your work. May the Lord continue these great favours and increase you with all the increase of God. Indeed, my dear brother, it is our happiness and glory to feel much of God in our hearts. It is Christ within, inwardly enjoyed unto a living conformity to him that makes the soul happy.

I am entirely of your mind that religion don't consist in disputes, but in inward sensation and experience. And lamentable it is that, in the age wherein we live, there is so much resting in head knowledge without heart experience; and where the truth of grace is in the heart, that there is so much resting in past experiences, without an earnest concern after growth in grace, and an increase in the knowledge of Christ, or a daily fellowship with Christ in his death and resurrection, with full joy and holiness. O! what holy, happy Christians should we be if we were earnestly concerned about a daily knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus in its power and efficacy on our hearts, and reducing the same to an answerable practice in our lives!

That religion which consists only in head knowledge, without heart influence, is little worth. Nor is that religion which exalts inward sensation to a neglect of outward revelation much better; nor without knowledge (the knowledge of gospel truths) the heart cannot be right. We must first know to feel, and feel to do, if what we do in religion is right, either as to the inward actings of our minds, or the outward actions of our lives. This is the sum, my dear brother. The Lord Jesus Christ and his blessed truths revealed in the gospel without us must first be revealed by the Holy Spirit within us before we can feel the happy influence of God's salvation in our hearts. And so far as Christ and his truths are revealed in us, so far we are constrained to abide therein by facts, to cleave thereto in love, and to bear witness for the same, both in word and deed in our lives.

Disputes in religion for dispute's sake, for humour's sake, are no better than vain jangling, idle contention, a wretched mis-spense of time, a neglect of the power of godliness, and a means to promote ungodliness and irreligion. Disputes in religion to advance error and destroy the truth are abominable. But disputes in religion for truth's sake, to advance the truth against rising error are commendable and profitable. Such kind of disputes, maintained by the inspired penmen, we have instances of both in the Old and New Testaments. To such kind of disputes the saints are exhorted, even to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3.) And the happy fruit of such disputes is the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the downfall of Satan's, the establishment of saints in the doctrines of Christ, the deliverance of their souls from the

falsehoods advanced by the father of lies, and the overthrow of men of corrupt minds. Such is the infinite wisdom and grace of our dear Lord Jesus, as the Head and King of his church, that he would not suffer errors to appear if he did not deign to overrule them for his own glory and his people's good. When the prince of darkness with his powers make war with the Lamb, by advancing error,—darkening, shaking error, our Lord thereby will more abundantly manifest and confirm his truth and the faith of his people therein. While, then, in an especial manner he calls the spirits his servants, his witnesses, to lift up the standard of truth against error, and to fight valiantly under him, their great Leader, who for this end came into the world, to bear witness to the truth. And our Lord will honour those who are his witnesses, his warriors for truth in the earth.

An absolute opposition to all disputes in religion is an apparent artifice of Satan; and the manifest design of the enemy herein is to darken the Redeemer's glory by a cloud of error, and have none to stand on Christ's side, on the side of truth, to fan the air and drive away the smoke of the bottomless pit.

Perhaps, my dear brother, you may wonder I speak thus; but I would guard your mind from that snare into which others have fallen. R. and O. were drawn off from appearing on the side of truth by [the cry] "No dispute in religion," until they lost the truth. And a sad account I have in a letter lately received from a friend at ——. The —— tenets spread very fast in that place, so that many proselytes are made, and hereupon persons most sadly give up the truths of Christ, and say they will have nothing to do with doctrines or principles in religion.

May the God of grace bruise Satan under your feet, and after all your sufferings by his temptations stablish, strengthen, settle you! May he deliver you from every evil work, and preserve you safe unto his heavenly kingdom.

The grace of Christ be with your spirit. Into his arms I commit you. Pray for

Yours most affectionately in Jesus,

ANN DUTTON.

THE countenance of David (Ps. xlii. 5) is sick; there is death in his face, when God is not the light of his countenance.—*Rutherford.*

SONGS in the night are not, cannot be, of nature's making, but are the sole gift of the heavenly Comforter. (Job xxxv. 10.)—*Bishop Hall.*

OFTENTIMES holiness in the heart is more known by the opposition that is there made to it than by its own prevalent working; the Spirit's operation is known by the flesh's opposition.—*Owen.*

THE greatest of earthly contentments will be of no worth nor use in heaven; neither can they of themselves any way add to the comfort or thriving of a spiritual life here on earth.—*Dorney.*

CHRIST is wholly for miserable sinners; life, pardon, righteousness, peace, strength, joy, glory, "without money and without price."—*Hardy.*

THE FOUNTAIN OPENED.

BY JOHN RUSK.

“In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.”—ZECH. XII. 1.

IF I were to confer with flesh and blood, I should write no more; for “what can be said more than has been said? Your eyes are getting bad, and the outward man, through the troubles of life, greatly breaks.” All this is true in one sense; but when I consider that the weak are to say, “I am strong,” that there are unsearchable riches in Christ, and that we are told to cry after knowledge, to lift up our voice for understanding, to seek her as silver, and search for her as for hid treasure, to be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, &c., these things encourage me to press on through all and every opposition.

A month or so back this text in Zechariah was sweet to me, and I spoke about it to some friends, but had no intention then to write upon it. But our ways are not God’s ways. The subject is very copious, and I, as usual, feel myself a fool; but it does not depend upon me, but on the wisdom, power, and grace of the Holy Spirit, who is to be a Spirit of revelation and understanding in the knowledge of Christ, to testify of him, glorify him, and guide us into all truth. “It is not you that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.” And as he has already blessed me at this work, and has promised that we should still bring forth fruit in old age, there is great encouragement for me to persevere, notwithstanding everything bears so hard against me.

This prophet Zechariah was the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, and he lived in the days of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was king over the realm of the Chaldeans. And God sent him to Jerusalem in the eighth month in the second year of Darius, exhorting them to turn from their evil ways. But we all know who know our own hearts that such exhortations are lost upon us, except God displays his power.

After this, he has a vision of a man riding upon a red horse amongst the myrtle trees, &c.; which certainly meant the Lord Jesus visiting his church and people, those who had been well humbled and brought down in a low place.

In the second chapter we have an account of the Lord’s measuring Jerusalem, and of the redemption of Zion. “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for lo! I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord.”

In the third chapter the prophet has a view of Joshua, the high priest, standing before the Lord, clothed in filthy garments. By which we are not in the least to suppose that he was so literally. No. And if he was, such things alone are not offensive to the Lord. Poor Lazurus on the dunghill, full of wounds,

and the dogs licking them, was not offensive to the Lord. But the true meaning is that Joshua had on his own righteousness, which the church by the prophet Isaiah calls "filthy rags," and which Paul calls "dung and dross." This gave room for Satan to accuse Joshua; but the Lord said, "Take away his filthy garments, and clothe him with change of raiment; which was no other than the perfect and spotless righteousness of the Son of God, Jehovah Jesus. And then the devil is sent off, as he always will be.

In the fourth chapter he has a view of the two olive trees, and the two anointed ones.

The fifth chapter speaks of Babylon's ruin, and of the flying roll; by which I understand the curse of the law. "And it shall come, saith the Lord, into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name; and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof."

Blessed, therefore, are all those who are delivered from that law and its curse by faith in Christ Jesus.

In the sixth chapter he has a glorious view of Christ the Branch, that he should build the temple and be a priest upon his throne.

In the seventh chapter the prophet reproves their hypocritical fasting, when they oppressed the widow, fatherless, stranger, and the poor, and made their hearts harder than an adamant.

In the eighth chapter the Lord encourages them to the building of the second temple, and shows that he will be with them.

In the ninth chapter the prophet has a glorious view of the coming of the Lord Jesus into the world, and says, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee. He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass."

In the tenth chapter he speaks of Judah being restored, and that God is to be sought to, and not dumb idols; not the dumb literally only, but also such as Isaiah speaks of—dumb dogs that cannot bark; and such were these. They spoke vanity, told false dreams, and comfort in vain; and such work as this is going on in the day in which we live, for this nation swarms with hypocrites and false teachers.

In the eleventh chapter the prophet speaks of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the poor of God's flock being fed, which they ever shall be, for he will not suffer the souls of the righteous to perish. "I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock," &c.

In the twelfth chapter he speaks of the outpourings of the Spirit, agreeable to the prophet Joel, and of the blessed effects of it—namely, a looking on Christ, whom we have pierced, and mourning; and this is real repentance, evangelical and well-pleasing unto God.

Having just glanced at the chapters preceding our text, let us now, as the Lord shall assist, come to the text.

I. Treat of the *characters* that this promise is made to.

II. The *promise itself*.

III. We will treat of *the day which then took place*, and also of *the day that particularly concerns us*. "In that day shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness."

And then, IV., we shall close the subject with a few remarks.

I. We are to treat of the *characters* that this promise is made to, for it was by no means universal; let the Arminians say what they will, the Bible knows nothing about that universality. That is a palpable lie, and Satan is the author of it. Now, as the promise is made to the house of David and likewise to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, if this is to be understood in a literal sense, what have you and I, reader, to do with it? It is of no use to us, for we are not belonging literally to David's house, neither do we pretend to say that we are of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for we are Gentiles. Besides, David will help us out in this himself, for he expressly tells us that his *house* was not so with God. But if this promise of a fountain opened to the house of David meant literally, then all certainly would have been with God. "Although my *house* be not so with God," &c. (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) For after David's fall the sword never departed from his house, and he had some of the worst children that ever lived, and also many hypocrites were about him. See Ahithophel with others. Then we are sure that it does not mean literally. I need not enlarge here; you can read the account in Samuel respecting David's house. And as to being of the inhabitants of Jerusalem literally, of what use would that have been? It is true the Jews were a highly favoured people; but when they rejected the Messiah and put him to death, God cast them off, and then they are not called Jews in God's account. Hence he says by Paul, "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh." See again, "I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews and are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan." (Rev. iii. 9.) And thus the Lord wrote upon them, "Lo ammi," saying, "Ye are not my people, and I will not be your God." And then we are brought in, we Gentiles. Thus as Paul says, "Blindness in part is happened to Israel." And this has gone on for many generations. "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king," having despised and rejected King Jesus; "and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim." But after this (with the fulness of Gentiles which is not yet come) they are to return and seek the Lord their God and David their King (or Christ Jesus, of whom David was a type); "and they shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." (Hos. iii. 4, 5.)

Having therefore shown that the promise was not made to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem literally, it must have a higher meaning—namely, a spiritual one; for it is evident that this fountain was opened to none other but to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Then take notice, by *David* here *Christ* only is meant, and by *David's house* *Christ's house*, and by the inhabitants of Jerusalem the elect of God, whether Jew or Gentile. So that you may read the text as follows without doing the least injury to the sacred Word: "I will open to the house of Christ and to all the elect, chosen in him, a fountain for sin and for uncleanness." But all this is to be proved, or it does not signify what I write; for to the law and to the testimony. "If they speak not according to that word, they have no light in them." I am, therefore, to prove that Christ is meant here. We all know that David was an eminent type of the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore compare what I have asserted with Acts ii., in which Peter tells them the promise is now fulfilled, spoken of by the prophet Joel, of the outpouring of the Spirit. He quotes what David says in Ps. xvi., taking the words from the type (David) and applying them to the Anti-type (Christ): "I foresaw the Lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand that I shall not be moved. Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad. Moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope, because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, which is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us to this day. He being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses; for David is not ascended into the heavens." (Acts ii.) I bring this forward to show that what was applied to David belongs only to Christ in these things. And so also is that text in Hosea, where it says that the Jews shall seek the Lord their God, and David their king, which certainly means Christ. So also in chapter xii. of this book in the outpouring of the Spirit, as well as in our text.

But, then, you will say, was not the first outpouring of the Spirit upon Jews observed literally? Yes; but this was not because those that received this blessed Spirit were Jews by nature or by birth, but because they were the elect of God; and, as before observed, God rejected all the rest, and palms them on the devil: "Ye are of your father the devil, and his works ye will do." It is not my being of David's house or an inhabitant of Jerusalem, or a Jew naturally, that will stand me in any stead, according to the flesh.

Paul prided himself in all these things, till God opened his eyes. I hope you understand me, and, therefore, agree that David in our text signifies Christ. And we may compare those that David was captain over with those that came to the Lord Jesus Christ. "Every one that was in distress, every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves together unto David, and he became a captain over them." Now, Jesus Christ is the Captain of our salvation; and to him shall the gathering of the people be. It is plain that good old Jacob prophesied of the heavenly Shiloh. And who are they that are gathered to him? Why, the poor, the halt, the lame, the maimed, and the blind. These he draws to him: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Thus there is some resemblance between David and Christ,—that Christ is intended in our text.

But, then, the question which every honest heart wishes to ask is this, "How can I tell that I belong to the house of this spiritual David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem? If I could but find this out, then I should be sure that this fountain was opened for me." To this I answer as follows:—that if you love the image of Christ in the saints, you are one that this fountain was opened for, and are of the house of this spiritual David. "Yes," say you, "I think I do, but not at all times; for when I feel this love, shortly after something crosses me, and I feel enmity rise up, even against them that I really believe have the image of Christ; so that I conclude myself to be a hypocrite. And this is not all; for I feel such a hard heart towards them, at times; no feeling for them when they get into trouble, but as if I loved no one but myself." Yes, this may be the case; but this latter is the old man, and the former is the new; and if you watch, the new man will be put on again, and then this love will flow out. Now, when this is the case, you will feel a love to Christ, his people, his Word, and his ways; all which prove that you have a disinterested love to God's family; that is, it is not for worldly advantage, but a simple love to truth.

(To be continued.)

THE FURNACE OF AFFLICTION.

Dear Brother in the Lord,—In October last my dear wife had a long and lingering confinement; still we thought all was well, and, perhaps, would have been so had not fever come on. I was obliged to call the doctor a second time. He said she would die; he would not flatter me. We had not the slightest hope of any recovery for three or four days; but the Lord blessed the means and restored her to a measure of health, although she has suffered from spasms of the heart ever since. Just as she was able to get about I was taken down in bronchitis, and three of the children. I was obliged to have the doctor again; so, I thought, I cannot order on my "Gospel Standard," which was a great grief to me from October up to this time; and I am now

laid by from a severe cold. We have had nothing but affliction. When the dear Lord intends to say it is enough I cannot tell. I am in his hands, and daily learning a blessed lesson to be still and know that he is God. Some people are foolish enough to say that we procure these things to ourselves. Of course we do; but still I believe above and beyond all this God has ordained a path of tribulation in which we must walk. The world may miss it, also the dead professor; but God's elect must walk therein. It is painful to flesh and blood to be brought low and to be kept there, and under these painful calamities it is only the Lord can give us resignation. We cannot always rejoice in the God of our salvation, nor say, "Thy will be done." God's elect cannot long act the hypocrite before him. They know he sees them. Altogether, they have to learn a daily lesson that without the strength of God manifested they are perfect weakness; that without him they can do nothing. Not long since I was led to pen the following lines :

"I HAVE CHOSEN THEE IN THE FURNACE OF AFFLICTION."

Trials, troubles, and temptations,
 Are our portion here below ;
 And a heart that daily plagues us,
 This the righteous only know.
 Sympathy we get from no one,
 But the blood-bought sons of heaven—
 Those who have a kindred feeling,
 Those who know their sins forgiven.

Rough and thorny is the pathway,
 But we do no less expect ;
 'Tis the Lord's own special promise
 To his bride, his church elect.
 God has said through tribulation
 All his saints must onwards press ;
 All must have it, none escape it,
 Who the better land possess.

But we know 'tis sin brings sorrow ;
 Careless walking claims the rod ;
 This we know and do confess it,
 But the promise of our God
 Still stands steadfast and unchanging,
 "With thee in the fire I'll be."
 In the furnace of affliction
 God says, "I have chosen thee."

O, I feel certain, my dear friend —, that it is God's elect and God's elect only who feel one for the other. The dead in sin, the nominal professor, cannot enter into our feelings. They have no midnight sighs, no secret desires, that God would appear for their deliverance. O, how few know what it is to be compelled to put their mouths in the dust and learn silence. And O, my dear brother, is it not a mercy that we know it? Must we not ascribe it all to the praise of free and sovereign grace? O, I often think God might have left me to have wallowed in sin and wickedness. He might have permitted me to have been

nothing but a heady professor, and I might have gone to hell with a form without the power. O, I must ever say before him—

Had not thy grace prevented,
I ne'er had chosen thee.

You shall have my experience as soon as it is finished.

Believe me to be, Your tried Brother,

R. E.

“THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”

Who are the just? The just I believe to be a people out of every kindred, and people, and tongue, and nation, which God the Eternal Father fixed his love upon and chose in Christ Jesus his Son, and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ before the foundation of the world, and predestinated them “unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. And whom he did predestinate them he also called; and whom he called them he also justified; and whom he justified them he also glorified.” (Rom. viii.) Thus we see that it is not anything in them which makes them just. No. They are so lost and ruined in the Adam fall transgression that there can be nothing good in them, and of themselves. “The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Except a man be born again he never can see the kingdom of God. It is God the Holy Ghost implanting new life in the souls and making them new creatures in Christ Jesus which makes them manifestively just. And this is how the just live by faith. To be made a new creature in Christ Jesus is to have faith given unto us; “for by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.” Faith is the life of God in the soul, by which the soul loves God and believes in God. Yes, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” God gave him faith first, or he could not have believed God. By faith the soul lives upon Christ. Through faith in Christ mountains of sins and guilt are removed from the conscience of a poor, lost, and guilty hell-deserving sinner.

I shall never forget God the Holy Ghost leading me, by precious faith, to Jesus Christ. I had thought God a hard master before that. I had tried very hard to please him by my own good works but he taught me, by painful experience, that the best that I could do was to sin against him in some way or other. But when he was pleased to give me faith to see my interest in Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Redeemer, to see that he had fulfilled the law for me, and that his righteousness was imputed unto me and my sin imputed unto him, and that he bore my sins upon the accursed tree never to be remembered against me

any more for ever, it broke my heart to pieces. O how I wept for joy that he had done such great things for me, and I cried for sorrow that I had been such a sinner against him.

This is how God's elect people are experimentally justified. They live by faith in Christ Jesus, they are brought to sue for mercy through what Christ has done and suffered; for

"No other sacrifice for sin,
Will God accept but this."

For there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we may be saved but the name of Jesus. Whosoever shall be led to call by faith on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved. But all men have not faith. No. It is only given to those whom God the Father chose in Christ Jesus before the world was. "No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him." "Ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you; my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

Dunham Massey, Cheshire.

GEORGE MORTON.

LETTER BY THE LATE MR. WARBURTON.

Dear Sister,—May mercy and peace be multiplied unto you.

I received your kind letter, and am glad to hear that you are still proving that by the grace of God you are what you are. Alas, my friend, neither you nor I have yet proved the depth of our ungodly nature, nor ever shall know it, for it is desperately wicked; who *can* know it? But, bless our covenant God, grace is a fathomless ocean which abounds above it all and shall reign above it, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ. What would such wretches as we do if such were not the case? We must sink into hopeless despair, never to rise again to all eternity. I can assure you that sometimes such is the baseness and the ungodliness of my heart that I am shocked at the sight, and soon cry out, "Can ever God dwell here?" God has cut us off from going about to establish righteousness of our own, and has stopped our mouths from saying to the vilest wretch out of hell, "Stand by, for I am holier than thou." But we can cry from our very hearts at times, "I am as a beast before thee. I am a brother to dragons and a companion to owls. My wounds stink and are corrupt, because of my foolishness. Woe unto me; for I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell amongst a people of unclean lips." What a mercy, my dear friend, that the Lord encourages such poor helpless, blind, foolish, rebellious wretches to call upon him, who has promised that, "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 Jacob will not forsake them." Yea, saith our God, "I will lead them in paths that they have not known.

I will make darkness light before them and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them and not forsake them."

I am still proving that it is through much tribulation, and sometimes fearing I shall sink and never come through into the kingdom of eternal rest; where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

I have not now those calamities and adversities in a way of providence that I formerly passed through. God, in his tender mercy, has heard my thousands of cries, sighs, and tears that he would grant me the blessing that I might live to see the day that I could pay my debts. O the years that I was bowed down here! And, bless the dear Lord, he has brought me to see the day. I vainly thought if ever this should be the case I should be one of the happiest men upon earth; but, alas, alas! I have ten times more trouble from a different source, from the devilish nature I carry about with me, from the roaring lion of the bottomless pit, and from the boldness, carnality, deadness, and barrenness of my heart; and the greatest grief and sorrow of my soul is when the Chief of all ten thousand hides his face from me, so that I am very like the blind groping for the wall at noonday, and fearing after all I shall prove a castaway. O the times I have shook for fear lest it should be proved at last that I had no oil burning in my lamp. I do know at the present day what it is to cry unto God, with poor helpless Simon, "Lord, save, or I perish." And again, "Lord, help me; Lord, teach; Lord, guide me right; Lord, never leave me nor forsake me; Lord, lift thou upon me the light of thy countenance; Lord, show me another token for good; Lord favour me, if it is with but one crumb." The dear Lord appears often as though he took no notice of me, until my very soul faints within me. Then I cry out with anguish and bitterness of soul, "Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Will he be favourable no more for ever?" And here I am many times, giving it all up as a lost matter. Then I call myself a thousand fools that ever I published my book. Perhaps I have deceived the people of God and deceive myself.

It is trying work, my friend, to be here; and sometimes the whole day on a Saturday as blind as a bat, and the Bible sealed up or a sealed book. My soul and body also shake and tremble. Then I cry out again, "What shall I do? Where shall I go to-morrow? Sunday near; hundreds of people, perhaps, will be gathered together. What shall I do? What can I say? How can I look them in the face?" Nay, I have many times believed it would be the most presumptuous thing in the world to attempt it. Sunday morning has come, and I have gone like a fool to the stocks, firmly believing I could not speak ten minutes to the people. I have gone bowed down to the dust and upon the dunghill. I can assure you at these times when I

open my mouth in the pulpit, it is not to tell the children of God what they ought to do, what they might do, what it is their privilege to do; but I am sure to tell them what sinners we are, what dragons and owls we are, and wonder what sort of a God we have that he should forbear crushing us into hell at a stroke. I can assure you I begin with grace, carry on with grace, and sometimes hope to be amongst the happy numbers at last, when the top stone shall be brought with shouting, "Grace, grace unto it." And the poor dear souls who come to the house of God and who have been robbed and spoiled and all of them immured in holes and hid in prison-houses, when they have heard their state by nature described, their footsteps marked out, their stumbling-blocks taken out of the way, have come out of their holes like worms and appeared like men. They have then had the boldness of a lion, and exclaimed, "The Lord is my light and my salvation. I will not fear."

I have many times stood astonished and melted with wonder and amazement at the wonderful wisdom, power, and glory of the wonderful way the dear Lord took to hide pride from my heart; emptying *me* to fill *them*: stripping *me* and clothing them; bringing *me* into the very spot their souls were in that I might trace the footsteps of the flock that they might see the print of their heels. And O, how many times it has rejoiced me when I have seen the end the Lord had in view in suffering the devil and my carnal heart to sink me into such depths of distress, gloom, and despair, namely, that it has been, as it were, for the very purpose, through the unworthy instrument, of strengthening, comforting, delivering, and feeding his dear sheep and lambs. I have blessed him and thanked him times without number that ever he should make choice of such a fool.

It is of no use for a parson to attempt to come before God's tried people if he has never trod in the path himself. God will never leave the golden oil to run but through golden pipes. No man can counterfeit the power and the unction, nor have an unction from the Holy One, and need not any man to teach him but as the same anointing teacheth him of all things and is truth and no lie. It is my soul's cry, from day to day, that the dear Comforter may ever lead me and guide me into the truth. O, how my soul is sometimes sunk down with heaviness, fear, and dismay, lest I should be left to prophesy a vision out of my heart. And O, what a solemn thing it is to stand up professing to be God's mouth! How my soul begs that the dear Lord will take the little child and set him by himself. I cannot bear that he should leave me alone; for of what use are all the heads, divisions, subdivisions, or applications if there is no unction or power from the Holy One? What is sound doctrine if it does not drop as the rain? What is a fine sound of words if there be no distinction in the sound? What are a long string of Scripture texts if there be no Spirit to seal it home to the soul as the bread of God? Nothing will satisfy hungry souls but finding

the Word of God and eating it and proving it the joy and rejoicing of their heart.

God's living children are looking and longing, desiring and panting, for the power; for they are ever learning that God's kingdom is not in word, but in power; and they are well taught that all their power and strength is in the Lord and from him.

I am glad to hear that you seem to have a little revival amongst you; but I am surprised you should ever look to or desire such a fool as I to advise you how to proceed. My dear friend, look to Jesus, the great Shepherd and Bishop of the sheep; for I can assure you I am such a poor blind fool that I am afraid of any one asking me to give them an answer to any question. You must go to the Fountain-Head, as I am obliged to do from day to day, from month to month, from year to year, "O Lord, teach me to walk, teach me to talk, teach me to think, teach me thy mind and will." And, bless the dear Lord, I have at times some few evidences and testimonies that he does not despise the prayer of the destitute. It is my desire that the Lord will preserve you from ever being carried away with empty appearances. I am not intimating that the appearances of your increase are empty. This must be left to that God who alone is the searcher of all hearts. I mean, I hope that you will be well satisfied that if ever you have moved one step, the cloud has gone before you, or you will have to come back with confessions. God saith, "He that believeth shall not make haste;" "Ye shall not go out in haste or by flight; for I the Lord will go before you and bring up the rearward." God grant that this may ever be your moving, the Lord going before you and coming up behind, and then you will be safe and have nothing to fear either from men or devils.

But I shall quite tire you with my poor scribble. My kind love to your father and sisters, and all inquiring friends; and may the Lord be your director and keeper, comforter and deliverer. This is the prayer of

Your unworthy Brother, for Truth's Sake,
Trowbridge, January 27, 1841. JOHN WARBURTON.

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

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

My dear Brother in a precious Christ,—Ah, my brother! I know he is precious to you; and could you have your will in the matter, you would have him made a thousand times more precious to your soul. But why do poor sinners love him at all? Because he first loved us. Before time, in time, and after time his love is unchangeable to us; but how different ours in its acting towards him! Sometimes we enjoy sweetly its burning effects in our poor hearts, and sometimes feel as if we did not possess a grain of real love to the Lord. It seems to be buried amidst the vileness and corruptions that abound within. It is written,

those that have no changes fear not God ; but poor sinners taught to feel the burden of sin, the guilt of sin, the curse of sin, and the fearful consequences of sin, are not like these persons. They have many changes from death to life, light to darkness. Some of the changes work a sort of desolation in our feelings ; and some changes work sensible good, and comfort, and establishment in our souls. Groans in the saints, as well as songs, are signs of life. Kent says :

" It is a sign of life within,
To groan beneath the power of sin."

And Hezekiah writes : " The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day."

But we fear, at times, that our changes are for the worse, not better. The psalmist says, " Ye that fear the Lord, hate evil." Sin ! O what dreadful havoc has sin made ! It is the leaven that defiles our keeping of our passover, and causes the Lord sensibly to depart from us.

O ! my dear brother, what a gloomy state of things do we see in the midst of what may even be considered the members of Christ's body ! What coldness, shyness, indifference we witness ; at times almost an entire neglect of the means, and a mixing up with mere professors. Professed believers, too, and members of gospel churches, marrying with unbelievers, and even not objecting to being married by Ritualists in their places of so-called worship. Others spending their precious time, which the Lord has blessed them with for spiritual improvement to their profit, in walking about on a Lord's-day evening, instead of filling their places in the house of God ; thereby setting an evil example to others. Alas ! Some persons, living and allowing themselves in these commissions, by their practice give too much the lie to their profession. Why do persons call themselves Christians, if they habitually neglect and follow not the pattern given by Christ ? These negative Christians can go to the house of God once in a month or two ; can sit and sleep, gape and yawn out the painful hour and a half. They do not get tired, indeed, of sitting, as they can sit and pray, sit and sing, sit and hear, sit and worship. They walk in after service begins, and such as are men sometimes do not even condescend to uncover their heads ; yet such conduct is by the apostle counted a shame in the presence of the King of kings, who hath said, " Ye shall reverence my sanctuary," and who " meeteth him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness." Yes, oftentimes meeteth him with joy and comfort, satisfaction and peace, contentment, assurance, and praise.

But righteous works must be done by a righteous man, and he that is one is so by Another's righteousness being imputed to him. This man also has grace, thus possessing an inherent righteousness, or a righteous principle implanted in him in regeneration. The former is his justification, the latter his inherent holiness. He is also a righteous man practically ; *i. e.*, he doeth righteousness ; for a good work must have its foundation in the good work

of God. But how lamentable a fact it is that of not a single thing we do can we say, Well done! The poor sinner gives over his thoughts, words, and actions, and acknowledges,

“If one good thought all heaven would buy,
Not one good thought, O Lord, have I.”

Nevertheless, the Scripture says, “To do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”

O how trying is the work of a godly minister! He must not prophesy to himself peace, nor dream of being carried to heaven on eagle's wings; nor that all the sheaves in the field will bow down to his sheaf. He must not dream of going to his grave all the way in peace; for he will meet with ill-favoured kine, troublesome friends, and hard sayings. He will have to dwell often by the willows and waters of Babylon, and his sheaf will be thrashed with an iron flail. He must not think of getting and reaping, but of losing and forsaking; and thus be willing to forsake all and follow Christ, and count the things of this world but dung and dross for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord; by whom we are crucified to the world, and the world to us.

Although, too, at times, we may seem to miss our aim, it will be only for a time, and finally we shall not suffer thereby. Others have experienced this before us. Christ preached in vain to the Jews. (Isa. xlix.) So did Noah to the whole world; and Lot to those of Sodom. But they were not really hurt by so doing. So poor sinners pray, and plead, and wrestle; and yet no answers come; but their enemies seem stronger and livelier; and the Lord seems to pay no regard; while Satan is permitted to be more fierce, and the poor soul is tempted to give all up, and say it is of no use to pray any more. But, poor sinner, the Lord will hear thee. The vision is for an appointed time; wait for it, and watch for it; it will come, and not tarry. The more violent the storm, the nearer is it to the end.

“Still cry and shout till night is past;
For daylight will spring up at last.”

Then thou shalt sing in the ways of the Lord; in the ways in which he answered thee of old; in the ways in which he blessed them.

O! my dear brother, what a blessed thing is real religion; and a blessed thing to enjoy it. What a blessing to enjoy a sweet liberty, gospel liberty, and to be able to preach this sweet liberty to others! How different is it to those preachers who preach liberty to others, whilst themselves the slaves of bondage and corruption! The Lord delivers only captives; pardons the guilty; heals the sick; cleanses lepers; saves the lost. Such a one shall not only have past sins forgiven, but also present, as well as future. His sins shall not even be remembered by the Lord; and though such a one may often feel unrighteous in himself, yet he is accounted righteous in the sight of the Lord.

The Lord's dealings with us, how far are they above reason! He brings joy out of sorrow, as in the first creation light out of

darkness. So by his death he works our life. He killeth us also to make us alive. His covenant of life he makes known to us in the deaths we feel and have to encounter daily. O! How careful are men about the health of their bodies. They will take bitter pills and potions to cure them; but the soul how few are really concerned about, or study the health of that! But the blessed Physician will see that we shall not die of a mortal sickness. He has his remedies at hand. He gives repentance and confession. O the blessed relief that a poor child of God has found in secret confession before him who searches the heart! Then he gives a heart made soft by grace, and a conscience tender and pure by being sprinkled with blood, and a realization of his love shed abroad in our poor hearts; and this will enable a poor soul to sweetly sing

“My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly trust in Jesus' name.”

The Lord highly esteems a broken heart. It is his own work. Good Josiah's heart melted, and the Lord took him to himself from the evil to come. (2 Ki. xxii. 19.)

I am sure my dear brother also knows something of these feelings in his own soul. Especially was this the case when the Lord so sweetly broke in upon your soul, when it was in the dark, and in the depths of distress, of misery, guilt and fear, that had for a time invaded your soul, when you felt yourself in a hopeless state; when the Sun of righteousness arose, with healing in his wings, causing you to sing praises to his dear Name. These things ought not to be buried, my brother, but declared in the gates of Zion, where every one shall speak of his glory. You have had many changes since then. Our joys are here mingled with sorrows; our sweets with many bitters; our liftings-up with castings-down; but we hope, in the Lord's time, to be delivered from all these mixtures, and to sing one song as with one voice: “Salvation to our God that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.” I hope you enjoy some little of this; and that it is part of your song, even now, in this house of your pilgrimage here below. Pray for me, brother, that I may be able to do the work of an evangelist, and make full proof of my ministry, and finish my course with joy, receive my crown, stand face to face with my enemies, and receive my reward with all the heirs of grace.

Please to give my love to dear Mrs. F., to whom I hope to write before long, and to all my dear brethren and sisters in ties of love, many of whom I have known for nearly thirty years. How can I forget the dear spot and dear friends there? No; never, never. The Lord bless you and the church of God at T. This is the heartfelt wish and prayer of

Your unworthy Brother in the Lord,

Biggleswade, Sept. 19, 1878.

R. BATCHELOR.

My dear Friend and Sister,—I hope you do not think me unkind in not writing before in answer to yours of December last.

I am glad to hear that my last letter was profitable to you, in being the means of separating you, and bringing you out from those who are but hirelings in the Lord's vineyard, and also in breaking asunder the sad wiles that Satan was labouring hard to entangle you in; the Lord having blessedly drawn up your heart and affections to the blessed throne of mercy and grace, constrained you to abide by his word, and made you willing to wait and watch his will concerning you. May he enable you still to commit all your temporal and spiritual concerns into his infinite hands, help you to pour out your soul before him, and give you to feel that there is still a throne of mercy and grace opened for every quickened, heavy-laden soul, drawn by the cords of love and mercy to the ever-blessed interceding Jesus, seated at his Father's right hand, as the infinitely blessed channel through which eternal mercy and pardon flows.

O, my friend, what a mercy it is for such worms as we that the Lord should ever have looked upon us and wrought that divine change in our never-dying souls which caused us to fear his great name, put us experimentally amongst the number of his redeemed, constrained us to come out from the world dead in sin and dead in a profession, and made us glad to take up a daily cross and follow hard after the meek and lowly Jesus, suffering for and with a suffering Saviour, continuing with him in his temptations, yea, choosing rather to suffer troubles, afflictions, vexations, and sorows with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of this world for but a season. O my sister that you may be enabled to cleave fast to him, and to let every idol fall before the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. May Jesus set up for ever in your heart, soul, and affections, reigning supreme alone, King of kings and Lord of lords; for we have hearts ever prone to go astray, ever prone to seek after forbidden objects; hearts deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, a corrupt fountain, continually sending forth its filthy streams, base and vile, which nothing but the reigning power of sovereign grace can subdue and keep in subjection, and hold the soul fast in every hour of temptation and trial, and which will not let the redeemed soul fall a final prey to Satan to be overwhelmed in eternal despair. No, it is in the covenant of God's eternal love and grace, engraven on the heart of Jesus, bought with an infinite price, redeemed with his own most precious blood, and justified through his spotless robe. And thus, from all eternity being chosen by the Father, redeemed by the Son of his love, and in his own time quickened by the Holy Ghost to feel their lost estate and the utter impossibility of doing anything to raise their souls to glory, they are led to see that salvation, in all its suitability, fulness, power, and glory, flows alone from the death and cross of Jesus; and upon his righteous head they can put the crown, falling at his feet, lost in wonder, love, and

praise. So having heard and learned of the Father, they are drawn by the blessed Spirit unto Jesus, and hear the voice of the good Shepherd, and receive mercy and pardon through the blood of his cross. They can no longer follow after hirelings and doctrines of devils. They may be daily tried and thrust sorely at by Satan, and often find their paths strewn with sorrows and temptations, so that they are again and again, through necessity, drawn to Jesus, to receive fresh tokens of his love and mercy, kisses from his dear and precious lips, and smiles from his sweet and blessed countenance, to cheer on their poor afflicted fainting souls in the rough and thorny road till they arrive upon the shores of eternal bliss and glory, beyond the valley of the shadow of death.

Yours sincerely for the Truth's Sake,
 Market Lavington, Wilts, A LOVER OF THE TRUTH.
 March 16th, 1857.

My dear Friend,—I would acknowledge your kind letter, and should be glad if I could see my way to come on Christmas day; but I am going out the first two Lord's days in December (D.V.); and next Sabbath morning I have promised a service at W., owing to the sudden illness of an expected supply for two Sabbaths there.

I have been away lately a good deal, and my much travelling is a great weariness to my flesh; yet I would be willing to do what is right in the Lord's sight. O! could I be little and nothing, and be always near to, and leaning upon the Lord. O the sweet nearness to, and enjoyment of, the Lord I was indulged with in my travel last week, while in the railway carriage, on my way to B. How sweet those moments, rich in blessing! What condescension to such a poor worthless sinner! What matchless love towards such a base thing! What a willing captive I became to the charm of love divine! How emptied of earth and self! How sweet to be surrendered to the Lord! O what a heaven on earth to live under the smiles of our most gracious God! O that it might be meet for me, and glorifying to God, thus to walk with him! I could feelingly, I hope intensely, pray, "O that thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldst keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me." I hope it is the Lord that has made that desire very fervent with me, that my last days may be my best days. O unspeakable mercy and blessedness, to be kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Be this our rejoicing more and more. O the goodness of God!

"O could I know, and love him more,
 And all his wondrous grace explore."

Hymn 991 expresses my soul's desire. But the Lord has made me know heaviness is needful for me at seasons and periods eternal wisdom and infinite goodness has fixed; but O the

sweet truth, "God is love." And that I should know it, who would not wonder? I believe it, because I cannot help it, "It is the work of God," adored be his holy and blessed name.

Satan suggested I should not live long after that, and that I should, perhaps, meet death on my journey; and this was to prepare me for it. I suspected he sought to rob me, and was enabled to show it the Lord and ask him to interpose; and it was not permitted to prevail with me.

Since I began to write this it has come into my mind that I perhaps might come the last Sunday this year; that is, the Sabbath after Christmas day. But if you can get some one for that, and give me till the beginning of the year, do so.

As you have opportunity, I would be remembered with affection to the circle of friends with whom you meet. Grace be with you.

Very sincerely yours,

Walsall, Nov. 19th, 1867.

C. MOUNTFORT.

My much-esteemed Friend,—I think I never found my mind more entangled than I have lately. I have begun those letters, and could not finish them. What the reason is I know not; but I have lost my subject each time. Something has come in the way and interrupted me, and then all is lost with me.

My friend wishes to come to an establishment in the things of God respecting herself. This is a very desirable thing, and one that is much needed. It is a long time with some before they come to this state. Many very heavy storms must be passed through, and many dark nights, as well as calm and bright days. Solomon says, "Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer. Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness." (Prov. xxv. 4, 5.) This agrees with what Paul says to Timothy (2 Tim. ii. 20): "In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man, therefore, purge himself from these, he shall be" (mark this) "a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use" (mark that), "and prepared unto every good work." Observe, "every good work."

The Finer of whom Solomon speaks is called the Master by Paul; and this Master is Jesus Christ. "One is your Master, even Christ," and he is Lord of this great house. The world, and his vessels which are to honour are mixed among those to dishonour. All walk in the same way, and are of the same mind; all are under the power of darkness, one as well as another.

Now, there is a time fixed in the mind of God the Father when his chosen ones are to be brought out of their natural state. If I might speak by a figure, it should be this: the Father says, as it were, to the Son, "Thou, my Son, who art the Master over these vessels of mercy, go and separate the dross from the silver, that a vessel may come forth for thy use." That is, let power go forth

to separate such and such a sinner from the world, and set his face towards Zion. Power must go forth before any sinner will separate from the love of this world. The silver and the dross would remain together, if the finer did not set himself to work ; and Jesus, the Refiner, will not suffer his silver to remain among the dross of this world. He says now to his people, as in the days of his flesh, "I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." The dross and the silver cannot agree when once the Refiner sets to work. After he begins his work, he makes us willing to be separated from the dross, and miserable until we are separated.

Again, "Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness." This appears to be an order given with all authority, and the person who receives the order has apparently full power to take away the wicked from before the king. Whoever the person is who receives the order, he is sure to execute it. The substance appears to be this. Satan is said to reign and rule in the hearts of the children of disobedience, among whom all the vessels of honour have their conversation when in a state of ignorance. These vessels are called palaces in another place: "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace ; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." The same Person who turns Satan out takes possession himself. And who can this be ? Paul tells us that it pleased God to reveal his dear Son in him ; but it was not until Satan was turned out. There does not appear to be much space between the one going out, and the other coming in. Now, whoever the Person is, he takes away the wicked from before the king. He says, as it were, "Take away this wicked one before I can enter;" because Satan and Jesus never reign together. They cannot agree. Jesus seems to say, "This wicked usurper has taken possession of my palace ; turn him out, that my throne may be established in righteousness. It is mine, by the choice of my Father, and by his gift to me ; mine by purchase, through my life and blood, by my having lived a life of holiness and sorrow, and at last paid down the price of blood, that my people should never die. Then most assuredly he has a right to reign in his own palace, according to the strictest rule of righteousness. According to Paul's account of this, a man is to be purged from these. That is, these vessels of dishonour, vessels of wood to be burned, and vessels of earth ; persons earthly-minded, and nothing else. If a man be truly purged from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work," which his heavenly wisdom should be pleased to call them to ; whether to minister to the necessities of the saints, or to minister in holy things, or to suffer for his sake. Every vessel must perform the service he has prepared it for. I believe *we* are interested in this purging. When the

Lord first began this good work in our souls, we did not know his handiwork; we were strangers to it; but we can remember this one thing,—we were made willing to give up all for Christ,—the world, and sin, and worldly companions; yea, and our own selves also. We desired to renounce all other lovers, lords, and kings; for though these had had dominion over us, yet then we wished to make mention of his righteousness, and of his only. We thought we were more willing for him to reign over us than he was to do so; and the cause of a great deal of our grief was fear lest he would never take such poor, unworthy, wretched sinners as we felt ourselves to be, under his government. We entreated him much to look in pity upon us and save us. We were willing to follow him to prison and to death too, if he would but be merciful to us, and take us for his own. Poor, needy sinners, we thought how glad we should be to own him for our king, if he would but own us for his subjects. This was not from feigned love, but from real, heartfelt affection for him. This is one part of his establishment in us, and ours in him. Our establishment consists in a knowledge of the things here mentioned; and though Satan may come with as many lies as he is the father of, he can never take away these truths. The continual love of sin and of the world is turned out, and we have been purged of worldly company. They are not our society. We are obliged to have to do with them, but we do not desire to be of them. We have enough of the world within us to make us sick of ourselves; and this would never have been the case if Jesus had not taken possession of our hearts.

I wish my paper had been larger, you should have had more. Love to you all; wishing you every covenant blessing.

Edenbridge, Feb. 3rd, 1821.

G. PAYTON.

Very dear Friend,—The confessionary language of Pharaoh's butler belongs to me towards you; therefore I do acknowledge my faults this day; and not only towards you but towards our blessed and adorable Joseph, to whom I have been and still am the most ungrateful one here on earth. You say "you suppose I have concluded you have sunk to rise no more." I hope, my dear friend, I have learnt doctrine too well in the school of experience to conclude any such thing. Your last two letters have been very sweet to me; wheat will not make up into dough until it is ground. My soul never felt more running into union to you than when I read the first account of your affliction. Life and trouble unite us together here; life and joy will unite us hereafter.

I have been in a very desolate state for some time. The loss of communion, fellowship, and fervency I sensibly feel. I seem, at times, to perceive the letter of the Word, but seldom can see and feel that dew and unction which make it spirit and life, and which make the bones fat. My flesh is nervous, my soul is petulant, my heart belching up the foulest evils, until a sense of the

desert of damnation is my frequent companion for hours; and when I try to hope in Christ, pray to Christ, or trust in Christ, it only seems like an effort of nature; and so seldom do I feel the sweet fruits of the blessed Spirit that I am ready to cry out, "The Lord hath forsaken me," or that I have been mistaken respecting the work of grace in my soul, and have formed too favourable an opinion of my own state. However, through mercy, at times the aboundings of grace make misery yield, and doubts, and fears, and dulness, and darkness give place; and my youth is renewed like the eagle's. Sometimes, for a few hours, and now and then for a few days, my heart is like the chariots of Amminadib.

I was as glad of the coming of your last as Paul was of Fortunatus. I read it several times over, and showed it to several friends; it did me good. Your letter before that drove me on my knees to beg, and your last drove me there to praise and bless his name; which is wonderful. I am glad to see you looking out for changes. You will, I believe, be the better enabled to meet them. May the Lord bear you up in your latter stages, and favour you with many revivals and many renewals of the Holy Ghost; and may our covenant God pardon with power, until our hearts are contented, and sing and give praise.

I hope this will find you at the wells of salvation, and when your vessel is full, write as quickly as you can; and should you be favoured with a little sweet and solemn nearness, do try to beg a little balm, and a little honey, and a few nuts, and some spices for me, who often am encamped on Gilboa.

On the receipt of your last I was just going up to our chapel (which is called Zoar), to administer the ordinance of baptism to sixteen, through which myself and they were wonderfully helped and blessed. All that I have spoken with declared they never witnessed so solemn a scene before. The chapel was crowded, but unusually still. Many of the candidates had been led to see the ordinance for many years. My own daughter was first, who had been waiting for an opportunity about eight years, and our clerk more than fifteen years. Such a blessing evidently attended the ordinance that some could scarcely afterwards keep in bed through the night; and some declared that they never closed their eyes for joy. On July 26th I baptized sixteen more, but had some sharp work with the devil and the flesh. One woman was subject to palpitation; and the devil and old carnal reason both rapped at the door together; and, fool like, I ran and let them in; and the old carnal doctor soon walked boldly upstairs; but the devil stuck in the door place, and I could neither get him in nor out. And thus he began: "You are a Baptist minister, are you not?" And really I stood with the door in my hand and could not utter a word. "Who made you a minister? Who made you a Baptist minister?" Well, I wanted to get into the House of the Rolls (Ezra vi. 1), to see if I could find any old scrap of my license; but the devil stuck in the door place. At this juncture, down the doctor came with a man of straw in his hand, which he

had been dressing up in the garret, and dragging up and down the chimney and dust. He sent it into my face, and, sawney like, my mouth being half-cocked, mouth, nose, and eyes received a pretty good benefit from the doctor's man of straw. However, with a little hauking and sneezing and wiping, and a little refreshing air which came down the staircase, I got my breath, and, grumbling a little, asked the doctor for an explanation. "O yes," says the doctor, "you shall have an explanation. I have deemed it prudent to convince you of the danger the ordinance is in by the one step you are going to take, in baptizing a woman subject to palpitation. There is the greatest danger of her dying in the water." And with that he fetched me another dust in the face with the man of straw, at the same time bellowing out, "She'll die in the water; and if she should, the ordinance will sink through your rashness. You should have told her the danger, and persuaded her not to go. Instead of which, you were glad to see her come forward." Well, what with doctor, devil, and soot, I felt ready to faint. So I made a sudden bolt into the garden, and both after me.

Well, as I was walking up and down, I thought I heard Little Faith call at a distance, and say, "Well; the root of the matter is in her." "Yes," I said, "I believe it is." "Then who can tell but she is begging help, strength, and all of Him who is able to make her to stand. Beside, she has a praying husband and a praying daughter." "But," said the devil, "you have put your hand to the plough, but you would be glad to go back as ever coward was; but you must go on, because you are a Baptist minister. And now you are plainly going forward only because you don't like to go back. You have no drawing of heart, you have no comfort of love."

Well, the time came for me to go up to chapel, so the doctor, the devil, man of straw, parson, wife, daughter, and three or four more, started; and we found a lot of folks and all the candidates; and after singing, prayer, and address, we proceeded to the ordinance and took the woman for the second female, and baptized her without the least harm; which emboldened me to snatch the man of straw out of the doctor's hand and to make a blow at his ugly head. But just at that instant the devil touched the doctor with his wand and turned him into an egg, which, in the bustle, I set my foot upon as quickly as I could; when, behold, it burst out into a viper, which hissed and bit and stung me in and out of the water, through the whole of the ordinance, until my soul was weary of my life. "Well," quoth the devil, "are you not tired of this?" And I heartily said, "Yes; not of the ordinance, but of my sad and miserable condition." And if you had seen the parson the next day, with his locks cut, his withs on, and the Philistines upon him, you would have said, "Is there not a cause? And if there is, what has he been at?" Why he had been dabbling in human glory; and the Lord was determined to spoil it (Isa. xxiii. 9), and to hide pride from him.

Yet, amidst all this, it appears that the dear Lord owned and blessed his own institution; and there appear to be many waiting for another opportunity to show the obedience of faith; and I hope to administer the ordinance again in about a fortnight.

I have been very little from home through the year, but am going to exchange with a good man next Lord's day. In my own soul I have much darkness, and am particularly barren and lifeless in prayer. I am afraid of resting on grace received instead of receiving fresh supplies, drawing my soul daily to the fulness that there is in Christ and enabling me to live upon him by faith. I am afraid I should build upon a knowledge of Christ without daily communion and fellowship with him in his sufferings and a daily conformity to his death being wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost. I believe many are, and will tell us they have got above doubts and fears; yea, are bold enough to declare they have not had a doubt nor a fear for years. These are not resting upon Christ, but that they *have* rested upon him; and to this my indolent soul inclines daily. But if one thing above another threatens the destruction of my peace, it is this: I fear resting in the knowledge of the plan of salvation instead of daily feeding upon Christ as the bread of God. Whilst two natures are struggling in the believer, he will judge he is that which he feels most of. Thus, if the old man receives a fresh supply from the powers of darkness, fears will multiply like moths in a sunbeam. Only let the devil say in the heart of the old man, *which is the fool's heart*, "There is no God," and follow up the soul with it hour after hour, until a man is ready to run distracted, and where will comfortable believing be? Where will exulting in Christ be?

Ah, my dear friends, every tried soul knows the harp must be upon the willows all the time the soul sits by the rivers of Babylon; but, on the other side, when it pleases the Lord the Holy Ghost to revive the new man and increase the graces of his first implanting, he can read and glean, pray and feel, stay his soul upon Christ, and taste that he is gracious, receive his blood to the relief of his conscience, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God; yea, do all things through Christ which strengthens him. I am now mourning without the sun, having been shut up for some days and cannot come forth; but he hath delivered, and will deliver. I have been in hope for many years of seeing better days upon earth, but I expect tribulation to the end, even an enduring *to* the end.

I can scarcely break off without observing that in the early part of the year we had three wet Sabbaths, which caused the congregation to be unusually thin; so that I had few to preach to; and on those days my ministry filled my own soul to that degree that my cup ran over; and when coming out of the pulpit I could say to my soul, "If I have not been an apostle to others, doubtless I have to thee, for the seal of mine apostleship is in thee."

I should be glad to see you once more before we cross Jordan, if it were the Lord's will; but, whether I come and see you or else be absent, I hope to hear of your affairs and that you stand fast in the Lord. I have been much engaged since I began writing, as you will perceive by the dates. Believe me to be,
Yours sincerely in Gospel Bonds,

Upper Dicker, July, 1842.

W. COWPER.

Last Tuesday, October 11th, I administered the ordinance of baptism again to seventeen, but there are many adversaries; but I do think a great door and effectual is opened. Pray for us. Farewell. Write soon.

Obituary.

GEORGE LARTER.—On Jan. 6th, aged 78, George Larter, of Haslingden.

He was born in Suffolk; and, as he often said, he was, like all Adam's race, born in sin and went astray from the womb telling lies. And so blind and ignorant was he that he was more brutish than the horses which he drove in the plough, having no knowledge of God or fear of his name; in fact, living like the brute beasts that perish, without God and without hope in the world.

In this state he married, and had a large family of children, and was often in the lowest depths of poverty.

But the Lord, in the purpose of his grace toward him in Christ Jesus before the world began, in his own good time, brought him to a sense of his state as a sinner in the sight of a just and holy God. And this was done without any apparent instrumentality; for he never went to any place of worship, and was so ignorant he could not read a word in the Book. It was done as he was working in the field. A most awful feeling came over him, and he seemed to be brought into the presence of God, as a God of infinite justice, and he seemed to be sitting in judgment upon him alone as a sinner. All his sins were then brought to his mind in all their dreadful magnitude. He stood astonished at the sight of them as they appeared before him; and the word of the righteous Judge seemed to thunder in his soul: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." So awful did it all feel to him that he felt that his doom was about to be sealed and that hell must be his portion, as the righteous law of God seemed to read his very inmost soul; and he felt that he had broken it all in word and deed, both in the letter and in the spirit of it, and thus incurred the divine vengeance. And the awful sentence seemed to shake his soul to its very centre: "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

There was such a change in him from that time that an un-

godly man used to taunt him with it, and tried every means to bring him back to his former state; but all to no purpose; for he who had begun the good work in his poor soul carried it on, and none could stay his hand or say unto him, "What doest thou?"

He now began to attend a place of worship, to see if he could find some peace to his troubled soul; but all he heard only condemned him. There was no one like him; and from what he generally heard there was something for him to do to please God and to make his peace with him. So he set to work with all his might to do as others did, and as they told him he must do; and he often said he was then working for spiritual life, not knowing in his ignorance that it was from the life of God in his soul that he was brought to feel and see his state as a sinner in need of a Saviour. So he went to work to work out his own salvation.

How long he remained in this state, under the law, trying to fulfil its requirements, is not known; but from what he said it must have been many months. But he was at last brought to a stand with these words: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." He saw that he had not continued; there was a great deal left undone; there was the sin in the thoughts and intents of the heart, that, however he might reform the outside, here was a den of iniquity which he could not touch nor alter; and unless a power greater than his own came to the rescue he must for ever perish in his sins. Then he cried out in agony of soul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death?" The word then came from God's own mouth into his poor soul by the power of the Holy Ghost: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not on the Son of God shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Here was the new way of deliverance opened up to him—the way of faith in the merits of a precious Jesus. Here he saw him as the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth; and his poor soul cried out, "Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief."

From that time he felt that the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness was sufficient to wash away his sins; and faith in his soul sweetly said: "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin;" and he felt that his sins were all forgiven. The peace of God, which passeth all natural understanding, filled his poor soul, and he went on his way rejoicing in God his Saviour.

In the order of providence he removed into Lancashire nearly forty years ago, and joined the little cause at Haslingden when it was first begun; and his wife also. And some time afterwards he was chosen deacon of the church, and continued in that office with honour to his Master and the cause of truth until his death.

He often spoke of the late Mr. Gadsby with great esteem and affection, and the blessed truths he preached. So much so that I

believe when he had heard him preach sometimes it was his delight feelingly to tell how those truths had been the support of his poor soul for many years under the many trials he had to endure, especially soul-troubles. He had often to walk in much darkness. I have known him to sit in the chapel an attentive hearer of the Word, as he often said, without any feeling. He could give his assent and consent to it, and he believed it, and that God's own people were blessed by it; but he could not lay hold of one of the promises of the gospel for himself. He felt that it was the work of God the Holy Ghost to take of the things of Christ and show them to the poor sinner even in the preached Word; and unless it was given to him as a special gift he could not take it and enjoy it as some professors of religion say they can. Yet his soul hungered and thirsted after it, nor could he rest satisfied without it. And thus he kept waiting his turn to be led into the gospel waters and by faith to be enabled to feel its healing virtue in his own soul. It was easy to see when he had got a blessing; there would be a pleasant smile on his face and he would tell to all how sweet and precious had been the Word and how good God was to a poor sinner such as he felt himself to be.

Some years ago I was preaching on a Lord's day morning at Haslingden from Exod. xxviii. 34, when he could scarcely sit still; and after the service he was telling all the friends how his poor soul had been blessed that morning; and he often spoke of it while he lived. He said it was indeed the ring of the gospel bells with their certain sound, as it has been sounded by Gadsby, Warburton, Kershaw, Philpot, and others, and will continue to be sounded as long as there is a spiritual Israelite to hear it. And my soul has often feasted on the spiritual pomegranate.

He was a man of peace and loved the truth as it is in a precious Jesus, and the ministers of truth for their work's sake. He always had very low views of himself. He loved to hear a precious Jesus exalted and the sinner laid low.

His death was rather sudden at last, and he did not say much; but from what we all know of him at Haslingden, we can say of him, "He that sleeps in Jesus will God bring *with him*."

Haslingden, April, 1879.

AQUILA CLARK.

REBECCA FORD.—On March 8th, 1879, at Wansford, aged 64, Rebecca Ford.

My dear mother was a member of the church at Stamford, for many years. She sat under Mr. Philpot's ministry, which, through grace, she highly prized. She was a woman of few words, but a lover of the truth as it is in Jesus. The Bible, Gadsby's Selection of Hymns, Philpot's Sermons, and the "Gospel Standard," may be said to have composed her library.

Her death was somewhat sudden, resulting from a fit of apoplexy, which deprived her of the power of speech until just before she departed; when her countenance beamed with joy, and she

uttered a few broken sentences, expressive of her safety. After which she waved her hand repeatedly in token of victory through the blood of the Lamb. It may be truly said she lived and died in the fear of God.

Bath.

W. S. FORD.

WILLIAM DAY.—On March 22nd, aged 41, William Day, of Hitchin.

I was acquainted with our departed friend for about seven years, and at different times have heard him speak of the Lord's dealings with his soul, but do not remember exactly how old he was when the Lord called him. He has told me after he was brought to a knowledge of Christ how very precious the Lord Jesus Christ was to him, and what sweet meditation he had at times, when alone, upon the Word of God.

At this period he was amongst the General Baptists; but from the Lord's teaching in his heart he felt obliged to leave them, and was drawn to unite with those whose experience he felt to be in harmony with the Word of God and divine teaching in his own soul.

He would express fears about himself, being evidently tried and distressed by the workings of the various evils of his heart. His felt need of the Lord's love and mercy and of the suitability of Christ's redemption were also very evident from his conversation and prayers. And it was from the fresh communicated knowledge and experience of God's great salvation that his burdened mind was relieved and supported.

He had a good deal of anxiety in obtaining the bread that perisheth, having a family to provide for and a weak body; and it was very plain from his conversation and prayers that his faith was much tried by a path of tribulation, the profit of which was greatly hidden from himself, but obvious to others.

The sight he had of his sinful and rebellious heart and ways laid him low in his own view, whilst the manifestation of grace exalted him in the affections of the godly.

He was for some years deacon at Bethel Chapel, Hitchin; and, during the latter part of his time in meeting with us for prayer, something concerning death was often mentioned in his petitions.

He was laid aside from his employment for about five or six weeks before his death. When able to converse about the things of God, his conversation was the same upon a dying bed as in life. There was a savour of the spirit of Christ in what he said, tending to exalt the grace and goodness of God, and to abase self.

At one time he spoke of having been meditating upon Isa. xxxviii. 1, and what it was to set his house in order. At another time he was imagining himself being buried, and what I might say about him at the grave, and weighing up the truth of the imagined remarks. After quoting 1 Cor. xiii. 13, he added—“Lord, do not I love thee, thy ways, thy truth, and thy people?”

When a friend called to see him after the ordinance and told him we had been singing the hymn upon Gethsemane, he replied, "I have often been there," meaning to Gethsemane. He said he frequently felt different things for a little, but his affliction affected his mind at times.

The last morning of his life he was very calm and happy, and spoke of enjoying the love of God; but a little before his end he had a severe struggle with the enemy. Then, again, before departing, he said, in a triumphant way, "That's it! That's it!" and tried to sing and shout to the praise of sovereign grace. Thus the Lord took him to join the redeemed above in their song. (Rev. i. 5, 6.) Death was gain to him, but a loss to his family, to the church, and to the nation, inasmuch as he was one who prayed to God for the welfare of each of these.

WILLIAM F. MORRIS.

2, Trevor Road, Hitchin, April 16th, 1879.

ELIZA RUSSELL.—Sir,—I shall feel obliged if you will have the following inserted in the "Gospel Standard."—Yours respectfully, R. W. RUSSELL.

On March 26th, aged 67, Eliza Russell, of Croydon.

She was brought up in the Church of England principles; but in 1835 was induced to hear a Wesleyan preach. His text was, "Watchman, what of the night?" &c. This was the appointed period. For the first time she felt herself to be a sinner. She then commenced to attend the ministry of an Independent minister, by whom she was led into gospel liberty.

Before this a lady in the Wesleyan Society called upon her, and advised her to join the Wesleyans, as the Independent minister believed in election and predestination, those horrible doctrines. She replied if he did she would not hear him again. On his next visit to her she put the question to him, and he replied, "Yes; show me your Church of England prayer-book;" which she did, and he read from it the 17th Article, and said it was the best thing in the book; which astonished her. He then read many passages of Scripture to confirm the Article; and after much suitable conversation they parted, to meet often again in sweet communion and fellowship, until 1837, when she removed to Cambridge, where she was baptized, and joined the General Baptists.

In 1840 Mr. Gadsby preached one day at the Particular Baptist Chapel, Cambridge, and a friend who attended there advised her to go; which she did. The text was Deut. xxxii., part of 13: "He made him to suck honey out of the rock," &c. From that time she left the General Baptists, and joined the Particular Baptist church, meeting at Eden Chapel.

Her last home was Croydon, where she was united to the church of which Mr. Covell is the minister. She often said she loved him for the truth's sake, and that his preaching exactly suited and met her experience.

When very near her latter end she said it was all by grace she

was saved. About 2 o'clock in the morning she asked me to read, sing, and pray; which I and my family did. Just before this she was in great pain. For the last four hours she appeared to be free from pain, and to be taking rest in sleep; and it was not until two hours before her death that danger was apprehended. Her medical attendant was sent for; but before he arrived the vital spark had fled.

Truly can I say with some words of dear Kent, which I have changed a little,

"Like Moses of old who to glory was kiss'd,

Without e'er a sob or a sigh;

Her soul from the confines of flesh was dismiss'd;

'Twas her gain everlasting to die.

"With a smile on her cheek, after she yielded her breath,

And ascended the regions above,

Where sorrow ne'er enters, nor pain, sin, nor death,

Swallow'd up in the ocean of love."

Croydon.

ROBT. WM. RUSSELL.

SARAH HIRST.—On April 8th, 1879, Sarah Hirst, aged 68, of Oldham.

Our friend was born of Wesleyan parents, who took pains to train her in their religion, and regular attendance at the chapel. When a young woman, her parents, with others, tried hard to persuade her that she was converted to God. She told them plainly that she did not feel it so, and were it as they said she must know it.

After her marriage, her husband, in some respects a kind man, was quite opposed to all religion; and so far did his wife partake of his spirit that for years both the Book and house of God were entirely neglected. One day she took up the Bible to read, the writer forgets the part, whilst so engaged; but

"She felt the arrows of distress,

And found she had no hiding place;"

as the Lord set her sins in the light of his countenance, the neglect of the Bible and the house of God and the sins of her youth caused her trouble and sorrow.

About this time an old friend invited her to the chapel. She went with shame and confusion of mind, and became a constant attendant; but could find no peace. To use her own words:

"I was distressed about my soul, and cried daily to the Lord for mercy. As I lay one night on my bed, burdened with guilt, the words, 'They washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,' came into my mind; yet so ignorant was I about salvation that I could not understand their meaning, and I cried unto the Lord to show me. A few days afterwards it was opened up to me in this way: if I believed in Christ, his blood could cleanse me from all my sins. I got some comfort from it, and prayed I might be a real Christian. My little comfort soon declined, and my distress returned even greater than before. I was wretched for a week or more, when the Lord spoke home to my soul: 'Fear thou not, for I am with thee.' The power attending the words encouraged me to hope in his mercy, and gave a sweet relief."

Our friend remained, for a time, among the Armenians, but, as the light shone clearer in her heart, giving her an understanding in the Scriptures, she became dissatisfied with the system in which she had been trained. About six years ago she was induced by one of our people to come to our chapel, where she heard Mr. Taylor, of Manchester. She liked the sermon very much; but felt offended at one sentence, viz.—“This is the only place in the town where the whole truth is preached.” This was to her a time of trial and heart-searching, whether she should keep to the place or leave it, as the doctrines made her angry; but, having a great love for the experience taught, she continued; thus proving our God ruleth by his power the hearts of his people. And her experience, like many others, going before her judgment, shows the truth of the lines:

“He works salvation in our hearts,
And forms a people for his praise.”

The Lord said, “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free;” therefore, all the elect of God shall be taught by the Holy Spirit, and led into the truth. So, when the Lord removed the vail from her heart, one error after another was chased away by the light and power of the truth.

I became acquainted with Mrs. Hirst about two years since. Finding her exercised in mind, and anxious to know, for herself, the truth as it is in Jesus, I felt much union of heart to her. In the course of conversation one day, she said, “I think sinners should be exhorted to repent and turn to God.” I put this question to her: “Do you think, Mrs. Hirst, you would ever have cried to God for mercy had he not opened your eyes and made you feel yourself a sinner before him?” “No,” she replied; “I am quite sure I should not.” I then put it in another form, “Do you think any person in nature can or will do so?” Her reply was, “I know indeed they cannot; for the Lord must do it. It is all of grace.” In the autumn of 1877, through the affliction and death of her husband, she was absent a few Sabbaths from the chapel. Calling one day, I told her we were to baptize the next Lord’s day, and asked her if she could be present. She said, “I am opposed to baptism, and think it imprudent to baptize, especially females.” After my saying, “we believe it to be a command of Christ and do it in obedience to him; and the apostles baptized both men and women,” the subject dropped.

In February, 1878, the words spoken from Job xxxiv. 32, were to her soul as a portion from the Lord; and a few nights afterwards she had a singular dream—she saw our baptistery opened, being filled with water. To a person standing on the pulpit stairs, she said, “Who is this for?” She was answered, “For you.” “For me?” The person added, “It is quite pure; no dead dog has been in it.” She said, “I see it is pure.” When awakened out of her sleep and pondering over the dream, the words, “That I see not, teach thou me,” were applied with some

power. She arose early, and like the Bereans, searched the Scriptures whether these things were so.

A few weeks afterwards she was blessed in her soul under the word from 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. It appeared as a handful on purpose; for on going home, she said, it had gone into her very heart, and described her feelings exactly.

On the next or following day, she came to my house, and, after a little conversation, said, "I am desirous of joining your church." On being told we were a particular [strict] Baptist church, she said she knew it. For a time her feelings quite overcame her. On recovering herself, she related to me and the deacon who came in at the time, how the Lord had led and brought her to decide on taking the step. A copy of our Articles of Faith was given to her; we desired her to carefully read them, and let us know the result. At our next meeting she said, "I can cordially embrace the whole of them, and shall be glad, when the time comes, for me to follow the Lord."

On hearing her experience the church were well satisfied to receive her, and we baptized and received her into communion on April 6th, 1878.

Passing over some nine months, I will come to her illness. When first taken ill, she was anxious to recover, and we all hoped it would be so; but, only a few weeks elapsed before she said, "I shall not get better in this world. I am going home. I know all is well; for the Lord has promised to bring me through, and I have felt the words, 'Fear thou not; I am with thee,' very sweet to my soul." At her desire a few friends held a meeting for prayer at her house. She said, after the meeting, "I have very much enjoyed it; but fear my strength will not allow me seeing again more than one at a time."

About six weeks before her death, on seeing her I found her so distant in her manner, that I could scarcely get a word from her. I felt concerned about it, knowing it was a snare of the devil; and in a few days went again. On seeing me she smiled, and said, "Oh! then I was tempted by Satan; when you last called I could not ask you to read or pray, as I thought it would be downright hypocrisy to do it. But the Lord has broken in upon my soul with the words: 'I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?' I cried out, 'Lord, I do believe thou art the resurrection and the life; thou art the Son of God;' and the Holy Spirit made such a blessed revelation of Christ to her soul that she felt he was indeed her Life and her Redeemer.

To a friend, who visited her a day or two after this, she spoke of the blessing she had received. Her countenance brightened up as she said, "I do feel he is my Resurrection and my Life; for I had such a view of Christ that he is made to me very precious. I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed it; but, I do know him now as my Saviour and my Redeemer. The tempta-

tion," she said, "was quite taken away; so you must read and pray to-day." From that time she enjoyed much comfort, and her mind was greatly stayed on the Lord.

Three weeks from that time she suffered, during a whole day and night, great bodily pain. The first time I saw her afterwards, she told me of it, and said, "I prayed and hoped that it would be my last day on earth." I said, "You are not now afraid of death, are you?" She replied, "No, I am not; for the Lord is with me. He does help me. It is all of grace."

When next I saw her I read Ps. xxiii. At the close she raised up her head, and said, "It is very sweet to me. The Lord is good in keeping me from pain. He has blessed me."

On my next visit, whilst reading 2 Cor. v., she stopped me at the 8th verse, by saying, "That is what I want. Do pray that with patience I may wait his appointed time;" adding, when I had done, "It has been very good, and so sweet to me, I can't be long."

The last time I saw her I was almost afraid to speak, on account of her weakness; but on seeing me she brightened up, and said, "I am so glad to see you; I shall not be long here, but shall be near and like my Lord. Christ is very precious to me. I want to be gone; yet his time is the best. I trust he will help me to the end. I have had some darkness; but he comes again and blesses me; but since I had such a clear manifestation of Christ to me as the Son of God and my Saviour, I know it will be well with me in life, and I hope in death." After reading a portion and a few minutes spent in prayer, I left her with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow, as I felt it might be, as it proved to be, our last meeting on earth.

Her sister, who was with her to the last, told me she had been very composed in her mind. About two hours before she died, her pains returned for a short time, during which, and even to her departure, she often repeated, "Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly." These were the last words she spoke on earth; and, with scarcely a struggle, her soul departed to live and reign with Christ for ever.

Oldham.

W. PERRETT.

SARAH BOOTH.—April 9th, aged 69, Sarah Booth of Broadbottom, Cheshire.

She was a most consistent woman, and a succourer of many. The ministers who have preached at Charlesworth, Derbyshire, were entertained at her house for many years. During the last two months, in consequence of the severe illness of a beloved daughter, it was thought that the ministers had better stay at some other place; but she wished to have them still, and said, "I like their conversation, and I wish an interest in their prayers."

Her dear husband has told me that this verse he has often heard her repeat on going to bed;—

“A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
 In thy kind arms I fall;
 Be thou my strength and righteousness,
 My Jesus and my all.”

Neither she nor her husband ever joined the church at Charlesworth, though I feel sure that both were living souls, though exceedingly fearing ones. The church at C. was formed by the late William Gadsby; and that dear man of God and Mr. Taylor, his successor, had a very warm place in her heart. She had but little to say, but would speak much to the point, and would often say, “I like that preaching which tells inside.”

It was my lot to be at Charlesworth the Sunday before her death. When speaking on the Saturday evening about better things, she said, “Mr. Spencer, I do love the people of God, and I long to feel I am one of them.” Her husband, who is deeply afflicted by her death, writes to me that he has often heard her pleading with the Lord during the silent night-watches, when she has thought he has been asleep, though she said but very little to any one.

I observed on the Saturday night that she looked very tired. I said, “Mrs. Booth, do rest a little.” She replied, “Mr. Spencer, when sickness comes into a house, it makes a difference. I feel as if I should like to lay me down and have a long sleep. Mr. Gadsby used to come to our house in my father’s days, and he sometimes said to my father, ‘You’ll be at rest soon. It will be well for those that go to rest.’” I said, “Mrs. Booth, time is fast passing away with all of us, and then——” She replied, “There remaineth a rest for the people of God; but the thing is to be one of them. O, if I were sure of that—if I were sure of that! But Christ is a great Friend.” She had a beloved daughter almost at death’s door, and extremely anxious about her soul. Truly I found it good to pour out my soul for father, mother, and daughter, that the Lord would appear for them. When her life was apparently so necessary to attend to her daughter, God in his providence suddenly removed her by death. She went to bed in her usual health, got up at half-past three o’clock in the morning to attend to her daughter, and then went to bed again. At seven o’clock her husband awoke and found her dead by his side in bed. I feel sure that with her sudden death was sudden glory.

S. G. SPENCER.

W. SOPER.—Dear Mr. Gadsby, I just send you a few lines to say that William Soper, of Aliford, is gone home to his eternal rest. He was taken ill of bronchitis sometime before Christmas, and died, I think, on February 1st. His end was peace, quietly resting on the blood and righteousness of his dear Redeemer.

I went to see him several times in his affliction. He complained of much darkness of soul, much doubt and fear, almost tempted to say he had no part or lot in the matter. He told me these feelings he was afraid to mention to any but myself, as they

did not understand them. I tried to comfort him; but he said, "None but the Holy Ghost can bring home these things with power to my soul. I want the Divine stamp,—the sealing;" alluding in his mind to some remarks made by J. M'Kenzie, of Preston, in his sermon on the "Sealing of the Spirit," and said, "If we have not the experimental part, our religion is not worth a straw. It will not stand the scrutinizing eye of a holy God. He was a man who detested the form without the power. Many times have I heard him say, "Better to fear than rest on a dead assurance."

Many times in his affliction I could get nothing from him, but, "Begging my way! Begging my way!" But the last time I saw him, it seemed that the Lord had appeared. He told me his soul had been much blessed while I was at prayer; that these words which I mentioned, "At eventide it shall be light," had taken fast hold of him; and he said it was a refreshing season. He also said these words had been refreshing: "Where thou goest I will go."

"I will keep thee near my side;
I will be thy Friend and Guide."

When I took his thin hand to bid him farewell, he pressed mine with all the strength he had, and said, "Good by, my dear friend." Then, alluding to some things I had written, he said, "Never lay down your pen. The Master is coming soon. I shall ride home in the chariot. Good bye." These were his last words to me. He did not say much afterwards to any one. He is now with Christ, resting in the bosom of eternal repose, enjoying that bliss and blessedness which his soul so much desired in this vale of tears.

William Soper was known to Mr. Philpot. He told me his soul was much blessed under his sermon preached at Stoke, in Mr. Isbell's chapel. He said he should never forget it. Mr. Tiptaft visited him once or twice; so did Mr. Shorter, and others, and spoke in the room at Lew Down. Mr. Hemington knew him; and so did Mr. Westlake. Mr. Isbell was with him a great favourite. In his younger days he would walk to Plymouth from Aliford on a Lord's day morning, hear the morning sermon at Stoke chapel, returning again by six o'clock in the evening, and preach himself in the room at Lew Down to his own people. Aliford to Stoke was about twenty-five miles.

He has been known to invite as many as five or six people to his house on a Sunday to take tea, his dear good wife and himself many times not taking any, but have gone to bed with a dry crust. This was all done for the Lord's cause; yet he was called an Antinomian.

Lew Down.

RICHARD BICKELL.

LET no man deceive himself. He that hath no sight of the glory of Christ here, shall never have any of it hereafter to his advantage.—*Dr. Owen.*

NOTICE.

WHEN, in October, 1877, I called a meeting, and gave up this magazine to our Societies, I made two reservations; 1, that should the Societies at any time depart from their Articles of Faith, my heirs or executors might take the magazine back; 2, that should I deem it necessary, I might myself take it back at any time during my life. All that I stated at the meeting I read from a paper; to prevent, as I said at the time, any misunderstanding or misrepresentation. The Report (of the meeting which was subsequently issued, and some hundreds of which were circulated, was faithfully printed from the paper which I read; and an announcement of the power I had reserved to myself was also made in the "G. S." in November, 1877. I was, therefore, taken by surprise when I found persons, some time ago, denying that I had made any such reservation at the meeting.

However, be that as it may, I have now simply to announce that I have exercised the power I reserved to myself. This number is brought out under my own management, as the magazine was from 1870 to 1877. Not that I purpose continuing such management; for neither my sight, nor health, nor temperament would permit it. I hope next month to announce who the future editors will be; though I am decidedly of opinion that editors should be unknown, as, if known, they often subject themselves to personal abuse.

I have no wish, as I said at the meeting, to take the profits of this magazine, or indeed any other money, from the Societies; but I *do* desire that my feelings and convictions should be treated with common respect, even though I may be in the wrong. Is there anything unreasonable in this, seeing that I gave up to the Societies upwards of £300 a year? I have revoked the deed of gift; but I am quite prepared to execute another, providing a proper understanding can be come to.

My desire is to say no more upon the subject, though I shall be quite prepared, if called upon, to give my reasons for doing what I have done; but *not* in these pages. While I have power to prevent it, *personal* disputes shall not again appear herein.—J. G.

Our life's great disappointments
 Are all arranged before;
 Accord with God's appointments,
 However great or sore.

Then, soul, take up the crosses;
 Submit to bear the pains;
 He'll make amends for losses,
 And turn them all to gains.

Sleaford.

E. C.

SWEET AFFLICTION.

My dear Friend,—I commenced a letter to you on the 31st of January, to acquaint you with the death of our dear and esteemed friend, Miss Shoemith, who was relieved of her sufferings by entering into rest on the 4th of that month. I desired also to send you two or three of her letters, which speak of her exercises at different times; as we had not an opportunity of gathering much from her in her last days. I left the letter unfinished to go to the prayer-meeting, intending to finish it the first spare hour I could get. But how true it is: "We know not what a day may bring forth"! The next day, being Saturday, I went to business as usual, although feeling very unwell. In the afternoon I was taken with a sudden chill, brought home, and did not leave the house again for eight weeks; but the last fortnight have been able to walk out a little each day. When the doctor was called in he said that what I was suffering from had been coming on for some time previous. It was an over-pressure upon the brain and nerves; and the chill I had taken had brought it to a crisis.

Perhaps it will be as well to tell you a little how the Lord prepared me for this trial. One morning, in the early part of January, I had just left my bed, when I was suddenly seized with pains in my back, which prevented me from going to business for three or four days. The morning after I was taken, before leaving my bed, I felt a calmness come over my spirit. My heart softened, and in a moment I was like clay in the hand of the potter. I felt a committing everything into his hands, my will wholly and sweetly absorbed in his will; and in the simplicity of my heart I looked up, and said, "Here I am, Lord; I can give everything into thy hands." And it was as if the Lord said, "Do you mean it?" And I answered, "Yes, Lord;" leaving the issue with him. It was a sweet surrender. And O! what an emptiness I saw and felt in all time things; my affections then being "set upon things above."

This left a very solemn impression upon my mind, and an awe upon my spirit, and a dread of having to do with the world, lest I should be entangled in the spirit of it; so that my prayer was, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips." "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip

not." And those two lines of Hart's hymn were continually upon my mind :

" Be to this world as dead,
Alive to that to come."

And also the 2nd verse of the 12th of Romans: " Be not conformed to this world ; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind ; that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." This produced in me a sober and watchful spirit ; and, like Habakkuk, I thus stood upon my watch tower, feeling the Lord had a purpose in this.

This went on until the time above mentioned, when I was brought home, which was about three weeks after. The two first days of my illness, I did not feel anything particularly ; but was kept in a quiet frame of mind. On the third or fourth day I began to think, " If my illness should terminate in death, what have I to die upon ?" And in solemnly examining matters, I felt I had but very little real religion. It was indeed a winnowing time ; but, notwithstanding I was tossed and blown about, through mercy, I was not blown off the foundation ; for I had a sweet hope there was after all some real grain left. A friend came in and read to me the 37th Psalm ; and when he came to the 16th verse : " A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked," it dropped with sweet feeling and comfort into my soul ; the blessed Spirit bearing witness thereto, and that I had that " little ;" and it was of that value and such a reality that, if called to die, I could die upon it. I felt this to be a very solemn time.

A day or two after, whilst meditating a little upon the sufferings of Christ, some lines of one of Hart's hymns came to me, not as they stand in the hymn, but in the following way :

" Softly to thy garden lead us,
To behold thy bloody sweat ;
Though thou from the curse hast freed us,
Let us not the cost forget.
View him in the doleful garden,
View him on the bloody tree,
Dearly purchasing a pardon
For his people, full and free.
View him now in heaven sitting,
Interceding for us there ;
Not a moment intermitting
His compassion and his care."

I hope I felt a little sympathy with the dear Son of God in his solemn sufferings ; and the most sacred and blessed part was that it was for me, a guilty sinner ; and I said, " Don't, Lord, let me forget the cost."

On the Sunday following, late in the afternoon, feeling very prostrate, and wondering whether this sickness would be unto death, I felt, if it should be, the Lord had wisely laid his afflicting hand upon the right one. I had such an humbling sight and feeling of my uselessness and unprofitableness in the church of

God, and what a sinner I had been all my days, that I could not wonder at his removing me; and I deeply sighed over what I was then feeling. Yet, up to this time I had not once been permitted to ask the Lord to restore me, as I was continually reminded of that time before my illness when I was enabled to commit myself and everything I had into his hands, with a desire that his will might be done.

Very shortly after what I had just been feeling before the Lord, it was as if he had been listening to my confessions, and these words came: "You shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord." I said, "How can I speak of them?"

"Who can thy acts express,
Or trace thy wondrous ways?"

for I felt, as Berridge says,

"Living tongues are dumb at best;
We must die to speak of Christ."

But, under the sweet feeling that the Lord had done much for and in me, that verse of Hart's came with such sweet power into my soul:

"His goodness how immense
To those that fear his Name!
His love surpasses thought or sense,
And always is the same."

Now the power that accompanied the words is better felt than expressed. The tears flowed from my eyes upon my pillow. It is but seldom that I can shed a tear; and if ever I wept tears of contrition, love, and joy, I believe I did then, as his goodness, love, and mercy flowed into my soul. My cup ran over; and such was the power I then felt that I verily thought I should sink under the weight of it. I blessed and praised the dear Lord, and my words were: "Blessed Jesus! Precious Jesus! Precious Jesus! Sweet affliction!" "He hath brought me into the banqueting house, and his banner over me is love. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for his love is better than wine;" and many other portions. My heart was full, and my body so weak, that I was about to say, "Lord, stay thy hand;" but I thought, No; I cannot say *that*. So I said, "Lord, remember my poor brain." And though the Lord gradually withdrew, I was still favoured to enjoy a gracious measure of the same blessing, which I hope never to lose sight of. The 23rd and 103rd Psalms were very sweet to me at that time; and the "peace of God which passeth all understanding" was upon my spirit all that evening, and more or less through the next day. I could indeed say, with the poet,

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

But a day or two after, feeling a little better, and having named to a friend or two what I had enjoyed, I began to wonder whether I had not said too much, and was ready to wish I had kept it to myself; for I had at this time lost the comfort of it. Then

“ I to my own sad place return'd,
My wretched state to feel;”

and knew something of what dear Hart says in another hymn :

“ Corruption rises like a storm,
And blasts the promised crop.”

For about two days I felt such evils boiling up in my heart, and such working within, as filled my mind with grief and shame ; and O ! how loathsome I felt myself before the Lord. The enemy had been thrusting sorely at me, and what tried me much was, that I felt at times as if I sucked sweetness from those very things that were my grief, and which I was continually crying to the Lord to subdue in me. At length I was relieved by those words :

“ Such dire disorders vex the soul;”

and I could truly say they did vex mine. And I was enabled again to cry mightily to the Lord for help. And I found the Lord to be my “ shield ” as these words came : “ When the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.” This quieted my mind again, and proved to me how helpless and powerless we are when the Lord withdraws.

I should like to tell you a little more, but writing tries my head exceedingly. This I began last week, but was obliged to lay it aside, and have been tried about sending it at all ; but these words coming to me this morning constrained me to do so : “ Set thee up way-marks ; make thee high heaps.” I felt what the Lord does for us so graciously and freely is not to be hid in a napkin.

May the dear Lord bless your labours abundantly, and spare you long upon the walls of Zion, both as a minister and editor for the church's good and for his glory :

I am, dear friend,

Yours in affliction,

Mr. Hazlerigg.

D. T. COMBRIDGE.

5, Leopold Road, Brighton, April 18th, 1879.

LOVE, THE ROOT OF TRUE OBEDIENCE.

(Continued from p. 361.)

EXHORTATIONS, then, to love, can only rightly be made to those who possess the love of God in their hearts ; and so essential is it to love the brethren that the Holy Spirit declares that, “ If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar ; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen ? ” (1 John iv. 20.) May we not, then, upon the authority of this scripture, demand the proof of a professed love to God by love being shown to God's children ? And if we are to judge of the nature and extent of love to God by that which is manifested toward the brethren, how little *real love* there is to be found in the hearts of men, either to God or man !

It is no proof of love to God when a rich man feeds the poor, or a martyr goes to the stake. (1 Cor. xiii. 3.) For it is so written: "And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also." (1 John iv. 21.)

God, therefore, commands those who love him to love his children also; so that love is to be alike shown to the Father of the great family and to each member of that family; and if a man say he loves the Father, and not the children, "he is a liar."

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments. As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." (Psa. cxxxiii.) If it is so "good and pleasant" thus to "dwell together," why give way to so much contention, strife, and discord? Why let unkind, angry feelings dwell in the soul, so as to separate brethren from fellowship in the gospel? Is not the power of vital godliness better than mere form, and far more worth contending for? But we believe the cavilling and contentions must not be laid at the door of those who are daily living under the influence of the gracious and Holy Spirit. No; the broken-hearted ones, those who greatly fear God, the meek-spirited, and trembling ones, these seldom, if ever, join those who *will* be seen and heard, even at the expense of the peace of the church. They may be drawn in; but godly sorrow working repentance will quickly bring them to seek a renewal of peace.

It is pleasant to exhort these to love and fear God, to "consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works." (Heb. x. 24.) Not to provoke to envy and wrath; but to be "kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another." (Rom. xii. 10.) Do we desire the welfare of the people of God, the good of the church of God? Then, "love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. xiii. 10.) Yea, as love is communicative, it delights in fellowship with the saints, and to hear of the spiritual profit of Zion. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee." (Psa. cxxii. 6.) The report of it causes thanks to be given to God (Col. i. 3-12); and it affectionately prays that the blessing of God might rest upon every individual member of Christ's mystical body, and works for the edification of the saints: "But we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying." (2 Cor. xii. 19.)

To serve the church of Christ, and to seek the spiritual profit of the brethren, can only be done in a spirit of love and affection, whereby love and union may be promoted, and a spirit of meekness, forbearance, and brotherly tenderness manifested one toward another. "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." (Gal. v. 13.) If any one desires to be made service-

able to the family of God, and instrumental in advancing the kingdom of Christ, let him "walk in love," and so seek the glory of God with a single eye, adorning vital, experimental godliness, "being rooted and grounded in love." (Eph. iii. 17.) Love is a pure disinterested affection for the wellbeing of the children of God, delighting itself in actions which tend to the concord and peace of their souls.

As the Head cannot be an object of love apart from his members, neither can communion with Christ be enjoyed apart from a felt love to the church. Fellowship is the very life of vital godliness; and the eternal union existing between the Head and the members of Christ's mystical body binds them together as one; so that, if one is loved, the other must be also. Hence the whole body of members has fellowship with itself, in Christ, and with God; "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." (1 Jno. i. 3.)

What different preaching there would be if this was the only object sought by the preacher. Let this fellowship be interrupted by contention and strife, and what a serious loss the church of God sustains! May we not, then, exhort one another, saying, "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." (Phil. ii. 1, 2)

This, we believe, is the only cure for the divisions which separate the flock of the Great Shepherd. But we must remember that the greatest portion of the evils which befall the church of Christ arise from false professors; and these reject all godly counsel. Too proud to be taught, they rush at things and conclusions which old and well-taught men approach with great reverence. Hence debate on some point of truth is started, and all the angry passions are stirred up one against the other.

We would exhort all the truly godly ones, who grieve over the quarrelsome nature of the contests which trouble Zion to withdraw from that strife which is mingled with rankling enmity against one another; for it is written: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Eph. iv. 31, 32.) But should any one say, "How can this be done?" Why, it is one part of the teaching of God; and if love to the brethren be absent, they in whom it is absent are not taught of God. "But 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.) This is the badge of Christ's disciples, by which they are to be known. (Jno. xiii. 35.)

O that God would constrain his people to love each other, and to seek the good of the brethren! How can their prayers prevail

with God, if there is no agreement amongst them? How visibly, too, are each one's faults held up to public view. Well might the apostle Peter say, "And above all things have fervent charity (love) among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins." (1 Pet. iv. 8.)

We will close this part with these words: "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous; not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing." (1 Pet. iii. 8, 9.)

(To be continued.)

THOUGHTS UPON THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

(Continued from p. 368.)

CHAPTER V.

Verse 7. "The watchmen that went about the city found me; they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me."

We have described this divine Song as a spiritual drama, *i. e.*, things are set forth in it in a kind of dramatic way; different scenes and characters, with various actions and suitable dialogues, being introduced. We have now the spouse represented as going about the streets of the city seeking the Beloved, and it is supposed to be night. It is a spiritual night when the Lord is absent from the soul; it is a kind of general night to the Church when he is not powerfully working in the midst of his people. Thus it is night-time in Matt. xxv. when the ten virgins are waiting for the bridegroom.

Now the spouse, stirred up, as we have seen, to an earnest diligent inquiry, and seeking after the Beloved, is represented, as in ch. iii., going about the city by night, asking others after him. But we observe in this case she meets with much harder things than in the former instance. Repetitions certainly add very much to wrong doings. First faults are not dealt with so severely as repeated ones. It is so amongst men, and it appears to be to some extent the rule of the Lord's dealings with his people. Relapses are more dangerous than the first sickness. When the children of Israel first murmured for bread in the wilderness, God sent them quails and manna, with no wrath in the midst of the provision; when they murmured again in a similar manner, God gave them quails in abundance, but with heavy wrath; and we read of the place as called Kibroth-hattaavah, or the graves of lust.

Well, the spouse here has to suffer severely for her carnal-mindedness. To understand this part, we must remember that the spouse, though thus in a poor dark state of mind, distant from the Lord, and in a wandering condition, was a real child of God, a chaste spouse, as in ch. vi. But she seems at this time to fare just as if she had been something very different, a mere

foolish virgin, a false professor; for not only is she found, and smitten and wounded, by the watchmen, but her veil is taken from her. This seems rough usage for a dear child of God, an espoused soul, to receive.

The veil, we know, is an emblem of modesty, chastity, submission to Christ; and to take this from her seems to indicate that she was treated, as we have remarked, like a mere hypocrite and false professor. But now let us see how all this wounding, stripping work is done; and then we shall see whether these watchmen and keepers were to blame or not. Some have thought they were.

Of course these watchmen and keepers represent the ministers of God, who watch over the souls of God's people, and keep the walls of the city; or, in other words, ministerially defend the church from the inroad of evil and false doctrine. In fact, the ministers of God should diligently watch over all that is within the church. "They watch for your souls," says Paul, "as those that must give account." They should look diligently that order and discipline, and what is Christ-like, should be present in the churches; and they should also be vigilant against errors and evils, and an inroad of false and injurious characters. They have to watch over what is and goes on within; they have to watch and give an alarm against that which would prove injurious from without.

But, now, how do these watchmen find persons, as here the spouse was found? "The watchmen that went about the city found me." Principally in a way of preaching; though we must not exclude private conversation or church discipline. Well, then, it would seem that it was by the public preaching of the word, more especially, these watchmen found the spouse, smote her, and wounded her. In the same way the keepers took her veil from her. Now, the word "found" leads to the conclusion that the word really found the spouse out, or discovered to her her real case. It described her wanderings of heart, her sad declension, her carnality of mind, her sloth, her self-indulgence, carnal-security, indifference to Christ. This certainly is only what a faithful ministry should do. If the word does not thus reach the conscience, it is not as the word of God. The truth of God must be discriminating; it discerneth the real state of the case, and makes the man discern it likewise.

Thus, then, in our judgment, these watchmen were really faithful men, and represent faithful ministers. Thus, too, the heart and conscience would be smitten and wounded. So it was when Nathan said unto David, "Thou art the man."

Now, we do not see that the spouse is represented as complaining of these watchmen. She does not cry out in self-pity, How cruel they have been to me! What bad-spirited men they must be to treat a poor creature in this way! No; she seems in an honest heart to fall under it, feeling how very unworthy her conduct had been.

But now, what of the keepers taking away her veil? If they really went so far as to do this themselves, or to pronounce the spouse a hypocrite, they certainly erred. They went too far. Eli misjudged the case of Hannah; and keepers of the walls may now-a-days misjudge the cases of God's children. In a zeal, too, for truth and against error, for holiness against sin, for what is of God and becoming a Christian, against that which is of the world and contrary to the nature of Christianity, even faithful well-meaning ministers may go into unjustifiable extremes. With too rough a hand, with too little tenderness and discrimination, they may be for excommunicating that which should be recovered and compassionated as out of the way. Well, it is possible these things, these excesses even in faithful and godly ministers, these too harsh spirits and untender dealings amongst the godly, may be hinted at, and warned against. Also the cruel conduct of really wrong-spirited men, who assume the ministry, may be reprobated; though we do not think this is the thing principally intended to be set before us. We rather incline to a different view of the matter altogether, and to suppose that watchmen and keepers alike here, as well as in chapter iii., represent good and godly ministers, men of truth, faithful to the Word of God and to the souls of their hearers; men, like the shepherds of old, keeping watch over their flocks by night, guarding the truth, watching for the church; men set by God himself upon the walls of Zion; men of faithfulness and love. But how, then, take the spouse's veil away, and make her out to be a hypocrite? We think this was rather the effect of their words and acts, than their proper tendency; more an effect produced by the workings of her own conscience when she was in the dark, and the Lord was absent. Conscience is a wonderfully tender thing, and speaks loudly when awakened. It seems to us that, being aroused to a sense of her wanderings and evil ways, the preaching of the word, which, amongst other things, describes the false and hypocritical characters, had not only come close to her and found her out, but, this being the case, she had begun to write further bitter things against herself, and sadly to fear lest her state might be altogether wrong, and herself a hypocrite, a false character, after all.

“If thou, celestial Dove,
Thy influence withdraw,
What easy victims soon we fall
To conscience, wrath, and law.”

So sings Mr. Hart; and his words are true. The blessed Spirit does not immediately produce such sad results; but if he withdraws, where do we get to?

“Without thee cannot rise;
For when our Jesus hides his face,
Our hope, our comfort dies.”

When Mr. Recorder (conscience) preaches a stirring sermon to the men of Mansoul, after they had feasted in the house and danced after the pipe of Mr. Carnal-Security, O how did their faces gather blackness! What despairing thoughts, what gloomy

forebodings! Now, this was not Mr. Recorder's fault. No! the men of Mansoul were to blame, not the worthy Recorder.

Well, then, our conclusion is that these ministers of God are here represented, not as cruel, but as faithful; not as mistaking the case, but finding it out. Therefore, even though the spouse in her feelings goes to extremes, and is ready almost to think herself not a chaste spouse, or a genuine character; they are not to be blamed, but honoured for their zeal and their faithfulness, as well as their love to souls.

An undue harshness and severity in the ministry are greatly to be deprecated. It is the wicked servant who beats the men-servants and maid-servants. It is a very evil thing, by an improper dividing of the Word of truth, to make sad the hearts of the righteous whom God hath not made sad. But, on the other hand, let us ever remember that it is quite as evil to sew pillows to all armholes, to cry, peace, peace, where there is no peace, and lull the minds of even God's people into a false and carnal security. Let us remember, too, that unfaithful ministers and dishonest hearts love to flatter and be flattered; and where these evil things exist and prevail, there will often be a sadly unjust outcry against faithful watchmen and vigilant keepers of the walls of the city.

But who, after all, is sufficient for these things? The work of the ministry is a great thing. O how the tongue of the learned is needed to speak a word in due season to the living family of God! On the one hand, to wound the flesh and unwrap the soul from veils or coverings of deceit, self-confidence, conceit, carnal-security, and other fleshly things; but at the same time not so to speak as that the speech shall have a tendency to rob the child of God of a proper confidence, and to make out that one espoused to Christ is a hypocrite. To give a portion in due season to the household of faith, this indeed requires divine teaching, divine leading, and divine ability. The Lord make his ministers both loving and faithful, give them the hearts of tender shepherds of his sheep; but at the same time give them to "reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all authority."

THE FOUNTAIN OPENED.

BY JOHN RUSK.

(Continued from p. 312.)

BUT as I shall have occasion as I go on to treat further of their character, I will dismiss this first part of the subject, and proceed to the

IIInd general head, *viz.*, *the promise itself*: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness."

Now here it will be needful to treat of the dreadful character of the house of David in the fall, to need such a fountain to be opened; for the very promise itself shows the polluted state they

were all and are all plunged in. Now, we never came out of our Maker's hands in such a condition as this. No; for "God made man upright," and pronounced man, with the rest of his works, "very good." But, though this was the case, yet the Lord, knowing the end from the beginning, could see the dreadful fall man would have; and therefore he made ample provision in his dear Son before sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so that, in the secret purpose and decree of God, the whole work was completed. And thus, in God's purpose the Lord Jesus Christ was set up to be the second Adam and new covenant Mediator. Hence the Saviour, under the character of wisdom, declares, "I was set up from everlasting;" that is, in God's purpose, not as to his human soul, as some say; "or ever the earth was." And if you read Peter's vision of the sheet let down knit at the four corners, full of creeping things, four-footed beasts, &c., these are all said to be cleansed; whereas they were all at that time in an unconverted state. But the meaning is, they were cleansed in God's eternal purpose; for the Lord calls things which are not as though they were; and for this reason: because nothing can frustrate or alter it from being done, he being Almighty.

Now, it is not my intention to enter very largely into a description of the fall of man, but to keep within bounds, and to say much in a little; backing every assertion with God's Word.

Observe, then, that when Adam fell, all the human race fell with him, he being their federal head and representative; and every faculty of the soul was turned from God, in the root, in the fountain; the mind alienated from the life of God. Spiritual, temporal, and eternal death are the dreadful consequences of it. The same mind became carnal, which is enmity against God and his law. The will became stubborn and rebellious, rejecting his authority that made him, even God. The affections were turned from God to idols of every kind which the devil and man could invent: "They have sought out many inventions." The conscience became hardened, loaded with guilt, sin, and filth. Man was shut up in unbelief, blindness of mind, and insensibility; no fear of God before his eyes; a love to all sin; drinking in iniquity as the ox drinketh in water; for whatever God's righteous will in the law forbids to be done, that is the very thing that we by nature like to be doing. And thus all flesh has corrupted his way. "From the sole of the foot to the crown of the head we are full of wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint." "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, and blasphemies; these are the things (says Christ) which defile a man."

Now, we all are "born in sin, and shapen in iniquity." And through our original pollution, which we bring into the world with us, we go on "according to the course of this [wicked] world, according to the prince of the power of the air; fulfilling the

desires of the flesh and of the mind." For elect as well as reprobate are "by nature children of wrath, even as others." But God has made a blessed promise to his elect in our text, namely, a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. And this fountain is nothing less than the blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus Christ; the Second Person in the ever-blessed Trinity, who in his highest nature is Jehovah, in every sense of that great and tremendous name. He voluntarily, of his own sovereign free will and matchless mercy, undertook our cause, and came into this lower world; assumed our nature, a human body and a reasonable soul, in the virgin's womb; for in all things he was made like unto his brethren (Heb. ii. 17); body and soul; and we all know that his brethren's souls did not pre-exist from all eternity. And if his had, he could not be in all things made like unto his brethren, but only in part. That doctrine of the pre-existence of the human soul of Christ is a most dangerous doctrine, and cuts at the divinity of the Son of God, or Jehovah Jesus, and surely came from hell itself.

Now this union of the two natures of Christ actually took place in the virgin's womb; and thus he is called Immanuel, or God with us; and he grew up till he became a man.

Here was infinite love, without a parallel. "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." And he went on for thirty-three years, in strict obedience to every part of God's law, not for himself, but for us. At last he was apprehended by divine justice, being our Surety, and standing in our law place, of which his circumcision was a seal; taken up as a criminal; arraigned and condemned at Pilate's bar. And here that prophecy had its accomplishment, which you read in Zech. xiii. 7: "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, against the Man that is my Fellow, saith the Lord of hosts. Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn my hand upon the little ones." My hand (or power), that must have been for ever against them as sinners, shall now, in the opening of this fountain, be turned; so that my power shall ever preserve and protect these little ones. And thus he received his sentence, and they crucified him on the tree between two thieves. And it is impossible to relate his sufferings; for on the tree all our sins met upon him. The weight and burden was intolerable. All the wrath and curse of God due to us, and what we must have endured to all eternity, with all the rage and malice of millions of enraged devils, suffered to do their very worst, and their power is exceeding great; with all the rage and fury of men influenced by them. This was their hour, and the power of darkness.

But, having finished the whole work, both in life and in death, he with his dying breath cried out: "It is finished!" And thus he removed the iniquity of that land,—the house of David, and the iniquity of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, in one day; for then was the fountain opened manifestly for sin and for uncleanness.

But this is not all; for we must come a little nearer home; seeing that it will avail you and me but little to know that such a work was once done upon the cross. What we want, as sensible sinners, is to know our personal interest in the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus Christ, who opened this fountain for sin and for uncleanness; which will bring me to the third thing proposed.

III. The *day* which then took place; and also of that day that more particularly concerns us: "*In that day* there shall be a fountain opened, &c." The day, then, that took place was such a day as never had been before, and never will be again; for this was the finishing stroke to the whole work. This was the day that Abraham saw by faith when he offered up his son Isaac: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; he saw it, and was glad." It was this day that David alluded to when he said, under the influence of God's Spirit, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and spoke of their piercing his hands and his feet. Daniel, also, when he said, "Seventy weeks are determined to finish transgression, to make an end of sin, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness; to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most holy." (Dan. ix. 24.)

And not only these few that I have mentioned; but all the prophets spoke of this day; for "to him give all the prophets witness." And at last this remarkable day took place; for it is said, "they crucified him." And here all nature was convulsed; for, directly he gave up the ghost, "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, the rocks rent, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." (Matt. xxvii. 50-53.) And there are some things here that I don't wish to pass over; and that is, the bodies of the saints arising; for it teaches us that the death and resurrection of Christ were only for the saints, and that the grave must deliver such up.

Again.—The veil of the temple rent. I have heard say that the veil was four inches thick; and we know that no one dare enter the temple but the high priest, and he only once a year. And some say that when he came out, he made an entertainment for the people, rejoicing that he got safe out alive; and he lifted up this veil to enter, and it fell down again. But now, says Paul, there is admission into the holiest of all through the blood of Jesus; "by a new and living way which he has consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." (Heb. x. 20.) Read the Hebrews very carefully, and you will see the truth of what I here assert.

Then, observe, the bodies of these saints arose, and went into the holy city; mark that—the holy city. And God's Word is plain upon it, that when Christ suffered and died, all the elect of God

suffered the penalty of law, and died in him; for he was and is their federal Head and Representative. Hence Paul says, "Buried with him by baptism into death." And again: "If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him." And when he arose from the dead they all arose also. "With my dead body," says Christ, "shall they arise." Yes, and they all ascended into everlasting glory with him (mystically) when he ascended; for Paul declares: "We are made to sit with him in heavenly places." We *are*, in the present tense. Then was not this a wonderful, great, and glorious day, awful and dreadful to the ungodly, but the everlasting happiness and felicity of every vessel of mercy? "In that day."

But I am also to treat of that day in an experimental way, as it more particularly concerns us. And here, be it observed, that all these things are of no weight to any but to sensible sinners. What do you mean, say you, by *sensible* sinners? I mean those that are spiritually enlightened and quickened by the Holy Ghost to see and feel their need of such a blessed fountain to be opened for them, as individuals. And though they may and do hear of all these things, yet, feeling their guilt, filth, and pollution, they have no rest, night nor day, for fear they are not of that happy number. And here they are crying, groaning, watching, waiting, seeking, longing, hungering, and thirsting for an experimental manifestation of this fountain to their hearts. That is the day they are following after; and, at times, they feel a little hope arise under the Word preached, or in reading the Bible or a good book, in company with Zion, or in prayer; for these are the means that God has appointed; and in the use of them they get many a lift. But they soon sink again; for the Holy Spirit discovers to them so much of their past and present life, and the corrupt fountain within, from which all this sin and uncleanness flows, that they are terrified at it, and never can at such times believe that they have part or lot in the matter. Nevertheless, after long watching and waiting, God is pleased to fulfil his promise of that day to their souls.

And now, you may ask me a question; and that is this: How shall I know that that day has taken place with me or not, that I have come to this fountain and been washed? Will it wash sin so completely away that I shall never feel it more? I will endeavour to answer your supposed question as the Lord shall assist me.

Then, observe, that it is not such a washing as you have imagined in your mind, so as to be ever after clear of all sin. And if you are looking and expecting such a day as this to take place in this world, you are looking for what God has never promised, and you will never find; for the more you are washed, in the feeling experience of it, the more you will need washing from day to day. This I have lived to prove for many years. And, therefore, the more you know of this fountain, the more you will know of the corrupt fountain within, which will ever

bubble up, and send forth all its uncleanness. This will go on till death. All the filthy lusts of your nature will work in all directions; so black, foul, and abominable, that you could not tell the best friend you ever had; no, nor is it proper you should, for it would only feed the lustful workings of the old man in them. I believe that many father confessors, as they call themselves, have had the lusts of their flesh fed with the confessions of those who have confessed to them; and that is the principal thing Satan has in view. And sometimes the father confessor has the same, being a very Satan or devil in human shape. Now, then, this washing does not remove indwelling sin; no. Paul had been to this fountain many a time before he cried out, "O wretched man that I am! &c." And David had been to this fountain before his fall into adultery with Bathsheba.

Now, if ever you have come to this fountain, you certainly have experienced these eight things; and if you never have as yet, still, let not this discourage you; for if in heart you are following on to know the Lord Jesus, and feel your need of him, he will in his own time give you to know by blessed experience the blessed effects of that day, in which you shall know that this fountain was opened for you.

(To be continued.)

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

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

I conclude that there is little or no alteration on either side in my dearest friend, and that Mary has been waiting to see something more before she wrote. Thus am I willing to make excuses for her silence, and not add sorrow to sorrow by a harsh word; for if she considers the matter, she will remember she raised alarms by her last letter, and they that do so should study to quiet them. I expected a line on Saturday a little, and most fully yesterday; but none came.

I hope to see you next week. I am perfectly satisfied with my journey, that it is from God. This most blessed, tender, and dear Friend hath carried me on hitherto with a high hand; but I do not remember to have had so desperate a conflict with Satan in all the times I have preached here as I had the whole of last Saturday afternoon and night, in which he was so close that I had not five minutes rest or sound sleep. By this I judge he has taken great umbrage and offence at my coming; and as things in the flesh do not go on well pleased, I feel a persuasion that it will not be wholly a lost journey on the side of the Spirit. It is thus that the Lord deals with those he loves. He thwarts and opposes us because we like to walk according to the flesh; and they that are in the flesh, and walk by the flesh, cannot please God. His purpose is that we should walk with him; and how can two walk together except they be agreed? Hence he shows us by many crosses and trials the nothingness of everything

beneath the sun, and makes us dissatisfied with it; and then gives us rest and peace in himself, where everything lies straight, and all things are good and for good.

I have found my dear friend much upon my heart, and have prayed the Almighty to sanctify the present affliction to the blessing of her soul, that she may make up her satisfaction in him as a covenant God, who ordereth all things after the counsel of his own will; and this will has respect to the good and final happiness of his people. But there is one part of that will which we do not like. It is when he says, "I will bring the third part through the fire." Though he promises to bring us *through*, yet we do not like to be in the fire. Yet it is needful to make known and discover the dross. The old man with his deeds works first, and gets uppermost. And thus "no affliction for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous." Our hearts are vexed, and our spirits grieved, by reason of the enmity, ignorance, rebellion, unbelief, and perverseness of our nature. There must be a time for this work. Every trouble is intended to work all this up; and if you see any in the furnace without something of this, set them down as ignorant of their own hearts, and as in carnal ease. Be sure of it. It takes some time to separate the dross from the silver, but it must be done; and in one moment the soul may be and is moulded into God's will, and be as a vessel formed and meet for the Master's use.

I have looked for this in my dear mother, for a mother thou hast been to me in kindness, care, and attention; and I reckon you as one of those whom Jesus Christ has promised me, and given to me. "Whosoever forsakes father, &c., shall have in this life fathers, mothers." And I believe I shall not be disappointed. It is my earnest prayer it may be so, and that she may find her soul satisfied in her God, and kiss him for his afflicting hand. You have felt and complained much of a want of this, and I feel a persuasion that in his good time patience shall have her perfect work. But in order to this, *faith* must be tried. And if it is tried you will find it tried in its works. By faith we draw near to God. Then the prayer of faith is tried. By faith we wait upon God. Then our hope and expectation must be tried. By faith we watch God's goings forth. Then this will be tried; and so sharply that, at times, the spirit of prayer will seem to be gone. As our Lord says, "I am weary of my crying." Waiting will seem to be worn out. "Mine eyes fail" with waiting so long for God. And watchfulness sinks into carelessness. "It is better for me to die than to live." But all this forms a part of the trial; and in due time patience is established, and we become perfect and entire in Christ Jesus, conformed to his image, conformed to his will, and wanting nothing, the soul being filled with him. Then all things are just to our satisfaction; or, as your dear husband used to say, there is nothing wanting; 'tis all as it should be. And He that made him so resigned can also make you so. I trust it is still his language; and I trust, if it

is not yours already, it shall be so in God's own time. We are so full of rubbish that there is hardly any such thing as getting at the bottom of it. Good things in themselves are through the flesh productive of evil. 'Tis strange, but true.

It is good for us to love one another, and to feel for one another. But I declare I have found this so strong towards the friends in St. Michael's that I have been forgetful at times of the poor creatures to whom the Lord has sent me in these parts to preach. And he has rebuked me for it. I have been so anxious about the post's coming, and then so disappointed at not hearing, that two or three hours have been spent in nothing but anxiety and vexation. If Mary had known this, would she have caused me pain? I trow not. But even this has been of use to me. It has turned my love and affection into a more spiritual channel. I have been also disappointed in hearing from my dame. Yet is not my love abated, but only purified. O! how sweet to feel the Almighty condescend to watch over us in such little particulars, and such seemingly trifling matters! But his humility is so great and transcendent that at times it exceeds my faith. Hence it is said, "What is man, that thou shouldst magnify him, and set thine heart upon him? That thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment?"

God bless thee. Kind love to all from

Your most affectionate Friend,

W. J. BROOK.

My dear afflicted Fellow-Pilgrim and Fellow-Sufferer,—I feel a desire to make a feeble attempt to write a few lines, thinking perhaps they may be the last. I feel my weakness greatly increase. My frail mud-walled cottage does indeed shake; but, as I've been living 40 years with death in view, I am not taken by surprise by receiving notice to quit. Yea, the thought does indeed rejoice me that I shall shortly leave this world of sin and sorrow to be for ever shut in with him whom my soul loves far above every other object. My deep heartfelt sorrow is that I love him so little, but this cumbrous clay every good desire mars. I'm creeping fast on for 80. Thirty-nine years I lived after the flesh, in the devil's dreadful service. O what slaves are all by nature to the devil and their own vile passions!

"They scorn alike the caution and the friend,
Bent all on pleasure, heedless of its end."

I feel myself a brand plucked out of the burning. A truly regenerated character is a world's wonder. David said he was a wonder unto many. I seem to puzzle the mere professor more than the profane. The professor's hatred is far greater.

Well, dear Sarah, our most blessed Shepherd says, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." You and I know it is a good country we are going to, since we have many times tasted the grapes of Eschol. (Numb. xiii. 23-24.)

I served, as I have said, the god of this world 39 years. I've been near 40 years in the service of the King of kings; a soldier of the cross. 'Tis a long campaign, with much hard fighting; often foiled, yet up again, and forward we press. Bless his most precious Name; he is a good Master. His service is perfect freedom. I'm not tired of his service; but I'm not able to carry the musket and sword; only fit for the baggage waggon. But God is the strength of my heart, and my blessed portion for ever. I envy none on earth. O what mad fools are all by nature to be so duped by the devil! I desire to point poor sinners to the cross of Christ. It was there I found deliverance from the burden of sin; nor did I ever know true joy and peace till my sins were pardoned. None can be happy while at war with God, which is the sad case with every soul by nature.

What a sad delusion is mere head-knowledge of religion! I see very many great lights who are deceived by the father of lies, even to be laid in the grave like sheep. (Ps. xlix. 14.) A form of godliness without power will profit nothing. Truly, dear Sarah, "The lines are fallen unto us in pleasant places; yea, we have a goodly heritage." (Ps. xvi. 6.)

I tremble for guilty England. O how God is mocked and insulted by dead forms! The true light seems almost eclipsed. Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people. The true light is sadly hated.

Please accept P.O. Order for 25s. with our Christian love. If able, a line at your leisure. If I ask professors to tell me what the Lord has done for their souls, it is very offensive to them. They tell you, as good Mr. Bunyan says, you are upon the catch. Very many have a name to live, but are dead.

Well, dear Sarah, let us sing with good Mr. Toplady in hymn 472:

"When languor and disease invade
This trembling house of clay,
'Tis sweet to look beyond our cage,
And long to fly away."

Sweet hymn!

Andrews sends her love, and wants to hear how your poor tabernacle is after the severe winter. She is tolerably well, except her poor eyes, from which she suffers a great deal. She is to me a good nurse, and is anxious to prop up my tottering tabernacle; but it must fall shortly, and return to dust. Sown a mass of corruption through *sin*; but it shall be raised a glorious body, and be re-united to the soul. By faith in a dear Christ we can sing,

"Death, thou hast lost thy sting."

My arms and legs almost refuse to perform their wonted office. May the God of all grace be your nurse and bed-maker, and in his own good time give us a happy issue out of this sin-ruined world. So prays, dear friend,

Yours in our dear Lord,

Shurdington, March 15th, 1879.

J. TURNER.

My dear Brother,—I need not tell you how delighted I was to see dear J. How fast he grows! Dear boy, he requires good nourishment; this you know from experience. I know, my brother, you must find it a hard pull with such a large family, and all the burden upon your own shoulders. I think much about you all. How glad I should be, if it was God's will, to be able to toil a little with my dear brothers and sisters, instead of lying so useless. It is a sore cross to me in addition to my sufferings; but I wish not to repine. The dear Lord has mingled so many mercies with my bitter cup, and he is too wise to err. He knows what discipline is needful for each of us. How soon we go astray without it.

Since I wrote to you last, I have had another heavy attack, which, together with diarrhœa, has greatly tried me. I have also had sore inward conflict, often questioning whether I can be a child of God after all. What a mercy it is the Lord understands groans and sighs, and that he deigns to bow his gracious ear to the groaning of the prisoner, and to the sighing of the needy! Bless his dear Name, he taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy. My brother, can we not creep in here? and our dear James can too? I know he cannot say that he does *not* hope in the Lord's mercy, or desire to fear him. This is a righteous desire; and the Lord has said, "The desire of the righteous shall be granted;" but he has fixed the time. May our dear James be encouraged still to press forward, though faint, yet pursuing; for the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. He that believeth shall not make haste.

But to return to myself. The Lord has once more graciously shone with a little light upon my otherwise benighted path. During the past week, at intervals, I have felt some sweet bedewings and droppings into my heart; sometimes with the Word, sometimes with verses of hymns, drawing my mind from the vain world to him who is the Chief amongst ten thousand, and the altogether lovely. I could say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth I desire beside thee."

"Yes, thou art precious to my soul,
My transport and my trust;
Jewels to thee are gaudy toys,
And gold is sordid dust."

A verse of another hymn was also sweet:

"Nor health, nor wealth, nor sounding fame,
With its deceitful empty name,
Nor earth, with all its pomp and glare,
Can with a precious Christ compare."

Portions of other hymns were also very precious. I many times before this have sucked much sweetness out of them; but whenever the honey drops in, it is new again, whether from hymns or Scripture. I must refer you to two or three of my favourite hymns, which speak so of Christ.

"The wondering world inquires to know."

"Go, worship at Immanuel's feet."

"When mourners stand and hear me tell."

"Jesus is precious, saith the word."

Yes, my brother, to them which believe he is precious; even to us: Vile as I am, I cannot deny it. I am not alluding to those dark, cold nights which I often pass through; when my Beloved seems no more to my base backsliding heart than a root out of a dry ground. O how I wish those seasons would never return! What is all religion without Christ? A shell, without the kernel. What multitudes are satisfied without the kernel! But every living soul wants food, living bread, even a living Christ. There is an aching void, which none but Christ can fill. The more we know him, the more we want to know of him; and so it will be to the end of our journey.

"I would be near his feet,
Or at his bleeding side;
Feel how his heart does beat,
And see its purple tide;
Trace all the wonders of his death
And sing his love in every breath."

But I am afraid I shall soon return to my own place.

Dear Ann is come to say good bye, or I would say a little more. With love to all, I remain, my dear brother,

Your own sister,

Trowbridge, Sept. 27th, 1870.

SUSAN TABOR.

My dear Friend in the Lord,—Grace and peace be with you in the kingdom and patience of Christ.

I was glad to receive a line again from you, as I began to think you had done with me altogether; and I should not have at all wondered at it if you had, as I am a poor correspondent and a poor letter-writer to any one. Nevertheless, I wish to be a companion of all those that fear God, and those whom I know and have felt a union to, such as I have to you and your dear father. I was glad that you went to see my dear daughter Rhoda. Poor girl, she has no acquaintance, and is so far from home. I have no doubt she was glad for you to call upon her, as she has no time to come and see you. There is so much work to do in that great house, and only one servant kept. I often wish she would leave, and come nearer home, so that I could oftener see her. She is nearly two hundred miles from us, and it is such an expense to come home to see us.

I am often thinking how I should like to come and see you all once more, if I should be spared to live another summer. We are all about as usual in health, through the mercy of our God. The Lord is good to us. We have bread to eat, and clothing to wear, and beds to lay our guilty bodies on, and a good hope through sovereign grace. Though not always a lively one, nor a rejoicing one, but still such an one as is an anchor to our souls, both sure and steadfast, and that enters into that within the veil, whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

AUGUST, 1879.

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

SERVING JESUS.

NOTES OF A SERMON PREACHED BY MR. COVELL, AT CROYDON, ON
SUNDAY MORNING, OCT. 1st, 1865.

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

THE Holy Ghost saith, speaking by Paul, “His servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.” Now the Son of God tells us that there are many who call him Lord, Lord, and do not the things that he says. Like Judas, it is, “Hail, Master!” and they kiss him, while at the same time they are servants to sin and the devil. How many at the present time answer to the poet’s words:

“Like Judas, the Saviour they kiss,
And while they salute him, betray.
Ah! what will profession like this
Avail in God’s terrible day?”

God saith to the prophet, “They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people; and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo! thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on a instrument; for they hear thy words, but they do them not.” (Ezek. xxxiii. 32.) Therefore saith God by the prophet, “Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not.” (Mal. iii. 18.) O sinner! to be enabled to lay thine hand on thy heart, and to look up and feel the testimony of a good conscience, and to say, with the great apostle, “There stood by me an angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve;” to have, my friends, an inward principle, a divine feeling in the soul, wrought by the Holy Ghost: “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord;” though nothing comes of it, yet to feel, my friends, that it is an honour to be in his service! What an unspeakable mercy thus to be made willing in the day of his power, and to feel, “Here I am; send me. Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” That is the man my text speaks of.

“If any man serve me, let him follow me.” The great bulk of mankind serve a hard master; that is, sin. As I just said, “His servants ye are to whom ye obey.” What a hard master is sin! What wages he gives at last! The wages of sin, that he gives to every one that serves him, truly is death, eternal death. He often partly pays them in this life. What guilt, what misery he stings their poor consciences with! He is such a bad master that he gives them no peace in this life. He fills them with fears, misery, and dejection, that they cannot stand; so they fly to ponds or halts to get away. He promises them nothing but misery and woe to all eternity.

What thousands are led captive by the devil at his will! What a hard master is the devil! Look at some that have followed him faithfully, that have kept to him like a leech. Look at Demas, Saul, Ahab, Cain, and a host of others. After they have served him truly, he has brought them into the prison of hell, after all their faithful service. Though they have cried, wailed, gnashed their teeth, not a drop of water has he ever given them to cool their burning tongues. These are the masters most men serve. Now, says the Son of God, “If any man serve me.”

Now we will turn to what it is to serve Him who is the brightness of his Father’s glory; who is all holiness, love, compassion, mercy, grace, and goodness; who gives eternal glory and mansions, as free as the air. What is a rushlight to the moon? What is a glow-worm to the sun? What is the dust of this world to gold? Yet all these things sink into insignificance compared with the Son of God.

Now, “If any man serve me.” Here is a Master that angels, who are ministering spirits to do his will, veil their faces before. “If any man serve me,” this blessed Lord Jesus, this incomparable Lord Jesus. He scatters mercies and blessings to thousands, and gives kingdoms and crowns in the freeness of his heart. He is such a blessed Master, he accepts the will for the deed, and tells these servants of his, “If there be in you a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath.”

O the mercy to be brought in sincerity to bow at his feet, and be willing to serve him with the best we have, and better if we had it! I will tell you how they serve him now,—from an inward principle. So it is not serving him *for* life, but they serve him *from* life. Where does this come from? It is wrought in their hearts by the blessed Spirit, whereby they delight to serve him, and to be found in his service, in any way doing his will and pleasure. Now, it is said, “A seed shall serve him.” All those that are brought to serve him were all servants to sin and the devil; there is no exception. Whether born of royal blood, or in a gipsy’s tent, they have all been servants to sin and the devil. Therefore you read, “We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.” (Titus iii. 3.) “For the time past of our life may suffice us to

have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine," and such like. God having brought us out from these things, they think it strange, that is, the other folks do, that we run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of us.

Now, the Scripture saith, "a seed shall serve him; it shall be counted to the Lord for a generation." Therefore the Son of God, in the day of his power, goes forth, by the ministry of the Word, or by his own Spirit, to seek a seed to serve him in this time state, and afterwards to inherit a throne of glory. Now, we should expect they would be the wise, the learned, and the noble of this world. But not so. The seed that he likes to serve him are, for the most part, the poor, the weak, and the ignorant. What for? That no flesh should glory in God's presence; that he should have all the honour and glory. As soon as he lays hold of their hearts in the day of his power, the poor soul bows to his will, and in heart and feeling listens to hear what God shall speak. He inclines his ear, and comes to the Son of God; and the language of his heart is, in the substance of it, "Other lords beside thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy Name." My friends, no sooner does he bow at God's feet, acknowledge his sin, and entreat that he may find favour in his sight; but what does the Scripture say of that man now? "Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee; he shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose." He has fled away from his old master, sin, in the love and practice of it, and has come over to the Son of God; and he declares he will not deliver him back. You will find him one of the best of masters. You will find he is full of compassion; so that you will never be able to speak well enough of him. You will never repent, and want to go back again to your old master. I will tell you what that man becomes now. In his feelings, his ear is bored to the post of God's door; his ear is bored to the truth of God, to the Son of God, and to the ways and things of God; and he becomes a servant of God for evermore. Now he has left his old masters, sin and the devil; and he wishes they were dead and buried. At times, the remembrance of how he has served them brings tears in his eyes, and blushes on his face; and the remembrance of how they have had the primrose of his days sticks many a dagger in his heart; while none, should they live to the age of Methuselah, ever repent that they were brought into the service of the blessed Lord Jesus. You were never at the bedside of a dying man or woman that said, I wish I had not served him so much. I have heard them say, "I wish I had served him better, and known him sooner." Their former service has often filled them with grief, remorse, and contrition, and sorrow. Jesus wipes their tears, and tells them their former life will suffice.

Now they begin to serve him. They serve him in humility.

They feel they are so unprofitable. They serve him by watching and waiting for him. "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." They wait on him in humility. "As the eyes of a servant are to the hand of his master, so our eyes are upon thee." A good servant, when she is in waiting, will take the nod of her master. She knows what he means by the movement of the head or hands. So these folks, as they wait at God's door, look to see what he means. How their ears are open to know which way the word moves! How they watch the movings of the blessed Spirit in their souls! They do not go to his feet to dictate; but in humility they kneel before him in their feelings. "Who am I, O Lord God? And what is my father's house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" They have such a sight of their unworthiness that in humility they serve him. They cover their faces, at times, under such a sense of their unprofitableness, that they take a low place; they esteem others better than themselves. They would run with the foremost; but in their feelings they are the last and least. They serve him in such humility that they never do it to the satisfying of themselves. They feel so unworthy that they want everything they do washed in the blood of the Son of God.

"If any man serve me." If you serve him so, you serve him rightly. They serve him in sincerity and in truth; they mean him to have the heart. If they cannot give it to him, he should have it if they could. Many a struggle do they make to see if they can serve him better than they do. Finding they cannot serve him as they would, makes them feel "unprofitable servants." If you can say that, you will outstrip all the false characters of Matthew xxv. and other scriptures; for they never do. If you notice, you will find when all the false professors come before him, they say, "When saw we thee sick, or in prison, and did not come to thee?" "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men." When the Son of God tells these poor creatures that serve him in sincerity and in truth what they did, "Lord," say they, "when did we do anything for thee?" They are ashamed of what they are; so they serve him in humility and sincerity of spirit. They mean what they say, and their souls are set on what they desire. When they say, "What wilt thou have me to do?" they mean to do it, if God will show them what to do. Others pull away the shoulder, and stop the ear, lest they should hear. Some came before the prophet Jeremiah, and said, "Inquire of the Lord for us, we pray thee, whether we shall go down into Egypt, or remain where we are." So he inquired of the Lord, and told them what the Lord said. And the people said, "You have not inquired of the Lord; you have spoken it out of your own heart." Now Jeremiah says, in effect, "You have dissembled in inquiring. You never meant to do what the Lord said; therefore you shall go down into

Egypt, and die there." Now, these people do not dissemble like that; they mean what they say.

Again. "If any man serve me." They not only serve him in this way, but they serve him in *faith*. The great apostle says, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." The poor souls wait on God in faith; as they come to him, they look up. What does this faith do? The Lord says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate; and touch not the unclean thing." So the man obeys, and comes out from the world, from the ways of it, the lies, the practices, and the cheating of it. So he finds things, more or less, just as Bunyan's pilgrims did, when they passed through Vanity Fair. "What will ye buy?" said the people. "O!" said they; "we buy the truth." So they were so unprofitable that they put them in prison. The Son of God tells the soul all the world will be burned up; and the man believes the report, and looks for something that will stand when time shall be no more. He looks out now for a pension, so to speak. So this brings him out from the world. If you were to say to the man some time (and by the answer you will see the simplicity of his heart), "Why, if you go on that way, you will soon have to shut up your shop. You must be like the rest of the folks; if not, you will soon find your way to the Union. Besides, you must mix with people if you want to get a living." "I cannot do it," the man says. Then what is going to follow? Do you know you are going to heaven? "No," says the man; "I am not sure of it." "What! then you are sure of nothing." "No," says the man; "what I have I have got by faith." I read some time back of a man that had just got this faith; and when his father died, he left all his money to the rest of the family, and left this man with a shilling; saying, "he has got a promise, now let that keep him." I venture to say, if that man could see us now, he would tell us he has the best of it.

Now these people serve God this way. They call on him in prayer again and again; and he seems to turn a deaf ear, and to take no notice. While they are serving him in this way, the world is jeering and frowning often. Unbelief and their old master will say, "Now see what your religion has brought you to. You had the smiles of the world, and your business prospered, when you served me; now see where you have come to." "God forbid that I should go back," says the man. His ear is bored; he has sworn he would be God's servant for ever. Though it tries him, he does not repent; nor does he desire to recant.

"When any turn from Zion's way,
(Alas! what numbers do)
Methinks I hear my Saviour say,
'Wilt thou forsake me too?'"

"Ah, Lord!" (Here is the humility of the man; now you see it comes out.)

“ Ah, Lord! with such a heart as mine,
 Unless thou hold me fast,
 I feel I must, I shall decline,
 And prove like them at last.”

As I just said, my friends, he serves God in faith. He has no desire to recant; but he finds this to be true: “A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.” As he serves God in faith, it is in what he hath said. So he believes the report; in faith he goes after him; in faith he worships him.

And the Son of God acknowledges that faith. As you may see in our father Abraham. “Get thee out from thy country;” and away he goes. He found that he did not serve God for nought. However God may try us in our serving him to prove us, we never serve God for nought. Poor Job was put in the place I have spoken of. His wife said, “Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die. See what has come of your delighting in God.” “You speak as a foolish woman,” he says. “What! Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?” “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; but I will maintain mine own ways before him.”

Again. The soul serves God in fear. Not with eye-service. Not in this way—while the eye of the master is on the servant, she is so active and bustling; but when he is away just the reverse. That is not the way these serve God; but because they love and reverence him. Just in the same way as a child. Let it be out; and let its companions say, “Let us go here, or there;” “No,” it says; “father or mother does not like that.” Now father or mother will not know anything about it; but it is the reverence the child has for father and mother. The man finds the testimony of a good conscience is more to him than silver or gold, or anything else. This is how this fear works.

If you look in God’s Word, you will find that Pharaoh commanded the midwives to destroy all the male Hebrew children. But it is said that the midwives feared the Lord, and destroyed them not. What followed? Because they feared the Lord, he made them houses. Here are Ahab and Jezebel, bent on the destruction of the prophets. Obadiah “feared the Lord greatly;” and he took a hundred of the prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and with water. He knew it was pleasing to do the will of God; so he saves them from the hand of Jezebel.

Where the fear of the Lord is, it watches after the smiles of God. They are more to the man than anything else. How the man that fears God wants to come into his presence. This fear of the Lord carries him out, walks with him all through life. He has the opportunity to do the same things other folks do; but what is the bar? The fear of the Lord. Can you look up with a good conscience and feel, I fear the Lord; and that you dare not do the things, you *cannot* do them? Have things been thrown in

your way sometimes, wherein a white lie, as they call it, would put something in your pocket, and aggrandize you? Have you felt, with Joseph, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" You mortify the deeds of the body because of the fear of God. This man fears to sin, not because he fears hell; but he fears the sin as he fears hell because it is hateful to God, and to Christ, whom he serves; and is contrary to the witness and influence of the Spirit in his heart.

I will tell you how other men fear God. They are brought up, perhaps, by godly parents, or taught in a Sunday School, or by continually coming to a place of worship. They hear, if men continue in sin, they go to hell; so they abstain from flagrant sins, not because they are hateful to God, but because if they live in the practice of them, they will be sent to hell. Just in the same way as when the king of Assyria took away the Jews out of Samaria. He peopled the land with his own people; and as they knew not the manner of the God of the land, the Lord sent lions among them, which destroyed them. So the king sent a priest to teach them how to serve the Lord. So they feared the Lord, and served their own gods. So the Son of God says, when speaking to the carnal Jews, scribes, and Pharisees, "Your fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men;" so you abstain from sin on that account. Not so with a child of God. He sees an evil in sin; he hates it; he loathes it. Harken! Could he go with this fear to hell, which he cannot, he would hate sin among the damned.

If that is how you serve God, if these are the things that move and guide you, you are the people that serve the Lord Jesus. You serve him with his own; you do indeed. Therefore say the words of my text: "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be. If any man serve me, him will my Father honour."

HOPE IN GOD RISING ABOVE THE FLOODS.

"The floods have lifted up, O Lord; the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves."—Ps. xciii. 3.

A FEW SOUL-QUIETING THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY THE ABOVE VERSE.

It is a blessed truth with which this short psalm opens "The LORD reigneth." He is God over all, blessed for evermore. Our hearts, the church, and the nations of the earth, often, to our view of things, present a scene of wild confusion. Everything in ourselves, in the church of God, and in the world, seems to our dim vision to be like the foaming sea,—under no restraint whatever; no divine power or authority seems to be at work to control the discordant elements. But the Lord reigneth for all this; and as the Infinite, Eternal, Almighty God, he controls everything. Nothing *can* take place but what he orders or permits. Not a wave can rise without his will. Not a dispensation

or providence can transpire without his authority; and not a single circumstance can be brought about without his making way for it.

Our God cannot be dethroned. His infinite and rightful authority over his church, and over kingdoms and men, cannot be neutralized. Much as poor blind reason may regard God as if sometimes he were like Baal, either talking, or pursuing, or on a journey, and as if much of the confusion and tumult, the calamities and evils in the world, and in the church, took place as the result of his absence, yet it cannot be so. God reigneth at all times, every moment, everywhere, and for ever. And it is for the staying of our minds, and to inspire our hearts with confidence in the Lord, and in the veracity and accomplishment of every promise of his Word, that this truth is declared. The Lord reigneth to bring his people out of all their troubles, to accomplish all his decrees and purposes, both in the church and the world, and to bring about that glorious ultimatum when he shall be "All in all."

"The floods," says David, "have lifted up." These floods, like natural floods in calm weather, are sometimes comparatively motionless. They exist in principle; but we suffer but little from them, because of their stillness. But at certain seasons they become fearfully disturbed; become turbulent, and rage, and roll, and lift themselves up with threatening fury.

We may venture to notice, First, a few of those floods which are affecting our own nation at the present time. Now, for instance, the war-flood has been rushing on for a long time past with impetuous current. What millions of money have already been spent by the nation for carrying on the Afghanistan and Cape wars; and what thousands of immortal souls have been hurled into eternity, as the result of such wars breaking out, or such floods being lifted up! War is one of God's scourges, and often permitted by him as an infliction of righteous judgment upon a nation, and stern rebuke for its pride and haughty contempt of his authority. The prophet asks: "Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?" We answer, No; for "The LORD reigneth."

Again. Whilst war-floods, which affect the nation, have been raging abroad, what floods of popish intrigue, of levelling democracy, and of daring high-handed scepticism, have been, and still are, lifting up themselves, within our walls at home. With such devastating effect upon human society are these floods sweeping over us, that society is getting more and more broken up into factious parties, and becoming as full of ferment and commotion as a boiling pot.

Not less alarming is the roar and rush of the mighty flood of immorality and awful profligacy, and foulest iniquity. The torrent of vice is dreadful indeed. Neither the march of civilization, nor the growth of intellectualism, nor the vast machinery of educational measures, nor any other human inventions, avail

to make the record of crime a less black calendar than in darker periods of the nation's history. Look at late events.

But withal, "the Lord reigneth;" and reigneth "to visit for these things." "Shall not my soul," he says, "be avenged on such a nation as this?" "I will," saith God, "bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it." What visible signs of his indignation are already making their appearance! The conflicting elements, and extraordinary seasons of wet and winter coldness in the time of summer; the withering of agricultural prosperity; the almost unprecedented stagnation of trade and commerce, and the greatest of human enterprises failing of success, are nothing less than portentous tokens of God's quarrel with the nation.

But, beyond the nation, we have seen for a long time past the lifting up, in different ways, of floods within the gates of Zion; and felt the psalmist's words as solemn with regard to Zion as the nation. In reference to both, we have had to say, "O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves."

Under the Old Testament dispensation, no floods were raised with greater violence against the church than floods of open and revengeful persecution, just as when the Assyrians came against Judah, and with an army of an hundred and fourscore and five thousand men, took all the defended cities, and besieged Jerusalem. Or, as when wicked Haman resolved upon the destruction of the Jews, both young and old, little children, and women in one day, even all that were to be found in any part of the king's dominions, who reigned over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces. So under the gospel dispensation, no floods have dashed against Zion's walls with more violence than floods of error, and floods of persecution, which the serpent has cast out of his mouth "after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood."

But, in a day like the present, when religious toleration, and the fullest religious liberty is extended to all sects alike, floods of open persecution are but little known. Of error in its most subtle forms, we know there is a prodigious amount; but even *that*, in our day, comes into the professing church more with a quiet flow, unheeded by the bulk, than with a mighty rushing torrent, as when Arianism and Sabellianism burst upon the church with overwhelming force.

Again. As it respects that section of Zion with which we stand more intimately connected, it is not so much error that we have most to fear. For, in both our own denomination, as well as in another, which only differs from us in reference to a gospel ordinance, God continues to keep the bulk of those who profess his Name firm and steadfast in his own truth. What these Christian denominations were fifty years ago, as it respects their firm adherence to the discriminating truths of the gospel of Christ, that

they are now; and the enemy, seeing how little he is permitted to raise any great flood of error among them, or even to bring it in with less noise than what the flood would cause, he aims to inflict mischief in other ways, and to raise floods of another kind. He will try and merge different streams of evil together, such as strife and contention, and the form of godliness without the power, and jealousies, and envyings, and what instances he can pick up of positive immorality on the part of church members; and with such conflicting elements he will raise his flood. So that whilst as a denomination we may have less to fear from prevailing floods of error and open persecution, yet we may have as much cause for fear on other grounds. If the waves of contention arise ever so little, let us fear *them*; if the waves of practical wrong-doing, let us dread to smother it up, but rather bring it to the light; and if waves of division, let us remember that it is an evil day, one that especially calls for union of heart and in prayer among the real children of God, and not for *disunion* and separation.

But be the waves and floods what they may; and be they such as affect either the nation, or the church, or ourselves, yet it is our comfort to know, "The LORD reigneth;" and that the floods cannot exceed the limits which he sets them. "He bindeth the floods from overflowing; and the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light." And, blessed be God, this applies as much to the awful floods of indwelling sin, and darkness of mind, and filth and wretchedness, which the child of God experiences in his own soul, as to any other floods we have hinted at. For months past we have had to cry, "The floods have lifted up, O Lord; the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves." Such dashing waves of infidel thoughts; such surging waves of the filth of the flesh; such floods of terrible darkness and unbelief have, at times, rolled over our soul, that it has seemed as if all the alarming prognostications which hang over the nation, and over Zion, had a corresponding existence in our own experience. But ever and anon the Lord has mitigated the fury of the waves, and shown himself;—and once in the dead of the night, and greatly to our comfort, to be "mightier than the noise of many waters;" and with such occasional gleams of brightness, and stilling of the floods, we have experimentally proved the soul-sustaining nature of divine truth, in a time when the floods, within and without, "have lifted up."

If all the breath of the children of God which in this day is spent in wrangling (not sheep-like), biting, and devouring each other, was spent in fervent prayer for each other, the spirit of unity and presence of the God of peace would be much more enjoyed. "Be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." "Then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye have love one to another." This, I believe, will not generally take place in the church of Christ till after the persecution. There will be such an abundant collection of chaff of selfish hypocrites, who will so separate and divide, that the *wheat* of God's dear children can hardly get together.—*David Fenner.*

DIVINE LESSONS.

A FRAGMENT.

“When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord; and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.”—JONAH II. 7.

“REBELLION,” says Samuel, “is as the sin of witchcraft; and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.” O how little even the Lord’s people think of this! How little even those who know something of its true nature estimate the real evil of sin! Man has an understanding and a will. In both of these exists naturally a dreadful rebellion against God; and though in the child of God this rebellion is broken, still much rebelliousness remains in his heart, and will, alas! remain until his dying hour. O what watchfulness, what seriousness in divine things, such a state demands! “Lord,” may our hearts say, “deliver us from a light, trifling religion, and make us think soberly and solemnly of the things of God.”

Jonah was left to his rebelliousness, in a very considerable degree; and what did he get by it? Could he prevail against the will of his Maker? No. If he will not go to Nineveh in the direct road, he shall still go there, if it is by the bottoms of the mountains. How the Lord will teach his people! How salutary, yet sometimes how severe, are his lessons! He rebuketh every son whom he receiveth; he punisheth the inventions even of a Moses, an Aaron, and a Samuel. May the Lord teach our hearts to fear him; may we worship as we ought, reverentially, even though with a child-like spirit, at his footstool.

Now, why did Jonah refuse to go to Nineveh, at any rate, practically refuse? He gives us the reason for his rebellion. “I knew thee, that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.” What, O prophet, is there in such a knowledge to offend thee? O Jonah! is there not something of sad presumption, as well as rebellion, about thy refusal? Thou refusest to go to Nineveh, not liking to contemplate mercy as reaching unto the Ninevites, and thy Maker’s kindness as being shown to the enemies of Israel. Thou thoughtest, for thy knowledge of the Lord showed thee this, that when God condescends to deal with persons in a way of reproof, it indicates a purpose of mercy rather than a fixed determination of wrath. Now, though this very mercy of God was the foundation of thy own hope, thou didst not like that others, who had been cruel to Israel, should experience even a measure of that forbearance upon which in its fulness thy hope was fixed. But, further, may we not conceive that actually thy heart was in some degree emboldened in rebellion by the very knowledge of the kindness of God? Would there not have been a greater fear of so rebelling had not there been so much light in thy judgment concerning God as in Christ being slow to anger?

Alas! I turn from thee to myself. How has my heart, at

times, displayed its rebellion and stubbornness! And must I not confess it, to my shame, that I have reason to fear a secret abuse in my heart of the knowledge of God's grace and mercy, as a sin-pardoning God in Christ, has rather removed the impediments to the actings of my rebellion, than a proper working of that knowledge tended to strengthen them? O! What must the flesh, the human heart be, when it can turn even the knowledge of grace into an occasion of sinning? As the poet says,

"And makes e'en grace a snare."

But, as we were saying, God can and will teach his people, and teach them to profit. Now look at Jonah, rebelling Jonah in the depths, and consider the lesson he learnt there. He shall be brought to feel thankful for a remembrance of that mercy which now, in its bearing upon others, he was offended at, and feel grateful for the power to even think of that God he now would banish in some degree from his thoughts, and flee away from.

But, first, observe for a moment how easy everything is made for the erring prophet. "A ship going to Tarshish" appears like a providential disposition of things in favour of the rebellious prophet. May he not think, contrary to the voice of conscience, Well; I have done well to be angry, and in not going to Nineveh. See here a vessel providentially awaiting my embarkation. Surely this is of the Lord.

But how this shows us what a danger there is of misinterpreting a providence. There are judicial providences, as well as gracious ones. How did God harden Pharaoh's heart? There were the magicians at hand to assist in that work. How does God lead into temptation? God tempts no man; but he may judicially give him over to temptation, and providentially, yet with justice, place him in circumstances which shall prove overpowering in temptations to him. The ship of Tarshish was not a providence of sweet mercy, an indication that Jonah was right, but one at first of severity and fatherly displeasure. Our states, then, are not to be determined by a providence or a circumstance, or the steps we take by a mere temporary result of them; they are to be judged of by the Word of God, and that only. A trusting Daniel may come into a den of lions; a rebellious Jonah at first may go down comfortably into a ship of Tarshish. God ultimately, for Daniel, shuts the mouths of lions; but for Jonah he takes the bottom out of a ship of Tarshish.

Now Jonah liked not the merciful ways of God, as they had reference to his fellow-creatures. Alas! that it ever should have to be said of the godly, "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel." It is sad indeed when we who need so much mercy are inclined to show so little; yea, grudge that even God should be merciful to others. We act out too much the spirit of the law, under the profession of the gospel. We live by grace, and yet are often sadly ungracious. These things ought not so to be.

But rebelling, yet vengeance against Nineveh desiring, Jonah gets to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with its bars was apparently about him for ever. Now, say, O rebellious prophet, is rebellion against a God of mercy and grace a light thing? He virtually replies in these words: "When my soul fainted within me." O this fainting of the soul! It means the soul in its feelings on the very borders of unutterable black despair. Fainting is a partial death, a temporary dying, the very semblance of death itself. Soul-fainting, then, is the semblance of the pangs of hell; the misery of the lost, the anguish of those who are damned.

This, then, a holy prophet got by rebellion. Thus God punished the invention of his child, who thought to find out a better way of doing himself good than that of serving and obeying God. Well might Peter exclaim, "If the righteous scarcely be saved,"—if they thus experimentally escape by the skin of their teeth—"where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

But now let us turn to ourselves. We who are, like Jonah, children of God; we who delight to say with him, and only fear lest he should disown us, "I fear the God of heaven, which made the sea and the dry land." Have we never grievously rebelled? The writer must confess that he has done the very things he began by writing about; he has in his naughty heart rebelled against the truth of God, and against the ways of God. His rebellious understanding has contended against the God of truth, his rebellious will against the sovereign will of his Creator. Thus he has learned that the malady lies deep within. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity," as to every faculty of my soul, understanding, affections, will; moulded in a form of sin; "and in sin," in all the original guilt of it, "did my mother conceive me."

But now, turn again to Jonah. Behold him fainting in his soul; in his feelings as in the belly of hell. And what took place there and then? "I remembered the Lord." David tells us, "I *thought* upon God, and was troubled." Then this remembrance of Jonah was something very different. A poor fainting man wants no more to trouble him. He has enough. A feather weight more would overwhelm him. As the Lord says in Isaiah, "The spirit would fail before me, and the souls which I have made." Yes; we know well what that means. So did Jonah. What, then, was this remembrance? O it was a remembrance of God in Christ—"merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin," and "repenting him of the evil." This was the remembrance that, like some reviving cordial, was poured by the Holy Spirit into Jonah's fainting soul; and this revived him. It was not a remembrance merely of God in the law. It was not a mere natural remembrance of Christ. No! it was a divinely-produced remembrance by the Spirit of God. This made it powerful and reviving.

Here, then, we see the divine lesson. Against these blessed

views of God he had actually, in reference to others, been offended; he had sadly abused his knowledge of God when in more comfortable circumstances. O how thankful he is, now that the Holy Spirit brings to his mind an abused truth, a declaration of God's mercy, which before he had stumbled at! Jonah prayed not in the sides of the ship; he slept there, even though he was so rebellious. Jonah prayed not of himself at the bottoms of the mountains, when he felt the woeful results of his rebellion. Neither carnal security, nor tempestuous waves and drowning depths, made him pray. No; it was divine faithfulness that came in to the aid and rescue of the despairing prophet. The blessed Spirit suggested to his mind a thought about Christ, and mercy, and grace, and pardon and goodness in him; then he cried unto the Lord. O! it is nothing but the Spirit of God will make a man really pray.

"The Holy Ghost indites
All real vital prayer."

Never any prayer yet went forth from human hearts to God, of a really acceptable nature as a sacrifice well-pleasing unto God, unless the Holy Ghost was in the heart as a new-Creator in Christ Jesus. The prayer of Jonah went, as he tells us, up unto God; it entered acceptably into his holy temple. It was not, doubtless, a prayer of many words. O no! At the bottoms of the mountains men don't make long prayers. Words are swallowed up in feelings. The whole soul is as a prayer to God. Lord, help! Lord, save ~~me~~! A sigh, a groan, these are the prayers which in such depths go up unto God; and these are all-prevalent; they enter into God's holy temple.

Now, again let us turn to ourselves, applying these things. Have not we, as Jonah, rebelled against God? Have not we, like him, reaped the consequences? Have not our souls fainted within us? But cannot we also speak of what Jonah did? May we not, with him, sing of mercy as well as judgment, and judgment itself as mercy, because leading to a manifestation of and a true valuation put upon mercy? Has not God taught us lessons of truth and submission, even if to teach us he has brought us to the bottoms of the mountains?

Take, in conclusion, one or two cases. Have not our hearts rebelled, one time or other, against some grand revealed truth of God,—say the doctrine of God's eternal election, his free sovereign choice of his people, his sweet, sovereign, eternal love? Well, what have we got by this rebellion against our Maker? The writer can say God has taught him the evil of this rebellion by severe, yet merciful dispensations. He has brought down his rebellious heart and proud reason by hard labour; and now, though, at times, sadly fearful as to his own part in such a glorious matter, he seldom dare do anything but put his hand upon his mouth, with a "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" Indeed, those very truths of free eternal election, and the sovereignty of God, that salvation is and must be only of the Lord, are now the very life, we trust we may say

it, of our spirit. Even if we cannot always realize interest as we would, we feel there is not a glimpse of hope for us unless salvation is of God, and all is free.

But, again. We may be left to speak against something written, spoken, or done by the children or ministers of God, who have, nevertheless, been led by the Spirit. It is not only a Judas that may take offence at a Mary for breaking the alabaster box of ointment. Well; God will assuredly teach us. At any rate, I have found him teach me; and sometimes, in a Jonah-like way, bringing me into such a spot and place that what I have at one time cavilled at or disbelieved, from some fleshly views and feelings, I have been obliged to own was after all of Christ and his Spirit. Samson has to take to himself the jawbone contemptuously cast away. Thence he derives the water which shall sustain his fainting frame. Thus the saints of God have had with thankfulness to embrace a despised truth, or acknowledge a disregarded servant of God. What is of God, and used and owned by him, cannot be safely despised or disregarded.

Thus God teaches us. Blessed be his holy Name for it. We shall have to give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. "The rebellious dwell in a dry land;" and sometimes sink, for a season, a great deal lower than that, even going down to the bottoms of the mountains. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? He is stronger than we. All our striving against him is of no use. He will work, and none shall hinder him. We may be left to rebel in our proud minds against his truth, in our proud hearts against his will; he will be our King, and he is our God. We shall have to submit to his truth, if he teaches us by the briers of the wilderness; we shall have to do his work, if we go to it by the bottoms of the mountains. Well; our only real happiness is in a true submission to him. Thus we live. It is as a death to the soul to rebel against the living, loving God. It is life to be in a sweet gracious subjection to him. "Lord," may we cry, "make us readily own thy truth; receive it in the love of it into our hearts; never abuse it to license ourselves in sin, or encourage ourselves in a disobedient rebelliousness. No! Make us submissively go in thy holy blessed ways from day to day, and not only love thy sweet grace as our own blessed portion, but delight in all the manifestations of thy mercy, grace, and kindness to our poor fellow-sinners."

In concluding this short piece, which is only a sort of fragment designed to be suggestive of thoughts to the minds of God's people, we will give a brief summary of the divine lessons hinted at as obtainable from this history of Jonah.

1. We see that, through the natural rebelliousness of the human heart, a child of God may be stumbled at and offended with God's truth in itself, or in its applications to the cases of others, and may sadly rebel against the revealed will of God.

2. We may strangely misinterpret a divine providence. Therefore, often, it is not safe to judge of our states and con-

duct by time results. Christ was in all things well-pleasing to his Father; yet he died upon a cross. A sinner may prolong his days in his iniquity. Great care, and a Scriptural, spiritual rule of judgment, are needed in this matter.

3. Allowed sin and rebellion against God will surely one day or other raise a tempest. This will prove to the soul like a troubling Jonah. Never, too, is the tempest more likely to arise than when the sin-indulging soul is most secure. Whilst Jonah sleeps the storm is brewing.

4. The Lord will assuredly, in one way or the other, bring his own people into subjection to his truth and his will. By terrible things in righteousness he will teach them. They shall learn to prize disregarded truths, and also abused ones. They shall learn that it is a bitter and evil thing to contend against a holy, just, and good God. They shall choose the ways once refused and turned away from.

5. The only way really to still the storm is by divine grace to cast the rebel that raises it, the sin that is allowed, overboard. Unless sin be pardoned in the guilt of it, and denied in the power of it, there can be no true peace in the conscience or the heart. If the Son of God, when his people's sins were imputed to him, sank, according to the type of Jonah, into the deep waters, to still for his church the storm of wrath, shall God allow sin in the hearts and lives of his people without a display of his divine displeasure? Assuredly not. Either sin goes overboard or a true peace. As for a false peace, it is only a storm-raiser.

6. God will not forsake his people. Though they are selfish in themselves, like the beasts, and proud like the devil, and, therefore, as left to themselves, rebellious against his revealed truth and righteous will; though he punishes their inventions, and brings them down to the bottoms of the mountains, he will not forsake them. He remembers us in our low estate, and therefore we remember him. We gladly think, by his Holy Spirit's power, of the God who can help us, and the truth which can save us, and call upon God, as Jonah did, out of the fish's belly. We return to the God we have departed from, for he says, "Return, ye children of men."

7. All divine communications to the soul, and workings in the soul, are of a practical nature. Notions of truth and grace may be abused. Fleshly remembrances of the past may be deadening. All merely natural thoughts and remembrances are vain. But when the Holy Spirit suggests the thoughts, brings the truth to remembrance, and applies God's Word with power, then we return, and cry unto God, who is dealing with us. Out of the belly of hell we cry to him; and whatever be our state and case, this cry, prompted by the Holy Ghost, enters into God's holy temple. It reaches, so to speak, the ear and heart of God, and is sure to be answered.

8. What a mercy it is to have God for our God! What a

mercy to be led and taught by him! What a mercy it is for such as we are that salvation is wholly and solely of the Lord! And what a mercy, even if we have to learn the lesson at the bottoms of the mountains, to be brought with heart-feeling and deep soul-conviction to say, with Jonah, "*Salvation is of the Lord!*"

LOVE, THE ROOT OF TRUE OBEDIENCE.

(Continued from p. 317.)

IN our last paper we endeavoured to point out love as being the root of godliness. We desire, therefore, to speak the truth in love, and pray that our pen may be guided by the spirit of it. For we can honestly say our only object is the welfare of the church of God. We proceed, then, with the subject, the root of godliness, *love*.

Paul was himself endowed with a very great measure of the spirit of love, which is plainly manifest in these words: "For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ." (Col. ii. 1, 2.)

In these words the man of God desires and prays that the Colossians "might be comforted, being knit together in love." That heart might be joined to heart in the love of the truth, knit together in oneness of spirit, and in the unity of the faith. This oneness is the union from whence communion of saints can alone be established. For if there is no union, there cannot certainly be any communion; and the distinguishing mark of real religion from lip-service is absent; for communion distinguishes the one from the other in a very marked way.

But, truly, how little fellowship the saints enjoy now-a-days! O for more walking with God to be granted to us! But we look upon the preceptive part of God's Word, when taken in the spirit and power of it, as the revelation of those things wherein God holds communion with his saints; and precepts, properly viewed, are not a dry, formal, letter worshipping of God, and an external observance of certain rules laid down. No; they are the sweet banqueting-houses, the gracious footsteps, and delights of two walking together in perfect harmony; God and a soul agreed. For "how can two walk together, except they be agreed"? (Amos iii. 3.) For will God hold fellowship with his own people while they are walking in the paths of sin? Impossible. Or will he really forsake them when they are being persecuted, despised, and yet cleaving to himself, his Word, and his ways? Impossible. Therefore it is the nature of the circumstances themselves that produces the effects. For who can find God where he is never seen? Or who can long miss him where

he always walks? For, if there is no union in things and places with God, he is never seen in fellowship with them. There being no union between light and darkness, righteousness and unrighteousness, nor between spiritual worship and mere form, there can arise no fellowship between them. (2 Cor. vi. 14-18.) Neither can there be any compromise between them; they must remain distinct things. So likewise there can be no compromise in divine things with natural and spiritual religion. Each must retain its own properties so long as each exists.

There being, then, a firm bond of union formed between the living members of Christ's mystical body in the love of the truth, their hearts become knit together, thereby forming that one great body, the church, united to Christ, the Head of the body; who is also the Truth himself, into which the members unite in the love of it.

But the truth cannot be received in love, save only by the power of the Spirit; from whence it follows that wheresoever the love of the truth is, there also is the Holy Spirit. And he constitutes the word received an effectual foundation for faith; for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. x. 17.) For this purpose the word is accompanied with power: "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." (1 Thess. i. 5.) In this lies the difference between the *spirit* of faith and a mere *letter* faith; which arises from a natural insight into the truths as revealed in the Bible, and not by the Spirit's revealing the Bible. This letter faith may have the truth as a skeleton, and the preacher may lecture on it, and point out the beauty and arrangement of every bone; but he cannot exhibit vital action in his frame-work of dry bones. No; the living word begets living faith; and when the truth has been received in its spirit and power, it assumes an authority and dominion over the conscience, by which it constrains the believer to obey the voice of God in the Word, at least in some measure. God's people are not left, as to the doing of his will, to the caprice of a mere human will, which of itself invariably stands in direct opposition to the Word of God. Neither can God's final will be submitted to a creature for his approval. The will of God *must* be done; for his word cannot fail; that is impossible. (Isa. lv. 10, 11.) If he speaks to inanimate objects, as the wind and the sea, they instantly obey his word; not from any power in themselves; but God has spoken, and it must be done. Therefore he exerts his own strength to accomplish his word that is gone out of his mouth. If, then, the natural man will not obey God's word, God himself will so arrange matters that the very opposition shown by him brings about the determined end. (Acts iv. 28.) So, likewise, when the Lord spake to the man with the withered hand, saying, "Stretch forth thine hand," the power to do so went with the order given. If, then, the word preached, or otherwise used, is not effectual, it follows as an evident fact that God

did not accompany it with his power; or else, if it had been spoken even to the spiritually blind, sight would have immediately entered the eye. Moreover, if some "draw back to perdition," then their advance was not of God, but of their own strength, and now that has failed. For had God started them, he would never have left them; and they would have continued to the end.

Let us, then, now look at the Word of God in its bearing on gospel obedience, and those addresses which speak to the quickened family of God alone. "My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways." (Prov. xxiii. 25.) Here the man with the withered hand, and the son with the wandering heart, are somewhat alike as regards incapacity to perform; that is, by a mere act of the will. For both their wills are good to act; but inability prevents the movement. There is an inclination thereto; but it requires the same power to work effectually in the son as it did in the man with the withered hand. The inclination of the son to be conformed to the will of God is set forth in a most masterly way in the seventh chapter to the Romans.

But perhaps some one may say, "If it be so, will not that create a spirit of carelessness? For if a man cannot obey for lack of power, why may he not say, I will wait till I am moved of the Lord?" Such an argument could only be made in earnest by a dead professor. A letter religion alone could abide by such a resolution, and not a quickened soul. Men seem to forget that the life of God in the soul acts spiritually as the life in the body does naturally. We know that the child of God feels at times "almost as unwilling" as he is unable; but, if he will observe, he will see that he has more self-loathings for his unwillingness than he has for his inability. His wretched depravity shows itself there to his shame and confusion.

But to take the general course of a believer. How can a hungry man wait with folded arms for food to come? Can he say, "Ah! I have no power to go; so I shall not trouble about it. If it comes, it comes; and if not, I shall not distress myself about it?" Or can a thirsty man thus act with regard to water? No; such carelessness is not the act of a living man, but that of a dead one, who has no hunger nor thirst to be satisfied.

Hunger brings the prodigal back to his father's house; and a thwarted will makes the apostle a miserable, wretched man. "For," says he, "to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." (Rom. vii. 18.) Can such a one fold his hands in indolence while his will is being thus opposed and rendered impotent? Impossible. No; the effects produced by such a cross are clearly stated by the apostle: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 24.)

This thwarted will causes much of the distress amongst God's people, and produces great discontent with everything short of the power that will effect the desire of the soul. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

(Phil. ii. 12.) If this effective operation does not producè, by its incoming, its own powerful influence on the mind, nothing else can reach the case of a living soul. For the children of God would serve him perfectly, love him with a perfect love, and give him all their hearts. Yea, they would delight in him, and live to his honour and glory; but find, alas! to their grief and sorrow they are unable to do this, or to keep their hearts from wandering. Nevertheless, the wanderings of the heart cause grief. If not, how can the love of God dwell in such a heart? It is true, the grief is not always felt, and this in its turn causes grief because there is no grief.

“A griefless grief,”

sings the poet. We believe that the greatest backslider sins at a dear rate. He is, in fact, a miserable man.

It is impossible, therefore, that the really anxious soul should settle down on the lees of its own helplessness. The life of God in the soul will prevent that. To what purport, then, are such preceptive portions of divine truth? The precept must of necessity be a perfect rule of life; because God could not give an imperfect rule. It is by this straight line that our shortcomings are made manifest. So that the precept preaches our own shame, sin, and folly in very powerful language. It tells us of a wandering heart that goes after others, and departs from him, the Fountain of living waters; and our inability to give him the entire heart proves our depraved and helpless condition. These things, acting rightly, will cause a person to feel humbled in soul; and to experimentally know that word: “Without me ye can do nothing.” O how lowly should a sensible sinner walk before God!

If, then, we read the preceptive portions of God's Word as being a perfect rule, a rule well-pleasing to God; how can God and a soul be in fellowship when both are walking different ways, and delighting in different objects? Viewing the daily actions of the mind also, apart from external sins of the body, such as weariness in serving God, unbelief, pride, dulness, stupidity, ingratitude to God, and forgetfulness of his mercies; and enough, we think, will then be seen to cause the face to blush for shame, to think there should be so much leaning to wrong, and so little to what is right.

Viewing, therefore, vital godliness as being the living active principle of love, moving the soul in obedience to God's Word, and, by it, bringing forth fruit to the glory of God, the effectual operation of God is as much required to render the soul fruitful as it is to cause all created things to bring forth fruit. For vegetation cannot maintain itself, nor become fruitful if left to its own resources; no more can godliness be maintained apart from the active power of God. Hence the whole word of God needs the effectual and continual operation of his power to render it efficacious; for the mere letter of truth, without the spirit and power of it, amounts to no more than a body without a soul. So, also, is a sound letter creed of Christian experience,

for we believe experience is as much preached in the letter of it as the doctrines are preached in the letter; and it is letter truth, whether doctrinal or experimental, wherein the great difference of opinion exists, and divisions follow. To tell out a few odds and ends of some ridiculous transaction which may have occurred during the week is not experimental preaching; but it is to have the Holy Spirit working the blessed contents of a portion of divine truth into the heart so as to have it intermingling itself with the experimental knowledge of the preacher, and so gushing out of his heart, under the unction of the Holy Spirit.

As we desire to clear our way as we go, so as to be understood, we make these passing remarks. For experimental preaching has been brought into disrepute by men who are ignorant of what it really means.

(To be continued.)

A DISPLAY OF DIVINE GOODNESS.

RECORDED BY MR. FRANCIS.

SOME time after I had entered upon the work of the ministry, into which I was brought by a singular way, and an unseen hand (though, by-the-bye, I had been employed therein long before I ascended a pulpit), I began to find, while pointing out Christ as a Saviour to poor, guilty, miserable sinners, though a delightful employment, there were some things connected with it which prove that a call from God to the work of the ministry constitutes him that is called a real labourer, and exposes him to a thousand trials that others know nothing of. But He that brings him into it will support him under, and eventually bring him through it, which I have happily proved to this day. Glory be to his Name.

At this time I was the subject of more soul-exercise than tongue can describe, together with pinching poverty. One proof of the latter I am constrained to mention, as the hand of God was particularly seen in it. I was in want of a Concordance, as I had none, nor had I the money to purchase one; while in my constant labour I seemed to need it as much as a carpenter does his hammer. I therefore told my heavenly Father about it, and begged that he would enable me to purchase one, or send it in some other way. After waiting a considerable time, and seeing no sign of its coming, it came into my mind to seek after a second-hand Butterworth's Concordance, which I thought might be got for a moderate sum. I accordingly inquired for it at a number of book shops, but to no purpose, being answered by all, It is out of print. This produced rebellion in my mind, and I often thought the Lord dealt hardly with me; but all our sin and rebellion will never add a cubit to our stature. In this state I continued until God appeared for me, which fell out in the following way.

A person called on me, with whom I had had some slight acquaintance a long time since, but whom I had not seen for two or three years. Upon entering the door, he said he had called to ask me to come and see his sister, who was then dangerously ill. I complied with his request, and went. When I entered the room, she was sitting in an arm-chair, a serious spectacle to look upon, being little else besides skin and bone; and, what was worse, all the horror and despair of her mind was manifest in her countenance. As soon as she saw me, she exclaimed, "O! Mr. F., my state is one of the most awful! I have long sat under the gospel, but to no purpose; I have been a hearer, but not a doer of the word; I have been a professor, but not a possessor. I am gospel-hardened. I am an awful character. O! what a sinner I have been! I am just upon the verge of eternity, and am going out of the world without hope." Thus she went on for some time; when, after a pause, shocked at her appearance, and more so at her language, I said, "You have been crying out much about your sins; but I would remind you of one which you seem quite to overlook, and which is much greater than all those you have mentioned. Your greatest crime is lifting up your sin above the merits of Christ, which you have been doing ever since I have been in the room; and this you do not see to be sin. Does not the blood of Christ cleanse from all sin? Does he not say, 'Look unto me, and be ye saved'?" After a little further discourse, I concluded by turning the whole into prayer; after which I left her, promising to see her again; but before I could repeat my visit, she was removed into an eternal world.

Shortly after her decease, I called on her brother, and said, "I hear that your sister is gone." He replied, "Yes. O that you had seen her once more!" I inquired, "Did you hear any hopeful thing from her lips before her departure?" He answered, "O yes; the very recollection of which is more precious to me than all the gold and silver in the world." On my asking what it was, he said he would read it to me. He then produced a sheet of paper, and read what he had heard drop from her lips. The substance of it was as follows:

"I am, indeed, a vile, wretched, miserable sinner. But for ever blessed be the Lord for sending one to point me to a sin I did not so much as think of,—lifting up my sin above the merits of Christ. Yes, surely his blood cleanseth from all sin; blessed be his Name! and so it will mine." She then prayed for me. "Lord, spare his useful life. Be with him when he stands up in thy dear Name! Bless him in his own soul. Give him seals to his ministry, and souls for his hire. Send him to many others with the very same message he brought to me." Then, adverting again to her own case, she blessed God that ever I was sent with such a message of life to her. Thus she continued to the last hour of her life.

After this pleasing recital of God's dealings with the soul of his sister, my friend continued, "I shall never be able to make

a sufficient acknowledgment for this acceptable visit; but this I say: She had a new Butterworth's Concordance; if you will accept of that, as a mite of acknowledgment, and keep it for her sake, it is yours, and you are most heartily welcome to it." Struck with astonishment, I took up my Concordance, and brought it home, and gave thanks to my kind, condescending, and wonder-working God; and could not help thinking that never man was supplied with a Concordance in a more sweet, unexpected, and gracious way. My way was to buy one; God's way was to give me one. My way was to get an old one; his way was to give me a new one, and the salvation of the woman's soul into the bargain. O how great is thy goodness to them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! Who is a God like unto our God?

Some time after this, the Lord laid his hand upon the surviving brother; who, I can truly say, was, from the first day I became acquainted with him, a simple-hearted, godly, upright, honest man. But, before long, he fell into a deep decline, and drew near to the gates of death, bound up in legality, and filled with doubts respecting the state of his soul. When called to visit a few serious friends that lived near his dwelling, he desired to make one in a little party; and being supported by a neighbour, he reached the house where we were. Upon being seated in an arm-chair near the fire, when he recovered his breath, he thus addressed me: "Mr. F., my manner of life for fifteen years past you have been in some measure a witness to. I have heard the gospel from many; I have given my mind closely to reading and study, but have never been able to come to a clear knowledge of the truth for myself. The more I pursued it in my way, the further I seemed from it. Sometimes I thought my conviction for sin had never been deep enough, and that the little knowledge I had received was not sufficient to constitute me wise unto salvation. At other times, I thought I had not yet received what was termed a manifestation of love to my soul. For all these things I have been seeking and waiting these fifteen years; and now at last, to this very day and hour, am as far from having obtained them in this way as ever. Here I prove the truth of Hart's words:

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

"Thus far have I been labouring to no purpose, but God has brought me at last in his own way. And now, my friend, as a dying man, for so I am, I feel myself exceedingly gratified in having an opportunity, just before I go home, of proclaiming my only ground of hope towards God, and the nature of that faith in which I am about to depart this life. I am now standing on the brink of an eternal world. The former ignorance I bewailed I feel now; the former sin and corruption that I mourned over I feel now; the former guilt and inward condemnation I feel now; yea, the whole body of sin and death I have long groaned under

I still feel. But my former doubts and fears, on this very account, I do *not* feel now; and though I know myself to be a very lump of sin, polluted and contaminated throughout by the fall, yet, glory be to God, I now see what I never saw before,—Jesus Christ mighty to save, yea, to save me as I now am, a miserable sinner. I have been waiting fifteen years to get fitted or qualified for Jesus; I now see that all the qualification a soul can partake of is to see itself all unfitness, and altogether in ruins, but Jesus able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. This is the point I am now brought to, and on this I rest my eternal all. Dying, I cast myself into his arms, and on his mercy, crying, ‘Lord, save me just as I am, or I perish;’ and I do firmly believe that I, even I, shall be found in Jesus, and shall be for ever glorified with him, my God, my Saviour, and my Friend!”

This was music to my ears, and joy to my heart. I made him this reply, “I need not say to you, this is a good hope. He that has put you in possession of it bears his own testimony to the worth and value of it to your heart and conscience.”

By this instructive circumstance and dying testimony, I believe we each felt mutually interested, and truly comforted. He was led home again; and, in a few days after, entered into the full enjoyment of that rest which his faith brought in the earnest of before his departure. “How wonderful are his works, and his ways past finding out!”

THOUGHTS UPON THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

(Continued from p. 328.)

CHAPTER V.

Verse 6. “I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone. My soul failed when he spake; I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.”

THE spouse continues the account of her experience. “I opened to my Beloved.” This signifies, as we have seen, that now the great prevalence of the carnality of her mind is overcome. Her heart is now really desirous of communion with the Beloved. What is Christianity without communion? A child of God cannot be in a really right condition unless he is either enjoying communion or wanting to enjoy it. As the poet says of himself:

“I mourn for him absent, and can have no rest;
And when he is present, I feel myself blest.”

The very being of the new nature is communion with God in Christ, arising out of eternal union to him. Thus Paul says, “Christ, who is our life.” And again, “Christ liveth in me.” Thus *possessed* life is from Christ being in us and united to us; *enjoyed* life from Christ holding blessed communion with us. “In his [manifested] favour is life.” Thus “heaviness endures for a

night," in his absence; "but joy cometh in the morning" of his sensible presence.

Well, the child of God, being now brought into a feeling state, and made conscious of the Lord's absence, is awakened to earnest desires after his enjoyed and comforting presence. A good man asks this question of his readers, and it is not a bad one to put to our own souls: "When last did you hold communion with Christ?" And Mr. Godly-Fear, in Bunyan's "Holy War," asks a similar question of the citizens of Mansoul: "When did they last see the face of Immanuel?" was his inquiry.

"*I opened.*" But why does the spouse say, "*I opened,*" and not rather, *the Lord* opened, or caused me to open? The Scripture speaks a simple language in such experimental writings as these. The blessed Spirit puts into the lips of the spouse, if we may so speak, the language of every-day life, and not the language of an elaborate essay. The spouse speaks from the heart, and does not talk as if she was arguing with a controversialist about a hard point of doctrine. Consequently, there is what we may call a naturalness in her language, which would have been completely spoiled if it had been made in accordance with doctrinal systems more apparently accurate.

"God is his own interpreter,"

we may here say;

"And he will make it plain."

What God says is perfectly intelligible to men of spiritual minds and feeling hearts. "They are all plain to him that understandeth." What should we think of the person who, in our ordinary intercourse with him, talked to us in the language of science, or with a studied mathematical precision? We should feel thankful to get away from him, and have a little talk with more homely people. Well, then, when we consider that this Song is a sort of spiritual drama, how would its beauty and propriety have been marred had the characters spoken, not the free, warm, natural language of the heart, but that of a more formal and studiously precise character.

But we may say something further in reply to such a question. The blessed Spirit may possibly have intended to point out, or at any rate such a reflection may arise to our minds, that he influences his people by acting upon and in accordance with their renewed faculties, and not by a force independent of them. He indeed is the final cause of the heart's opening to the Beloved. Did he not work, the heart would remain completely shut; but, then, when he works, he works upon the child of God's will, swaying that will with an Almighty easiness. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." God does not move his people by a sort of irrational impulse. No! Here his Almighty new-creating power is shown in that he renews and transforms the will. "A new heart also will I give you." He sets before the mind certain things of a most sweet and desirable nature, opening the eyes of the understanding to see and discern

their exceeding beauty. Thus he brings the affections to desire after them; and thus he gives the longing soul which shall be satisfied. He divinely sways the will. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord; he turneth it whithersoever he pleaseth."

Thus, then, when God visits the heart, as in the case before us, the will is sweetly brought over unto the side of Christ; and at one and the same time God opens the heart, and the heart opens itself to God. The feeling of the man may be expressed in these words: "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?" The man would, if he could, open every chamber of his soul unto Christ.

"And in his best room

Would gladly receive him, yet fears to presume."

We see, then, what an excellent fitness there is in the language the Holy Spirit puts into the mouth of the spouse. "*I opened.*" O yes! I wanted Christ to come. I wanted him to enter the chamber of my breast. I wanted him to fill me with his love, to satisfy me with communion. God says of his people in Hosea, "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love." He set before them, we may say, those things which were really good and beneficial for them. He did not impose upon them a quantity of things destructive of their natures, and injurious unto them. He did not cause them to serve with an offering, or weary them with incense. No! All he imposed upon them was for their advantage; he set before them things of a most excellent nature, revealing to them his tender care and love. Thus God did not put a sort of violence upon their understandings, but drew them with cords of a man. Thus Paul writes of "your reasonable service." So here, Christ comes inviting to communion with himself; he sets before the spouse the most desirable things. In this way he draws her heart's desires out after him, and engages her will; so she opens to her Beloved. Paul, writing to Philemon about receiving his son Onesimus, points out many sweet considerations to win him over to his wishes; for, says he, "without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly." Thus God wins the hearts of his people over to his side, swaying their hearts, and bowing them to his will with a discovery of his divine truth, and a working of his Almighty power.

Well, then, the spouse says, "I opened;" but she stops not there: "I opened to my beloved." Yes; that was it. Christ came to her, Christ touched her with his grace and love. This moved her heart, and subdued her will, and brought every faculty of her soul over unto the side of Christ; and now her whole soul is earnestly desirous of communion.

"*But my Beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone.*" We need not enlarge upon these words, having already pointed out the character of the divine dealings which the spouse is here treating upon. Christ evidently designs to manifest a holy displeasure on account of the spouse's former negligence, slothful-

ness, and carnality of mind. When he first came inviting to communion, she was taken up with other things; cold, careless, and indifferent. When she is eager for communion, he will show himself a jealous God, and will hold himself at a distance from her. She was indifferent; he will be shy at her advances, and reserved. Thus she shall be taught that it was a bitter and evil thing to be so self-indulgent and carnal in her mind. But, though we need not dwell upon these words, two reflections arise.

1. How very sovereign are the communications of the Lord's love, even in respect to his own people! He hides his face, and we are troubled. If he chooses to keep his face hidden, none can behold him. He breaks forth from the clouds which are round about him, and shines with sweet refreshing beams of love, mercy, and grace upon the soul when, where, and how he pleases. In reading, in hearing, in meditation, in prayer, when alone in our chambers, when walking, perhaps, in the fields, or even in the crowded streets of some great city, he can, if he pleases, shine forth into our hearts, and fill them with the sense of his presence and his love. He is Almighty. He comes where he likes, leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills.

2. How utterly contrary to the Word of God, and the experience of saints, is the supposed capability which some have of taking when they please the promise and the Word of God. Here we have the godly person, the true child of God, one who had been advanced to some very sweet and blessed lengths in the experience of the divine life, earnestly desiring communion with Christ; yet she cannot obtain it. She would lay hold of Christ; she would receive him into her very heart if she could. Enabled by the Holy Spirit, she opened to him; yet she could not obtain what she so ardently desired: "My beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone." Indeed, it was not for some lengthened period, and after much painful experience of darkness, desertion, and distress, that she again enjoyed his sensible presence and the sweetness of communion.

"*My soul failed when he spake.*" The wise man says, "In the day of adversity consider." What the Word says the blessed Spirit works, to a greater or less degree, in the souls of God's children. Thus "the wise in heart receive commandments." God works in them to will and to do of his good pleasure. It is now a considering time with the spouse. No doubt her spirit made diligent search. She inquired into the cause of this dispensation. "How is this?" she would say to herself. "I am now seeking after the Beloved; my soul is awakened to desires after him; he has been wont, when my soul has thus desired his presence, and I have asked for it, to grant me my request; but it is not so now. He has gone. He has withdrawn himself. Why is this?" O how different is such an exercise of soul to the miserable lukewarmness of some, who, resting in carnal security upon the doctrines or a past experience, have no present enjoyment of Christ's presence, no longings after it, and

no solemn searching inquiries as to the why and wherefore of his absence. They go to the means, they hear preaching; no Christ is there to them. They, perhaps, find fault with the means, and condemn the preaching; but they do not with the spouse inquire into the reason of the dispensation, the cause of the Lord's withdrawal and absence. This shows a very wrong state of mind. The psalmist David, when in such a state of desertion, asks, inquires, searches diligently. So did the spouse, as is evident from the words under consideration; for here she signifies that she discerned the cause: "My soul failed when he spake." She refers to what has gone before; how she responded not eagerly to his voice and his knock; how slothful, indifferent, and carnally-minded she had been.

Here, then, we see the nature of divine teachings and leadings in exercised souls. They look into things. They examine into the causes of the particular dispensations they are passing through, and thus they discover the reasons for the divine dealings with them, to their own advantage, and to the glory of God.

"I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer." The whole thing is evidently working well. All divine teachings, all spiritual exercises of the soul, all new-covenant communications, have life in them, and therefore a practical tendency. They will invariably produce a reaching forth to the things which are before, to a pressing after Christ, to a renewed pursuit of the blessings of the gospel. It must be so. This we see in the case of the spouse under consideration. She is made spiritually and divinely conscious of the absence of Christ, and of the distance of her soul from the Beloved. She does not fold her hands in a careless, carnal security, and say, When he wants me, he will come for me. No; she seeks after him, and calls upon him.

Again. She is made, under the divine teachings, aware of her carelessness, her neglect of the Beloved. This, whilst producing self-upbraiding thoughts, stirs her up to still greater earnestness. When she reflects upon the past, the sweet enjoyments she had had, the happiness and peace which not long before she had possessed, but now had lost, she is aroused to greater earnestness. This is evidently shown by the words under consideration. "I sought him;" "I called him." Yea, further; his still standing at a distance, his not answering, animates her to increased diligence. The fact is, the new nature, as we began this paper by pointing out, must have Christ. Its very life is in union to and communion with the Beloved. O how certain it is that our coldness, indifference, lukewarmness, do not proceed from the spirituality, but from the carnality of our minds. The more spiritual any man is, the more will that man be lively in the things of God, the more will he deplore anything like distance from and the felt absence of Christ, and the more earnestly, eagerly, and perseveringly will he seek after and call upon the Beloved.

NEARING HEAVEN.

I HAVE received your two last kind letters; for which I feel very thankful, and beg to acknowledge my obligations. That you and the brethren remember me before the throne of grace, is to me a cause of great joy. I consider the prayers of the church on earth to be next to the intercession of Christ in heaven. Those "groanings that cannot be uttered," the language and voice of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of his people, are sweet, powerful, and most effectual with God. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." And there are no limits to this "much," except asking amiss. That the church is praying for me is a great honour. This cheers ~~my~~ ^{my} mind when most dejected; though, at the same time, it fills ~~me~~ ^{me} with shame that I know not where to hide my worthless head. It is a pleasure to me to think that I shall have to spend a joyful eternity with my brethren, who are on earth so dear to me. All things are well; I could not wish them better.

It is true, the dispensations of my heavenly Father towards me appear to me mysterious; yet, while viewing them, wonder, joy, and gratitude fill my mind. His ways are unsearchable, and yet all his works are glorious. He can, by the same means, kill and make alive. He can draw life from dead things, and fill with joy unspeakable and full of glory a soul that is in the midst of clouds, the darkest and the most threatening. Yea, he leads his people into the wilderness for the purpose of speaking peace to their souls in a manner most advantageous to their good. I do not think it becomes me to speak much of myself, lest I should become a boaster before God, which I dread to be. There are some of God's dealings with his people which it is not lawful for us in this world to make known in all their circumstances.

They will in the next world be known to all, to the eternal praise of the Redeemer. Yet it is my delight, and it is my duty, even while here, to bear my humble testimony, together with thousands of my brethren gone before, that God is faithful, and that nothing has failed of all that the Lord has spoken in his Word, that all has come to pass. He has remembered me in my low estate, and afflicting circumstances, and has given me strength according to my day. He has manifested so much of his glory and of the glory of his salvation through his Son, that my spirit has become submissive under his hand with joyful serenity and calmness. I fully believe that he who gave his life a ransom for me cannot but do me good in the end.

A believing view of Christ crucified has made me whole. He has told me again and again: "My covenant of peace shall stand." I have felt the stability of the "two immutable things" (O the importance of having something *immutable* in the day of trouble!) sufficient to support my soul, and to raise me above all my fears, enabling me in a degree to obtain a glimpse of the incorruptible inheritance that fadeth not away. Viewing these

wonderful things, I felt my soul drawing nearer the heavenly country, desiring, and in a measure longing, to enjoy it fully. All things below receded from my view in a degree I never found before. There was but very little, I thought, between me and the full enjoyment of the promised possession.

These views, and the serenity which resulted from them, continued, in a degree, without any change during all my illness. To die seemed more pleasing and more delightful to me than to live; and the country behind the grave appeared to me extremely desirable, and the company and the employment suitable to my taste. I viewed the eternal happiness of heaven, as enjoyed by the glorious hosts above, to be that of worshipping God perfectly, with all the heart; of worshipping him, the only worthy object of worship, and of praising him unceasingly, who loved and washed them from their sins in his own blood.

I would sometimes turn my sight from these objects, nature being unable to bear views so enrapturing. I cannot express to you how I longed, some moments, to have no more to do with any other thought or work, but the delightful work above. Jesus was All, and he was fully sufficient. All I knew, except what I knew of him, appeared wholly useless, and altogether worthless. I felt unspeakable gratitude for the little I knew of him; *that* was eternal life to my poor and guilty soul.

There appeared, and still does appear, a peculiar excellency in the knowledge of him, and everything else seemed but "dung and loss." It was a comfort to me that I had tried to speak a little of him to sinners; but I felt ashamed that I had not spoken better, more clearly, more powerfully, of One so infinitely worthy of being exalted, the knowledge of whom is so necessary to sinners. My soul rejoiced with exceeding great joy, that tongues, as it were, of fire were speaking of him to a world of lost sinners. And it gave me pleasure to think that the bride would not feel the need of me, inasmuch as her Beloved has the fulness of the Spirit. Though I thought it an unspeakable privilege to obtain the lowest place in the church, yet it comforted me to think that the glorious cause could go on without me; and that though I, and thousands more with me, were laid in the dust, the cause of Christ would still prosper; for "the government is on his shoulder." This was a cause of continual joy to my mind.—*Letter of T. Charles.*

["In my humble opinion, Mr. Charles was a Christian far beyond the common order; at all events, I feel far, very far behind him.—A. H." Such is friend Hammond's comment; and such, we think, will be that of most of our readers.—ED.]

A WORM is a creature; and an angel is no more. He that made the one to creep on the earth, made also the other to dwell in heaven. There is still a proportion between these; they agree in something. But what are all the nothings of the world to the God infinitely blessed for evermore?—*Owen.*

SATAN'S DEVICES.

“For we are not ignorant of his devices.”—2 COR. II. 11.

UPON the failing of these temptations, the enemy has another ready. Since he cannot get thee off thy guard by bringing thee into doubting and unbelief, he will attack thy faith in another way. He will come like an angel of light, and seem to be Christ's friend and thine. He will allow thee to be a child of God, and strong in faith. The more clearly thou art satisfied of thy union with Christ, the more will he improve, if thou art not aware, this thy certainty to his own wicked purposes. He will try to keep thine eye upon thy great graces and high gifts; he will flatter thee exceedingly upon them, and will tempt thee to view them with a secret delight, every now and then insinuating what a great Christian thou art; how few there are like thee; to what an exalted state thou hast attained; what temptations thou hast overcome; what victories thou hast gained over Satan; and how safe thou art now, fast upon the rock! And if he find this pleasing bait is not instantly rejected with a “Get thee behind me, Satan,” then he will begin to work upon thy self-love, and to give thee many plausible reasons for self-admiration, so that thou shalt first look pleasedly at, then fondly love, and at last sacrilegiously dote upon thy wondrous attainments. Thus he will lift thee up with pride, and will try to draw thee into his own crime, and into his own condemnation.

What a dangerous temptation is this! How many have I known who have fallen into it! If thou sayest, “By what means shall I escape it?” Mind the first approach; for it is coming upon thee, as soon as thou beginnest to think of thyself more highly than thou oughtest to think. Thou art in thyself a poor miserable helpless sinner; and to this very moment without Christ thou canst do nothing. Thou canst not do one good thing, nor overcome the weakest enemy, nor take one step in the way to heaven, without Christ; nay, thou canst not think one good thought without him. What hast thou then to be proud of, and to stir up thy self-admiration? Nothing but sin. The humble abiding sense of this tends to thy safety; for while this is ever present with thee,—“In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing,” it will lead thee to live upon Christ for all good things. And being all his, and received every moment from him as his free gift, thou wilt be glorifying and exalting him in all and for all, knowing that he resisteth the proud, but he giveth grace unto the humble. The Lord keep thee humble, and then thou wilt have grace to escape this cunning wile of the devil. If thou shalt say, Alas! I am fallen into it; how shall I recover myself? Remember his case who in his prosperity said he never should be moved; the favour of the Lord had made his mountain to stand so strong. (Ps. xxx. 6, 7.) He was too confident in himself, and was moved. How did he recover his standing? “I cried unto the Lord; and unto the Lord I made my supplication.

Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me; Lord, be thou my helper." His prayer was heard. He found mercy to pardon his offence, and help to raise him up; and his mourning, he says, was turned into joy and gladness. Look up as he did to the Lord Christ. Plead thy pardon through his promised mercy; and beg of him to enable thee to walk more humbly with thy God. Then shall the psalmist's experience be thine, and thou shalt escape the snare that was laid for thy precious life.—*Romaine's "Life of Faith."*

PEACE AND JOY IN BELIEVING.

HAB. III. 17, 18.

SOMETIMES a light surprises

The Christian while he sings;

It is the Lord, who rises

With healing in his wings.

When comforts are declining,

He grants the soul again

A season of clear shining,

To cheer it after rain.

In holy contemplation,

We gladly then pursue

The theme of God's salvation,

And find it ever new.

Set free from present sorrow,

We cheerfully can say,

E'en let the unknown to-morrow

Bring with it what it may.

It can bring with it nothing,

But he will bear us through;

Who gives the lilies clothing,

Will clothe his people too;

Beneath the spreading heavens,

No creature but is fed;

And he who feeds the ravens

Will give his children bread.

Though vine nor fig-tree neither

Their wonted fruit shall bear;

Though all the field should wither

Nor flocks nor herds be there;

Yet God the same abiding,

His praise shall tune my voice;

For while in him confiding,

I cannot but rejoice.

COWPER.

These beautiful lines of Cowper have often been very sweet and encouraging to our own mind; we therefore insert them with the hope that they may be as cheering to the hearts of many of our readers. Of course, they are to be found in his published works. Our object is to call attention to them.

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

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

My dear Friend,—How very gentle, at times, are even the felt communications of the Holy Spirit unto the soul! So gentle that there arises the danger of despising and quenching them.

“So gentle sometimes is the flame
That, if we take not heed,
We may unkindly quench the same,
We may, my friends, indeed.”

Sometimes the blessed Spirit brings a word of the truth to our minds, but it does not come with any very great sensible power. Then we are apt to neglect it, or even put it away from us. It is as if its effects were quenched in our incredulity and carnality. But sometimes the Lord will not suffer this counter-working of the flesh to prevail. He designs to give us a blessing, and will not allow our miserable yieldings to the flesh even temporarily, at any rate for long, to oppose his determination. God is greater than we are; that is our mercy; and greater than our hearts, with all their horrid unbelief and enmity to his Spirit and his grace. Thus the Word will at times come again and again, until at length it overpowers all oppositions, and our hearts are brought into a sweet and blessed captivity to it. So it was, I believe, with my own soul this morning. Alas! the usual dulness, deadness, miserable guiltiness, and sense of baseness and unworthiness seemed to prevail. O! how often have I to cry, “Iniquities prevail against me”; and many, many times I have, through my folly, to go long without relief. This morning this word touched me:

“Believing, we rejoice
To see the curse remove.”

A little life, I believe, came with it; but then it was only like a little light let into a dark room. It seemed overpowered by the carnality of my frame of mind. A good man writes:

“My faith’s so nighted in my doubts,
I cast the offered good away,
And lose, by raising vain disputes,
The wonted blessing of the day.”

I merely quote these lines as illustrating by another’s experience what I am experimentally writing about. By “nighted” he means *benighted*; and by “offered” he means, as I understand him, that these touches of grace are Christ’s standing at the door and knocking, and inviting his spouse to communion.

Well, to go on with my tale. The words of Watts’ sweet hymn thus gently touched me; but they met with, through my prevalent carnality and unbelief, only a sorry reception. But in this case the Lord graciously, after a time, sent them in again. Another knock; but even then by no means a thorough reception. Now, what a mercy it was that the Lord did not depart, and say, Since this heart at which I have thus knocked is in

such a carnal wretched state, I will go away, and send some stern judgments to arouse it. "In their affliction they will seek me early." Sometimes, I believe, the Lord takes such a course. On this occasion it was different, and the word of his grace at length took possession, to a considerable extent, of my soul, and, "believing," I could in some sweet degree

"rejoice

To see the curse remove."

O how good the Lord is to me, a sinner! How exceedingly evil is my heart!

"Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love."

O may I feelingly add:

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

What a mercy it is for me, and will not you, my dear friend, and all the Lord's people say the same, that the Lord reigns, that he will work, and none shall let it, that his will is almighty, and can overpower ours. I have not the smallest possible hope of getting to heaven unless the sovereign almighty arm of God's freest, richest grace gets me there. I find that my own will, yea, all that is in me naturally, pulls me continually and mightily in the opposite direction. I hate free-will; but I love a freed will. O! the sweet, rich, free grace of God in Christ, can even master and manage such a heart as mine. May I not say, then, with the poet,

"My soul into thy arms I cast;
I trust I shall be saved at last!"

Believe me, Yours in Sincerity,

OMICRON.

My dear Brother,—I received your very kind and affectionate letter, and another from one of the peeresses belonging to the great council,—one that I believe was the most favourable to the prisoner at the bar.

I continue but poorly; yet am very rich. I am sick, but have got both health and cure; have a violent cold, but it hath not affected my heart. I am confined to my room, but am going to Lewes and Bolney all the day long. A soul in liberty cannot be confined. It can travel at large all over the world. It can walk back to the creation of the world, and forward to the general doom. It can look back on the ancient settlements of eternity, and forward to the thousand years' reign, and to the ultimate glory. It can converse with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the prophets and apostles, and with all the spirits of just men made perfect. It can ransack the love, choice, goodwill, secret counsel, purposes, and thoughts of the Lord's heart, the glory of his covenant, the mysteries of his kingdom, and the treasures that he hath laid up for those that trust in him before the sons of men. The state of devils, and their dreadful abode, is not hid

from the eyes of the saint ; nor even the hearts of all mankind. The spiritual man judgeth all things ; but himself is judged of none. What a field, what a vast expanse can the human mind explore, under the influence of the Comforter, who abides with us for ever !

I hope my good God, who hath cooped me up, that I might scribble to a vast many souls who cannot hear me preach, will proclaim my enlargement, and let me once more see his excellency, and his habitations, and the nobles of the land who sat in council upon me at B.

The Lord be with you all. Amen.

Thine to command,

W. H., S. S.

To my Sister in Christ, beloved of God, grace and peace be multiplied.

It is, as you experimentally know, the highest of all privileges to be brought, in the light of the Holy Ghost, to see the Son, and believe on him, because it is the will of the Father that every one who does this may have everlasting life. This seeing the Son is necessary to believing on him, for he is the Object of faith, to which it cannot look, and on which it cannot rest, until he is revealed by the Spirit. (Jno. vi. 40; Eph. i. 17, 18.) There is no object set before men which can bear any comparison with this one blessed and wonderful Object,—Christ crucified. Of other things it is truly said, that “the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing,” because, however pleasant they may be for a time, they leave a void, and when often repeated, become a weariness instead of a refreshment to the spirits. But who that has tasted that the Lord is gracious can ever see and hear enough of Christ the Saviour of sinners? This beauty and glory is as captivating to such as it was to David (Ps. xlv. 2), who, speaking to him, says, “Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips.”

The beauty of Jesus shines in his mediatorial office, in executing which he has glorified all the attributes and perfections of God. Uniting in his wonderful Person all the perfections of both natures, of God and man, he was able by himself to purge the sins of fallen man, and to reconcile those who were enemies in their minds by wicked works, in the body of his own flesh through death, so that mercy and truth might meet together, righteousness and peace should kiss each other in the justification and salvation of elect sinners. Therefore when, having finished the work of redemption which the Father gave him to do, he rose again from the dead, then truth sprang out of the earth in his righteous Person, and justice looked down from heaven well pleased in him. (Ps. lxxxv. 10, 11; Rom. iv. 25; Matt. xvii. 5.) When the glory of this blessed Mediator shines in your heart by the Spirit's testimony, you then behold the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shining in *his* Person, by whom you are

“ saved from wrath,” and in whom you are “ made the righteousness of God.” (Rom. v. 8–10; 2 Cor. v. 21.)

The beauty of Jesus is seen in the offices which he bears towards redeemed sinners, as their Prophet, Priest, and King. In his prophetic office he is their wisdom to teach them, that they may understand the mysteries of his kingdom, the blessings of the everlasting covenant, and “ know the things which are freely given unto them of God.” By his teaching, the doctrines of the gospel, the eternal counsels of God in election and redemption, and the precious promises of the Word of truth, are opened up and applied to the heart, so that the grace which is poured into the lips of the King drops into it as “ sweet smelling myrrh;” for he speaks pardon to the guilty conscience, rest to the burdened soul, peace and reconciliation to the rebellious heart, comfort to the distressed mind, and life and salvation, as the gifts of God, to the returning prodigal.

As their Prophet, he often speaks sweet reviving words to his ransomed ones who have got into darkness, and who, through the subtilty of the old serpent, are ready to lose the simplicity of their faith in Christ, and to mix something of their own with his finished work. By these sweet words he recalls them to their true rest, and strengthens their faith of being complete in him alone. He has the tongue of the learned given him, that he should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary; and therefore, as he speaks to their case, he satiates the weary soul, and replenishes every sorrowful soul. (Isa. l. 4; Jer. xxxi. 25.)

As their Priest, he makes himself known to his people as finishing the transgression in their behalf, making an end of sin, making reconciliation for iniquity, and bringing in everlasting righteousness for them, by his own obedience unto death. He satisfies them, by the manifestation of himself in his priestly office, that by his atoning sacrifice they have forgiveness of sins, and perfect cleansing from all unrighteousness by the justice and faithfulness of God; and hence comes joy in God through him. (1 Jno i. 9; Rom. v. 11.)

As their High Priest, he shows himself as gone into heaven with his own blood, now to appear in the presence of God for them, and ever living to make intercession. Therefore he is able to save them to the uttermost, however low they may be sunk in desponding fears through manifold temptations, and however dark and perilous their path may at times appear.

He has a kingly office, too, with respect to both the world and his church. With respect to the world, he is King of kings, and Lord of lords; and says, “ By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.” (Prov. viii. 15.) But, as King of Zion, he rules in the midst of his enemies over his own people, that they may be well ordered in all respects, and suffer damage in nothing. As their King, he gives them to view him conquering sin, Satan, the law, death, and the grave for them, and making them sharers in all

his victories, that they, too, may reign as kings over every enemy. (Rom. viii. 35-37.) Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, have no power against them when he appears in their behalf. Over these they are "more than conquerors through him that loved them." It is useless for any enemy to rise up against those who have the promise (Isa. liv. 17); and when the promise drops upon the heart in the light and power of the Holy Spirit, it strengthens the weak hands, and confirms the feeble knees, and causes the soul to lift up its eyes to behold the King in his beauty, and gives a sweet refreshing view of the land that is very far off, as our eternal inheritance in him. (Isa. xxxiii. 17.) As King of saints, he reigns in the hearts of his people by putting his Spirit and grace there, by writing his laws of liberty, truth, and love in them; the powerful effects of which, as he applies them, subdue their unruly wills and affections, make them willing captives to his grace and love, and bring every thought into subjection to the obedience of Christ. (Isa. xxvi. 13.) His power upon them is what they always wish to feel; and when he condescends to bring them into his *chambers*, into sweet *communion* with himself, so that the soul feels and enjoys the common interest they have in each other, and says, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his," the King of Israel is glorious indeed, and his rest is glorious. (Isa. xi. 10.)

He has wine peculiar to his kingdom, which he sometimes gives to those of his subjects who are ready to perish, and are of heavy hearts, till they drink and forget their poverty, and remember their misery no more. This wine goes down sweetly; it yields such comfort, satisfaction, joy, and gladness to the before drooping spirit! It is strong, because it communicates the power of eternal personal election, never-failing grace and love, particular redemption, final perseverance, and the certainty of partaking of eternal glory with Christ, to the heart in such a manner as to make it glad indeed in the feeling and prospect. (Ps. civ. 15.) But it is not more strong than palatable; and everyone that gets a taste of this wine, which is well-refined from the dregs of human wisdom and fleshly reasonings and carnal unbelief, finds it so sweet to his soul, so wholesome and nourishing, that he understands what the King means, and is of the same mind. (Luke v. 39).

We will say, then, "Thou art fairer than the children of men;" for there is none to compare with him who is "the chiefest among ten thousand, yea, altogether lovely." We will say also, "Grace is poured into thy lips;" for who speaks peace to our souls but Jesus? Who but he speaks to us of grace, as displayed in the sovereign and eternal love and good-will of God in his purpose and promise towards us in Christ Jesus? Who but he could give us such assurances as are contained in those words (Jno. v. 24)? And who but he can persuade our minds, by the powerful application of his gracious promises and doctrines, that the love of his heart is set upon such poor polluted

unworthy creatures as we, that he has espoused and betrothed us unto himself for ever, and will never put us away for our infidelity, our wanderings, our unfaithfulness? (Hos. ii. 19, 20; Mal. ii. 16; Isa. xlv. 21, 22; Jer. iii. 1, 14.) Not he has declared that, however far his people may backslide from him, "they shall return;" and however dry, barren, dead, and unsavoury they may at times become, yet "they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine" under his quickening, invigorating, refreshing influences (Hos. xiv. 7), till their scent is as the wine of Lebanon; because he will be as the dew unto his Israel.

My dear friends here continue much the same in health, except poor E. I have spent a pleasant time with them so far, the only drawback being poor E.'s great weakness. But she is strong in the Lord, and very spiritual; and that is the best. I often think how little cause the people at — have to pride themselves in Mr. — and their great privileges, when they come so far short of these poor outcasts, who have no one to feed them, and no one to write to them but such a poor thing as I. What a proof it is that the excellency of the power is all of God, and not of man! I beg my kind love to you and the Misses B., and to all our friends. The time is going on rapidly, and I shall soon be with you again, if the Lord will. May it be for good to us all, by the outpouring of his Spirit. I have had some sweet breathings of desire after more intimate communion with Jesus in writing to you; and he says he will fulfil the desires of them that fear him. God bless you, and cause the spices to flow out, till you cry with the spouse, as in Song iv. 16.

J. S.

Grimsby, July 4th, 1837.

My dear Sister,—Having had another remembrance of my sins and sinfulness this morning, with a degree of self-abhorrence, I wondered how a holy God could love such abominable, sinful creatures. It entered my mind that God the Father had joined or incorporated his people with his dearest, best, and choicest Beloved, even his darling Son, who is so exactly his image that his love flows out to him; and they, as being incorporated into or with him, share in the self-same love.

My eyes were soon filled with tears of wonder at the height and depth of the holy wisdom, which was manifested in this discovery to my mind; and though it is an old truth, very old, yet as it was opened to my mind it was very new. I remembered also some that had written on the blessed theme. I saw that they had enjoyed it. Thus Dr. Watts says,

"Nor shall our souls be thence removed,
Till he forgets his first Beloved;"

which is impossible. The Almighty Saviour himself declared that his people were loved with the same love as he was; but it is through this incorporation.

Though I had had the covenant love of God shed abroad in my heart years ago, this view of it by union with or incorporation

into the Son of God, did heighten it, and make it to appear more wonderful still. Yes, there it was explained how it was everlasting love. There never was a period in which the Father did not love his Son, nor ever will be; and his members share in that love. O! how strong the foundation of salvation of those united to him! How impossible for any of them to perish! Through this incorporation, the whole weight of their salvation depends upon him; and here I had a sight of his almighty strength. Then in came these words: "They shall hang upon him all the glory of his Father's house," which surely is his entire due, and which I delight to give him.

Since I wrote, your letter arrived; and I find you have been in deep waters. I feel for you; having been through the same scenes, or much deeper. How many times has that question been asked me: "To which of the saints wilt thou turn?" *i.e.*, where will you find an example to comfort you in such deep distress? Yes, it appeared that heaven, earth, and hell, and the church, were all against me. It put me in mind how old Mr. Gadsby said that when the Lord chastened his children, he removed every thing out of the way, that his strokes might be felt. But in the midst of the keenest sensations, how that precious hymn, beginning:

"Whom the Lord Jehovah loves
He in various ways improves"

used to come to my mind; and every word would speak to me, and give me light.

I remember one time especially, when in such dreadful deeps, the words came: "I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but found none. They also gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." It opened my eyes to see I was in the same path as Jesus Christ. O the relief, the unction, it was to my afflicted soul, to see and feel I was in the same suffering path that Jesus had travelled! It was like the tree cast into the bitter waters, which made them sweet; and it made me believe it was a right path, and would end well. How the Lord has met such suffering cases, and even called the sufferers "beloved"; saying, "*Beloved*, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." And again, he says, "The same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." That word also of pity has come to me: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted." I used to want the promising part to come as well; but no; it would stop without the promise, and I could not get the comfort.

O what chastening has my pride caused me! It appears much plainer to me now than it did then, that I was something in my own eyes, and wanted to be something; therefore the Lord would bring me down.

Some time ago, I asked the Lord to bring me near to himself, and keep me near, whatever it cost me. Something said, If that

was answered, there would be some keen suffering. Very soon after, I had my two daughters at home so ill as to compel them to be at home for months.

You remember last May there was a letter of mine put in the "Gospel Standard." A Mr. Abbott, of New Jersey, formerly a member of Gower Street, sent to inform me of the blessing he had received in reading it. I wrote back to him, and have received an answer, which perhaps you may see some time. I have also received a nice warm-hearted letter from E. I am glad he is favoured to hear such a ministry, as it will search, strip, and pull down, build up, strengthen, and establish him.

Accept of our love. We send the same to Mr. B.

Believe me, Yours doubly a brother,

Strongsville, Ohio, U.S., Dec. 1877.

HENRY MILLS.

Dear Sir,—I beg to inform you that I received your very acceptable epistle on the 24th Sept., for which I return you many thanks. On opening it, and seeing from whom it came, a feeling something like this came over me: "And whence is this to me, that the servant of my Lord should write to such a dead dog as I am?"

"O wretched man that I am!" has been the cry of my soul of late. Since I returned from Oakham, I have only been poorly in my body; and what is worse than that, I have laboured under a sense of much deadness, darkness, and leanness of soul, accompanied with a feeling sense of my unspeakable sinfulness in the sight of God. I believe I can say that there has been more breaking up of the fallow ground of my heart, or, in other words, a further discovery of my vile, ruined, loathsome nature made known to me. I sometimes wonder what the last sight of sinful self will be. The sight is such now that I cannot behold it without some degree of horror; and yet it is still said, "Turn thee yet again, son of man, and thou shalt see greater abominations." O Sir! Since I saw you last, I have thought again and again that I must give up every thing for lost; for I could not believe that God would ever save a wretch like me, one so vile, so base, so loathsome and so brutishly ignorant as I am. I have said, most feelingly, "Surely I am more brutish than any man;" that is, than any of those men who are taught spiritual things by the Spirit of God. And when Christ is out of sight, and only sinful self is seen, the sight is horrible indeed. And when the Lord hides himself (as he very justly may for our manifold iniquities), who then can behold him with pleasure?

My mind has been led to look back to my infancy, and to see how kind and long-suffering the good Lord has been towards unthankful sinful me. It was as if the Lord had said, "See how I took you from your father's house when young, when you were almost lost for the want of the common necessaries of life, and were suffering hunger, cold, and nakedness; and see what I have

done for you. And see what kind of returns you have made me for all my mercies towards you." Such expostulations touch the soul keenly. And thus my soul has been tossed up and down as the locust, conflicting with sin and self; and something like the dove who could find no rest for the sole of her foot, until Noah put forth his hand and pulled her in unto him into the ark. Thus we find there is no rest for the soul until drawn unto Jesus, the only place of rest for the weary and heavy laden to repose in.

I do most sensibly feel that my poor helpless soul cannot enjoy any spiritual rest and peace until favoured with the precious faith of God's elect in exercise upon the Person and merits of a dear Redeemer. I feel, too, that the exceeding greatness of the power of God is required to produce this exercise. I view the blessed Paul as in a most happy frame of mind when he said, "The life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*." This is what I want more to come into,—to live by the faith of the Son of God, and for God more fully to satisfy my soul that I am indeed accepted in Christ the Beloved, and am now and eternally complete in him; for I am sharply tried about this point. I also beg the good Lord to lead me more clearly and experimentally into the great and most blessed mystery of the imputation of sin and righteousness, and to make it clear to my soul by his blessed Spirit that God hath made his dear Son to be sin for me, that I might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Perhaps my dear friend will say, "Don't trouble me with your miserable tales of unbelief and wretchedness. I have enough of these things at home in my own heart." To which I must reply, "I dare say you have. But, as I must say something in the way of reply to your very kind epistle, it must be about the things I am now tasting and exercised with." Well, then, I will say no more; only I have some hopes that I shall be able to get to Oakham by the 8th, if it pleases God, and shall see you there, and your gracious Lord and Master with you. O may he be pleased to reveal his glory, and display his saving power on our behalf; so that much good may be done in the Name of the holy Child Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God amongst the poor and needy souls at Oakham; and it shall be for the glorifying of his holy Name, and magnifying of his mercy which endureth for ever.

Now may God Almighty greatly bless you, and make you very useful and profitable to the church of God, and keep you faithful even unto the end; and then you will receive your crown of righteousness and glory, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give unto you at that day, and unto all them that love his appearing. This is the desire and prayer of him who is of himself nothing but sinful dust and ashes, but

Yours in Christian affection,

To Mr. Grace.

THOS. CLARKE.

Loughborough, Oct. 2nd, 1856.

THE HEAVENLY BRIDEGROOM.

MATT. IX. 15.

JESUS, and can it ever be
That thou didst love a wretch like me,
And choose me for thy bride?
The Bridegroom of my soul appear,
And search me out, and bring me near
To thy dear loving side.

My dreadful debt didst thou discharge,
And set my captive soul at large,
When sin did me enslave?
Didst thou then suffer, Lord, for me,
Upon the ignominious tree,
My wretched soul to save?

I never could repay thy love;
Yet thou didst my affections move,
And call me by thy grace;
Thou brought'st me to thy chosen fold,
That I thy beauties might behold,
And see thy smiling face.

O can I e'er forget the day
When thy sweet voice did to me say,
"Arise, my love, and come?"
Then to the chambers of the King
How lovingly thou didst me bring;
Nor let me longer roam.

O! 'Twas a blessed nuptial day!
I thought I ne'er again could stray,
But should in thee abide;
But, ah! My sad, ungrateful heart,
How frequently dost thou depart
From thy dear Bridegroom's side!

C. SPIRE.

Obituary.

ALICE TRIPPIER.—On February 4th, 1879, aged 37, Alice Trippier, of Haslingden.

She was born in 1841, at Shuttleworth, and always bore a good moral character. It is not known when or by what means she first felt a concern about her soul's salvation; but it is known that when about 20 years of age she, with some other young women, began to attend the ministry of the word, sometimes at Providence Chapel, Bury, and sometimes at Cave Adullam Chapel, Haslingden; each place being about four miles from Shuttleworth. In 1868 she married a steady man of good moral character, and in the following year they removed to Haslingden. She then continued to attend at Cave Adullam Chapel as often as she possibly could until her death.

She was always very reserved in her manner, and never had much to say, especially about herself; but she was very civil and obliging, and

always had a kind word for every one who addressed her. She was always ready and willing to do any kindness to any one who needed it, as far as she was able, especially the Lord's people. She had a great respect for the ministers of the word of God, and loved them for their work's sake. Like Lydia, she showed it in her actions towards them as often as she had the opportunity, without attracting any special notice. It has always been noticed with what earnestness she listened to the word preached, even when she was a young woman sitting in the singing pew. Mr. Richard Hargreaves, formerly a deacon of the church at Haslingden, many years ago remarked, "I believe the Lord is doing a work in the heart of that girl sitting in the corner of the singing-pew." The same opinion was held by all the brethren and sisters in the church; but they could not get her to acknowledge it, whenever they attempted to speak to her about the matter. She was so fearful of being misled, and she did not wish to mislead others.

On one occasion some of the sisters visited her, and gave her an affectionate invitation to come before the church; for they believed that she was one of the Lord's children, and that the work of grace was begun in her soul by the operation of the Holy Spirit, who was leading her by a way she knew not, making her to see and feel that she was a sinner, and in need of a Saviour. They wanted her to come and tell them about it; but they could not prevail. Her reply was to this effect: "No; I cannot come; for I do not know that I have anything to say that is right, and I do not wish to say that which may be wrong." Thus she continued to attend the ministry of the word, but could not be induced to join the church.

I first became personally acquainted with her in 1877, when I came to reside at Haslingden. She had known me for some years before as a supply at the chapel; and my acquaintanceship with her has fully borne out to my satisfaction what I have heard concerning her from others. I have often noticed, in common with others, how she has been melted down under the preaching of the word, the tears falling from her eyes; yet she tried to hide her feelings from observation. On one occasion last year, when I was preaching, during my discourse I was led to tell a little of the experience of a woman, well known to me, at the time when the Lord began the work of grace in her soul. I pointed out how she was exercised under a sight and sense of her condition as a sinner in the sight of a holy God, and about the impossibility, as it seemed to her, that he could ever save such a sinful wretch as she felt herself to be; and how she was tempted by Satan to give it all up, because, as he said, it was of no use for her to think of being saved, for he was sure of her, and she might as well make away with herself at once, and know the worst of it. I told them how she left home one night to drown herself, and how when she got to the waterside, she stood looking at the water before plunging in; when these words came with power to her soul: "Who can tell if the Lord may yet be gracious?" I told them how she went back home, believing the Lord had spoken the words to her, and that he would yet have mercy upon her; and how, shortly after, she was brought into the sweet liberty of the gospel, when the Lord spoke peace to her soul with these words: "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee." "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." It seems that this account made a great impression on Alice Trippier's mind, which she could not shake off.

A short time after, as she and my wife were leaving the chapel on a Lord's day afternoon, she asked my wife to go and take tea with her, as I was away from home, her husband being away also. When they

got to her house, she said to my wife, "Mrs. Clark, did you know that woman Mr. C. was speaking about when he was last preaching at Haslingden?" My wife replied, "I have the greatest reason for knowing her, for it was myself." She exclaimed, "You, Mrs. Clark? Then I want you to tell me all about it." She asked so earnestly that my wife complied with her request, and began where the Lord began with her, and told her all her experience of the Lord's gracious dealings with her poor soul. She sat and listened to it all in silence, with her eyes filled with tears. It appears she was listening to the account of the exercises of her own soul; and from that time there was a bond of soul-union between the two, which time can never sever. My wife then wanted to hear something of the state of her mind, and thought this a good opportunity; but just then some one came in, and that put an end to it for that time; and my wife had to leave, as she expected me home by a certain train. As she was leaving the house, Alice said very earnestly, "I want you to come again soon, and make a longer stay." But neither of them knew what was to take place before they met again to talk about these things as she desired to do; for in a few weeks we heard that Alice Trippier was very ill. My wife went to see her the same evening we heard of it, and found her even worse than we expected, and it was not possible to enter into a conversation with her. So we could do nothing but pray for her.

About three weeks after, a person came to me at my work, and told me that she had expressed a wish to see me. I at once left my work, and went to her. When I entered her room, she said, "How is it you have not been to see me before? I have so wanted to see you." I said, "I have been very ill myself, so that I have not been able to go out much, except when I have been obliged; but I came to you as soon as I heard you wished to see me." She gave me one long earnest look, and said, "I am glad you are come;" and then she sank down, and shut her eyes as if she was asleep. It was the nature of her complaint to make her do so. I felt by that look she had given me, and her exclamation, "I am glad you are come," that she expected some comfort to her poor tried longing soul; and I felt my own weakness, ignorance, and inability to convey one word of comfort to her. I inwardly prayed to the Lord to teach me what to do, and to give me the ability to do it; and the word came: "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness;" and I felt that was enough. She continued to sleep, apparently. I then sat down, and read the 472nd hymn. I read it through; and when I stopped, she opened her eyes. I said, "That is sweet, is it not, Alice?" She said, "It is sweet," very earnestly. By that I knew she had heard and understood all. I then read several more hymns, which she seemed to enjoy much. I then opened the Bible, and read portions of the Word; and as I was reading those precious words, "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you," she opened her eyes, and said, "That is what I want to do, but I cannot." I said, "It is a mercy you desire to cast your care upon him, for he has given you that desire; and by that desire you know that he is able to bear the burden of his people; but you doubt his willingness to bear your burden." She said, "That is it. I want to know that he careth for me." I said then, "The vision is yet for an appointed time; though it tarry, wait for it; for in the end it shall speak, and not lie."

As she felt inclined to sleep, I prayed with her, and felt some sweet liberty at the throne of grace on her behalf. When I left her, she said, "Come again soon." I promised to come as soon and as often as I could.

My wife also went to see her, and she was very glad to see her come. My wife tried to draw her into the old conversation, to find out the

exercises of her mind ; but she could get very little. At last she said, "I suppose you can say with the poet :—

" 'Tis a point I long to know ;
Oft it causes anxious thought ;
Do I love the Lord or no ?
Am I his, or am I not ? "

She said, "That is just where I am, Mrs. Clark ; and I can get no farther." My wife said, "Then be assured he who has given you that desire will fulfil it in his own time." She said, very earnestly, "I think he will, Mrs. Clark. I believe he will."

It would take too much time and space to relate all that passed in my visits to her, for I made frequent visits after the first. She was always glad to see me, and to hear what I said and read to her ; and I always felt a sweet liberty in praying with and for her ; and I felt assured that the dear Lord would enable her to read her title clear to mansions in the skies, in and through the love, blood, and righteousness of the dear Redeemer. In this I was not disappointed. I went to see her on the Wednesday evening before her death, and her friends who were with her thought her end was come. She was asleep, and had slept a great deal for some days, and seemed unconscious. I spoke to her ; but she did not seem to take any notice of me ; and my poor heart almost failed for fear I should not get the assurance I had hoped for. I sent up a silent petition to the throne of grace. A friend asked her if she knew me, who I was ; and she said, "Mr. Clark." I went to her side at once. She seemed glad to see me, but went to sleep again. I sat down, and read a few hymns and portions of the Word. She seemed to revive a little. I said, "Have you heard what I have read ?" "Yes," was her answer. I said, "Do you love it ? Is it precious to you ?" "Yes." "Do you feel the love of Christ in your poor soul ?" "Yes." "And do you love him for what he has done for you, as a poor sinner ?" "Yes." "And can you now cast all your care upon him, knowing that he careth for you ?" "Yes." "And you feel that all your sins are washed away in his precious blood ?" "Yes." All these answers were not given in words, for she could not speak plainly now, as her speech was gone ; but it was by affirmative motions, or negative, as the case might be. O what unspeakable pleasure I felt in my poor soul as these affirmations came from her ! I then said, "Now you can say, Alice,

" "Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress ;
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

She gave another affirmation, and I was satisfied, and poured out my thanks to the Lord for these assurances.

We did not expect she would live over the night, but she lingered till the following Tuesday, sleeping most of the time. On the Saturday she gave up her children to her husband ; and he asked her if she was happy. She replied that she was. Another friend asked her if she was now resigned to God's will ? She said she was.

My wife called on the Saturday. She was sensible, and seemed glad to see her, but could not speak to her. I called on the Sunday evening, but she was asleep. I again called on the Monday evening, and found her in the same state ; but I believe she was, at times, conscious of what was said. I read a little, and then knelt down by her bed and prayed for her, and asked the Lord, if it was his blessed will, to enable her to give one more sign that she had peace in her soul. She tried to lift one of her hands, and hold it towards me, but it fell helpless on the bed by my side. I took this for a sign, and believe it to have been so. I took

her hand, and bade her farewell. She opened her eyes, and gave me one earnest look, and I felt the gentle pressure of her fingers in my hand, and left her, feeling assured that I should meet her again in our Father's home.

She never became conscious after this; but the next morning, about 10 o'clock, she breathed her last in this world; and her ransomed soul took its flight to the bosom of everlasting love,—a poor sinner, saved by free, unmerited, sovereign grace.

AQUILA CLARK.

Haslingden, Feb., 1879.

THOMAS TULLY.—On Nov. 19th, 1878, aged 29, Thomas Tully, of Burgess Hill, Sussex.

Thomas Tully was subject to serious impressions when very young, and at times had a hope in the Lord's mercy, accompanied with softness and compunction of spirit; but, through the vanity of youth, this would often go off. Through fresh guilt, a sense of sin, and the emptiness of all his hopes and expectations, he would seek solitude, and try to pray to the Lord for mercy.

As he advanced in years this blessed teaching increased in his soul. His conscience was made very tender, and he became a lover of the Lord's ministers and people. His father, who was a large farmer, placed him in a dairy-farm at Burgess Hill. At this time, our friends had preaching occasionally in a school-room, where he was an eager, anxious attendant, and not without profit, as the following letter will show, which he wrote to his sister:—

“Jan. 2nd, 1873.—O what a great thing it seems to me at times to die, to live with the Lord! It seems too much for me to think of or expect; yet, when hope is revived, and a little nearness to the dear Redeemer felt in the soul, of which I trust I have experienced a little at times, there seems a willingness that the time should hasten when I shall leave this clay tabernacle. My soul longs for more of these blessed times of love. I felt sweetly refreshed and encouraged on Wednesday evening, while hearing Mr. Bray preach from these words: ‘The life of God.’ He spoke blessedly of the effects of that new life in a sinner's heart, the honesty it produces, and love to the Lord's people, &c. I felt it good to be there. I don't get these good times very often, for I travel much by night. I hope the Lord will make and keep us very sensible of our need of his power, and of his blood and righteousness, every day of our mortal lives, and that we may be found in him when our summons comes. I do feel at times the vast importance of having a right religion; and I do trust I have a desire to renounce everything that is of the flesh. I felt truly this day that my own righteousness is as filthy rags, and everything that savours of self I would gladly lay in the dust, and creep to the sacred feet of Jesus with,

“‘Nothing in my hands I bring;
Simply to thy cross I cling.’

I wish I could speak well of his holy Name; but I feel so unworthy. You don't know how I love to hear or speak of his dear Name, when I feel a little hope in his mercy, for it is so unmerited and so free. Ah! when we feel most unworthy, that is just the time when it comes. The heart knoweth its own bitterness; but a stranger intermeddeth not with its joys. I have felt it a great mercy sometimes that neither man nor devil can keep God out of a sinner's heart . . .”

He was amongst the first who attended when the friends began to meet together here for worship. He was a man of few words, except when any of the friends or myself found him under a sense of the Lord's goodness to his soul. Then he would freely speak of his sinful base heart, and unworthiness, and the sweetness of the Lord's mercy and love.

In the evening of Aug. 12th, 1873, he was much favoured after attending service in the school-room. He said, "I felt so lonely to-night. I can't tell you how low I felt as I came home. It seemed as if the people of God had no love for me, and that the Lord had quite forsaken me. When I arrived home, I took the Bible, and thought, I shall find nothing; I am forsaken. I cannot tell you what sorrow I felt. My eyes dropped on Isa. liv. 4: '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 any more.'" Then comfort and hope flowed into his soul. He said, "What a loving gentle way the dear Saviour has of humbling my proud heart in the dust! O that I could love him more and serve him better, that I might be right for time, and right for eternity! O what an unspeakable delight it would be to be found in him! Sometimes, when I have a little sweet persuasion that he is *mine*, I long to give full vent to my feelings, and shout to his glory and praise!

"O love, how high thy glories swell!

How great, immutable, and free!

Ten thousand sins, as black as hell,

Are swallowed up, O love, in thee."

The effects of this blessed visit lasted on his soul for some days. He said, "If I was fully assured of my interest in his blood and righteousness, I should not be fit for my daily calling. No; I should long to be gone. When he visits me in pity and compassion, it humbles me in a moment. Not because I first loved him. No; but because he first loved me. Then I am constrained to love him because I am so unworthy of anything from him by way of comfort. Ah! I deserve nothing but the punishment of my sins. But to have his mercy and longsuffering break through it all, is enough to melt the hardest heart."

When the friends began to desire a more convenient place to worship in, he was much concerned about it, and wrote in a letter to his sister:

"I do hope the Lord will raise us up a place to worship in here, in his own time and way."

After our chapel was built, and I came to reside amongst the friends here, he began to be much tried about the milk trade on the Lord's day; as he used to send milk to London on that day, as well as on week days. One Monday afternoon he called to see me about it. He said, "What shall I do? Your preaching so condemns me concerning this Sunday trade. I cannot sleep, and I know not what to do." I said, "Carry it to the Lord by prayer; and I will try to do the same; and let us watch the Lord's hand. He is able to deliver you." He called two or three times in the same distress. I answered him after the same manner, and tried to encourage him to trust in the Lord, and to commit it into the Lord's hand.

About three months after this, I met him in his fields. He had such peace and joy in his soul that he began to bless the Lord; and said, "O! I am sure he has heard our prayers; thanks to his holy Name. How I should like to come forward and be baptized, and sit down with his people! But, then, I am in this milk trade, but I feel sure the Lord will bring me out of it. My heart is full of his goodness and mercy. Yes, I feel I can wait now. I have such a blessed hope in my soul that he will make all things work for my good. I can say, 'O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy.' Do you think the church will receive me now I am in the milk trade?" I said, "I will propose you at our next church

meeting." He said, "I have much I could tell them of the Lord's goodness and mercy to me, a poor unworthy sinner."

On October 24th, 1876, he came before the church; but could say only a few words. He said, "I thought I could say much; but it is all gone now." He was unanimously received, and was baptized, with two others, on November 1st, 1876. He came with fear and trembling; but during the service he felt a sweet calm and brokenness of spirit in contemplating a suffering Saviour dying for poor lost sinners.

In a few months after this, the cloud began to move to bring him out of the milk trade. His father having taken another farm, wished him to leave the dairy farm, and come and take the one he was then using. What a wonder-working God is our God! He rescueth and delivereth; and worketh signs and wonders. This deliverance greatly strengthened his faith in the Lord's hearing and answering prayer; and when asked to pray at our prayer-meetings, his confessions and pleadings at the throne of grace, in pouring out the desires of his heart, often softened and warmed our hearts, and produced a union of spirit.

About three months before his last illness he came to see me, and complained much of his hard sinful heart. He said, "After all the Lord's mercies to me, and now for me to be so unthankful, so prayerless! It seems as if there could not be one so unworthy and unable to serve him as I am." This he said with compunction and self-loathing.

His illness was short. He took a cold, which fell on his chest, with congestion of the lungs. Isa. xlii. 16 had been comforting to him before his illness; and now this portion rested on his spirit, and he repeated the words: "I will bring the blind by a way they knew not; I will lead them in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." This seemed to encourage his hope again. Also these words: "This is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them snared in holes, and hid in prison-houses; they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil, and none saith, Restore." These words seemed truly to express his case. None of us, not even he himself, thought his end was so near. Again he said, "I do desire to love Him more, and serve him better. I do wish the Lord would appear for me again. The Lord's voice is in this affliction. I do wish he would appear for me."

About an hour before he departed, he said to his dear wife, "I feel more comfortable now; lie down and rest a little while." She did so; but was soon aroused by hearing him vomit. A bloodvessel had broken. When he came to himself, he said, "O! how came I into this state?" and soon breathed his last. "The memory of the just is blessed."

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

He leaves a wife and five small children, and us as a church to mourn that loss which is his eternal gain.

Burgess Hill.

E. ASHDOWN.

THOSE who have found the "old things" of law and terrors gone, and the "new things" of pardon, peace, and liberty come, must be more in their element to hear Christ set forth than Moses, and the pain he gives.—*David Fenner*.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

NOVEMBER, 1879.

MATT. V. 6; 2 TIM. I. 9; ROM. XI. 7; 1 COR. VIII. 37, 38; MATT. XXVIII. 19.

MAN'S INABILITY: HOW LEARN'T, AND THE
RESULTS.

(Continued from p. 441.)

4. By *gracious longings* and *incessant oppositions*. We may safely say that there are two things ~~the hearts of~~ the godly will be yearning after. 1. The enjoyment of the Lord himself in the use of appointed means. 2. The serving him with a true obedience, and thus showing forth his praises in their day and generation.

These longings necessarily arise out of the state of the Christian man's case. As we have before said, he is born again, and from above. The seed of God abideth in him. He has received a new and heavenly life in union to that of the Lord Jesus. From this must necessarily proceed—

1. New desires and longings after the Lord. What should we think of the child who desired not the presence of the parent? of the wife who mourned not the absence of her husband? Now, the Lord has appointed certain means in which he is wont to manifest himself unto, and commune with his people. As he promised to Israel of old, that where he put his Name there he would meet with them and bless them, so it is now. He is still present until the day of glory breaks upon the mountains of myrrh and hills of frankincense. This makes God's people diligent and constant in the use of appointed means. They can in some measure and degree say, with David, that they want to see God's power and glory so as they have before seen him in the sanctuary. They attend with this desire and object the public means. They go to the place of worship when the doors are open; whether it be for the preaching of the Word, the worship of God in prayer and praise, or for the keeping the sweet ordinances of Christ's house. They go with desires, and oftentimes with much prayer, saying, in their hearts, "O visit me with thy salvation!"

They also use with an earnest spiritual diligence and constancy the private means. They have not only a public, but a private religion. They enter into their closets, and shut the doors about them, and pray, or at any rate desire and seek to pray, to their

Father which is in secret. Some of their best and sweetest times are when they are thus in secret before God. O how at times they are favoured to pour out their hearts before him! They tell out all their matters unto the Lord. They unbosom themselves of their woes by pouring them into the bosom of their Father, their God, their Friend. In secret they thus prevail with God, and after coming forth from their secret intercourse with God, all obstacles, all mountains melt down, like Esau's heart of old, before them. Must not those who know what this intercourse, this heavenly communion is, long, thirst, pant for it? Assuredly they do, in a manner man. In private, too, they read God's blessed Word. O what treasures of light and life and love, of free salvation and full forgiveness, what mines of unsearchable riches, at times are opened up to their view, when God the blessed Spirit

"Breathes upon the page,
And brings the truth to light."

O how they love God's holy Word! How they again and again long to explore its wonders, saying, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." In private they praise God. They can at times most truthfully say, "It is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed." Their hearts melt and their eyes overflow with tears, when they think upon God's sparing mercies. But at times they sing in higher strains, and, with the ten-stringed harp of a heart freshly enlivened with a sense of God's love in Christ, they cry, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." In private they seek to meditate upon God's Word, and to examine themselves as in his sight. They say, feelingly, at times, "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord." O how they want to be right, to walk with God, to keep his ways, to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man. For the same grace of God in the heart, the same principle of a new and divine life, which makes a man long for God, and the enjoyment of his presence and blessing in the use of means, will make him also,

2. Earnestly long and desire to do God's will, and serve him and glorify him in his day and generation. Mind, we are writing here of the workings, actings, desirings of the new nature, and of the man in accordance with that new nature. The new nature, as Paul shows us in the end of the 7th of Romans, approves of God's law in the judgment: "I consent unto the law, that it is good;" chooses God's law in the will: "I would do good;" and loves, yea, dearly loves, God's law in the affections; "I delight in the law of God after the inner man." Thus Paul could truthfully say, "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God." He wanted to serve and please God. Such rules and exhortations as he gives to others were sweet to his own mind. They were not bondage to him, but liberty. When he wrote those words: "Whether ye eat or drink, or

whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God," his own heart thoroughly approved of and longed for compliance with the precept. So it must always be with the new nature. Grace will always respond cordially to John's words: "And his commandments are not grievous." To mere nature the will of God as revealed in his Word is certainly grievous. The legal heart in a man will turn the purest gospel truth into bonding legality. The heart conceives of things in accordance with its own character. If the eye is single, the whole body is full of light; but if the eye be evil, it will turn the itself into darkness.

And here, by the way, we would give forth a word of caution. May we ever remember that the carnal mind will conceive carnally; turning the pure and noble and wine of the gospel itself into something quite different through its own false conceptions of what is written or spoken even by God's ministers. Incapable of entering into the mind of the Spirit in those things which are of the Spirit, it will stumble. Where the spiritual mind will find pure truth, and a sweet refreshing light, carnality will take offence. How exceedingly instructive and solemn are the words of Hosea (xiv. 9): "Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein." O friends! beware of the carnal mind, the really legal spirit, the critically curious and evilly censorious temperament! "Prove," says Paul, "all things; hold fast that which is good." "Try the spirits, whether they be of God," says John. This is right. This is only wise in such a day as now we live in. But O, remember the first essential in all our judging and proving is to see that there is not the beam of prejudice, ill-feeling, and false conception in our own eyes. "He that is spiritual judgeth all things." When a man has been on his knees before God, and got at the blessed throne of grace his eyes well anointed with the eye-salve that Jesus gives; then, and then only, is he well qualified to judge of the words and writings of the godly.

Well, then, we have briefly pointed out how of necessity—a necessity arising out of the new-creation work in his soul—a child of God must be longing for communion with God in the use of means, and also earnestly desiring to serve and please God in his day and generation. Grace will surely make a child of God say, with the psalmist, when as in his case it is prevalent, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?" And as the hymn sweetly says,

"O what shall I do my Saviour to praise?
So faithful and true, so plenteous in grace,
So strong to deliver, so good to redeem,
The weakest believer that hangs upon him."

"How happy the man whose heart is set free,
The people that can be joyful in thee;
Their joy is to walk in the light of thy face;
And still they are talking of Jesus's grace."

Mr. Hart blessedly confirms all this when he so sweetly writes:

“Since Jesus has saved me, and that freely, too,
I fain would in all things my gratitude show.”

Thus by the mouth of two or three witnesses is what we have written established.

But now let us consider briefly what will be this man's, this longing soul's, experience. We may safely affirm two things as generally true. In the first place,—that the living desiring man will meet with a mighty and continued opposition. His desires will be opposed and thwarted, and seldom gratified. He will also feel a most mortifying inability to alter these things, and to do the very things which he would. In the second place,—that the more life he has, and consequently desirous and earnest he is, the greater and more painful will be the opposition, and the more sensibly felt that inability.

The smooth, easy, unopposed path of some is no sign of the goodness of their states. Such a pathway frequently indicates death rather than life; or life at a very low ebb. Satan cares little or nothing for a mere false and lifeless profession, a mere name to live, the form of godliness without the power. The flesh will not oppose what is fleshly. The battle of world, flesh, and Satan is really against Christ, and whatever is of the Spirit of God. Against vital practical godliness Satan arms all his forces. Men may walk in what Mr. Hart styles

“Rounds of dead service, forms, and ways,”

and find very little to oppose or trouble them. Men, too, are tolerably welcome to their clear, uninfluential notions; but when there is the life of God, and therefore when there are living desires, ardent longings, earnest and sincere pursuits after divine things and real obedience, then, as Paul says, we shall have to wrestle with principalities and powers.

We are considering, then, the case of the living man, one who has a daily, because a living, religion. O how this man has to sigh on account of the opposition he meets with, the little he enjoys of God, and the sense of his inability! He would enjoy much communion with God in the diligent attendance upon the means of grace, public and private; but many, many times the means are dry, and like a desert land to him.

“He hears, but seems to hear in vain,
Insensible as steel.”

He reads God's Word, but reads as if he read it not. He cannot enter into the mind of the Spirit in the plainest portions.

“Ordinances tease or tire.”

O how different all this is to what the godly man longs after! and yet he cannot really alter it in the least degree. If God hideth himself, who then can behold him? So, again, as to his daily life. How full, even at the best, it is of infirmities! Bearing about, as he does continually, a body of death, he cannot do the things which he would.

“In all he acts, or thinks, or speaks,
He opposition meets.”

He would walk humbly with God, but pride opposes him; he would walk in love, but envy and bitterness prevent him from so walking as he desires; he would serve and please and glorify God in his day and generation, but has day by day to groan and lament that his

“Best is all defiled with sin,
His all is nothing worth.”

But, now, in all this he is learning one lesson continually. Daily he is more and more rooted and grounded in it, and that lesson is the one we are writing about,—the lesson of man's total fall, and of the creature's complete inability. His very seasons of help, relief, and refreshment carry him forward in this necessary learning. For though for a season he may drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more, these seasons are sadly brief. But having communicated new life and spiritual vigour to his soul, they have increased his longings. Consequently, when he returns to his own sad place again, it is indeed

“His wretched state to feel;
He tires, and faints, and mopes, and mourns,
And is but barren still.”

The opposition is even many times increasingly felt, the absence of the Lord more perceived and lamented, the soul's inability, by any inherent power, to do what is good, more groaned under. Thus by gracious longings and incessant oppositions, the man is carried forward in the heart-felt lesson of creature weakness.

5. By *afflictive dispensations and godly heart-exercises* under them. “Many,” we read, “are the afflictions of the righteous.” And again: “Through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom.” This is the appointed road along which we must travel; and there is no escaping from it. Of all the innumerable multitude seen by John, this was true, “These are they which came out of great tribulation.” The trials of God's people are many and various; sometimes of one kind, sometimes of another. Thus they pass through fire and water; but they come through all into a wealthy place.

Worldly persons and false characters, of course, have afflictions as well as the righteous; but there is a difference in two respects. The godly have some afflictions which the ungodly cannot have,—afflictions of a spiritual nature. The godly also are exercised in a peculiar way under their afflictions, and greatly profit by them. The sorrow of the world worketh death; but the afflictions of the righteous yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them as rightly exercised thereby.

We do not, of course, intend to enlarge upon these trials, our design being only to show how they result, in respect of the godly, in an increasing consciousness of their own weakness and entire insufficiency.

Now, in our own experience we have, we believe, found the following exercises, amongst others:—

1. We have sometimes found the Lord so greatly present with us, and so mightily upholding in a trial, that we have been carried for the most part above it. This was so in a very great affliction. We went into it with prayer. We were supported in it by the Word and power of God. Whenever for some months our heart began to sink, this word came sweetly in :

“Some cordial from his Word he brings,
Whene'er my burdened spirit faints;
At once my soul revives and sings
And yields no more to sad complaints.”

At other times it has been different. There has been a degree of support, enabling us to endure the chastening without yielding to a murmuring mind or greatly rebelling; and yet this murmuring and rebelling has been felt as going on within. There has been grace enough to keep from quite giving way; yet none to spare.

But at other times things have been a great deal worse with us. O what hard thoughts of God! what rash speeches, alas! vented. There has, indeed, been something, as we believe, within, so that these wretched evils have not had it all their own way; but, alas! they have been fearfully prevalent. We have felt and said we would not pray. But we have had, through the terrors of the Lord coming upon the soul, to retract such hasty resolutions and expressions, and to rise in the night and cry out mightily unto God.

We need not enlarge. Most of God's people know something of these varied states of mind under their trials, and know also how in the midst of these exercises of mind, and varying frames, they have been carried forward in the way of true self-knowledge; learning deeply their own inability to bear God's will in a proper manner unless he gives them grace sufficient.

We pen these lines under trial. We pen them as having felt, in the trial God has been pleased should come upon us, how weak is nature, how sweet and mighty is God's grace. At times it has seemed exceedingly bitter to think of being altogether laid aside from work and usefulness; to have the harp turned into the voice of mourning; to have to stand up in the congregation with Job as a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls; to be as a sort of cumberer of the ground, no longer able to serve God with voice or pen in our day and generation; yea, to feel all energy so broken as to be unable even to read, or meditate, or actively seek after God. But, at other times, O what a spirit of sweet submission! “Not my will, but thine be done.” Content, if most for the Lord's glory, to be laid aside. Content to suffer his will, as well as pleased to do it. Then what confession of the needs-be of the chastening! What acknowledgment of the pride and self-seeking of the heart! What justifying of God, and even praising him for that which in itself is a most painful dispensation! Then, what a desire to obtain the designed fruit of the trial, rather than for its speedy removal!

“O let this furnace yield to my soul the peaceable fruits of righteousness, more humility, more love! Lord, how much there is in my heart and life to purge! Then, Lord, anything with thee is sweet. Life, death, health, sickness, all are one.

“‘Less than thyself I cannot crave.’”

Give me thyself.

“‘Grant this, O Lord, I ask no more,
But to thyself the rest resign;
Sick, or in health, or rich, or poor,
All will be well if thou art mine.’”

So it is, and has been, at times, with us. At others, what gloomy fears, what sad despondings! O what a mercy it is for us that grace is free, that God is love, that Jesus remaineth faithful! Thus grace revives us again, and makes us at times sweetly hope that this, as well as other trials, will work for good, and redound to God's glory, and that as the result of it we shall be able even more to spread abroad instrumentally the sweet savour of the Name of Jesus. O that tongue and pen were filled more and more with the sweet perfume of his Name!

But we must add no more. We only wish by these few lines to illustrate, from our own experience, what we write about; how that by afflictive dispensations, and exercises under them, we learn more and more the necessary lesson of creature-weakness and insufficiency.

(To be concluded.)

THE YOKE IN YOUTH, A BLESSING IN AFTER YEARS.

(Concluded from p. 448.)

III. But now we turn to *certain effects* in due season produced in the cases of those with whom Christ deals in their youth, as in the words of our text.

He comes, as we have seen, to subdue them to himself, to bring them to bear his yoke. We have seen also that there is a mighty opposition to this yoke in their hearts. Yet it is good for them that Christ so deals with them, though froward nature would often say the reverse, and wish to be let alone, and be left at perfect liberty to follow its own ruinous courses. At length the goodness of Christ's ways becomes apparent; but, first of all, the poor sinner must be brought into the proper place for manifested mercy and enjoyed blessings. This place, this result of Christ's dealings with the soul, Jeremiah describes to us. O how accurate and how good is his description! “He sitteth alone.” “God setteth the solitary in families.” O how sweet these words have been to us when in this spot of sitting alone, which Jeremiah writes about! Here is a man separated by a work of grace and power upon his heart from his former companions, friends, and ways. He cannot associate with his former companions, who are living in vanity and sin. Eternal realities

press upon his heart; he must come out and be separate. He cannot even associate with the unconverted, unconcerned members of his own family. They cannot understand him. He is glad to escape into solitude from their society. He is a burden to them; they are a trouble unto him. He cannot continue in his old ways. Like Lot of old, Christ takes him, as it were, by the hand, and brings him forth from the city of destruction. This man is in earnest. This man has the avenger of blood at his heels. This man leaves friends and everything, and flies for his life to seek a City of refuge. But at present, though he cannot associate with the men of the world, he has not a known place amongst the saints of God. He wanders as in the wilderness in a solitary way. He is as a sparrow alone upon the housetops. He is, as it were, neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill. He is homeless as to the world, but has not at present a recognized place amongst God's sons and daughters.

"And keepeth silence." This man feels what a sinner he is. He has not really one word to say, so far as he is concerned, why God should not send him into hell. He is brought to the place of stopping of mouths. He cannot boast. He cannot say, with the proud Pharisee, "God, I thank thee I am not as other men are." He cannot speak scornfully of others, and say, "Or even as that publican." He feels far more inclined to say that there is not such another hell-deserving sinner upon the face of the earth, and would gladly be saved with a bloody Manasseh, a dying thief, and a Mary Magdalene. He cannot justify himself. O no! His mouth is stopped. As one writes, so says he,

"I need no other shrift
Than my own conscience."

He cannot even offer extenuating pleas. No; he feels that his sins have reached unto the very heavens; and he knows in his heart that he is without excuse. He feels that Paul accurately describes him in Rom. i. and iii. No language that is used can exceed the testimony of his own conscience.

He cannot shift off his guilt upon others. No, not even upon Satan. He knows that the sin is his, though Satan may have tempted him. He knows creatures could not really have forced him into sinning. No; he was drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. He will not say, then, "the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat;" or charge God foolishly, and say, my circumstances necessitated my transgression. No; his heart is honest, and, therefore, he keepeth silence from all vain pleas and foolish self-justifications or lessenings of his guiltiness. This man, too, is no mere 'Talkative in religion. He cannot trust in empty notions, or prattle about doctrines without tenderness of conscience and feeling in the heart. No! he keepeth silence. He cannot pray as carnal professors pray; he cannot sing hymns as carnal professors sing them. What are mere words to such a man as this?

“The sinner born of God
To God will make his prayer.”

But it is

“In sighs, or groans, or words expressed,
Or in a falling tear.”

“For quickened sinners want to pray
As prompted from within.”

When we were in this place of stopping of mouths, we belonged to the Church of England communion, and were taught that it was proper to say the responses in the Church Service, and go through the appointed round of formal worship. But this we could not do; and our very inability to do what others did made us appear, at times, to ourselves the veriest reprobate; worse by far than others. They seemed good and pious; but we, alas! how different! But one day the Lord blessedly cleared up this matter by sending in the psalmist's words: “How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?” We felt we were at Babylon, and that a child of God when there could only hang up his harp upon the willows that are by the waters thereof.

Well, then, this man, this child of God, called in youth, and disciplined by God, taught out of God's law, and chastened by adversities, so far as the former ways of vain and foolish speaking go, “sitteth in silence.”

“Because he hath borne it upon him.” This refers, we believe, to the process of a teaching, disciplining, nature-humbling, soul-subduing kind, which the man has passed through. As we have seen, he has felt the yoke of sin, of the world, and Satan. He has felt also the grievous yoke of legality. His legal heart has turned the very gospel into a new kind of law. A mere duty-faith, duty-repentance kind of gospel has grievously oppressed him. Faith, and hope, and love, and repentance have been to him like so many conditions of salvation to be performed by the creature. Thus, beneath old yokes and new, he sank well nigh into desperation. So it was with us. The gospel we heard, and which we believe, Satan and our own hearts preached to us was this:—Christ has done his part; he has died for sinners, for all men who will repent and believe in him. Now it is for you to so repent and believe; and if you do not, Christ works no miracles in the matter, and you must perish. O! this was indeed to us a killing gospel. But, one day, when in church, these words dropped sweetly into our heart: “I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” We felt the virtue of Christ's cross, and his sweet resurrection power drawing us in our inmost spirit unto him. Then we could repent, believe, and hope, and love, and pray. O! the sweet virtue proceeding from a crucified and risen Christ Jesus, revealed in the word, and by the Holy Spirit to the heart!

Well, this man of our text, with whom Christ, perhaps, has been dealing for many a day, is at length brought down, as to his stout-heartedness, by hard labour. He falls down, and, at

times, he thinks there is none to help him. O how we remember the day and night anguish of our heart! The words of Jeremiah seemed all our own. "My wound is incurable, and my pain perpetual." We thought ours must be the unpardonable sin. We had sorely sinned against judgments, mercies, warnings. We had backslidden from God; and O! we feared the hottest place in hell would be ours. At night we wished for the morning; in the morning for night. Heaven seemed, at times, brass, and the earth iron. We thought, at times, the earth would open and swallow us up alive. We thought that the thunder-clouds would discharge their lightnings upon us. The flesh wore off from our bones; and life itself seemed as if it must depart. In this we believe we write the sober truth of the case; truth to which those who know us well can bear their witness. Thus we sat alone, and kept silence, because we had borne it upon us.

"He putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope." Though feeling, at times, very desperate, this man cannot quite despair. No; as Huntington well says, a secret undiscerned hope supports him. He is a prisoner, but a prisoner of hope. God Almighty supports him. At times, too, little glimpses of light and comfort will break in; then he does just what our text describes: "He putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope." These visitations of God in Christ sustain his spirit. They make him wait for the Lord. Thus they put him into the place of blessing; for "it is good that this man shall both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."

O, dear friends, cannot you, as well as us, travel along with Jeremiah in these paths? Cannot you from your inmost spirits say, "Yes, so it was with me?" "It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth." It is good to have had our pride, legality, self-righteousness; our confidence in empty notions, in forms, in outward things; our carnal reason and fleshly wisdom, in fact, our wretched selves, humbled into the dust. O! it is good to have been brought to put our mouths in the dust, if so be there might be hope.

IV. Especially is this proved to be the case when we go a step farther, and notice, lastly, *the manifested blessing* which at length comes to the man thus humbled.

This man is now in the dust, and upon the dunghill. This man is indeed brought very low. The snares of death surround him, the pains of hell get hold upon him. But this is the very place for sweet relief. Here he gets the manifested blessing. "I was brought low," says the psalmist, "and he helped me." Now the man's prayers, though, maybe, only sighs and groans, have a wonderful reality and power about them. Mercy knocked, in the Pilgrim's Progress, very loudly when she seemed to herself hardly to knock at all. Feelings in the heart knock louder than mere lip expression. Now the man is where Jeremiah describes himself as being: "I called upon thy Name, O Lord, out of the low dungeon. Hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry."

This man in reality has come to the blessed place Ezekiel mentions: "Thy time was a time of love." O! the Lord will now do something good to this man. "When they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both." "He raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set him amongst princes, and make him inherit the throne of glory."

But now, how is this good thing done? How does the Lord raise up a poor wretch who is in such a deplorable, ruined, utterly undone, seemingly desperate, condition? Sometimes this may be done with greater rapidity, and even suddenness; sometimes more gradually. Thus Isaiah writes, "The eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness." The day may break suddenly, as in more southern lands, or there may be a twilight. Whether more gradually or more instantaneously, the Sun of righteousness shall arise to this man, with healing in his wings. For the substance, the following things, amongst others, shall take place.

The blessed Spirit will reveal Christ to this man as he really is to such a poor lost sinner. Christ says to this man, "Fury is not in me." The poor man thought there was, and even Christ was terrible to him. He viewed him more as an austere man, exacting so much strict obedience, than as a gracious Saviour. He apprehended him as the Holy One of God; but then his holiness, justice, majesty, were terrible to this poor conscious rebel; and his cry was more like Peter's: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," than David's: "O when wilt thou come to me?" But now the Holy Spirit reveals Christ in the true, sweet, scriptural point of view, as the Christ of God, in accordance with John's words: "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Christ now appears all grace; a fulness of grace. "Full of grace are thy lips," writes the psalmist. O what a change this makes! Now the man is sweetly drawn to Jesus, and readily embraces him. Various blessed scriptures are opened up by the Holy Spirit to the man's heart, revealing Christ in his sweetness, freeness, and fulness of grace to him. We will mention two which were made a blessing to our own soul as examples. Heb. v. 1 and vii. 26 were sweetly unfolded, as showing us the gracious nature of Christ's High-priesthood. We saw he was, in that sweet office, *for* poor sinners, not *against* them, and that his holiness, instead of being dreadful, was most necessary. Being holy, he makes his people holy. The Holy One of Israel can touch a loathsome leper, and, contracting no defilement, make that leper clean. O how sweet this discovery was! What a Christ he then appeared to us!

But, again. The blessed Spirit not only reveals what Christ is, as the gift of God and a fulness of grace, but he discovers to the poor sinner the nature of the finished work of Christ. Now he sees that all that is requisite for the sinner's justification has been already done. That Christ in his death has made an

end of sins, and by his life wrought out for the sinner a perfect, divine, and everlasting righteousness. Nothing can be added to, nothing taken from, this work of Christ. It is finished. How blessed to our own soul was the 16th of Leviticus. We saw that Christ, the great High Priest of the true Israel, had borne away for ever the sins of his people into a land of forgetfulness. Then, again, how sweetly liberty was enjoyed by our soul, not only from this view of Christ as making the grand atonement, but as making the leper clean.

“Dipt in his fellow's blood,
The living bird went free.
The type well understood
Expressed the sinner's plea;
Described a guilty soul enlarged,
And by a Saviour's death discharged.”

We saw ourself as the living bird dipped in his fellow's blood, the blood of Jesus, and felt by that precious dipping in Christ's blood our souls set free. As, too, the living bird thus dipped was free to fly abroad in the open light of heaven, so we felt in our own spirit free to enjoy the blessed light of God's love, and to fly abroad in gospel liberty.

Then, again, how sweetly the blessed Spirit revealed to us Christ as the Lord our Righteousness, and sealed all this home upon our heart with the application of the words of Paul: “Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” We are merely illustrating our text from our own experience, as this may give a greater force to our remarks. Indeed, it is good to be able to say of what we speak or write, “That which we have handled of the Word of life.”

Well, in this way our own soul was set at liberty, and enjoyed the freedom of God's children. We saw that we had nothing whatever to do in this divine matter of acceptance and justification. Christ had done all.

Then the blessed Spirit reveals what God is to this poor sinner in Christ. How sweet were those words of Paul to us: “But to him that worketh not, but believeth in him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” We remember once awaking up out of sleep with this blessed word speaking to our heart (Prov. vi. 22.) O so sweetly! and with such a divine light and power: “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood; to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Now the Father appeared as the God of love, and the spirit of adoption was with our heart, enabling us to say, Our Father!

“A happy pardoned child thou art,
And heaven lies at thy door.”

We are only sketching the experiences of the blessed time of love, in order to show what a really good thing it is to have been

humbled, chastened, and brought low under the teaching, disciplining hand of God. We must not enlarge; but there are two more things as essential to this man's blessedness in enjoyment must be noticed.

The Holy Spirit reveals to him the nature of the everlasting covenant, and brings him into the bonds of it. He has a fulfilment of that sweet word: "I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." He now being ruined in his feelings, as to the old covenant, is brought sweetly into the blessedness of the new. He sees a Three-One God engaged in that covenant on his behalf, and feels in the covenant undertakings of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit his happiness perfectly secure. Now he can say, with David, "Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure." He not only relies upon the finished work of Christ for acceptance, but sees a little into the depths of God the Father's electing love, and relies upon the work of the blessed Spirit as doing all in him and by him, which God has ordained on the road to glory. Christ is now not only his Righteousness, but his Strength. In fact, the man now is manifested as one of the true circumcision. He "worships God in the spirit, rejoices in Christ Jesus, and has no confidence in the flesh."

Now, lastly. This man sees, under these divine teachings, the real nature of the yoke of Christ, and feels in his heart to delight in it. He finds that yoke is perfect love, and full and free salvation. Christ now becomes his salvation. Christ is All in all to him. The precept of Christ does not jar with and contradict, but is in the most perfect harmony with, his doctrine and his promise. Christ's mouth, let him speak what he will, is sweet. The man's own heart is brought into a sweet submission. The language no longer is: "We will not have this man to reign over us;" but:

"Reign o'er us as king, accomplish thy will."

"Other lords have had dominion;" now, Lord Jesus, do thou reign alone.

"Fill all my soul,
And all my powers by thine control."

Now, then, the man carries the dear yoke of Christ with pleasure and delight. He would be holy. He would be quite free from sin. He would follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. Now his way is cleared up; the mystery of his past experience is unfolded. He sees that all that painful soul-travail he has passed through has been good for him; and now he can repeat, with a solemn sweet confirmation of them in his own experience, Jeremiah's words: "*It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he has borne it upon him. He putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope;*" and can add to these words a further sweet and emphatic declaration: *That "the Lord is good to the soul that seeketh him;"* for "*they that wait for him shall not be ashamed.*"

LOVE, THE ROOT OF TRUE OBEDIENCE.

(Concluded from p. 453.)

THAT GOD should ever have allowed so gracious a favour as godly repentance for sins committed against himself, and have provided an atonement whereby he could both forgive the quickened sinner and accept his person in Jesus, being justified from all things, are inexpressible marvels of his grace and loving-kindness which will redound to his eternal honour and glory to the never-ending ages of eternity.

But there was a national repentance granted to Israel, which must be distinguished both from gospel repentance, and from that also which needs to be repented of. Because God pardoned the sins of the nation, or of an individual Israelite, when brought to repent. (1 Kings viii. 47, 48.)

There was, it is true, a godly repentance also granted to some of them, such as that of David, and others; but yet, there was a distinct national repentance apart from that, wherein all Israel were included. (Ezek. xviii. 30-32.) But even this national repentance required the power of God to render it effectual, as well as that of the gospel, since both are the gifts of God. It is also evident that the former, as a national covenant grant, was never bestowed on any other nation besides that of Israel. (Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20.) It was, therefore, peculiar to Israel.

There were certain special instances of God granting and accepting the repentance of other nations, as that of Nineveh; although Jonah was not sent to *preach repentance* to them, like as the prophets were sent to Israel. His message was: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." (Jonah iii. 4.) The Lord gave them faith to believe in him, as the God of nations; for it is said, "The people of Nineveh believed God;" and with this faith he gave repentance in order that he might spare the city. He did not pardon them; he merely spared them. For where is Nineveh now? Israel would have been pardoned under such circumstances, as their repentance would have been attended by an offering for sin. (Lev. iv. 13-20.) This is an important difference between the two nations. The former had an atonement, but the latter had none; and without shedding of blood there is no remission. (Heb. ix. 22.) Israel still remains a distinct people, while all trace of the Ninevites is gone. What a mercy it would be if God would grant England national repentance!

There is, then, an outward repentance unattended by a pardon, but sparing favours accompany it; and there is a humiliation which only defers the judgments of God, like that of Ahab. (1 Kings xxi. 27-29.) Many are the subjects of this kind of repentance and humiliation, who will, nevertheless, be damned, as impenitent and hardened sinners, if grace prevent not. Some of this class form those mysterious persons found in the church of God on earth, whose heads are sound in the letter of truth, and memories well

stored with a letter experience, while at the same time they never felt one spiritual pang of godly sorrow for sin in their whole lives. These have their work to do, as Judas and others, and then go to their own place. They may return like the dog "to his *own vomit* again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Pet. ii. 22); or continue on and be laid in the grave like sheep, to be made manifest in the great day. (Ps. xlix. 14.)

Israel, then, had a special national covenant life given to them; and there was an atonement also provided for them which was adequate to their national life. This was the life that was threatened in case of disobedience to the laws and statutes which were delivered to them (Deut. xxx. 15-20); which will explain many portions of the Old Testament, wherein exhortations and threatenings are found, such as: "Why will ye die?" &c. They could not die if they were not alive. Such language, then, is not addressed to sinners, as is usual with free-willers and duty-faith people, because they are already dead. Neither can the language belong properly to the quickened family of God, because they possess eternal life, and that cannot end, if it is eternal. The words belong primarily to national Israel, whether to individuals, or to the people at large. (See Ezekiel xviii.)

There can be, therefore, no typical relationship between Israel of old and the nations of the earth under the gospel dispensation, for the gospel is not a national religion, but a personal one. It must, then, be very wrong to address the world at large in accordance with rites, ceremonies, and laws that were never delivered to them, nor in any way imposed on them. "He showeth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord." (Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20.)

All such passages that contain the terms of a condition of life or death can form no part of the gospel of Jesus Christ, seeing that that is not a Yea and Nay message (2 Cor. i. 17-20); and this expression of the apostle ought to set that question at rest. For the gospel contains no condition of life or death. To exhort the dead to live, or the living to maintain their own life from becoming a prey to death, is unknown in the Word of God. God raises the dead, and maintains the life of every living creature. For man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. (Matt. iv. 4.) Hence all effectuality is of God; the fallen creature is absolutely helpless in every sense of the word, except to do evil. (Rom. iii. 10-18.)

There is, then, a repentance attended by a pardon; and one that brings some sparing favour with it, but no pardon; and this natural repentance comes so near, at times, in outward appearance, in some persons, to that which is true, that it is very difficult to tell whether it is spiritual or natural repentance that is effecting so extraordinary a reformation in the person. A change is visibly manifest; but how will it end? A genuine one ends in

pardon; and nothing short of that will satisfy the really repenting soul. For this the person prays, and waits; sometimes in hope, and again in much fear.

This brings us, firstly, to that "*godly sorrow*" which "*worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of.*" (2 Cor. vii. 10.) It is "*godly sorrow,*" then, that "*worketh repentance to salvation;*" and God the Holy Spirit is the Author of "*godly sorrow,*" which is inwrought by him in the new heart and right spirit which God graciously gives a man at regeneration. So David prays, "*Renew a right spirit within me.*" (Ps. li. 10.) This right spirit receives the gracious influence of the Spirit of God, as the earth receives the rain from heaven, and godly sorrow for sin flows out of the heart, causing the person to grieve on account of sin, and producing a bitter hatred to the corrupting thoughts that are continually passing through the mind. It is said of Christ, "*Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness.*" (Ps. xlv. 7.) This is the image of every regenerate child of God. He loves righteousness and hates wickedness; and grace enables him to confess and grieve over the sins he sees and feels working within. The working of sins within is felt to be a great degradation to the soul, a disgrace to it, and a loathsome thing; and godly sorrow, mingling therewith, causes the soul to detest it. But should godly sorrow for sin be stayed in any way, then spiritual repentance lies, for the most part, inactive. How hard and unrelenting does the child of God at such times become! Now, neither judgments nor mercies have any apparent practical influence on the soul so as to humble it in the dust before God. Yea, there is, at times, a positive rebellion going on, and a stout heart becoming hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. The soul frequently wages war against God, and utters dreadful rebellious language; or it may not be put in words, but remain as the thoughts of the heart only. But O! what rebellion is thus gendered within, as with Job: "*He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked. If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent.*" (Job ix. 22, 23.) Hard words for a creature to utter against the God of all his mercies.

Sometimes the man is sensible of his hardness, and feels some little sorrow on account of it; but not sufficient to cause him to cry out, "*Behold, I am vile.*" He is now tossed about between self-justifications and self-condemnations. Now he would loathe himself on account of his baseness; then hard thoughts of God will arise, and the soul is swayed first this way and then that way, until he thinks he is the most inconsistent person in existence. At one time he cries out, "*O Lord, stop this rebellion in my heart. I hate it, and myself on account of it.*" Then he feels he does well to be angry. In this way he feels his own helplessness; for although he may now desire to lie passive in the hand of God, and feel his rebellious spirit subdued into a sweet submission to God, yet he finds that he cannot do the least thing himself to help forward the desired end. He knows now

that God alone can work the gracious feeling of godly sorrow in the soul, and humble it at his feet. He finds likewise that if God leave him to himself, he becomes one mass of sinfulness, according to his own feelings; and he sees plainly that if it was possible for God to really leave his people in a dying hour, that even then they would rebel against him, for aught they could do to prevent it. This makes God's people dread the thought of being left to themselves, when in their right minds. For, when they do really consider their helpless condition, which they are enabled to do at times, it fills them with terror lest the Lord should so leave them. Under such feelings they would hail with gladness the least sensible motion of God's Spirit on their souls, producing a little brokenness of heart, and contrition of spirit; yet, with all this longing of soul, they cannot bring true sorrowing for sin into operation. They would rejoice if they could but even perceive it coming into the soul; and feel true humility laying them in the dust of self-abasement. They know there is something more wanted than they can do to produce it; and thus their own helpless condition is felt to be exceedingly great. Now they know that power belongs to God, and that that something which is needed to melt the heart into spiritual and godly sorrow for sin, and produce gospel repentance in the soul, whereby they may confess and forsake their sins, feeling themselves vile, and humbling them before God, must come from God, and from him alone. Yet this knowledge does not bring it. Yea, they, at times, seek it, earnestly pray for it, and long for it; but, alas! the power which would cause them to hold their peace, like Aaron, in the midst of trouble, is absent. The sweet softening influence of the gracious Spirit of God is frequently long delayed, and a hard, unrelenting, and unhumiliated heart greatly tries the child of God; and he groans under the weight of unpardoned sins. These are seasons God's people do not wish to die in. Death is terrible when the presence of God is withdrawn; and a hard, unrelenting heart is a sorry death-bed companion. Ah! there are many days God's people would not wish to face death in; and it is the knowledge of this unfitness that makes them dread being left at last to face death in such a sad and unfeeling state, in regard to real fellowship with God. All God's people would dread the thought of dying in the dark, as it is called; and some of them are even held in bondage all their life, or nearly so, through fear of death. They feel that death, under such circumstances, would indeed be death, death to be dreaded; for it is living in the shadow of death during life to have to endure the absence of the Lord. Knowing and feeling this, the man truly longs to feel his heart melt in godly sorrow, and his soul to lie humbly at the foot of the cross of Christ, sympathizing with a suffering Saviour, and grieving over the sorrows of Jesus in the garden, and himself well subdued to the will of God.

But yet, with all this intense and increased longing, still he finds that this does not produce it. There is the hardness in

the heart that keeps it from that spiritual contrition desired. He hates his hardness; but there it is. He hates his sins; but cannot confess them, only as feeling them hateful; but there is not that compunction mingling with the confession that is needed to stamp it with the grace of God's Spirit working within. It is not mere formal confession neither, for the sin is honestly owned; and the man would gladly repent in dust and ashes, abhorring and loathing himself before God, if he could. He does do it in one sense; but something more is needed to bring about communion with God, and that is the grace of the Holy Spirit causing a heavenly meekness, and a full confession and forsaking of sin in the heart and affections.

But, secondly, when godly sorrow does really flow into the heart, by the Spirit of God, then gospel repentance produces a graciously-felt humbleness before God; and the free confession, now made, relieves the conscience of its burden, which the other confessions did not do; they left the burden still remaining behind them.

Godly repentance, like godly sorrow, is a grace and gift of God bestowed on the election of grace, as freely as the gift of Christ himself. Neither is it ever bestowed on any beside the elect; and it is impossible to produce it by any human agency whatever.

The doctrine of repentance accounts the whole world to be lying in sin, guilty before God; and to have come short of his glory. It lays all in the dust; rich, poor, moral, immoral, high, low, Pharisee, sinner, or any other persons, by whatever name they may be designated among men; all are laid by it on one common level before God as law-breakers. King or beggar, all are sinners, lost, ruined, and helpless in themselves; and all will be driven from the presence of God at last, except those on whom God may of his free grace bestow godly repentance. The real nature of the doctrine of repentance says to every professor of religion, "How didst thou come by thy religion? For there is no true religion where godly repentance has never been bestowed. Hast thou a spiritual insight into the nature of a broken law? Hast thou a spiritual knowledge of thyself as a fallen creature? Dost thou know that thy thoughts are vain, thy righteousness filthy rags, thy natural repentance requires to be repented of, and that thou art a sinner against God, whatever may be thy position in life? For thou art guilty before God, and a sinner in heart, lip, and life. Yea, all are lost, dead in sin, and condemned."

The doctrine of repentance, therefore, cuts off all those professors who came by their religion by what *they* call "a simple act of faith;" for if they had ever known what conviction of sin is, and what godly sorrow and repentance are, they would have required God to do something for them in the way of pardon, which lies far out of the reach of creature-power, and must be applied before it can be enjoyed. This repentance is no respecter

of persons; for, when the Pharisees and Sadducees came to John, to be baptized of him, he said to them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance." (Matt. iii. 7, 8.) Being the children of Abraham by natural birth went for nothing. Being born of religious parents, having had a religious training, so-called; and all fleshly holiness, which men esteem as such, even all must fall like the tree cut down when the doctrine of repentance is laid as an axe to the root of these self-righteous trees. For if there has been no godly repentance, there is no grace; and if there is no grace, the person is dead in sins, be he king or beggar. The grace of repentance will be sure to enable a person to justify God in condemning him for his sins, and will condemn himself also; and if God is just in condemning, the sole right of having mercy on whom he will belongs to himself.

One great test of vital godliness is, therefore, the working of a gospel repentance in a man's soul. Nothing can be substituted for it. Build almshouses, go on pilgrimage, fast, and feed the poor; all will fail the person in the hour of need. For if these things are done to buy the favour of God, God will never give them such a payment for their deeds.

Godly sorrow and repentance accompany the child of God all his days on earth; and it is this that stamps a distinguishing mark on God's election, and on the genuine nature of godliness in their hearts. For it is noticeable that those persons who fall away from a profession of the truth are those who seldom, if ever, walked humbly before God, even in appearance; and their acts belied their lip confession. Their very humility was nothing but the pride of being noticed by men.

The child of God who becomes a backslider does not decline all at once; but sin generally hardens the heart by degrees; and sin is sure to harden the heart, whether it be in open or secret backsliding, if the grace of repentance does not keep pace in the soul; and then how soon a long list of sins of omission and commission is accumulated! But let the sweet influence of godly sorrow for sin and gospel repentance be renewed, and then what strange work it makes within! Now the heart relents, grieves, and confesses its vileness, unworthiness, and wilfulness to God, and is humbled before him. Shame covers the man's face, and he will now take the lowest place. He is low in his own eyes, meek, and quiet.

Godly repentance is, then, essential to vital godliness. It is found in attendance at the new birth, and at every renewing of the soul. Would we commune with Jesus, the Friend of sinners? Repentance and godly sorrow must flow freely, and be in full employment, or else no such communion is really enjoyed. Would we walk with him who is meek and lowly in heart? Then there must accompany us, every step we tread, this gracious favour of repentance, or we shall soon find we have parted company through

some proud act or word. Sin has been indulged in, and the Best Friend has slipped away. Would we enjoy the fellowship of the gospel? Repentance must work sweetly in the soul, or, ere we are aware, the yoke of bondage will be on the neck, and legal toil fretting the soul.

O how much, then, are these graces needed in our days! We would earnestly pray God to grant these gracious favours to his people at large. For there can be no prosperity without them, neither to a man nor a community. Let these be absent, and all fellowship one with another is at an end; but the comforts of love will abound where they are present.

THE FOUNTAIN OPENED.

BY JOHN RUSK.

(Continued from p. 460.)

5. Let us now proceed to the fifth proof of our coming to this fountain, and the advantage of thus coming; and that is, *a knowledge that we have life*; and this life is purifying. Hence you read of a "pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal;" and it proceedeth "out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb." And as you and I go on, we shall find death in everything that this world rejoices in, whether professors or profane; and though we may find a false satisfaction from the lusts of the flesh, yet death is sure to follow at the back of this; nor shall we be right again till we get to this fountain of life, and feel it in us springing up, and purifying us from the sin of our nature, which has bowed down our souls to the earth.

And now I'll tell you a little how it will operate, and the discoveries which we have. Then observe, that we see and feel that Christ shed his blood for us. This is drinking his blood. And such have everlasting life. We feel that Christ is in us the hope of glory; and this is a lively hope, for Christ liveth in us, and he is our life. The sentence of justification is felt, which is justification unto life. Mercy regenerates, washes, and renews us; and these tender mercies come to us that we may live. Grace reigns in our hearts; and this is the grace of life. Love casts out slavish fear, for God has circumcised our hearts to love him, that we might live. Faith in the finished work of Christ purifies the heart, or conscience; and he that believeth hath everlasting life. And we can feel all these things, and much more; for the old man at this time is put off, and the new man is put on, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. We have believing and transforming views of the new covenant, which is a covenant of life and peace. We feel we are heirs of promise, which promise is eternal life. We feel that we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ; and God's blessing is life for evermore. These things felt and enjoyed produce self-loathing, self-abhorrence, self-abasement, godly sorrow, and true repentance; and this is

“repentance unto life.” And thus life works out all death, as you may read in the “Destruction of Death by the Fountain of Life,” by Mr. Huntington; which is a precious book. And what is all religion, falsely so called, without life? Truly it is all nothing. Thus this fountain is a fountain of life, of living water; and O how precious is the thought that once having life, it never can be finally lost!

6. Another advantage of coming to this blessed fountain is, it proves our *election*; and of this I shall briefly treat.

Now, take notice. Have you got that faith which purifies the heart, in that it lays fast hold of the atonement of Jesus, and brings it into the conscience? You never could have had this faith if you had not been chosen of God. Hence it is called “the faith of God’s elect.” And again, “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.”

But again. Justification is said to be by the blood of Christ; and therefore Paul says, “Much more, then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.” And this justification is a proof of our election. Only take notice of the golden chain by Paul: “Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified;” and justification, says Paul, is by the blood of Jesus.

Thus faith, as before observed, lays hold of the sacrifice and death of Jesus, purifies the heart, and justifies the soul; for we are justified by faith; both of which prove our election.

And this is not all; for directly we come to this fountain, and receive pardon and justification, then peace is sweetly felt in the heart. But Christ made this peace by the blood of his cross; and such are called sons of peace, being predestinated to the adoption of sons.

Once more. *Life* comes to us by this fountain; for “he that drinketh my blood,” says Jesus, “hath everlasting life.” Justification also is justification unto life. Peace also is joined to life, being closely connected with it. Hence the apostle Paul tells us that “to be spiritually-minded is life and peace.” But then, says the same apostle, “In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.” And the preaching of the gospel is bringing forth the decree, and making it manifest in the hearts of God’s elect. Hence “life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel.” Thus, then, faith, justification, peace, and life all flow to us from this fountain, and manifest to us we are the elect of God. Blessed be God for the unspeakable gift of his dear Son!

7. But I proceed to the seventh advantage arising to us from this blessed fountain. It is very evident that we are all bent to backslide, and though not openly, yet in heart. This is the case and state of every one of us. And in this state, what should we do without this fountain? I have been now in the ways of God for more than twenty-five years; and the longer I live, the worse I see and feel myself, and can truly say that I never see

one so bad as myself. And the reason is this: Because you and I only hear what others are, and there is a reserve even then; for they can't tell all; neither would it be prudent. But we see and feel our own hearts, and without any reserve. O how shocking, beyond all description, is what I daily discover working within! It terrifies and frightens me, so that I often question whether it is possible that I ever had grace, and often fear that mine is only a gift to talk and to write, and that the devil and mine own heart have deceived me altogether. But God has made glorious provision for us in this fountain; and the daily discoveries we have of our corrupt natures should teach us daily to come to this fountain that is opened for sin and for uncleanness. And you and I must feel these things, or else be self-righteous,—pure in our own eyes. If this were so, we should reject this fountain, and trust in ourselves. But, say you, it would be more comfortable to feel so. Yes; I grant that to the flesh it would; but we should come under the woe of God, which is a woe of wrath: "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." Such are not emptied from vessel to vessel; their scent is not changed; they are settled on their lees; and their end will be awful. Solomon tells us that "there is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness." But, on the other hand, those that are washed will, more or less, to the day of their death, when under a right influence, loathe themselves in their own sight for their iniquities; and yet God is pacified towards such in Christ Jesus. The apostle John says, "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth [mark that, it is in the present tense, *cleanseth*] us from all sin;" all sorts of sin, the deepest, the blackest, sins of long standing. "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven." "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." So says the Lord.

Now, what encouragement is this to men who feel sin a sore burden, who long to be delivered from its dominion and from its reigning power! Not to a light carnal professor. No; he may, as Bunyan says, "cry out against sin;" but God's family hate sin and forsake it, for they have a new nature that does this. And what feeds and nourishes the old man of sin in them, and what the flesh loves and lusts after, the new man in them hates, loathes, and abhors. And these things occasion a continual war; for "the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other." Say you, I should like to be always under the influence of the new man. Yes; and so you shall after death; but till death you will go on as I say, if you are a true and therefore exercised believer. So Job found it, when he said, "The things that my soul refused to touch, they are as my sorrowful meat."

Now, backsliding from God procures the rod, whether it be open or secret; and we are made heartsick in the way of all our

abominations. And though this is grievous to bear, yet God will bring us so completely down that we shall accept the punishment of our iniquity, and justify him in all his righteous dealings towards us ; acknowledging that his ways are equal, and ours unequal, and that in very faithfulness he has and does afflict us. Indeed, when he has thus humbled us, and brought us down to the dust, he soon lets us feel the cleansing efficacy of this fountain, and we set to our seal that God is true, and can sing both of mercy and of judgment.

(To be concluded.)

AFFLICTION PROFITABLE, IF NOT PLEASANT.

“ Whatso’er afflictions seize us,
They shall profit, if not please.”

Beloved for Christ’s sake,—Peace be multiplied unto you.
Amen.

Here I am seated, without either will or power to think a good thought, speak a good word, or do a good work. I am sensible that all my sufficiency is of God ; and that what I am, above a cursed hell-deserving sinner, is by the free sovereign grace and undeserved mercy of God. He declares in his Word, and we find it so in our experience, that he works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, prepares our hearts, gives an answer to our tongues, creates the fruit of the lips, and by his Spirit furnishes us for every good word and work. And when he puts his good word in us, it is received in power, and in the happy enjoyment of the blessings thereof. When he puts his good grace in us, that subdues the reigning power of sin and corruption. When he puts his good Spirit within us, he renews us in every faculty of our souls, and so makes us meet for heaven. Then we are constituted good men, and then we are enabled to bring forth fruit unto God. Hence the tree being thus made good, so the fruit is good. “ A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things.” And we know that the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth ; and it is by his influence and operation upon us alone that we are formed a people for God’s own use, to show forth his praise. “ Ye are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” When he enlightens us, then we see. When he quickens us, we feel. When he operates as a Spirit of faith, then we believe. When he applies the promises in their comforting power, then we go forth in a lively hope and expectation. When he operates as a Spirit of revelation and understanding in the knowledge of Christ, then we discover him as the only Saviour of sinners, and as the fairest among ten thousand, and have all our thoughts brought into captivity to the obedience of him, in the matter of salvation. When he brings near the atoning blood of Christ and his everlasting righteousness, so that we are enabled to receive them, then we

enter into pardon and peace, and find wisdom and knowledge to be the stability of our times. When he bears witness with our spirits that we are the children of God, and sheds abroad God's love in our hearts, then we are brought to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Every fresh discovery we make in the Word of God's grace, or in God's work upon our hearts, this is his work; and all the power by which we are supported in times of temptation, trouble, and affliction, and by which we are delivered, comes by the Holy Ghost. Hence he is called the Spirit of power and of might. When we stand and withstand all the attacks of men and devils, it is because we are strengthened by the Spirit's might in our souls. We have a sweet passage on this head: "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." It is in the margin, "put him to flight." This standard is Christ; lifting him up is testifying of him to us, and drawing forth our faith into exercise upon him, as our Almighty Saviour and Redeemer. Thus, holding him fast by faith in all his saving benefits, both the devil and carnal reason give way, and are put to flight.

When Paul speaks of this good fight and victory of faith, he varies his manner of expression from that of the prophet; but his meaning is the same. "Taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." Christ is the shield that faith uses; and as we hold him fast in all the glory of his Person, and in all the fulness of his finished work, so no adversary can prevail. As he has obtained eternal redemption for us, and has become the Author of eternal salvation unto us, so shall we be saved in him with an everlasting salvation. Only hear the noble security he gives us: "I give unto my sheep eternal life; and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, who gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." The Holy Ghost is a well of water that is to spring up in us unto eternal life. He is to be a Comforter, who shall abide in us and with us for ever. So that, when Father, Son, and Spirit cease to be God, then may a believer be damned; but never till then. Blessed be God for decreeing our salvation to be of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise of everlasting life might be sure to all Christ's seed.

But furthermore. My friend is in the furnace of affliction. Well; even this marks out the footsteps of the flock; for in this all are chosen, and all find it so, more or less. He that was declared by God himself to be a perfect and an upright man, whose fellow was not in all the east, was in the furnace, according to some writers, for years. Yet he was brought through, according to God's promise. His body was healed of all its pain and weakness; his soul also. He was stripped of all his self-sufficiency, and brought to ascribe all his salvation to God alone. God

blessed the latter end of Job more than the beginning. But before this he had many tossings to and fro, and many wearisome nights appointed him. (vii. 3.)

It is a great comfort to a believer to think that all the afflictions, temptations, troubles, or distresses that ever he shall go through in this world are appointed for him by the Lord himself. There is a measure, both of these, and of all the comforts, consolations, refreshings, and heavenly visits that ever we shall experience.

But let me consider the first sort. "Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground [that is, none of these come upon us by chance]; yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward." So says Eliphaz. Then all these must come according to the all-wise appointment of God; and so we read that they do. "That no man should be moved by these afflictions; for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto." (1 Thess. iii. 3.) There is no getting to the kingdom any other way. After Paul was stoned at Lystra, and almost killed, but restored by the display of God's power and blessing, he returned to Iconium and Antioch, "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts xiv. 22.) If with this we compare what one of the elders said to John, we have it settled as a clear case that it is the lot of all the elect of God. "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" The answer is: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

But then, friend Morgan, what is beyond this tribulation? Come, let us have it; for it has a place, both in our faith and affections now. Well, when soul and body are united and glorified, though the soul is in perfection of happiness first, we know that "they shall serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." Is this all? No; blessed be God it is not. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." (Rev. vii. 13-17.) This will fully complete and perfect all our desires. Blessed be our gracious God for bringing us, in a measure and at times, to rejoice in hope of this. When this is uppermost, then linen drapery and mahogany logs pass behind the curtain for a time;* and all beneath the sun sinks into vanity and vexation of spirit, which indeed is the most we can make of it.

Afflictions are very profitable, though unpleasant. One good

* Mr. C. Goulding, the writer of this letter, was a linen draper. He kept a shop in Cheapside. Mr. Morgan, to whom it was sent, kept a timber yard; but, at the time this letter was written, he was ill at Cranbrook.

man confesses this. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted. Before I was afflicted I went astray." If, then, they are so sanctified as to bring us to and keep us with God, then they certainly are good things in their effects, though they are ever so contrary to flesh and blood. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

Again. By these we are withered, and die to the vanities of this world; and the salvation of the soul is brought to be the one thing needful with us. By this way some are brought into the experience of salvation. Bodily afflictions are sometimes used to bring about this, as the end intended by the Lord; as we see in that notable instance recorded in the book of Job, which is too long to quote here. (Read Job xxxiii. 14-29.)

(To be concluded.)

GOD IS TRUE.

THE world can neither give nor take,
Nor can they comprehend
That peace of God which Christ has bought,
That peace which knows no end.

The burning bush was not consumed
Whilst God remained there;
The three, when Jesus made the fourth,
Found fire as soft as air.

God's furnace doth in Zion stand;
But Zion's God sits by,
As the refiner views his gold
With an observant eye.

His thoughts are high, his love is wide,
His wounds a cure intend;
And though he does not always smile,
He loves unto the end.

His love is constant as the sun,
Though clouds come oft between;
And could my faith but pierce those clouds,
It might be always seen.

Yet I shall ever live and sing,
And there for ever shine.
I have thine own dear pledge for this;
Lord, thou art ever mine.

HE that would faithfully teach of God, must be taught of God (*θεοδιδασκτος*)—"God-learned;" and this will help to all the rest, will help him to be faithful in delivering the message as he receives it, not detracting, or adding, or altering.—*Leighton*.

THE INHERITANCE OF THE SAINTS.

In a letter received some months ago from a Christian friend, our attention was called to a certain obituary published in a monthly religious periodical, in which a minister is represented as having reminded his dying hearer of the "home beyond," and having at the same time remarked that "it was being prepared for him, whilst he was being preserved for it." Our opinion having been asked about the scripturalness or otherwise of such remark, we may perhaps be allowed, for the sake of many others, as well as our friend, to give our opinion in these pages; though, in doing so, we have no wish to advance anything we write in a discussional spirit, but to simply state what we think the Word teaches on the subject.

Whilst, then, the inheritance of the saints is set forth and described in the Word under such metaphorical expressions as: "A house not made with hands;" "a city whose Builder and Maker is God;" "a better country;" "a kingdom;" "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away;" yet in no single instance, as we think, is it represented as being a something still unfinished, but in course of completion. The only passage where such an idea seems implied is the one where Christ says, "I go to prepare a place for you" (Jno. xiv. 2); but the language is evidently figurative, and means nothing more than that the great Redeemer, having finished his work on earth, he would, upon the merit of that work, and by his intercession at the "right hand of God," secure a place in heaven for all his redeemed family. He entered "not into the holy places made with hands," nor into any unfinished home requiring completion, "but into heaven itself," in order "to appear in the presence of God for us." As *heaven itself*, then, is the place where Jesus now is, and as he has promised that where he is, there his people shall be also, that place, and no other, must be the *home* of his saints beyond the grave.

Again. As his presence there, as the ever-living Intercessor, is the only thing that is needed, now that redemption's work is accomplished, to fit the place for the reception of all whose persons he represents before the throne, how, we ask, can it be consistent with what Scripture teaches on the subject to speak of the heavenly home of the believer as being in course of preparation, whilst he is being preserved for it here below? Heaven, in Old Testament language, is called a "city," as Paul the apostle, in the New Testament, calls it "a house not made with hands." And it is said of Abraham that he looked for this city, and of Isaac and Jacob, that they were heirs with him of the same promise; and it is also emphatically declared respecting such city, that God had prepared it for them: "For he hath prepared for them a city." Now, if it be asked, When did God prepare it? we answer, From all eternity, according to his ever-

lasting purpose of grace in the salvation of his people, through the redeeming work of Christ, to be accomplished in the fulness of time. To this blessed abode went all the saints of God, patriarchs, prophets, and all who died before Christ's day. Jehovah, in his infinite mind, knowing the end from the beginning, and knowing that "when the fulness of time was come" his own beloved Son would put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, he gave his Son, so to speak, so many thousands of years of credit, and took to heaven, upon the merit of his finished work, a multitude of souls before such work was actually accomplished. Christ's work having had a virtual existence in the mind of God from everlasting, his blood spoke as loud in heaven, and was as prevailing a plea for Old Testament saints as ever it speaks and prevails in heaven for us believers now; and the virtual presence of Christ as Mediator in heaven, in the purpose of God, was as much heaven's readiness for the reception of saints who died under the Old Testament as Christ's actual presence as Mediator in heaven is heaven's readiness for us, when death removes us from this present evil world.

Thus it will be seen that we make the preparation of heaven for the redeemed to be the presence of Jesus there. Under the Old Testament dispensation he was there, actually so, of course, as the Eternal Son of God; but he was also there, as set up in the counsel and purpose of Jehovah, in the character of Mediator. It is in such character that Christ speaks of himself in Prov. viii., where he says, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth. When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth; then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." But under the New Testament dispensation, Jesus is there in real bodily presence. What he was in mediatorial repute, and according to covenant purpose before he became incarnate, that he is now in glorious reality. Having assumed our nature, body and soul, our whole humanity, apart from sin, when he was born of a woman and made under the law, and having by virtue of such mysterious union of our nature with his divine Person as the Co-equal and Co-eternal Son of the Father, become, really and truly and substantially, God and Man in one glorious Christ; he reigns above as such, reigns

"On Zion's heavenly hill;
Looks like a lamb that has been slain,
And wears his priesthood still."

And what other preparation beyond this heaven needs to make it a home, both suitable and ready, for the reception of the whole family of grace, we utterly fail to conceive.

Having, then, briefly expressed our opinion on the one side,

we will give it on the other, and state what we regard to be the *saints' preparation* for heaven. Erroneous notions creep into people's minds as much about the believer's fitness for his heavenly home, as the readiness of that home for him. In what, then, we inquire, does the believer's actual fitness consist? Well, in our judgment, it consists in that alone which makes him a believer in Christ,—viz., the grace of God; in his being regenerated and made a new creature in Christ Jesus; in his being sprinkled with the blood of atonement, and having the righteousness of Christ upon him in which to appear before God. The language of the apostle in reference to this matter is very clear. He says, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which *hath* made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Thus our actual meetness is not a something for which we have to wait, and receive a bit now and a bit then; a part by this affliction and a part by that; a little to-day and a little more to-morrow. But as believers in Jesus, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, and as being by regeneration delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of grace; we are now, at the present moment, as meet for heaven, as viewed in Christ the Beloved, as we ever shall be. Neither the sanctified afflictions which come upon the children of God in their life, nor the discipline and chastisement they pass through under the hand of God, nor the years of learning of divine things under the Spirit's teaching, has anything to do with imparting that actual meetness of which the apostle speaks. No. The apostle could give thanks unto the Father for having received such meetness in his new creationship in Christ. With him it was Christ in him the Hope of glory, and Christ in him his meetness for glory. And in this consists the actual meetness of every child of God, who has been called and sanctified.

But, then, what about our trials, and afflictions, and our growing in grace, and all that we learn under divine teaching, and the many years of stripping, and humbling, and being weaned from the world and the creature, and being at last made "ready to be offered up," that is, ready to die? Has all this nothing to do with really preparing us for our home above? In our *feelings*, and *experience*, and *condition of mind*, we do not say for a moment that it has not. We most firmly believe, that the Divine will must be fulfilled in respect of the number of years of sorrow and trial that God has ordained for us to live in the world, and the particular pathway of suffering that he has marked out in infinite wisdom for us to tread, and all the humbling lessons for our profit that he has designed to teach us, and all the ripening of us in faith and experience for eternal glory that he has purposed to bring us unto; and that we cannot die until the whole of such purpose of God concerning us here

below is accomplished. But that this kind of discipline and moulding of our minds to the divine will forms any part of that absolute meetness which the infinite justice and holiness of God require before we can stand before him, and abide in his presence with joy, is what we object to believe. What our absolute meetness is, is blessedly set forth in the following lines of the poet:

"In Christ's obedience clothe,
And wash me in his blood;
So shall I lift my head with joy
Among the sons of God."

Our sufferings, trials, temptations, and varied experiences of sorrow and joy, have nothing in them in the way of merit; but that which can alone give us admission into the immediate presence of the Most High God, according to the above verse, must be a work of *infinite* merit; and as such work can only be discovered in the glorious atonement of the everlasting God-Man Jesus Christ, it is for this reason of vital importance that we should be brought to look in a spiritual way to that work alone, as giving us a meetness for eternal glory. The mind is thereby taken off from everything in the creature, and from everything we pass through in this wilderness world in the way of trial, and from everything we attain unto in our experience, our life, walk, and practice; and the whole burden of our present and future acceptance with God, and dwelling for ever in his immediate presence, is placed exclusively on the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ.

But whilst nothing more is needed to make heaven a prepared place for our reception, but the presence of Christ as our Redeemer and Intercessor, and whilst nothing more is required to give us a real meetness to enter there, but our being clothed upon with his righteousness; yet how important it is, and also desirable for the strengthening of our hope in God, and the comfort of our minds in the prospect of our departure out of the world, that we should be made ripe for heaven in our own experience, our thoughts, wishes, longings, and anticipations.

"When languor and disease invade
This trembling house of clay,
'Tis sweet to look beyond our cage,
And long to fly away."

And even though a real experienced readiness of mind "to depart" may not be given to many before the time of their departure is at hand, yet so sure as we are brought under sanctified trials, chastisements, and humblings in our life, we shall become more and more weaned from things below, our hearts will become more turned off from earthly streams, and we shall often be made to say, with Job, "I would not live alway." Our experience will sometimes be of that nature that all things under the sun will be seen as vanity and vexation of spirit; and excepting our beloved ones in the flesh, and the church of God, we shall see nothing around us strong enough in its attracting influence over our minds to make us wish to abide longer in the flesh. Our oft darkness of mind, and fears lest we should not

be really and truly meet for heaven, by having the righteousness of Christ upon us, will make us often wish to linger in the plain; but when, through the favour of God, we can rise above our fears, and believe, in the exercise of precious faith, that we have "a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," we can then sing with the poet—

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

May the Lord, then, enable us to see these things in their true and proper light. May we see Christ in heaven to be heaven's preparedness for our reception. May we see Christ's blood and righteousness, and ourselves being sprinkled with the one, and clothed with the other, as regenerated by his Spirit, to be our preparation for the place. And may we be satisfied with nothing short of God's own testimony in our consciences, that he "hath wrought us for the self-same thing, and given us the earnest of the Spirit." Thus blessed with the testimony of God, and the "earnest" of heaven, in our souls, we shall escape the dreadful snare of holding such divine realities in a mere intellectual and notional way, and prove our hope of immortality to be a hope that will never put us to shame.

BOTH SIDES OF THE MATTER.

My dear Friend,—I sit down to try and write a few lines, but certainly do not know what to write. I do not know what to make of myself.

"What am I, and where am I?
Strange myself and paths appear;
Scarce can lift a thought on high,
Or drop one heart-feeling tear."

I do not seem to have one real desire, and often wonder whether I ever had, or ever offered one real heart-felt prayer, or whether my religion is not all mere fancy. And yet if all that has passed is a delusion, I must ascribe it to Satan, which I dare not do; for when I think of all that has passed, I cannot, dare not, say I do not know anything of real religion, of what it is to be convinced of sin, to repent of sin, and trust humbly but wholly on Christ for salvation.

"Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on thee;
Leave, ah, leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me."
"Zeal extinguished to a spark;
Life is very, very low;
All my evidences dark,
And good works I've none to show."
"Prayer, too, seems a load;
Ordinances tease or tire;
I can feel no love to God;
Hardly have a good desire."

You will say my letter is all other people's language; but indeed it expresses my feelings better than I can myself at the present time, if indeed I have any real feelings.

"If aught is felt, 'tis only pain
To find I cannot feel."

My only hope is in the blood of Christ, and in his perfect righteousness. I know if he has really begun a work of grace upon my soul, he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. O what can people do with a God who changes as we change? My only hope is in a God who never changes. I may change, but if he has once chosen me in Christ, if he has once assured me of his love, he is my God for ever. Sovereign, electing grace, and an unchangeable God, are what my soul desires to fix upon.

May the Lord grant that I may not have been deceived. I often fear it; but if there is one thing I dread above another, it is deceiving and being deceived. May the Lord make us very honest; and

"May we never, never dare
What we're not to say we are."

Mr. Vine was very nice on Sunday morning. His text was: "Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, &c." I dare not say I know nothing of the things he spoke about; but I want to know more. O! I do want to know more of Christ and his love, to feel him to be the Chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely to me. I feel at times I can say,

"Take my body, spirit, soul;
Only thou possess the whole."

"I'd part with all the joys of sense,
To gaze upon his throne."

You will say my letter is a strange contradiction; but I am a puzzle to myself, and think I must be to those to whom I write. It is very seldom I tell any one what I feel. I often think there are those who suppose I enjoy a great deal; but if they only knew, they would think very differently. We cannot tell out the depths of our feelings, either of joy or sorrow. I often think there is much that each of us must bear alone.

I must end my unworthy scribble; but if I could tell you better news, I would. Accept very kind love, from

Your affectionate Friend,

Leicester, July 15th, 1879.

D. H.

My dear Friend in a precious Christ,—I feel I must thank you for your very kind letter; it was very seasonable to my despairing soul. But why did I despair? Because I was looking too much to myself instead of trusting and looking to One who never changes.

"My soul through many changes goes;
His love no variation knows."

It would indeed be better if we could write and speak more about the Lord and his great love to such vile unworthy worms of the earth. Instead of that, we are so full of self-pity, so full of our own complaints, that we forget to look above.

You will be pleased to hear I had a precious time in the house of our God yesterday morning. The text was: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." Mr. H. first spoke of the Shepherd; and my soul was so enraptured with the description of him that for a time I did not think of the part that I usually listen the most for, that is, what sets forth the marks of the sheep. O! Is it not sweet to hear Christ exalted? We care not how low we are brought, when in our right minds, so that Christ is again made All in all to us.

"His beauties we can never trace
Till we behold him face to face."

"When shall the time, dear Lord, appear,
That I shall mount to dwell above,
And stand and bow among them there,
And view thy face, and sing thy love?"

I stood at my bed-room window last night when I went to bed. All seemed so peaceful; and what was more, I felt a little of that peace which passeth all understanding, which the world cannot give, neither can it take away. And I felt for a few moments while gazing above as though my eye pierced through the clouds and the sky, and would gaze into heaven itself, there seeing Christ as my All, and feeling that ere long I should be among those who are favoured to cast their crowns down at his blessed feet, and cry, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." He is worthy, and he shall have all the praise.

"One look at Jesus as he is
Will strike all sin for ever dead."

But I began to tell you about yesterday. Before I went to chapel, I longed so for something; yet hardly feeling that I dare ask for a blessing. I asked for reproof, if that was most suitable, sooner than have nothing. I felt even that would not be a mark against me; for if the Lord reproved me, it was more than he would do if I were not his. But O! dear friend, I got a word indeed, but it was a good word to my soul. I felt humbled and broken, and so full that I longed to give vent to my feelings, and felt I should have so much to say to dear M. in the afternoon; yet when we did meet I felt that I could scarcely say a word, only tell her how well I got on. I do not deserve the least mercy; and as Mr. H. said yesterday morning, I need a long-suffering and patient God; for truly I have the mark of a wandering sheep. But, blessed be his Name,

"He brings my wandering spirit back
When I forsake his ways;
And leads me, for his mercy's sake,
In paths of truth and grace."

I must now conclude with very kind love. I remain

Yours in Jesus,
D. H.

Perhaps ere you receive this I shall have returned to my old sad place. O for more faith to trust where we cannot trace!

Leicester, July 28th, 1879.

AFFLICTION WORKING RIGHTLY.

"So wilt thou recover me and make me to live."—ISA. XXXVIII. 16.

1. THUS you have heard of the patience of Job, and you have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very full of pity, and of tender mercy.

2. He never afflicteth willingly. He has infallible wisdom to contrive, and the heart of a parent to send every chastisement to his children.

3. He well knows what sin wants purging; and there is a needs-must for strong physio.

4. He has seen where the fear of man got the better of the fear of God; and he takes his sharp rod, not in anger, but in love; not to punish as a judge, but to correct.

5. If the world creep into the heart of any of his children, he is very jealous, and will not be rivalled. He is guided by the tenderest affection when he embitters worldly joy; and by sickness makes that a pain in which his child foolishly sought happiness.

6. If he send great and heavy affliction, and it come in a way which makes it to the flesh the greatest and heaviest, yet he has his everlasting arms underneath to support, even while little-faith can scarce perceive them.

7. And he not only supports, but also often vouchsafes a gracious visit, breaks in with his sweet presence and sensible comfort to the heart; and the poor, sick, fainting child is made to cry, "O let me suffer anything, so I may but have such visits from my God! A sick bed with these cordials is heaven upon earth."

8. But the Lord's end is answered; he abates the sickness, and health returns. The Father throws away the rod as soon as the child has learned to kiss it, and to be thankful for it.

9. Then he makes it appear that he kept the rod so long for the child's good, in order to teach lessons which could not be learned in any other way.

10. He intended to make the child's will bow to his; and it does. "Holy Father, thy will be done; thy will be suffered. I desire to lie as clay in the hand of the potter."

11. He designed to produce many peaceful fruits of righteousness, which grow upon no tree but the cross; and therefore he continued the cross a long time, only to make the fruits richer and riper.

12. Hear the great crowd of witnesses. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us. In love he chose us in his Son, and called us by his Spirit; in love he corrected us; in love he supported us under the correction; in love he removed it, the moment his gracious purpose was answered.

13. O may a sense of his goodness grow with health, and the soul prosper as the body does!

14. May every peaceful fruit flourish to the praise of the glory of our Father's exceeding rich grace.

15. May there be more faith in the great Peace-maker, and more resignation to the Father's will in him; a mind more reconciled to the cross, and profiting more under it; a heart daily more dead to the world, and more engaged about and pleased with heavenly things; a conversation so well ordered as to maintain peace with God through life, and at last to die in the peace of Jesus, that passeth all understanding.

1. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy Name.

2. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and forget not all his benefits;

3. "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.

4. "Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies."

5. I had reason to think, in my sickness, "I shall go to the gates of the grave. I am deprived of the residue of my years.

6. "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.

7. "Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent. My beauty is turned in me into corruption; and I shall be cut off with pining sickness."

8. But when I cried unto the Lord, he heard my voice out of his holy temple; he delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.

9. My recovery was the Lord's doing—his, and his only—and it is marvellous in mine eyes.

10. O how good is my God! What return shall I make unto him for this never-to-be-forgotten mercy, as well as for his other benefits, with which he loadeth me daily?

11. I have nothing to return him but what is his own, and nothing but what I wish may be his own. Myself I give up and devote to the Lord of my life and health, wishing all I have and am may be his for ever.

12. O my God, and my Jesus, make me better for this affliction. Now thou hast raised me from a sick bed, let me recover in my soul as fast as I do in my body, and both prosper alike.

13. Let thy end, Lord, in this chastening, be answered; and let it yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness now I have been exercised thereby.

14. Since thou hast favoured me with sickness, how can I enough adore thy matchless love, which supported me under it, and brought me through it? Now, Lord, give me thy blessing on it.

15. How mightily should a review of thy gracious dealings with me encourage me to trust in thee for the future! O grant

me more steadily to believe thy fulfilling them to me! Lord, increase my faith.

16. As thou hast shown me how uncertain every creature-comfort is; all are perishing—health, on which their enjoyment depends—life, on which they have their very being—O my God, raise my hopes above them, to the better comforts of a better world.

17. And there fix my poor wavering heart. Set it free from all its sins, and from its favourite pursuits; that every affection may be henceforward where my treasure is, even where thou, my Jesus, art sitting at the right hand of God.

18. O for more of these graces, that my Best friend, who hast dealt so bountifully with me, may be every day of my life more beloved, and better served.

19. My dear Jesus, I want to be more dead to worldly hopes and fears, which have too much governed my heart, and influenced my conduct. Subdue in me these base-born passions; so that, for the future, my hopes may all centre in thy love, and I may fear nothing but the displeasing thee.

20. While thy mercies are fresh upon my mind, let me find growing zeal to thy lovely Name and precious cause, that I may never be ashamed of thee before men.

21. Mine own will has been my plague. O my Lord, subdue it, and make it bow to thine. Let thy revealed will be my study, thy ways my delight; and let my whole life, so kindly lent me, be one continued sacrifice of praise.

22. If thou art pleased to lend me more time, help me, Jesus, to redeem it. If I have health, add to it a thankful heart. Whatever blessings thou givest, give me grace to receive them from thy bounty, and to use them to thy glory.

23. Whenever thou shalt be pleased to put me into the furnace (it may be soon), Lord, enable me to go into it with strong faith, and to stay in it thy time, with humble patience. O never let me want thy good Spirit, that through him, not in word only, but in deed and in truth, I may say, Thy will be done.

24. Yet a very little, little time, and the days of my pilgrimage will be ended; and then I shall see thee face to face. O what a sight will that be! My God and Saviour, let the faith of it warm my heart, and the hope of it influence my life, that, whenever thou callest, I may be ready, and may have nothing to do but to go up into the mount, and to die in the arms of Jesus. Amen.—*From Romaine's Letters.*

The above beautiful writings are taken out of Romaine's works. They are appended to one of his spiritual letters to a friend. He does not state who was the author; but conjectures that the latter may have been written by Chrysostom, as he was a sickly man, and it answers to his style of composition. The translation from the original is Romaine's. Our readers who have experienced the furnace of bodily affliction will doubtless feel how sweetly these writings express what have been the desires and exercises of their own souls. We can

only say that they give expression to what we have felt in our late trial. At the same time, we have to lament deficiency, and to mourn over our little answerableness to this, as well as to other divine dispensations. But we would feel thankful that in any degree our trials have yielded to us the peaceable fruits of righteousness—patience, humility, and love.

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

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

My dear Friend,—We are told in God’s Word to “prove all things,” and (only) “hold fast that which is good.” Again, it is written, “Try the spirits, whether they be of God.” These directions are of great importance, and show us that we are to call no man father upon earth, or master, as implicitly believing a thing because he says or writes it. But, then, it is well for us to remember those necessary qualifications for forming a right judgment upon what we hear or read, which are also set before us in the Scriptures. “He that is spiritual judgeth all things.” It is only, then, the spiritually-minded man who is really capable of correctly discerning between what is of the Spirit of God and what is of the spirit of error. The carnally-minded stumble in the sunshine. Thus Paul evidently intimates that the Corinthians, when their minds were so greatly carnalized by envy and strife, had become like babes in respect to divine things, and were unable to correctly discern the things which differ.

It is written in Isaiah (xxviii. 6) that the Lord will be a Spirit of judgment to them that sit in judgment. When this is fulfilled in a man he is indeed a well-qualified judge both of what he hears and what he reads. But when may we expect that this will be the case? Certainly not when a man reads and hears under the influence of unjust prejudices, or when he reads and hears with the design and desire of finding out how much he can object to. Certainly not when he reads or hears not to obtain profit, if the Lord will, to his own soul, but to make another, if he possibly can, into an offender. This man is treading in the dangerous and even fatal steps of those in Ps. lxiv. and Isa. xxix.: “Who search out iniquities, and accomplish a diligent search.” “Who make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him who reproveth in the gate.” Certainly not when a man reads and hears without prayer or care; who in a blind self-conceitedness and self-reliance thinks it unnecessary to lift up his eyes unto the hills, from whence must come that help whereby only a man can read to profit, or judge righteous judgment. This man, being in his own eyes as one rich and increased with goods, and having need of nothing, feels no necessity for having his eyes always anointed with the eye-salve that he may see. Such an one is sure to err in judgment. The more spiritual a thing is, the more will he stumble at it. Unable through the straitened carnality of his own mind to take in the

drift of a writer or speaker, to apprehend his real meaning, he will take offence at the mere letter, at certain forms of expression which, in themselves perfectly correct, are by the carnal mind entirely perverted from their proper signification.

The carnal and prejudiced mind, the mind biassed by ill-will or envy, will deal with a man's words as Nero did with the Christians at Rome. He first had them dressed in the skins of wild beasts, and then worried by the dogs; or clothed in inflammable garments, and then set on fire as spectacles to the Romans, illuminating the night. So the state of mind we are noticing will dress up a man's words in the most extraordinary and fantastic attire, and thus expose his reputation to be worried, or consumed by reproaches, as a monstrous heretic.

Now, the rightly-judging mind acts in a very different manner. The spiritually-minded man is very tender, and invariably self-distrusting. He sees so much liability to error in himself that he fears lest he may be mistaken. The very same sense of his weakness and proneness to err in judgment which makes him take heed what he hears and reads, and how he hears and reads, lest he should receive some dangerous opinion, and be thus corrupted in judgment, and moved from the right ways of God, makes him very tender and humble in judging. He knows himself to be fallible; therefore dare not be rash and outrageously positive. He goes to the Lord in prayer before he hears and reads. He lifts up his heart unto God in hearing and reading. He prays that if he drink any deadly thing it may not hurt him; if death is in the pot, that the meal of the Spirit's grace may correct it. He takes in the scope and drift of a man's writing. For though he thinks his own capacity small, and often says, "Surely I am more brutish than any man," his power of apprehending the mind of the Spirit in a writing or sermon is supernatural and divine. Thus he does not rend words and sentences out of their proper connections, and wrest them into forced, unnatural, and improper senses, entirely foreign to the mind and intention of the writer. He is at once candid and careful. He reads and hears in the fear of God. He trembles at one and the same time lest he should imbibe any wrong and corrupting or fleshly influence, and lest he should reject and despise anything which is of the blessed Spirit of God.

O my friend, may you and I, in this dark and dangerous day, when errors abound, and the form is superseding the power, the mere deadening letter taking the place of the spirit, think upon these things. The Jews of old stumbled at the gracious life-giving words of Christ. "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" Christ came in his Father's Name, and spake as never man spake; for the Father gave not the Spirit by measure unto him. But these carnally-minded men, these prejudiced envious persons rejected him. Another, who came in his own name, they would receive. The spirit that stumbles at the truth is that which drinks in

error. The man who wrongly and rashly judges another is the man who falls. When what is written or spoken under the influence of the Spirit of God, is despised and rejected, and scorned and trampled under foot, through pride and rashness, and prejudice and envy, it will never be surprising if that which is of error is received instead. The Lord, then, make us humble and tender, distrustful of ourselves and our own understandings, and watching the guidance of his eye. May he ever keep us looking unto him; that our eyes being truly and constantly anointed, we may see clearly and judge rightly, and thus neither receive any error, nor reject what is of the Lord's own Spirit.

So prays for you and himself, and the Lord's dear people,
Yours in Gospel Bonds,

OMICRON.

Dear Sir,—May grace, mercy, and peace be with you through God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

I am still spared to write to you once more. I am such a poor foolish thing in writing that I keep putting it off and getting behindhand. I was afraid last night, after getting to bed, I should not be able to write any more, being very unwell, and having a slight return of my old complaint,—dysentery. But blessed be my gracious God, he has been better to me than all my fears. Last Friday, Saturday, and Sunday it was very hot, especially on Sunday. The wind being hot, as well as the sun, the heat baked some of our apples, which dropped off and lay on the ground. The thermometer was nearly 90° in the shade. There was a little change in the evening, and a slight shower in the night; and Monday was a good deal cooler. These sudden changes try a person very much. It was nearly 20° colder on Monday than on Sunday. Hot winds are trying indeed. Our places are almost like an oven. Still,

“I have been upheld till now;
Who could hold me up but thou?”

“Not a single shaft shall hit
Till the God of love sees fit.”

I have written this to try to explain myself. I hope you will be able to read it. I have long wanted to tell to sinners round what a dear Saviour I have found; or, rather, I was found by him; but I cannot do what I would. “I am shut up, and cannot come forth.” O that the Lord would be pleased to open my heart and mouth, and enable me to tell what he hath done for my poor never-dying soul; for truly without him I can do nothing but sin against him.

I am thankful for the Report sent me of the “Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society”; by whom I know not. I should have been glad to have subscribed to the “Gospel Standard” Poor Relief Society, if I had been able so to do, but I cannot at present; for my dear Lord and Master gives me just sufficient, so that no man troubles me; but I have very little to spare. To have suf-

ficient is no small mercy for a poor vile monster, such as I feel myself to be, at times, not worthy of the least of his mercies.

“I looked for hell, he gave me heaven.”

O that I could love him more, and live more to the praise and honour of his great and glorious Name! I am such a poor, foolish, helpless creature, I want drawing, or I cannot run after him. “I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.” O how many times do I, in my poor way, pray for a praying heart! O to have a religion of the right sort, that will do to live by and to die by!

“Although my cup seems filled with gall,
There’s something secret sweetens all.”

Dear Sir, I have known the time when I have cried feelingly, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

Wishing you and those that assist you in your labours of love every blessing that our covenant God may be pleased to bestow upon you,

I am, Yours affectionately,

Camperdown, Australia, Dec. 19th, 1878.

T. ROSE.

My dear Sister in the Lord,—I am both pleased and comforted by your epistle; and although I cannot write as you do, I will drop a line or two by way of acknowledging the favour I have received.

But of whom shall I write, except it be of him whose Name shall endure for ever, and in whom the children of men shall be blessed? His Name has ever been found to be a strong tower of defence in the day of trouble. Who can so declare this truth as the souls that have waited for him, and have at length found him to the joy of their hearts? He has, I perceive, *again* visited you with his salvation. His left hand has been under your head, and his right hand has embraced you. You have truly been brought into his banqueting-house, and his banner of divine love has been unfurled over you. My dear sister, make much of him, and bless him for these tokens of his love to you. You have been suffering his will, and have been learning that no affliction for the present is joyous; on the contrary, it is both trying and grievous; nevertheless, afterwards cometh forth the peaceable fruit of righteousness. You have sown in tears; but now reap in joy. You are recompensed for all your pains in waiting, watching, and crying. The dear Lord is found faithful to his own word and promise. He is glorified; he is exalted; and is become very high in your soul’s estimation. Say, my sister, is he not good unto the soul that seeketh him? How superlatively so to the soul that findeth him!

But I do expect still to bear the cross with him. Poor blessed Mary loved and wept, and anointed his dear feet; but she wept also again when she said, “They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.” Nevertheless, he was near to comfort her troubled spirit; and so it shall ever be to thee as well. I have expressed confidence before; neither was it the

“confidence of a fool.” I do esteem it a favour to be made instrumental in ever so small a degree to your soul; and do pray that the dear Lord may make me of much use to his poor children, at Salem especially. It helps me under my many castings-down to perceive tokens of this kind in the hearts of any.

I was filled full with a spirit of prayer last evening for about two hours for my dear wife and child, for our little Salem, its deacons, and its members. I seemed to get fast hold upon him, neither could I let him go. I afterwards took the Book, and opened upon 1 Chron. xvii.; when every verse appeared so full of grace, love, and mercy, that my soul was melted within me at almost every word. When I came to the 11th verse I was so held by it that I read it over and over before the Lord with a heart full as it could hold. O how humbling are the visits of the Lord!

“’Tis heaven to rest in his embrace,
And no where else but there.”

It is now Saturday evening. I want faith to trust him for the morrow; for if he deals with me after my deserts, I shall be confounded. O the untiring working of sin! You are not a stranger to it, I am persuaded, or I would not have ventured upon the subject at this time; but the heart knoweth its own bitterness, whilst a stranger to these heavens and hells within cannot meddle with, or touch upon, or comprehend its joys; and ever and anon, we shall be crying for our sin-pardoning and sin-subduing Lord.

Please accept this poor letter as an acknowledgment of your very savoury epistle. Give me a place in your prayers, and believe me to be

Yours most affectionately in the truth,

THOS. DANGERFIELD.

122, Cannon Street Road, E., Dec. 23rd, 1865.

My dear Friend,—Through the mercy of the Lord, we are moving on comfortably, under the circumstances, that is, in peace among ourselves; for which I would desire to be more thankful to the God of all our mercies.

I must tell you, though you told me the state of your mind soon after your affliction seized you in 1877, it has been made sweet to me again in reading your account, as it appears in the “Gospel Standard” this month. How little do those parties know, *if anything at all*, who remark about your saying there had been no wrath or fear of death in your affliction. ’Tis indeed but poor evidence to me that such know anything about feeling the vital power of God under the sacred hand of Almighty wisdom. But I do hope you and I and some others know what it is to feel, as dear Combridge says, in his letter this month, at such times, “Sweet affliction!” I do hope I have been enabled, with him, with you and many others, to look up to the Lord, after weighing up my religion, I hope, as in the sight of God, and to say, “Lord, let death come; I feel ready. Let life

continue; I am willing. To die will be my gain of eternal joy, where there will be no more sin to distress, no base heart to combat with, no alluring world to try, no empty professors to vex and cause many heart-rending sighs."

Ah! my dear companion in travel, soon it will be all over. And I dare not say but that I believe it will be heaven then for earth, joy for sorrow, holiness in one eternal stream, instead of, as in this clay tenement, sin and misery. Last week, I attempted to drop a line, and I don't think my soul has been favoured with such a sweet spirit of real contrition in writing since I wrote to you last March or April twelvemonth. How the Lord broke in upon me on that occasion! And so I felt last week. I felt quite ready to leave this vile tenement of clay. O what a contrast there is, when desiring to depart, between desiring it for the sake of leaving trouble, and feeling like dear old Simeon, when he had a glorious Christ in his arms, a desire never more to be separated from him! Ah! who can understand it? O what trifles do all things appear when Jesus with his precious love takes the whole heart, sometimes by surprise, and carries every thought of the mind away from earth, with all its trials, sorrows, sins, woes, doubts, fears, yea, every circumstance; when we are wrapt up, as it were, in the glorious embrace of the dear Incarnate God, and favoured to draw blessed draughts of love from viewing him in his sacred sufferings while here in a body of flesh! O! friend H——, what will it be above? Sometimes I look forward, I hope by faith, and long to leap out of this filthy mud-walled house, where every evil dwells, and enter into that glorious heaven prepared for all God's dear people. Then at other times, I am obliged to ask, shall I after all get there? But sometimes I use the language of the dear poet, and say,

"When shall the day, dear Lord, appear
That I shall mount to dwell above,
And stand and bow amongst them there,
And view thy face, and sing thy love?"

My life has been one of conflict. But O to be favoured to hope that by and bye I shall cast off this tenement of clay, and for ever fix my eyes on the dear Lamb of God. This, at times, takes my hardness away, melts my spirit, after what I have been, yea, what I am. 'Tis amazing grace.

"How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds"

to such vile sinners as you and I! Aye, the very sound of his sacred name, Jesus, has been the means of thawing all the ice away. Yet, strange to say, at other times I can think of his love, suffering, agonies, yea, even his death, and nothing move such a heart at all. O base heart! O vile, ungrateful soul! carried away with the love of sin, instead of love of him for what I hope he has done for me and others.

But I must soon close. I hope you and your dear wife are well, and that you are favoured to see the good hand of the all-

glorious Immanuel going before you as a people, and that peace and tranquillity may be yours while life lasts. Love to any of the lovers of truth; and accept yourself of the same. Remember me also to Mrs. H——. Fare thee well.

Yours sincerely,

Aldershot, September 6th, 1879.

JOHN BENNETT.

THROUGH MUCH TRIBULATION.

MEMOIR OF MR. C. COWLEY, LATE MINISTER OF GEE STREET CHAPEL,
LONDON.

(Continued from p. 477.)

IN accepting this invitation from the church meeting at Wilderness Hall, London, he writes :

“I received your invitation to become your pastor, and last Lord’s day week read it to the church at Fairford. At the close of my reading, there was profound silence until I spoke as follows: ‘You know, dear friends, I am a man not hasty in my movements in religious matters. Whether I am right or wrong in the end, I look at a step, and consider much before I take it. This matter now in hand has cost me much exercise of soul before God, both by day and night, for I think nearly two years. Now, I feel unable to say Nay to the invitation I have read to you. I hope the Lord will do all himself which is required to be done. I would not be suffered to commit any error whatever in this thing.’ The meeting broke up with manifest affection towards me for the sake of that truth which I have so long preached amongst them.

“My dear friends and brethren in the Lord, I do venture to say that I now agree to accept your invitation to become your pastor, and servant for Christ’s sake. For this office I feel both unfit and unworthy; but if God account me worthy, and will stand by me, that will suffice for my complying with your request. I do not feel any opposition within me, as far as I know my own heart; neither have I any in my house. My dear wife thinks that the hand of God is in it; also many of my friends think so; and some say, ‘You should not go if we could keep you, and were able to support you.’

“Now, my dear brethren, I have nothing more to say than that I feel a confidence in you, that you will strive together to make me comfortable in temporal things; and as the Holy Spirit is pleased to keep your souls needy, so will you also strive to uphold me in the ministry by your constant and fervent prayers to God for me, both in public and in private; but especially in the closet, as an open reward is promised to attend such prayers. I think the providence of God has been as a wheel going round for some time to prepare me for a removal. Shall I say, ‘What hath God wrought!’ in hearing your cries, and in thus inclining my mind towards you as brethren with a peculiar affection and willingness to live and die with you, if the will of God be so?

“I assure you that, if I did not possess such feelings towards you, and believe that you as a people feel the same towards me, I could not hearken to your request, even could you or would you give me thousands of gold and silver. What is all that compared to God’s love and smiles, and those seasons of hallowed and blessed feelings which are in accordance with the spirit of the glorious gospel of Christ? I do not expect to be without my troubles, and I expect to stand alone as a

minister. I have no private opinions of my own to give expression to. As opportunity occurs, I have ever been simple and honest, as in the fear of God, and hope ever to be kept so, knowing that one day I must die, and appear before God. I have not a slighty imagination, therefore shall not be able to please any one by faulty perversions or fanciful interpretations of the Scriptures. Neither have I been suffered to make use of the holy Word of God so freely as I fear many do, merely as an accommodation to their subject. I cannot think that if the saints were stuffed up with such a ministry, they could be building themselves up on their most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, as Jude speaks of. My dear friends, lacking, as I do, novelty, which some possess, and which is so congenial to the human mind, and having to speak as the Lord shall give ability of ancient things, which are 'hid from the wise and prudent,' and which a natural man cannot know, we must not expect a great assembly of individuals to hear me, unless there are a great number of broken-down sinners round about Wilderness Hall, or of God's elect now dead, whom he will call to feel their need of Christ and his salvation. I hope and pray that a good measure of life and light may attend our path, although we may have to go a thousand times over the old beaten path of tribulations, of helps, and promises. If JEHOVAH smile, and help us on our way, and bless us with a comfortable hope of ending our journey in peace and safety, all will be well. 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.' Amen.

"I remain, your willing servant, for Christ's sake,

"CORNELIUS COWLEY."

In closing this Memoir, we give a few particulars of his life and trials in London, where he arrived safely, with his wife and family, Dec. 29th, 1865, to commence his labours.

In the year 1867, his family were visited with small pox. He was himself laid aside from preaching through an attack. In this affliction, he proved the goodness and faithfulness of God, and the kindness of friends, both far and near; thus verifying the words he had in coming to London, and which so truly prepared his mind to expect afflictions and trials, viz., "God is faithful." In the following letter he mentions his own illness, and the death of his dear daughter Hannah, and her husband, who had been married only six months:

"My dear Brother,—I received your kind letter safely, and have obtained the £5 at the Post Office. I am truly thankful for it, and have felt prayer with thanksgiving in my heart to God for putting it into the hearts of my Sussex friends to sympathize with me in my deep afflictions. I felt liberty in prayer to ask of God spiritual blessings for you all. I loved you, and had a good feeling towards you as a people before, and longed after your spiritual prosperity. How can I do otherwise, now you have refreshed my spirit with your liberality?"

"I have received much help and sympathy from my friends, both in Town and country; but my afflictions and the expenses connected with them have been like a great gulf swallowing up everything. I was not before at rest respecting temporal matters. London is such a place for expenses.

"I could not but think of you the last fortnight, and sometimes desired that you might be directed of God towards me, if it was pleasing in his sight, and if not, that he would give me patience and strength to wait his time. So that, when I received your letter yesterday morn-

ing, I felt broken down, and wept for joy, in that the Lord was mindful of me, and mine; and that his truth and power should have brought me into the affections of so many of his dear people, particularly the most favoured part of his children. As some are more humble, sensible, meek, affectionate, self-denying, self-abased, and spiritual than others, therefore they walk in the truth, and show that they are of the truth, and that the truth hath made them free. Such live on earth for God, and not for themselves. They are of heavenly origin, being born from above; and having their treasure in heaven, they are 'looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.'

"I have stood up to preach before my friends one Lord's day evening and three whole days since my recovery from small pox. I was glad to see them once more, and believe they were glad to see and hear me again. The Lord's presence, I believe, was with us. My first text was: 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.' I truly felt the words to be my own. I spoke more than was expected, considering my weak state of body. I gather strength, through mercy, to the astonishment of my friends, knowing as they did how low I had been reduced. I have not been out of Town to preach as yet. I hope to go to Deptford on the 27th of this month.

"My dear wife as yet continues pretty well, verifying the words that continually followed her through the illness; viz., 'I only am escaped to tell thee.' She is the only one out of eight that has escaped. We have in dear Hannah lost one of the best of daughters parents could have. She was of great use to us; but now she is for ever gone, and the place that knew her once shall know her no more for ever. Her husband is yet alive. He has been in Highgate Hospital eight weeks last Tuesday. I should not be surprised any day to hear of his death. He appeared to be fast sinking last Tuesday, from what our nurse told me.

"Although this affliction is common to man, yet the measure dealt out to us is uncommon; but it cannot be wrong, since God himself hath permitted it, and mixed much mercy with it.

"My kind love to your dear wife, sister, and the friends.

"Yours in the right path, though of trial,

London, June 20, 1867.

COR. COWLEY.

"P.S.—My dear son-in-law died the day on which this letter was written. Both of them were in their graves just six months after their marriage. I trust they are now in glory, singing of redemption through the most precious blood of Jesus Christ."

(To be concluded.)

THERE is a scripture that hath often affected my heart (Rom. x. 29): "As Esaias said before," saith Paul out of him, "except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been like unto Sodom and Gomorrhæ." It is spoken of election; he had discoursed of it in that chapter. And what is that seed there? It is plainly a reserve, a relic or remnant. And that speech in Rom. xi. 5 of a "remnant according to the election of grace"—is all one with that "seed" there. O! my brethren, if God had not taken such a remnant, not Israel only, but all mankind, had been like unto Sodom and Gomorrhæ. Not a man, woman, or child in Sodom and Gomorrhæ were rescued but whom God took out,—Lot and his family. Therefore, say I, bless God for election. We had been undone else to a man. And shall not this affect us? O! despise not election. Therein lies all our hope, that there is a remnant that shall infallibly be saved.—*Goodwin.*

Obituary.

HENRY WILTSHIRE.—On Feb. 17th, 1879, aged 73, Henry Wiltshire, a member of the church at Studley, near Calne.

Henry Wiltshire was born Nov. 11th, 1805. He was the eldest son of the late Martha Wiltshire, of Studley, whose obituary appeared in the "Gospel Standard" in April, 1859, p. 113. In his youth he was very moral, and never ran the lengths in sin, in his natural state, which some of God's people have run before their call by grace. He was thus called in his youth, but never had such a deep law-work as some of God's people have experienced. This was a source of trial to him. Nevertheless, he was a very sincere follower of the Lamb throughout his spiritual pilgrimage. In his first love he was very zealous in going to hear such men as the late Mr. Gadsby, whom he heard eleven times in one of his visits to these parts. The late Mr. Warburton and other servants of God were beloved by him for their work's sake. He was baptized when young by the late Mr. Dymott, and joined the church at Studley, and remained a consistent member until his death. For nearly fifty years he adorned his profession.

The deceased was twice married; his first family consisting of five children, his second of nine. Whilst his first wife lived, who was a good woman, he was not without some heavy trials; but the Lord sustained him. God in his sovereignty having taken the first wife of our departed brother to himself, after some time he married again; his second wife being also a partaker of grace. The Lord appeared for him and his, and blessed him in his basket and in his store. On one occasion the Lord blessed his soul when on a journey not very far from his home. Afterwards he was tried about this; and begged the Lord that if the blessing was really from him, he would appear to his soul's comfort again on the very same spot. Some years after the Lord completely granted his request, and he was enabled to realize the presence of the Lord so much that he said aloud, three times over, "The presence of the Lord is with me." He could then challenge Satan to his face.

After this visit from the Lord he lost three children by death within three weeks. The burial-place of the family was in a neighbouring churchyard; and the clergyman objecting to read the burial service over the corpses of non-sprinkled children, Mr. Wiltshire spoke at the grave himself. He said, "I have been told that the children will not be perfect in bliss because they have not been christened; but we believe in no such popery." The clergyman would not even allow the corpses to be taken into the church.

About nineteen years after his second marriage, his family being young, the eldest boy of the second family being only in his teens, our departed brother was taken with paralysis while at tea. His right side was affected thereby, and his speech totally gone for some time. He was never able to converse on worldly things again; but on spiritual things he could converse in some measure toward the latter end of his life. While in this affliction he had to be taken to chapel in a wheel-chair until within three or four months of his death.

The Lord often stirred up his heart in his affliction. Once he heard Mr. Porter from John xvi. 22; and often afterwards quoted the words, "See you again," having heard to real profit. Through his long affliction the Lord appeared for him and his in a providential manner, and since his death continues to do so. Before the departed was afflicted, he was a most persevering man in business; yet afterwards, though not able to earn a penny, his mind was delivered from the cares of this

life. "Rock of Ages" was a favourite hymn of the departed. The writer has at different times heard him quote the words:

"Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to thy cross I cling."

also the words: "Naked;" "Black." So that his soul abhorred perfection in any way but through Christ Jesus, in whom he stood complete.

I now come to his last days. He was confined to his bed a month. The doctor attending him said that dropsy had set in, and that he could not last long. The sufferings of the dying saint were very great at times; but not a murmur escaped his lips. On one occasion, when suffering great bodily pain, he made his family to understand that his sufferings were light compared with the sufferings of Christ, and wished John xvi. to be read to him. On the Sunday before he died, when some of his friends came to see him, he commenced singing,

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

When the writer entered his bedroom on the above-named day, he could see a great change in him, and the dying saint said, "See you again." He found the portion about the man who was sick of the palsy in Matt. ix., which I read to him, speaking afterwards in prayer at his bedside. I never saw him again. The following night one of his daughters read to him Hymn 205, which he seemed to enjoy. He repeated many times during the night, "All the glory; All the glory," which was all he could say, being partly deprived of his speech. What he spoke was in broken sentences. A few hours before he died one of his brothers came to see him, to whom he said, "See you again." His brother said, "You will soon see him face to face." He replied, "Yes." He appeared quite sensible till ten minutes before he died, when he was taken with a fit, and never spoke afterwards; and thus his soul entered into rest. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

He has left a widow and ten children to mourn his loss; but not to mourn as those without hope, for their loss was truly his gain. May that God who has called some of his children by grace bring them all to know, if his will, their father's God.

Calne.

H. M. HINCHLIFFE.

MATHILDA JONES.—On March 18th, 1879, aged 68, Mathilda Jones.

Mrs. Jones was a member of the church assembling for divine worship in Zion Chapel, Leicester. She joined the church in the year 1867, and remained a consistent member until her decease. During the latter years of her life she suffered much from an afflicted body; but was supported in all her trials by the Lord. She was led at first to attend the place where the above church was then worshipping through hearing two of the friends conversing upon divine things, and was for the first time powerfully convinced of sin under a sermon of the minister's from Ps. xlv., pt. 1. She felt herself out of the secret of true religion. These convictions were further carried on and deepened by means of a sermon on the parable of the tares and the wheat. Also by the 411th hymn, when given out in the chapel. She was overwhelmed with a sense of her guiltiness; and the work was brought to a crisis through the instrumentality of another sermon of the minister's. She could not even utter a prayer. In this state she rose at three o'clock in the morning; and when full of trouble, leaning against the chimney-piece, the Lord broke in upon her soul with sweet words and a discovery of his grace. At the prayer-meeting that evening the minister gave out the hymn beginning:

"I long for a concert of heavenly praise;"

which exactly suited her feelings. She could rejoice in Christ's love. After this she had fresh troubles, but was greatly blessed under a sermon from 1 Pet. ii. 24, 25; and at the ordinance following, when sitting by

and looking on. She then felt a great desire to come forward and join the church. This she at length felt constrained to do. After speaking to the deacons upon the point, she was greatly blessed by the words in John x.: "My sheep hear my voice, &c." At a prayer-meeting, too, which she subsequently attended, she was most sweetly blessed from Newton's hymn: "Begone, unbelief;" especially from the words:

"With Christ in the vessel, I smile at the storm."

She felt she could smile at the storm. After these exercises she became member of the church, passing through the ordinance of believers' baptism.

The last time Mrs. Jones attended Zion chapel was on the last Lord's day in February, 1879. She said, when lying on her deathbed, "I hoped to have been there the next Lord's day, and to have sat down at the table of the Lord. How often my soul has feasted at the ordinance! I never once sat down without a feeling of love to the dear people of God. I could not have gone there if I had had any bitter feelings."

One day in March, she said to a friend, "I've had a great trial with my husband; but kept it for the most part to myself. O the hundreds of prayers I've offered to the Lord that, if it was his will to take me first, he would enable my daughter to bear with her father; or, if agreeable to his holy will, would take him first; but I always ended with this: 'Not my will, but thine be done.' 'O bend my will to thine.' The trial of leaving my child with such a father has been my daily cross; but now my heavy burden is completely gone. It was taken from me yesterday by those words coming so sweetly: 'He hath delivered thee in six troubles; and in seven no evil shall touch thee.' I can't pray any more for them. No more prayers for husband and child. I've given them up into safer and better hands than mine. I do not expect to be any better in this world; but I've got a promise for a dying hour." The friend asked what the promise was, and whether she thought it would be fulfilled. With such a smile, she replied, "Believe it? That I can. He has never forfeited his word. I shall shout in my dying moments: 'O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?' I'm so happy. The fear of death is gone. How I've been blessing him for such a promise!"

The friend saw her again on Wednesday, when she said, "I had such a time this morning from that hymn:

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come
To fetch thy ransomed people home."

It is so sweet, and keeps coming over and over again; especially this verse:

"Then loudest of the crowd I'll sing."

We shall shout then; but I believe my song will be the loudest, for I've been such a great sinner. How disappointed I should be if I got better! The thought comes to me sometimes: If I should get better, and go into the world again. But I could not live without my Saviour. O how I love him, and all of you who belong to him! May he bless you abundantly."

The friend called again on Saturday. She said, "I'm very ill. It will not be long now, but I'm happy. It is peace, perfect peace. Read the 103rd psalm. It is precious; but all the psalms are so. He has forgiven all my sins; yes, he's done it all. Bless his Name. Good-bye. I believe we shall meet in heaven; but this troubling thought will still come, at times: You'll get better, and go into the world. But God is faithful."

She lived three days after this, but her breathing was so difficult that her words were not distinct. Just before departing she said to her daughter, "I'm nearly at the end of the valley; but I'm so happy. I'm leaning on his everlasting arm. Christ is so precious."

Thus, leaning upon the Beloved, she passed through the Jordan of death into the everlasting glory prepared for her. S. A. H.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

DECEMBER, 1879.

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

MAN'S INABILITY: HOW LEARNT, AND THE RESULTS.

(Concluded from p. 487.)

WE have dwelt somewhat largely upon the ways already mentioned in which creature inability is truly learnt under the teachings of the Holy Spirit. We shall therefore only be able almost to summarize some other ways; but then our experienced readers will be qualified from their own cases to fill up the sketches. We notice, then, that the work is carried on in the midst,

6, of a *chequered pathway, and wilderness wanderings*. We read that God of old led Israel about, and thus instructed him. The nature of the instruction we gather from Deut. viii.: "To humble thee." Yes; in the midst of these wanderings, these varying circumstances, they learnt the lesson of human weakness. Thus the people who could undertake boldly to do all that the Lord their God commanded at Horeb, found out their weakness at Kibroth-Hattaavah, and in other places. So it is still. God's people are emptied from vessel to vessel, and thus, unlike to Moab, their fleshly sufficiency is taken out of them. In a great variety of circumstances, we learn our utter helplessness. We are not sufficient of ourselves to conduct ourselves properly in any of them. Like Israel of old, we murmur at Marah, and at Rephidim. We won't go up against Amalek when the Lord commands; and will go up when he commands not. Thus we learn that in and of ourselves we can do nothing right. All we can claim is rebellion and sin. To the Lord our God belongs all our strength, our grace, and our salvation.

7. By *perplexing experiences and deep anxieties*. O how bewildering, at times, are the things we meet with! What a wilderness we are passing through! We are baptized unto Christ in the cloud of confusion, as to sense and reason, as well as in the sea. Thus we are made not to lean to our own understandings. If we do thus lean, we get more perplexed. The Word of God, the providence of God; what we see in others, what we feel in ourselves; God's ways with the wicked, and with the saints; the sight of Babylon in scarlet, and Zion in sackcloth; of vice suc-

cessful (Eccles. viii. 4) and prosperous, and godliness in adversity; of craft and violence carrying all before them (Dan. viii. 25), and integrity and uprightness in the low place; of "servants upon horses," as the wise man writes, "and princes walking as servants upon the earth." (Eccles. x. 7.) All these things are full of perplexity until we can cease from our own wisdom, and get into the sanctuary. Then we see all is right, and the wisdom of God ordering all things well. But in the midst of all this perplexity, how we learn the utter weakness of human nature!

8. By *drowning depths* and *despairing feelings*. Jonah, we believe, learnt more at the bottoms of the mountains, and when feelingly in the belly of hell, than he had learnt in years of previous experience. O how the good, yet erring, prophet could feelingly say, "Salvation is of the Lord," when he had cried unto the Lord out of these drowning depths, these anguished feelings, and the Lord had brought him up out of the depths again! He was not theoretically weak at the bottoms of the mountains, and in the fish's belly; but really and feelingly so. O how thankful he was that salvation depended upon Another! That salvation was entirely, from first to last, and in every respect, of the Lord! David and Hezekiah, with all those who are mentioned in Isaiah xxxv., learnt, as well as Jonah, the weakness of the creature in such places as these. Yes; the place of dragons, the belly of hell, the shadow of death, these are the spots in which the saints of God, in which we ourselves, we believe, have learnt, and deeply learnt, the lesson of human misery and creature inability.

9. By "*So great a death*," as well as *a daily dying*. We place these together. The child of God's daily experience is that of a daily dying. "We which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake." "In deaths oft." Deaths upon our comfortable frames and pleasant feelings; deaths upon us in our reading and hearing the Word of God; deaths in our prayings, singings, attendance upon means; deaths within, and deaths from without. O! it is a daily dying; daily deaths of various kinds coming upon us. But this is not all. Sometimes it is "so great a death;" something special and peculiar; something so terrible that it seems as if life itself must depart, as if nature must altogether give way under the affliction. Here is the place to learn weakness in. So it was with Paul. All he had in himself to oppose the temptation was weakness. His best reply to his accuser was: "I am dead; and my life is hid with Christ in God." All his own wisdom, righteousness, strength, goodness, were as nothing. Happy it was for Paul that his help was in God, who raises the dead.

10. By *a thorn in the flesh* and *a messenger of Satan*. A thorn piercing into and ranking in the flesh makes a man feel the flesh and its infirmity. This will make a man truly know how weak and wretched he is in himself. Then, let there be added to this, a messenger of Satan to buffet him; to drive the thorn

in deeper and deeper, and to put a venom into the wound. O! Won't this man learn human weakness and creature inability? Paul writhed under the thorn; but he could not extract it. He cried aloud with pain; but there it was. He agonized beneath the affliction; but the thorn still pierced; and every movement only made it go deeper and the pain greater. A messenger of Satan, too, heeds not a sinner's groans, or a saint's cries; but is utterly merciless. All this was more bitter than death itself to Paul; but it did him great good; it made him feel more and more his utter misery in himself, his weakness, his insufficiency.

11. We might mention many other things. No doubt some will occur to our readers which we have not noticed. But we must only add one more to our list. We learn the lesson of our weakness, not only by each of these things singly, but sometimes there will be an accumulation of things of this sort, and this added to them—a heart, as to the man's feelings, dead and prayerless; so that he appears to himself not only most miserable, but destitute of prayer, and shut up in the midst of his temptations in the dungeon of a prayerless heart to the judgment to come. This is, as it were, the climax of wretchedness. When we can pray, and sigh, and groan, and go to God in any degree, there is some relief; but when prayer itself seems dead, or the heart so dead and desperate that we can't pray, then all seems over. Then we write bitter things indeed against ourselves. Then we think we are in the place of Jude's reprobate: "Twice dead, plucked up by the roots."

Here, indeed, is a place of weakness. This man knows what creature inability is. This man can speak and write of things as one who knows something about them. This man cannot maintain creature power, or uphold the ability of human nature. His words, his writings, must, in the spirit of them, be filled with what he has thus deeply and effectually learned. He knows from heart experience and maintains from heart feeling the doctrine of human inability.

II. Having considered the first part of our subject,—how the godly learn, yea, learn and relearn, and are established in the truth concerning their complete spiritual weakness and inability, let us turn our attention to the second thing,—what they learn upon this point. We shall here notice, briefly, that their convictions of weakness and helplessness in themselves are universal in their character, and abiding and continually deepening.

i. They are *universal in their character*, extending to all within and all without; to all evil and all good. They learn in heart felt experience the truth and meaning of our Lord's words: "Without me ye can do nothing." They find by a painfully humbling experience that they are not sufficient of themselves to think anything aright as of themselves. Without the present enabling power of the Holy Spirit, as a new-Creator in Christ, they cannot think aright of God and his holy law, of Christ and his sweet gospel, of the blessed Spirit, of the works of God, either in

providence or grace. They cannot recall to mind, in a spiritual and heart-affecting manner, the very truths they have rightly learned of God, or the very experiences of his past dealings which have been most powerful and sweet to them. Thus after, perhaps, some time of blessing, they may get into such conditions of darkness of mind that they may be to themselves as if they had never known anything rightly of God or Christ or his blessed truth. Thus one writes:

“I have, as I seem, when left in the dark,
Of light not a beam, of love not a spark.”

O how strange this is, that a man should be “light in the Lord,” and yet to his sense and feeling be shut up as in a darkness that may be felt!

“And while a dark night drags heavily through,
They cannot strike light by all they can do.”

How true is this testimony of Berridge! Yet how strange as well as true! A Christian man has two things at the same time in one heart,—light and darkness; the light of grace, the darkness of nature. And all the actings of grace are entirely dependent upon its Author. Thus the child of light may walk for a season in felt darkness; and he cannot by any power of his own produce a ray of cheering light in his own soul. He cannot command a soul-reviving, heart-comforting thought, if his salvation depended upon it.

But, further, he cannot produce a good desire. No, not if heaven could be purchased by it. Nothing is more thoroughly dependent upon God than the new creature. It is not a self-dependent, self-centered life that a child of God receives from heaven. It is a life dependent upon Christ, and centered in him. “Because I live,” says Christ, “ye shall live also.” And Paul writes: “Nevertheless I live; yet not I; but Christ liveth in me.” . . . “I live by the faith of the Son of God.” And again: “Your life is hid with Christ in God.” Therefore the psalmist could write: “The Lord is the strength of my life.”

Now, where there is life, there will be desire; and the desires of the child of God will depend upon him whom their new life depends upon. All hangs upon Christ. Their desires only flow forth as he causes them to do so. Thus “a spring shut up, a fountain sealed,” is Christ’s love. O how universal, as to all within, is the conscious weakness of a child of God! Thoughts, desires, will, affections, conscience, all depend upon Christ. Jesus gives and draws forth pure affections. Jesus gives wills to his people, agreeable to his own will. “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.” Jesus enables the conscience to bear a true testimony; condemning us naturally, acquitting us supernaturally through the blood and righteousness of Another. All the workings and actings of faith, hope, love, and every grace of the Holy Spirit within us, depend entirely upon the present power and working of the Holy Spirit of Christ our God.

Then, again, this consciousness of weakness extends to all without. Paul excellently describes this point of experience in the 7th of Romans. He writes: "For to will is present with me." Here the dear man of God, stirred up by the Holy Spirit, willed to do God's will. Now some person unacquainted with divine things might here say, "Well, then, Paul, why do you not do it? Where there's a will there's a way." Natural things and spiritual are very different. Alas! says Paul, "how to perform that which is good I find not. With me the dependence upon my Lord must be universal. He who gives me the will must give me the power also. It is God that worketh in me both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

This may appear a melancholy description of a Christian man's condition; but it is not so gloomy as it seems. Nothing is more to be dreaded than the pride and self-sufficiency of the human heart. Now, when a man finds his universal inability, as to all within and all without, his pride and self-sufficiency will die away beneath such humbling creature-killing experiences.

Then, further, he finds this inability extend to all of good and all of evil. He cannot, as we have seen, even do the good that he would. He cannot pray unless the Holy Spirit helps his infirmities. He cannot praise unless God gives him a thankful heart. "Open thou my lips," says David, "and my mouth shall show forth thy praise." He cannot meditate, he cannot examine himself, he cannot consider his ways, or search and try his ways, and turn again to the Lord, unless the Lord enables him. He can neither speak a word aright, nor perform one really good action, unless the Lord gives him abundance of grace. O these humbling, crippling, salutary lessons! The child of God has reason to thank God for this divine teaching; but even here he must incur a fresh debt, and depend upon God for more grace, that he may prize his fatherly corrections and instructions.

One thing more. As this consciousness of inability extends to all of good, so it does likewise to all of evil. O humbling consideration! creature-abasing thought! The child of God finds evil is present with him. There, as indwelling sin, it is in his heart. Nor is it there as merely in a dormant, inactive state. No; there in his heart it lusts, and works, and wars; deceives and rages. But, then, cannot he, by the strength of inherent grace, and virtue, always easily resist it? Cannot he scatter triumphantly the forces of indwelling sin, world, and Satan? O no! He finds that he stands in need of present communications of divine power. He must, to resist properly and successfully, be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus. Christ must be all his righteousness, and also all his strength. Thus he must put on the whole armour of God, or he cannot properly overcome one single sin or temptation. He is not crowned unless he thus strives lawfully. He hates vain thoughts; yet yields to them. He loves the Lord, and hates evil, as after the inner man; and yet displeases the Lord, and inclines to evil through the carnal

nature which is also in him. His pleasure is really placed in pleasing Christ. He would be pure and holy, as Christ is pure; but, alas! he finds how utterly weak he is in himself to resist, particularly as to their working in his heart, the most hateful sins. For the most part, especially after a time, Christ keeps his people from outward sins of a grosser nature, or which will bring dishonour upon their profession; but O! what evil works within! This humbles the man; this lays him low; and his utter weakness and wretchedness in self, his universal emptiness, is deeply learned in the midst of these painful exercises.

ii. These convictions are *abiding*, and *continually deepening*, for we put these together. The Christian man is, as we have already seen, the possessor of a new life; and this life is eternal. In his feelings he may be like Heman, "free amongst the dead;" but in reality the life of God abideth in him. Christ came that his people might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. The Holy Spirit is in the saints as a well or fountain of living water, springing up into eternal life. So say the Scriptures. The exercises, too, of living men are continual. Every thing from day to day which the child of God passes through and experiences acts upon the life of God in his soul, and carries him forward in the divine lessons. The flesh, indeed, though wounded unto death, still remains in him. It may, too, at seasons recover a degree of its strength; and as a pardoned man may forget, as Peter writes, that he was purged from his old sins, so a God-taught man may at times forget to a certain extent his own utter weakness and inability. But he will soon be reminded of it again. God will in mercy adapt circumstances so as to bring him to a revived sense of it. God knows how to hide pride from man. "Those who walk in pride" and self-sufficiency, leaning upon graces, gifts, or anything but himself, God "is able to abase." He turneth, most wisely, justly, and mercifully, rivers into a wilderness, and a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of those that dwell therein; and there is no wickedness greater than that of a proud independence of the Lord. God is very merciful, very good, in chastening his children. He scourges every son whom he receiveth. It is not only for seeming mercies that we have to thank God, but seeming severities. What a mercy, even if it is by things terrible to nature, to be brought to our spiritual senses, and to have a due consciousness and persuasion of our own utter nothingness revived in our hearts, and deepened in our convictions. The psalmist tells us that God "by his strength setteth fast the mountains." He had learnt this by heartfelt experience. His own mountain slipped when God hid his face. Then was the poor man troubled. But this brought him to his knees, renewed his dependence only upon God, who is the hope, not of the wise and holy in themselves, the strong and self-confident, but of "all the ends of the earth, and of those afar off upon the seas."

We must add no more. This will be sufficient upon our second head. The true convictions of creature-inability are of a permanent character, and continually increasing.

III. We come to the last part of our subject. We must be brief, as we want in this number to conclude our article. We shall say, then, only a few things, the Lord helping, about *the beneficial results* derived from this true learning our own weakness and inability.

1. One blessed result is pointed out by Paul, when he writes to the Corinthians: "But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves." Under divine teaching Paul viewed himself, as in himself, a mere condemned and crucified malefactor. The sentence of death was to him upon all that was merely natural about him; his own wisdom, his own strength, his own righteousness, his own goodness. He could not then trust in such a miserable, condemned, executed creature as the old man was to him. Thus he was the true circumcision, cut off from fleshly confidences. As in natural things no man could put any confidence of help in a poor wretched malefactor, justly condemned to death, and hanging on the gallows, so Paul could put no confidence in himself; for he was to himself as one crucified with Christ, the Son of God. O blessed crucifixion! O happy death! "I am," he triumphantly exclaims to Peter, as in the Galatians, "crucified with Christ." I count myself to be as a mere condemned, executed malefactor in myself. Nevertheless, indeed I live. At the same cross where I get my death I also get my life. Christ is at once a death and a life to me. The death of my death,—my old and carnal self; the life of my spirit. O happy exchange! I lose myself, but find Jesus. He gives me for all my hell "His own sweet heaven."

Here, then, is one very blessed result of the divine teaching the Christian man receives concerning his own utter ruin and inability.

2. A second is also set before us by Paul. Indeed, the one would be death and despair without the other. To be deprived of all hope and help in self, without hope and help in Another, would be destruction. But God is the God of life and blessing to his people; not of death and destruction. Therefore Paul joins these two things together,—the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves; but in God which raiseth the dead. We learn, by means of the teaching we have considered, the power of Christ's resurrection in an experimental manner. We not only know something of the doctrine of the resurrection in our judgments, but we experience the fellowship of Christ's resurrection in our hearts. Thus we learn what is the exceeding greatness of the power of God to usward who believe, and that God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. O the sweet mysteries of the life of God in a child of God's experience! How in the midst of weakness and of death, of drowning depths

and killing circumstances, he learns truly and spiritually to trust in God.

3. Here, then, are two most blessed results, self-distrust coupled with confidence in God. The same apostle shall show us the last result which we shall here bring before our readers. He most sweetly joins with the two former things another,—the *experience of the delivering hand of God*. “Who hath delivered, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver.” Yes; this crowns all. The saint, through a true consciousness of weakness, distrusts himself and trusts in God; and he does not trust in vain. O no! The God he trusts in responds to the confidence he himself begets. He helps; he delivers. Thus the child of God out of weakness becomes strong. Thus he learns the Christian paradox or mystery: “When I am weak, then am I strong.” The same apostle who wrote: “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves,” wrote also: “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth.” God enabled him to pray, to praise, to speak, to act. By divine almighty grace strengthening him, out of weakness he became strong. He bore God’s will with patience, as well as performed it with zeal and diligence. He served his day and generation. He fought the good fight, kept the faith, overcame the world, sin, and Satan; he lived a Christian, and died in the faith of Jesus; and now receives at the right hand of God the prize of the victory which divine grace bestowed upon him.

Here, then, we see the difference between mere notions of man’s inability, a mere fleshly dead-letter holding of the doctrine in this particular, and deep, influential, effectual divine teaching. The former leads not on to practical godliness; it terminates in itself. It ends in a sentiment, an opinion, or in barren talk and strife. Nay, rather indeed, often leads the possessor of it into or confirms him in paths of vice. It sears his conscience, and does not animate his soul in the ways of God. A mere notion of man’s inability may co-exist with the indulgence of sin, the allowance of every evil, and an exhibition of the most unbroken power of the flesh to do what is corrupt and wicked in the sight of God. But divine teaching is very different. The weaker a man really becomes, the more qualified he is to truly overcome sin and serve God. The less the Christian is in himself, the more he thrives in Jesus. Was a child of God really reduced to a perfect conscious self-nothingness in this life, he would perfectly trust in God and perfectly serve him. The more he is reduced to such a consciousness, the more he will resemble the Lord Jesus, and the more he will walk as becometh his blessed gospel. O may our dear readers try things, then, by these plain and simple rules. He that doeth righteousness is manifested to be the justified person; he that committeth sin is of the devil. He that lives most as becometh the gospel of Christ; he who most resists sin, and serves God, is the man most taught of God his own weakness and inability.

These three results are really inseparable from divine teaching upon this point, and from one another;—self-distrust, trust in God, and the experience of his divine power, delivering us from evil, and enabling us to serve and please God in our day and generation.

A careless and unfruitful, a self-indulgent, inconsistent, and sinful life has not, then, its source, as some may fancy, in a divinely-taught weakness, but in the strength of the flesh, and in an unbroken self-confidence. Our real weakness is not our conscious inability, but our fancied strength. We sin not through the brokenness, but the strength of our corrupted natures. The flesh is weak; and we are weak through ignorance or mere notions of this. Were we really weakened, our enemies would soon find us strong. For the more we are divinely weakened, the more we shall be divinely strengthened. The more we livingly and consciously hold the truth concerning our own nothingness, the more shall we trust in God, and experience his saving Almighty power.

We conclude, then, with one short sentence, containing, we believe, a truth which is worthy of remembrance, and cannot be disputed: *That Divine teaching concerning human inability invariably issues in a victory over sin, and in practical godliness. Conscious weakness is the Christian's strength.*

THE FOUNTAIN OPENED.

BY JOHN RUSK.

(Concluded from p. 503.)

I SHALL NOW lastly treat of the safety of all those that experimentally come to this fountain that is opened for sin and for uncleanness; and short of this there is no true feeling of safety. This is plain, if you take notice that, wherever the blood of the paschal lamb was found, it secured the Israelites from the destroying angel; for he passed over that house when he saw the blood sprinkled on the side posts. (Ex. xii.) You may see it again in the prophecy of Ezekiel, when the destroying angel is ordered to defile the house, and slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children; but not to destroy any one on whom the mark was. (Ezek. ix. 6.)

Now, what may you and I learn from these things? I answer, The passover lamb, spiritually, is the Lord crucified: "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," says Paul. And if you and I are led by faith to this atonement, to this passover, to this fountain, so that we get cleansed, here is safety; and divine justice will never destroy us. And it is just the same as it respects this mark in Ezekiel's prophecy, which appears to me to be the blessed effect of this atonement; namely, a healthy countenance. Cain's mark was a fallen countenance; but David's mark was a healthy one; for he was in a pardoned state. And therefore he says, "Thou art the health of my countenance, and my God." It was

this that made Stephen's face shine like an angel's. And in glory they are said to have their Father's Name in their foreheads. And this name was proclaimed to Moses: "Forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin;" which they enjoy to the full in glory above, saying, "Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory for ever and ever."

Now, every one living and dying without being sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and without his covenant Name in the experience of it, such an one is sure to fall a prey to divine vengeance; for there is no safety short of this fountain opened for sin and uncleanness.

Let it be observed here that this safety, which we have in Christ Jesus and his atoning blood, is only enjoyed, and the same is true of all the other things which I have mentioned, by a manifest union with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, then, let us go over the things we have been attending to. First, then, if you find *peace*, this peace is in Christ Jesus. Hence he told his disciples, "In me you shall have peace;" and therefore you and I all our days are to follow hard after him. For if you and I slight our privileges, and go on like the world, it will be at the expense of the happy enjoyment of this peace; which, though you cannot finally lose, yet you never can enjoy but by a cleaving to the Lord Jesus.

2. Though the burden of sin is removed when we come to this fountain, yet you will feel sin a sore burden to you every time you and the Lord Jesus are apart; that is, when you feel cold to him and his cause, and drink into the spirit of this world. For the pardon of our sin is in him. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Now when things are going on right there will be honest confession of our daily slips and falls, and a continual pleading this atonement; which is not so easy as you perhaps may think. All this is to keep up a constant communion and fellowship with the Lord Jesus; and the nearer we are to him and enjoy the benefits of this atonement, the more we are sensible of pardon; and the burden of sin is removed by our casting every burden on him.

3. *Access to God* is in the same way. "For by him we have an access by one Spirit unto the Father." In vain, then, is all your pretension to spiritual things if you can live like the world. You may talk much, but you are a stranger to what John says about tasting and handling the word of life.

4. *Justification*. It is in the Lord that all the seed of Israel are to be justified; and in him they are to glory. But you will find that, though you have been justified, yet you can't enjoy this with a loose profession of Christ, but by a close walk and sensible union; which, if neglected, you will find condemnation enough.

5. *Life*; and this life is in Christ, who is our life. And when this union is enjoyed, we feel life in spiritual things. But you

and I can't join this with living after the flesh. No; this will make us dry and barren enough. Self is to be denied, and the cross taken up; and in this way we shall enjoy this life as King Hezekiah did: "By these things men live." These afflictions are to empty us of self; and after this we feel Christ to be the life of our souls.

6. *Election.* You and I are to enjoy this by virtue of our union with Christ also. He is the first Elect; and we in him. Now, in cleaving to him he lets us know this also. Hence he says to his disciples, "I have called you friends, for all things which I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." But if this is kept up in you, it will not be without great opposition from the flesh; and every visit he gives you you will enjoy something of this. Hence he says, "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

7. What is the cause of backsliding in heart and life? Why, it all arises from coldness of affection to the Lord Jesus Christ. Then the world crawls in, and the old man is put on, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. And therefore he says, "Return unto me, ye backsliding children." So that this union is the only way to keep from backsliding; I mean a sensible manifest union.

Lastly, there is no safety out of Christ for any man, and no safety enjoyed by the elect but by a manifest union. For as we slacken to Christ, so every enemy is treading on our heels, and pursuing us. But "the Name of the Lord is a strong tower," whither the righteous continually, all their days, run in, and are safe.

To sum up the whole, then. What a provision has the ever-blessed Trinity made for all the heirs of promise! That God the Father should fix his eternal love upon them in Christ Jesus, and to discover this great love, suffer them all to fall with the rest of mankind, in the first Adam. That God the Son should clothe himself in our nature, come into this world, and engage every enemy, and work out a righteousness, and open this fountain which I have been treating of for sin and uncleanness. That the Holy Spirit should make us see and feel our need of this glorious provision, and testify of Christ to us; taking of the things of Jesus, and showing them to us; so that we are cleansed from all sin by faith in this atonement, and justified freely from all things by faith in his perfect righteousness; and in such a way that we shall be kept diligently pressing on towards the mark. Therefore, as already noticed, it is impossible for an Antinomian or carnal professor to know anything experimentally and practically of these things; for there must be a manifest union with Christ. O that you and I, reader, may thus live upon Christ, and grow up into him, our living Head, in all things; that there may be a growth in grace, and a growth in experimental knowledge, and that we may daily come by faith to this fountain; for we always need it, seeing we are continually bent to backslide.

Thus I have got through what I intended. May God make it a blessing to my reader, if he feels his need of this fountain; and if he does not, may God in mercy, if consistent with his will, open his eyes to see, and quicken his soul to feel his need; for, remember, it is open for sin and for uncleanness. I shall finish with one of the verses out of that precious hymn that has been sweet to my soul in Mr. Hart's book:

“This fountain, though rich, from charge is quite clear;
The poorer the wretch, the welcomer here;
Come needy, come guilty, come loathsome and bare;
You can't come too filthy, come just as you are.”

God bless his own truth, for Christ's sake. Amen and Amen.

FORETASTES OF HEAVEN.

“The days of heaven upon the earth.”—DEUT. XI. 21.

LORD, for these tastes of heaven below
I am indebted to thy love;
But when I leave this land of woe,
Thou wilt be all my heaven above.

Blest be the love that gives a sight,
Though distant still, of heavenly day;
A kindly interval of light
To cheer my dark and lonesome way.

But ah! How soon the night returns,
When the Redeemer hides his face!
And scarce a heaven-born passion yearns
For light, or liberty, or grace.

Wretch that I am, to harbour sin,
And nurse disquiet in my breast!
Jesus, thy reign of peace begin,—
A long, sweet day of love and rest!

If such the sweetness of a day
Spent in thy presence here below,
Why should I wish to live away
From the high joys that angels know?

But angels, sinless though they are,
Must veil their faces with their wings;
Their highest notes are lower far
Than those a ransom'd sinner sings.

My spirit thirsts for heaven apace,
And longs to see her smiling God;
To view Immanuel face to face,
And sound his highest praise abroad!

May 4th, 1879.

W. WILEMAN.

THIS life is not a season to be always taking wages in. Our work is not yet done. We are not always to abide in this mount.—
Owen.

AFFLICTION PROFITABLE, IF NOT PLEASANT.

“Whatsoe'er afflictions seize us,
They shall profit, if not please.”

(Concluded from p. 506.)

AGAIN. Afflictions crucify us to this world, and lead us to self-examinations to look after God's work within upon our own souls. So says the psalmist: “Let thy work appear unto thy servants.” And as it appears in genuine faith, in good hope, in life, in light, in pardon, in justification, in peace, in heavenly-mindedness, in joy, in love, in wisdom, in knowledge, in the fear of the Lord, and in evangelical repentance, it affords unspeakable joy and comfort. As it is written: “Let every man prove his own work (or what God has performed in him and done for him), and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.”

Furthermore, afflictions drive us to a throne of grace with more fervour and earnestness, and to more diligent searching and reading of the Scriptures and attending on the means of God's appointment. Thus our profiting is sure by God's own promise: “The diligent soul shall be made fat.” His knowledge and understanding shall be much increased; his comforts and consolations shall abound. Sweet revivals and renewings of the work of grace shall be experienced; much joy and peace in believing shall be felt. Charity, the bond of all perfectness, as well as the abundance of spiritual and divine life, shall exist in the soul. All this is confirmed by the experience of a good man under bodily affliction; for he declares: “O Lord, by these things men live; and in all these things is the life of my spirit. So wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.” (Isa. xxxviii. 9-22.) Too much prosperity is our greatest trial, and in this way we are the soonest upset and overthrown. Read God's great kindness to Israel in Deut. xxxii. And you will thus hear the effect of it upon them: “But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked. Thou art waxen fat; thou art grown thick; thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.” We do the soonest fall here under too much prosperity. That good man Agur understood things well. His request to God is admirable: “Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me; lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.” (Prov. xxx. 8, 9.)

Now, under your existing circumstances, you have much encouragement, if the Lord is but pleased to increase your faith to take it. You have many exceeding great and precious promises, that include everything you stand in need of. Let us observe something about both. In 2 Chron. xvi. 12 we read of Asa, that he was diseased in his feet; yet this good king had not confidence to look higher than an arm of flesh. In his disease he sought

not unto the Lord, but unto the physicians, and they left him without a cure. In Mark v. we read of one who had a better faith at last. She first tried temporal physicians for twelve years, and that was as long as the money lasted; her faith stood then in the wisdom of these men; but when all the cash was gone, instead of being better, she grew worse. At last, hearing of Jesus, and finding a confidence wrought in her heart in his Almighty power, in this confidence she spoke and said, "If I may but touch his clothes, I shall be whole," and immediately upon the touch came the cure. For this act of faith brought healing virtue with it, and she was made whole of her disease. What is the use of all other physicians without him? Nothing at all. They are useful in their place; and all means are to be used; but these means can be of no service, without looking to, and imploring the Lord's blessing. In this way the greatest cures have been made by the most insignificant means, in order that the whole and sole glory might be secured to God himself. Naaman the Syrian was ordered to wash in Jordan; and thus he was cured of his leprosy. But if God's blessing had been absent, he might have washed a long time, and have been just as near a cure as before he began. But as it was God's own means to his own blessing, so by his own means he effected a perfect cure. Hezekiah is another instance. The means was a bunch of figs applied; nothing more simple. But that used at the command of God was blessed to his recovery.

So now, if we use means, we ought to pray God for his blessing upon them, and then to watch his hand. And if any means we are directed to use proves successful, then it is by God's blessing that the cure is experienced. The glory then is his, and not man's. Christ is the good Physician still. Matthew informs us (iv. 23) that Christ, in the days of his flesh, healed all manner of sickness and all manner of diseases, which made his fame to spread. There is still balm in Gilead, and the only wise and all powerful Physician there. When it is said, "Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" The reason often is, because this good Physician is not called upon, nor consulted by prayer. If we ask not, we have not; because the Lord says that for all these things he will be inquired of by the house of Israel, that he may do all the things for them that he hath promised. And the Lord's promises must be the ground of our faith, and the foundation of our hopes; nothing else. No way can be so successful as this; for if we hem him in or compass him about with his own promises, having in our heart a feeling sense of want, what can he do? His faithfulness and truth stand bound to make them all good; for heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of his work shall ever pass away unaccomplished or unfulfilled.

Now I will set before you six great promises; may the God of all grace bless you with a faith in exercise to take to yourself the comforts of them. The exhortation to all believers is: "Be

careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." (Phil. iv. 6.) Then follow the promises: "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee; and thou shalt glorify me." (Ps. l. 15.) "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." (Deut. xxxiii. 25.) "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." (2 Cor. iv. 16.) Now watch this, and see: "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." "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.) "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you." (Luke x. 19.)

Now, these are God's own promises, belonging to every individual believer, every heir of promise. And as we feel ourselves in tribulation, it is our privilege to plead them; and deliverance, either for soul or body, must come this way. The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor his ear heavy, that it cannot hear. He declares himself to be a present, yea, a very present help in time of trouble; and says that we shall never seek his face, or call upon his holy Name in vain. In due time we shall reap, if we faint not.

I have remembrance of you in my poor petitions. We have also this sweet encouragement, given by our blessed Saviour himself, who says, "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. xviii. 19.) Now, then, we see the work laid out that is to be done, and the means to be used. May the good Lord so repair the structure of your human frame which he at first built, as that it may yet stand firm for a longer time, if his heavenly will; and, above all, so adorn the same with his own glorious furniture, that you may feel yourself all glorious within, in life, in faith, in love, in joy, in righteousness, and in peace; so that you may have the most lively sense and inward satisfaction of knowing that, though your outward tabernacle may be dissolved, yet you have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,—a better and more enduring substance than can be found here. That the fulness of joy which is in God's presence, and those rivers of pleasure that flow at his right hand for evermore may be the joy and rejoicing of your soul; and that you may, under the blessed earnest of them, rejoice that your name is written in heaven, is the desire, dear Morgan, of

Yours most affectionately in the best Bonds,

CHRISTOPHER GOULDING.

37, Hatton Garden, London, May 5th, 1810.
To Mr. Morgan.

EPISTLES TO VARIOUS FRIENDS.

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

My dear Brother and Fellow-traveller in that way in which all who walk find tribulation and peace; tribulation from the world, the devil, and especially the flesh; and peace from God the Eternal Father, through the Eternal Son, by the Eternal Spirit.

These two things are well known by all the family of God, though by some more deeply and largely than others; for God is determined to save and to bless his own; and the devil and his agents are determined to oppose, to assault, and to devour them. Where there is true religion in the soul, it is not all brightness, neither is it all darkness. O what a mystery is the faith of God in the heart, or the life of God in the soul! What changes does the soul experience of death and life, darkness and light, heat and cold, bondage and liberty, barrenness and fruitfulness, rebellion and obedience! O what poor, helpless, worthless things we are! We stand as it were between two parties, or elements, and are actuated or influenced by the one or the other. Sometimes the Father smiles, the Son reveals his beauty and blessedness, and the Spirit touches the heart with life and love; then we feel assured of victory and eternal glory, and can praise the Lord with heart and voice. Then, again, the Lord JEHOVAH hides his face, and our enemies bestir themselves, and stir up the dust and filth of our depraved nature so much that we cannot see or find anything else. Then, to all appearance, and to sense and feeling, it is as if we shall be lost. “O!” says the soul, “can ever God dwell here? Or did he ever really grant his presence in such a heart as mine? Can such a vile sinner be a subject of sovereign, saving grace, or a temple of the Holy Ghost?”

There is nothing like these solemn exercises to depress the mind, and make the heart fear and faint; and nothing like these to stain human merit, creature-glory, and fleshly holiness, and make the soul highly esteem and richly value free and sovereign grace. Oh! beloved, our God knows how to manage us, to teach us, and to enable us to admire his ways, and to magnify his Name and the riches of his grace.

I was much pleased to receive your letters, one of which contained a little of your soul's conflict, and the other your deliverance by the touch of the ever-blessed Spirit. The one necessarily precedes the other; and both must be known by those who know Him whom to know is life eternal. How truly do you say that the corruption of the old nature is the greatest burden you have. I find it so. I am no stranger to family and other afflictions. My dear boy is again almost speechless and helpless, which is a constant heavy trial; but nothing in comparison with my vile, base, wandering, forgetful, and unbelieving heart which I daily carry about with me. What a mercy it is that salvation is all of grace, full and free, without money and without price!

With Christian love and best wishes for my dear brother and your beloved wife and her sister, I remain,

Yours very affectionately,

Chester, Nov. 18th, 1878.

J. OLDFIELD.

My dear Friend,—I was thinking of you this morning, and these words came into my mind: "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." And as I believe you are one of that happy number who do fear God, I was induced to take up my pen to tell you a little of the Lord's dealings with my soul.

In the year 1835 I was living in a large family as housekeeper, in the enjoyment of good health and every comfort that this world could afford, when it pleased the Lord to bring me to see my lost and ruined condition, and to make me cry, "What shall I do to be saved?" O the horrors that I felt under the conviction of a guilty conscience! Portions of Scripture came with condemning power; such as that in Jer. viii. 20: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." I read the Word, and prayed over it; and seemed to see the rocks rent, and the graves opened; but thought that my hard heart would never soften. I pleaded guilty before the Lord of breaking all his most holy laws; and felt that every action of my life had been nothing but sin. Such were the terrors of my mind that I was afraid to eat or drink, or go to sleep, fearing the enemy would come and take me if I left off praying.

Thus my mind was kept on the stretch, till I felt I should go out of my mind; and I arranged everything I had the care of in expectation of that event; and I found afterwards that all in the house thought the same thing. The Lord who does all things well so ordered it that the family was away from home at this time; so there were only a few servants in the house. A mercy this was for me; for I will tell you a circumstance which, however childish it may appear, will show you the importance I felt my soul to be over the body. I prayed that refraining from my meals might be of more service to my soul than partaking of them would be to my body. Thus was I brought into a very weak state, and wondered what would become of me; for I felt that I should not be able to keep my situation. But the Lord, who is rich in mercy, ordered it otherwise. In reading and praying over the Word, I found portions whereby a hope would spring up that the Lord would hear me some time or other. Such portions as this thus affected me: "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead; and Christ shall give thee light." But then something would say that it was presumption for me to think that the Lord would hear my prayers; such a vile sinner as I was. Thus I was kept between three and four months agonizing with the Lord in prayer, and felt I could not live unless the Lord would pardon me. Indeed, I said, with one of old, "I will not let thee go unless thou bless me."

At length the never-to-be-forgotten time arrived. When on my knees one day I felt myself as it were at the foot of the cross, as if the Lord Jesus Christ was there bleeding and dying for my sins; and O! what tears of godly sorrow flowed at the sight! My burden fell off, and I could rejoice in the Lord. Indeed, I felt there was such a thing as "joy and peace in believing;" and that the Scriptures are indeed the Word of God. This portion was very suitable to me: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Many other portions were equally suitable. O how I prayed for the inward Monitor to teach me right from wrong; for I felt that I had been doing wrong all my life without knowing it. I felt that this was indeed the new birth; this was regeneration. O my friend! what a marvellous thing to be born, not of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God!

Thus I was brought to see that all Three Persons in the Trinity were engaged in my salvation; for 'twas by the Spirit I was convinced of sin, and thereby led to cry to the Father for mercy through the merits of the Son. I desire to give all the glory to God for thus teaching me. It was not of man, nor by man, that I received it; for the preaching that I heard was such as denied what I was then experiencing, and asserted that sprinkling was the only regeneration; for, situated as I was, I had no opportunity of going anywhere but to the Established Church. Indeed, though I had previously lived seven years in the family of a bishop, I knew nothing of the things I was then passing through.

I must tell you that I enjoyed the presence of the Lord for some time, and felt as one who was alive from the dead, and really thought that I should go on in that happy state as long as I lived. But I have had much to learn since then. I find I have an evil nature that is averse to every thing that is good; but blessed be God who has caused this word to be written: "Sin shall not have dominion over you." And again: "Even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." Yes; I find it to be the path of tribulation; for every thing seems to be against the believer, both in himself and in the world; and so it must be if we are crucified unto the world, and the world unto us. Though some of the Lord's family are more deeply tried than others, yet I believe that every one has as much at times as he can bear. But when we can by faith look unto him who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, we feel that he that is for us is more than all that can be against us.

Now, my dear friends, if you feel any unity of spirit, or that my experience in any measure corresponds with your own, I shall be glad to hear from you, whenever it is convenient. Believe me to remain,

Yours very sincerely,

Shurdington, Feb., 1852.

SARAH TURNER.

My dearest —, —Through the Lord's mercy, I had a prosperous journey on Friday, and arrived safely at night. The Lord, I may say, has been with me in the work of the ministry, and also in private; which last is perhaps the sweetest, and has its influence upon the public work. When Moses had been in the mount with God, his face shone, even though he wist not of it; and our Father, which sees in secret, rewards openly. What a mercy to have a secret religion! Our private hours, if inquired of, may afford us some answer as to the truth and state of our religion. If when alone we are not alone, or holding communion with the devil in our lusts or vain thoughts, but with God in Christ and his blessed words and truth, this is a good mark, and shows our religion to have the impress of God upon it. I wish it was always so with me. I dare not say it is; though it certainly is so at times. I trust my closet, if inquired of, would not pronounce me a hypocrite; or one destitute of all secret living intercourse with God. No! I believe it would have to testify to God's inexpressible goodness in many times favouring me with that which is better than life itself—communion with God in the Son of his love, Christ Jesus. I trust yours would testify of the same. O this heart religion! this secret intercourse with God! this private meditation with life and sweetness upon his truth! this fitting, in our thoughts, from flower to flower in the garden of God, and gathering gracious honey from them! How sweet it is! How much of heaven, how much of real Christianity is in it! I want Christ to be more sweet to me. I want more assured knowledge of my interest in him. I want more enlarged views of what God has given me in him. I want to live like a king, by living as a poor dependent beggar upon Christ's fulness. This is kingship. Union to Christ is royalty; dependence upon him, the accompaniment of union, is the true sovereignty of the creature. Independence! Why, it is the most miserable bondage. He who serves not God in Christ (Luke xix. 14, 27), "a servant of servants" shall he be unto his lusts, and all creatures. The slave of circumstances, the drudge of Satan; and proudly boast of his independence all the while. O, my soul, the Lord keep thee from this folly, and give thee, as a member of Christ, to live only upon his all-fulness. Then thou shalt reign; thou shalt sit with Christ upon his throne. Clothed with the sun, thou shalt have the moon beneath thy feet; the lord, not the slave, of circumstances and creatures. The stars in their courses fought against Sisera; are not the angels *all* ministering spirits sent forth to minister to these heirs of salvation? O, my soul, the Lord give thee a portion in Jesus, and then truly all things are yours.

What a poor Christian I am! Scarcely worthy to be called a Christian. Groping along, almost in the dark. Learning so slowly; forgetting so readily. So stupid, so obstinate, so monstrously self-willed; and yet still I do think a Christian. I dare not cast away my confidence. Christ is worthy, if I am base.

“ Some gentle call I feel of grace,
 And softly to his ark repair;
 But such a monster, rough and base,
 As never sure came waddling there.
 With wanton heart and growling throat,
 A mess of lion, bear, and goat.”

There's a saint for you! This would hardly go down with some of the finer, holier sort of saints; and yet honest conscience, if fairly consulted, would testify to the truth of the description. Such we are in and of ourselves. We would indeed be holy. In the new nature we have an abhorrence of sin. If we are Christ's, we have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts. We do put off the old man, and put on the new; but alas! the old man is there, and puts himself on again too, too often. “God be merciful to me a sinner” is the best cry; and “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver?” a better exclamation than a pert “Thank God, I am not as other men are.”

Mr. ——— was taken very ill with his old complaint on Saturday night. Through mercy, he is better, and going on well. It was a great disappointment to him. He had over-anticipated my visit to Allington; feeling much spiritual attachment to myself as a minister; the Word having been sweet to him. How mysterious are God's ways! How he will cross his children's wills! How determined he is to have us all to himself! How we fight against it! Will a man rob God? O my soul, thou must, if honest, confess thou hast robbed him times out of mind. Woe is me! I were undone if God's own sweet grace were not so free, so great, so infinite as it is. Jesus restored (may I say for me?) that which he took not away. If he has paid my heavy debt, I am now no longer a debtor to stern justice; for that debt is, O so honourably, discharged; but a debtor to free rich grace; and that debt I must lie under the undischARGEABLE sweet burden of to eternity. Blessed be God. I wish, though I never can pay this debt, I could a little more render again according to all the benefits received; at least in devotedness, in adoration, and in praise. But I must actually incur fresh debts in this very thing. He must give me a praising heart, a devoted spirit. O my dearest Lord Jesus Christ, my God, my King, do set this heart all on fire with love to thee, and in that sweet holy flame consume self, and pride, and sin, and make the one prevailing desire of my heart to be that God in Christ may be everlastingly glorified. Amen.

I am thankful to hear you are well. This is God's mercy. The Lord keep you all. I remember ——— in prayer. Love to all; and believe me

Yours affectionately,

May 7th, 1866.

My dear Friend,—I enclose you the copy of a letter. Perhaps you have a place for it in the “G. S.” It came to friend Gosden at a seasonable time. He was telling his wife while dressing

that morning that he feared he should live to wear his religion out. While sitting at breakfast the post brought the enclosed letter, which gave him quite a lift, and encouraged him still to go on begging at the throne of grace. With Christian love to you,
Yours faithfully,

Whitesmith, Hawkhurst, Aug. 9th, 1879. WILLIAM VINE.

“Screw Steamer ‘Centurion,’ from Aquillas for London,
off Eastbourne, July 9th, 1879.

“To Mr. George Gosden, Hayreed Farm, Sussex.

“Very dear Sir,—It has been on my mind a long time to write and tell you how that blessed account of your dear daughter Ruth, which appeared in the ‘G. S.’ for May, 1877, was blest to my soul. I first saw it about twelve months ago. I was at the time in the Mediterranean. I had to lay it down many times before I could get through the reading it, to weep with joy of heart and gratitude to the Lord for thus manifesting his love and mercy in the salvation of your dear daughter Ruth. When I came to where she speaks about her feelings, often when hearing you begging in prayer for your children, that they might all be brought to know the truth for themselves, how her remarks wrung tears from my eyes! And what a knitting of heart and soul I felt towards you! Blessed man! The Lord’s people are indeed the salt of the earth. I am also the child of God-fearing parents. My grandfather, John Holden, was a hearer at the Dicker chapel. This makes me sometimes very much fear that if I know anything about the best things, I have only learnt it as a school-boy learns his lesson. May I ask you to remember this stranger also at a throne of grace, that I may have some experimental discovery of the Lord Jesus Christ to my soul, so as to raise up in my soul a living faith in him, with hope and love, which will enable me

“‘To read my title clear
To mansions in the skies.’

“I take the liberty of sending you this sermon by Mr. Covell. I know it will suit you. I hope to arrive in London to-night, where I stay a few days, and then sail for Leith, Newcastle, and Marseilles, where I hope to arrive about the middle of August. Accept my Christian love to yourself and family, trusting you are well. Love to Mr. Vine for the truth’s sake.

“I remain, dear Sir, Yours very faithfully,

“W. HOLDEN.”

LAURENCE SAUNDERS, one of our English martyrs, wrote thus to his wife a little before his burning. After desiring her to send him a shirt in which he was to suffer, he breaks out into this sweet prayer: “O, my heavenly Father, look upon me in the face of thy Christ, or else I shall not be able to abide thy countenance, such is my filthiness. He will do so; and therefore I will not be afraid what sin, hell, death, and damnation can do against me.” When arrived at the place of execution, he kissed the stake, saying, in a transport of joy, “Welcome the cross of Christ! Welcome everlasting life!”

REVIEW.

The Advance of Popery in this Country, Viewed under both its Religious and Political Aspect. By J. O. PHILPOT.—London: J. Gadsby, 18, Bouverie Street, E.C.

THE above invaluable work to the cause of real Protestantism never having been noticed in the body of this magazine, we think it only right that it should be. A sincere and widely cherished esteem to the departed author might be a sufficient reason of itself for our availing ourselves of the present opportunity to bring it forward in these pages; but the vast importance there is for using every effort to keep such a work in perpetual circulation in a day like the present, when Popery is advancing with more rapid strides than ever, makes us the more desirous not merely of bringing it under the special notice of our readers, but of asking them to bestir themselves a little to augment its sale, by obtaining as many copies as their means will allow, and doing their best to distribute them broadcast over the land.

Before, however, proceeding any further with our notice of the work, we wish to relieve ourselves of all such burden as what even an attempt to write a review of it would lay upon our mind. Feeling as we do our lack of ability to do proper justice to such a work by dealing with it in that way, we must content ourselves with adopting a more simple method of bringing it under public notice; and perhaps we shall be keeping more within the range of our own ability as a writer if we just perform the part of a scrupulously conscientious tradesman, who gives no recommendation to a single article but what he feels in his conscience well deserves the recommendation he gives. So in the same way, we shall endeavour to hold up the work as deserving the very highest recommendation that can be given of it, and as being a mighty, indispensable weapon for practical uses in the great battle that is waging in the present day between Protestantism and Popery. We shall at the same time urge it upon our readers, by all their civil and religious rights and liberties, which they so tenderly cherish, not to let such a weapon lie like a sword in its scabbard, but to handle it, and put it into other people's hands, that, with the blessing of Almighty God, it may be wielded right and left against the enemies' cause, and in defence of the cause of truth.

It is to be deeply regretted that such a masterly written work should not have passed ere this through successive editions. Such a faithful exposure as it is of the awful machinations, subtle workings, and detestable lies and abominations of that most accursed system, Popery, and also of the alarming dangers with which the cause of Protestant truth in our beloved country is being more and more threatened by its rapid advancement, it is to our mind surprising that more editions have not been called for; and it certainly betrays a woeful amount of apathy and condemnable indifference among the majority of such people as call

themselves Protestants when such books go off so tardily from the publisher's hands, and when so few copies a month are disposed of.

As, however, it is not the bulk of Protestants that we are able to reach by such rebuke, we will confine our remarks more particularly to our readers; and in appealing to them, we will ask them not to be content with having procured, as is most probably the case with most of them, a single copy of Mr. Philpot's "Advance of Popery" for their own private use, but to procure other copies, either few or many, as their means will allow, and to do their best and utmost to get them spread about. Let all our Sunday school libraries, moreover, be supplied with more copies than *one*, and let the teachers themselves read it well and thoroughly, on purpose to be the better prepared to set before the minds of the young people the awful evil and accursed lie of Popery. If our simple suggestions, which are so easy of being carried out, should only be so far adopted among our readers and friends as to secure for the work a circulation three-fold of what its circulation has yet been, we shall be too glad for having felt moved to make them. May the Lord put *his* hand to the work to bring our wish about.

Having said thus much towards stimulating an increased circulation of the work, it will be only fair, for the sake of those who may not have seen it, to deal a little with its contents; though we regret that the little time we have to spare before going to press will compel us to make fewer remarks upon any parts of the same than what otherwise we might have been disposed to do. Feeling, moreover, what a very suitable book it is for a Christmas gift, we are the more desirous of not delaying our notice of it beyond the December magazine, in the hope that, both at Christmas and at the beginning of the New Year, when so many books are given away, there may be a much larger demand for it at the publisher's office. A work of such character deserves, we say again, the unremitting efforts of all who love God's truth, and hate the devil's lies, to promote its sale and its usefulness in every possible way.

In touching, then, briefly upon a few of its contents, we may just mention, first, that Mr. Philpot, in compiling his work, has chiefly aimed, as he tells us in his Preface, at two main points, and in the working out of which his whole volume consists. First, "*To show, from its own documents and recognized authorities, the doctrines which Popery holds, and the principles on which it acts; and, secondly, To trace out the means whereby it is advancing in power and influence.*" But many persons, Protestants we mean, have a doubt in their minds whether Popery ever will, or ever *can*, regain such an intolerant form of power as what it has exercised in years gone by, when, as our author shows, it "deposed monarchs at its sovereign will, laid whole kingdoms under an Interdict, and let loose fire and sword upon all places and people which it branded with the deadly crime of heresy; burnt

its victims at the stake by thousands, and set up that horrible Inquisition, which seems to have carried human cruelty and ingenious, cold-blooded, unrelenting torture to a height from which fiends might have revolted, and which none but priests could have devised or carried out."

Well, our author frankly acknowledges at the very beginning of his book, that the "spirit of the age" we are living in, "the principles of liberty which animate every true English heart, the diffusion of knowledge, and the spread of education, the power of the newspaper press, the advance of democratic principles, the force of public opinion," and many other things which he mentions, are powerful, "and, as it would seem at present, invincible obstacles to the success of Romish aggression," and may, "to a great extent, prevent Popery assuming that arbitrary, tyrannical character which is the very breath of its nostrils." But for all this, as he goes on to show, Popery in "its power, influence, and authority may not be less noxious because it may re-appear amongst us under an altered form." Though the middle ages, when Popery was so intolerant in her enactments of cruelty, have passed away, and "can never be revived," yet "be it never forgotten that papal Rome is essentially unchanging and unchangeable." Having but one object, viz., *supremacy*, "she can accommodate herself to all times, persons, places, and circumstances." "Her eye" being fixed upon that one point,

"it matters little to her how she gets there, whether by a direct or a side-long movement, whether by a straightforward or circuitous route. If she recede, it is but more securely to advance; if she give way, it is that she may press more strongly forward; if she submit, it is but to reign; and if she stoop, it is but to conquer. We cannot judge, therefore, what Rome will do, until the time come when she will be fully prepared to act, and then she will strike out her own path and march on in it without hesitation or scruple."

But, then, whatever doubt Mr. Philpot might have had whether Popery will ever again be permitted to regain the same intolerant *form* of supremacy in this country which it assumed in the days of Hildebrand and of Innocent III., yet he fully believed, in common with most Protestant writers, that it will regain supremacy in some form or other, and that a day of triumph, though a *short one*, yet awaits it. Being "fully assured of the undivided allegiance of millions of devoted subjects all over the world," Rome has but one path before her, which is to allure millions more into her fold, and to go on multiplying her converts until she finds her strength equal to her aim of subjugating all that cannot be allured. "She fully knows," as our author says, "what she means, and how she intends, if possible, to attain it; and though it serves her present purpose to mask and disguise both end and means, she does not the less steadily pursue both, as the event, we fear, will too surely prove." Again, in order to show what Rome's deliberate intention is, and that it is no "visionary dream" to speak of it as being nothing less

than the complete crushing of all "moral power," the stamping-out of all "liberty of thought and action," and the reducing of "our free England to slavery and serfdom," Mr. Philpot gives us the following extract from the words of Dr. Manning, the Romish Archbishop:

"If ever there was a land in which work is to be done, and perhaps much to suffer, it is here. I shall not say too much if I say that we have to subjugate and subdue, to conquer and rule an imperial race; we have to do with a will which reigns throughout the world, as the will of old Rome reigned once; we have to bend or break that will which nations and kingdoms have found invincible and inflexible. . . Were heresy (*i.e.*, Protestantism) conquered in England, it would be conquered throughout the world. All its lines meet here, and therefore in England the church of God must be gathered in its strength."—*Tablet* (a Roman Catholic paper), August, 1859.

Again, in the "Weekly Register," a Roman Catholic journal, we meet with the following, as published much more recently than Mr. Philpot's work:

"In England the work of conversion has continued during the past year with steady and not very slow steps. To name, or even indicate, individuals who have been received during the past twelve months would be foreign to our purpose. This much we may say, and say with truth, the fact being known to many Catholics in London, that the number of converts in London alone has been upwards of two thousand during the past year, and has during the past few weeks increased very much. Many, as we are informed, have joined us who are all but Catholics, and who had little need of instruction before they made up their minds to take the final, long-deferred, but all-needed step. From every Ritualistic congregation in London there is a continual stream of converts drifting towards us; and the number would be increased had we priests sufficient to look after those who are hesitating as to this future step in the right direction. In various parts of the country different Anglican clergymen have been received into the Church, to the number of some ten or a dozen; and at least as many ladies connected with the various Anglican sisterhoods have followed in the same direction. Out of every twenty Anglicans who joined the Catholic Church, not less than seventeen have been prepared for the step by the teaching they have heard from Ritualistic pulpits, and by the practices they have got accustomed to in Ritualistic churches."

What a remarkable confirmation is this of Mr. Philpot's opinion, that Rome was securing her advancement and ends as much through the indirect aid of the Ritualists as by the more direct aid of her own priesthood. He considered the chief means of the advancement of Popery, or her three most distinct lines of progress, to be, "1, *Its increasing diffusion as a religious creed*; 2, *Its growing strength as a political power*; 3, *That of Ritualism*."

The Church of England service, as our author says, "is a very bald, cold service, when it has nothing but its naked simplicity to recommend it; and, though they hardly dare confess it, this has made it dreadfully wearisome to many of its firm adherents. They venerate, almost adore, the Prayer-book, but yawn a good deal at it, and find great relief when it is closed." He then goes

on to show how the Ritualists have met "this feeling of weariness by dressing the cold, bald service out with some of the warmer accompaniments of Romanism;" such as "chanting the Psalms," "an altar instead of the old plain table, with lights, flowers, a crucifix, if they dare go so far, and a deal of bowing and kneeling before it; . . . and the priests dressed in their albs, chasubles, stoles, dalmatics, maniples, copes, and a host of coloured vestments borrowed from the Romish Church." The people becoming intoxicated with such fooleries, they "instinctively drink into the same feelings."

"As the spectators of a tragedy drink into the spirit of the scene from seeing the countenances and gestures, and hearing the words of the actors, so the attendants at one of these Ritualistic churches are moved by the acts and gestures of their priests, and imbibe from them similar feelings of veneration, without any clear, definite views about the doctrine of transubstantiation, though they have strong leadings in that direction. When, therefore, a fuller development comes, it will not take them by surprise, but rather fill up a want which is felt by them rather than expressed, but is continually gathering strength from the food now supplied to it. As the ministers, then, gradually advance from one step to another, the congregation will move with them, until Popery will be welcomed by them as the full completion of their wishes and desires. The bishops, if not favourable to it, will be powerless to oppose it. Most of them are already prepared to receive it, and if it were to come to this, 'You must either embrace Popery or give up your bishopric,' we are inclined to think there would be found amongst them few Ridleys or Latimers who would rather choose death at the stake than to profess their belief in transubstantiation. Thus the great bulwark against Popery is already undermined and gradually falling, and the Church of England will be the door through which, if it eventually prevail, it will climb to the height of its power."

But, then, we are bound to ask, What could be a greater proof of the rottenness of the Established Church of England, as a system, than the very fact of its being capable of becoming such a training school for Romanism? Both clergymen and laymen of the Established Church are declaring that "we are bound to reject Protestantism as a delusion," a "cesspool," and exclaim, "God defend us from Protestantism." The Reformers are called "a set of miscreants," and their work "an abomination," and their memory, even J. C. Philpot's, "detestable." And yet, strange to say, there are yet to be found Nonconformists who, in the face of such a hotbed of heresy and popish formalities as what are allowed to exist in the Established Church, still cleave to the belief that it is a "bulwark of Protestantism." But we ask, how can it be when the bishops themselves, who are the law-appointed guardians over the ecclesiastical affairs of the Church, not only have no power to effectually suppress such abominable practices, but no will to do it; yea, even in most instances, actually encourage them? Well, the greatest puzzle to our mind, and has been a long time, is, how any really godly men who are taught divine truth by the Holy Ghost in their own souls, can

continue, under such circumstances, to deliberately abide at their post in such an anti-scriptural system. If their position is not very often a deal more burning to their consciences than what they confess to others, then their consciences must be singular things. Were the religious Dissenting denomination to which we belong as much polluted with false doctrine and as much carried away from the simplicity of gospel worship, as is the case with the Established Church; and were the pulpits in our connection filled from Sunday to Sunday with such daring heretics as the Ritualists who creep into the pulpits of the Anglican Church, we feel certain that no emoluments, pay, or any other inducements, would be able, with our present convictions, and in the prospect of a dying hour, to keep us where we now are.

Ritualism, or the very Church of England itself, being, as we believe it will prove, "the door" through which popery "will climb to the height of its power," we have said the more, and spoken the more strongly on this part of our author's work. Neither have we spoken a whit more strongly than what several of the evangelical clergymen have spoken themselves, as the following extract, containing the utterances of one of them, will show. He says,

"We are no longer a Protestant Church, but a Church in which anything and everything may be held and taught with impunity, from the limits of extreme Rome to those of almost utter infidelity. And this fact becomes overwhelming, when we consider that our Church has no existence except by the law of the land; and that only which that law makes her, that she is. So, then, she is actually unprotestantised; and we her ministers are, as to our position in her, unprotestantised also."

Here, then, is not a Dissenting minister like ourselves, but a clergyman of the Church of England who confesses that such are the Romish practices of his own Church, and such the state of things within her own walls, that you may get anything you like, "from the limits of extreme Rome to those of almost utter infidelity;" that matters in fact are so bad that "she is actually unprotestantised;" and that he regards himself as being unprotestantised in his position by remaining one of her sons. And yet, strange to say, one of her sons he still remains; neither can we say wherein he is most honest, whether in his position or his confessions.

We shall now follow our author through a few other matters which constitute the very core of Popery within the Catholic Church, though, for the sake of sparing time, it must be done rapidly, and with as few remarks of our own as possible. We will begin with *convents*, those dark and awful abodes, the inmost recesses of which are only fit in themselves for fiends to haunt, and devils to inhabit. But what is a convent? It is professedly a place where a secluded life of devotedness to God may be led, where, the world and its vanities being excluded, there may be nothing to interfere, or to intrude itself upon the sacred quiet and holy devotion of those who are immured within its walls.

But, then, we know that all this is an abominable lie, as our author shows. After referring to the celebrated trial of Miss Saurin, he says:

“We now see what a convent really is, and that instead of being a happy, holy place, where a favoured band of devoted virgins, full of peace, harmony, and love, spend days and nights in meditation, contemplation, and worship of God in prayer and praise, it is but a poor, petty, common-place collection of earthly-minded women who, like birds with broken wing, trail and flutter on the ground, picking up a few crumbs doled out to them by a rigid, arbitrary Superior, or pecking at one another, instead of soaring aloft to the gates of Paradise. We have seen what degrading and disgusting penances are inflicted upon the poor nuns, such as kissing the ground, wearing dirty dusters on their head, and old boots round their necks, and that instead of cleanliness being with them next to godliness, stockings and tunics worn till they drop to pieces with filth and age, are the ordinary practice; and, no doubt, according to the example of that renowned saint and martyr, Thomas à Becket, who wore his shirt till it was all alive with vermin, viewed as the very odour of saintly holiness. Setting aside all other considerations, are our English maidens, many of whom are taken from the higher classes of society, alike delicate in frame and sensitive in feeling, to be immured by hundreds in these gloomy prisons, that, under the idea of meriting their salvation by their good works, they should be crushed, body and soul, by these wretched Reverend Mothers who, the more they can debase them into uncomplaining obedience by task after task, and break their spirits by penance after penance, whilst they are really gratifying the worst passions of cruelty and tyranny, are all the time persuading themselves and their votaries that they are thus leading them on to the heights of Christian perfection? And remember that they are caged for life. A criminal sentenced to penal servitude may obtain a ticket of leave; but there is no ticket of leave for a nun. Fit or unfit for her vocation, on she must go with her weary task until she drops into her grave with a body worn out with penance, and a heart crushed with disappointment and sorrow.’

Passing on to that part of the work where we have “*Popery viewed under its special religious aspect as an advancing creed,*” “*Confession,*” “*Transubstantiation,*” and “*The worship of the Virgin Mary,*” are shown, with remarkable ability, to be Rome’s most powerful “*spiritual implements;*” and her *spiritual* assumptions, as Mr. Philpot shows, are far more to be dreaded than her *political* power; “*for, take away,*” as he says,

“her spiritual authority, and she sinks into a small Italian principality, governed by a feeble old man. But once assume that the Church of Rome is the holy, catholic, apostolic church, the church built by Christ himself upon the rock, and against which the gates of hell shall not prevail; and assume that the Pope, as her visible head, is Christ’s vicar and representative on earth, then what limit can you assign to her authority?”

In exposing, first, that hideous and revolting mystery of iniquity, the Confessional, our author, after speaking of certain restrictions which are put upon the priests in the confessional box, asks:

“But who can set bounds to human passions, when temptation and opportunity meet together? The priest has wound himself into the

penitent's inmost mind. He knows all the secret thoughts of her heart, and she knows that he knows them. He can, at his pleasure, put question after question. He knows his business well. He has been well taught it. He has read and studied books and manuals written and drawn up by the keenest, subtlest minds, thoroughly acquainted with all the windings and turnings of the human heart. What is this poor trembling girl in his hands? She is looking up to him almost as God, and he is gloating over her as man. The questions which rack and tear her bosom feed his with licentious thoughts, and, with his hook in her conscience, he can play with her agony as a salmon fisher with the fish at the end of his line; and, if so bent, he can go on winding her up till she fall into his hands. For he can follow her home. The father confessor can visit his penitents at all seasons. But we will not pursue so revolting a subject. God shield our maiden daughters from the confessional, and preserve our modest English girls from the arts of a licentious priesthood."

O what reason there is to exclaim, in the words of our departed friend,

"Ah! Rome, thou knowest how to torture consciences, as well as martyrs; souls as well as bodies; and destroy maiden purity as well as license hardened iniquity. What a breaking up of domestic happiness, what a violation of all family ties, what an intrusion into homes hitherto enjoying the sweetness of an almost sacred privacy, are all involved in the claims of a priestly confessor to guide the conscience of his female devotees, and rule them with an authority which they are fully persuaded it is a mortal sin in them to disobey."

Respecting the doctrine of "*Transubstantiation*," every Catholic is bound to believe that the bread and wine in what is called "the Sacrament of the holy Eucharist," are not merely emblems or signs of our blessed Lord's flesh and blood; but that the very substance of the bread is converted into the actual body of Christ; and that the very substance of the wine is converted into the actual blood of Christ. And, saith the Council of Trent, "If any shall say that he is only in it in sign, and figure, or power, let him be accursed." What rank idolatry! Yes, but then, as our author says,

"The time has been in this country when, if you called it idolatry, you would have been burned alive; for it is a well-known circumstance that the doctrine of transubstantiation was made the turning point which decided sending to the stake Lambert, Ridley, Latimer, Cranmer, and the other martyrs of the Reformation."

Who can tell but what our children may live to see such times again?

On the worship of the Virgin Mary, Mr. Philpot takes up two whole sections of his book, giving numerous quotations from the Missal and Breviary, the recognized daily service-books in the Romish Church. But it must only be one extract from this part of his book that we insert. It is given in our author's work as a quotation from Cardinal Bonaventura, who has taken the Book of Psalms, and made himself guilty of the blasphemous wickedness of putting the Virgin Mary in the place of Christ, and hence in the place of God who made her out of dust. Here is the quotation:

“Blessed is the man that loves thy name, O Virgin Mary; thy grace shall comfort his soul.’ ‘O Lady, how are they multiplied that trouble me! With thy tempest thou wilt persecute and scatter them.’ (Ps. iii.) ‘Lady, in thee have I put my trust; deliver thou me from mine enemies, O Lady.’ (Ps. vii.) ‘How long wilt thou forget me, O Lady, and not deliver me in the day of tribulation?’ (Ps. xii.) ‘In thee, O Lady, have I put my trust; let me never be confounded.’ (Ps. xxx.) ‘Blessed are they whose hearts love thee, O Virgin Mary; their sins shall be mercifully washed away by thee.’ (Ps. xxxi.) ‘O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; give thanks unto his Mother, for her mercy endureth for ever.’ (Ps. cvi.; cxvii.)

“As the climax of this tissue of blasphemy, we may quote the following:

“The Lord said unto our Lady, Sit thou, my Mother, at my right hand.’ (Ps. cx.)

“Some may say, Is not this all obsolete? Is this Psalter in use now? To this we answer, that it has gone through fourteen editions since the year 1830, and bears the *imprimatur* of the present Romish ecclesiastical authorities in the Vatican.”

The worship of saints, of images, and of relics, with other important matters contained in our author’s work, we must pass over. We can only say that all the infamous delusions of Popery, its wicked intrigues, its subtle methods of advancement, and the alarming dangers with which its rapid advancement threatens our Protestant rights and liberties, are laid more faithfully bare, and dealt with in his work with a more skilful hand than we have ever seen in any other work of the same size that we have ever read. So much faithful dealing with the worst, the most pestiferous, the most polluting, the most cursed system of heresy that “the wicked one” has ever fabricated, as what we find in our author’s work, should command for it a sale of thousands every month in the year. But, then, before closing our paper, we may, kind readers, ask what can such poor “feeble folk” as you and ourselves do toward arresting the onward progress of so gigantic a system of evil? Would it be right in the sight of God, even if we had the power, to use carnal weapons to put popery down? We say, Certainly not. But for all this, there are proper means to be employed, and a proper way of using them. Listen to what Mr. Philpot says on this most important point.

“But the question arises, How is she to be resisted? How is her advance to be checked? Must we use physical violence? No. The time may come when the nation may rise up against her and put her down by the strong hand of power. But that is not our path nor our counsel. There is a way before us, a legitimate way, a way sanctioned by the laws of God and man. How did Luther succeed in overthrowing the papal power at its greatest height? By the word of God; by preaching and writing, and setting forth truth in opposition to error. It was not by the sword but by the pen that the great German reformer gained his victories. Error can no more stand before truth than darkness before light; and thus, as he kept advancing in light and knowledge, in faith and boldness, he pressed on from point to point till that Reformation was accomplished which, with all its imperfections and infirmities, has been made the greatest blessing wherever it

has come, both socially and religiously, since the first preaching of the gospel and the gift and diffusion of the Scriptures."

Whilst, then, the "unaccountable apathy of the great Dissenting body" is such that few seem to care to move "hand or foot" to oppose the advance of their deadliest enemy, or even to take the trouble of lifting up their heads to examine the progress which it is making; we trust that our readers, at least, who have not yet done so, will be the more ready to lift up their heads, to look into the book we have been recommending, in order to "examine the progress" which popery is making; and we trust that all our readers together may, by our poor feeble recommendation, be moved to lift both hand and foot to get "The Advance of Popery" more generally circulated.

IS CHRIST DIVIDED?

I COR. I. 13.

How many try with reason's knife to cut the knot asunder!
 And where they do, there will be strife; and who at this can wonder?
 The Child new-born, and given Son, were one in earliest breath;
 'Tis marked throughout the Saviour's life, and in his glorious death.
 In all his miracles we see,—yes, it is sweetly true!
 The blest perfection of the God, and perfect manhood too.
 'Twas human lips said, "Go in peace; thy sins are all forgiven;"
 But power divine gave that release;—these never must be riven.
 Some own the union through the life, until he came to die,
 And then for comprehension's grasp, to sever it they try.
 But glorious Christ was God and Man when Justice drew the sword;
 And thus, while flesh alone can bleed, it was the blood of God.
 The atoning virtue of that blood did from the Godhead shine,
 Just as the voice that calm'd the sea was human and divine.
 If I see *but* the glorious God, then in my sins I'm found;
 If I see *but* a man that's good, I'm on Socinian ground.
 My soul cannot rejoice in hope, my spirit is not free,
 Except the God-Man Jesus Christ by faith I clearly see.
 'Twas Christ, the Lord of heaven and earth, on whom our sins were laid;
 And was he not *ЖЕHOVAH*, Lord, they never had been paid.
 He, as the Lord of heaven and earth, our cause would undertake;
 And did, as the eternal Son, himself a victim make.
 But how as God he bore our sins, and yet as man could weep,
 Is height my reason cannot climb, nor venture near the steep.
 'Tis Christ the God-Man's precious blood which did for sin atone;
 Manhood, abstract from Deity, would not suffice alone.
 My feeble faith would shun the *hows*, and at his cross abide;
 Hope's anchor may well fix in this,—'twas Christ the Lord who died.
 O never try, my soul, to part what God has joined together;
 His natures truly are distinct; but O! divide them never.
 To add, to alter, or disjoin, no leave from God I see.
 The Holy Ghost reveals him thus, and 'tis enough for me.

Chelsea, June, 1879.

A. B.

A BRAND PLUCKED FROM THE BURNING.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE LAST DAYS OF MRS. THOMAS CLARKE, OF LOUGHBOROUGH, WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE ON APRIL 10TH, 1872, AGED 56.

My dear mother had been accustomed to hear the sound of the gospel for more than thirty years; but never experienced the power of it until her last illness. At that time she was mercifully brought to feel her deep need of salvation through Jesus's blood, and was blessed with a spirit of prayer and supplication to God that she might be a partaker of the imputed righteousness of Jesus; not creature righteousness, but that which is divine.

After some time she was asked if she had received any encouragement; to which she replied the greatest consolation she had received was from the words: "He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax;" but she said her desire was to have the blood of Christ applied to her soul; nothing less would do; for she had all the sins of her life set before her, and they rose like mountains to her view. She did not doubt that Jesus was able to save, but she felt herself such a poor, sinful, guilty wretch, and that she had been *so* ungrateful. Still, she could not quite give up hope, and said several times, "He hath delivered, he doth deliver, and we trust he will yet deliver." At one time she said, "When he has tried me, I shall come forth as gold; and his time is best."

One night I repeated that verse to her:

"O that with yonder sacred throng,
We at his feet may fall," &c.

She replied, "Yes; I should be satisfied with a place at his feet."

On Sunday, March 24th, she was very ill, and suffering much severe pain. In the night, when giving her something to drink, she said, "They gave him gall and vinegar to drink." She seemed very thankful for all the comforts she had.

On Tuesday, 26th, she exclaimed:

"How huge the heavy load of all,
When only mine's so great!"

I asked her that night if she could resign us all into the Lord's hands. She replied immediately, "O yes! He can take better care of you than I can;" and then most fervently prayed that God would put his fear in the hearts of all her children, that they might not depart from him. Her illness increased; yet the state of her mind was much the same; but she was almost constantly in prayer. Her desire was to view Jesus as on the cross for *her* sins, and she longed to feel his redeeming blood and love in her soul. Her very frequent language was:

"Weary of earth, myself, and sin,
Dear Jesus, set me free," &c.

She often asked us to read that hymn of Cowper to her:

"God of my life, to thee I call," &c.

And many times repeated the two lines :

“When the great waterfloods prevail,
Leave not my trembling heart to fail.”

Friday, 29th. My mother remarked early this morning, “The poor man at the pool waited a long time; but he could not get in himself. What patience! I do pray for patience.”

Saturday, 30th. Her cry was, “Lord, help me; for I cannot help myself. No help in self!”

Monday, April 1st. My father asked my mother if her prospects brightened at all. She answered, “Not so much as I should like; but I keep praying, hoping, waiting. I cannot give up hope.” The same night she was very ill, and much tempted, and said Satan wanted to show her the bottomless pit, and to persuade her that she would go there. On Wednesday night the enemy made another attempt to harass and perplex her soul; but she said he was not permitted to say much, and in an hour or so afterwards she exclaimed, “It has come.” We asked her what? She said, “These words: ‘Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven.’”

Her desire after this was to depart. She daily got weaker and worse. One night she said to my father, “Do pray for me that I may have an abundant entrance ministered unto me.” She so longed to

“Pass the river telling
The triumphs of her King.”

On Tuesday, 9th, she said, “O Lord, do come and take me, if it be thy will. I am quite ready.” The next day she peacefully, without a sigh, breathed out her soul into her Redeemer’s hands.

“Why should the wonders God hath wrought
Be lost in silence or forgot?”

S. A. H.

THROUGH MUCH TRIBULATION.

MEMOIR OF MR. C. COWLEY, LATE MINISTER OF GEE STREET CHAPEL,
LONDON.

(Concluded from p. 525.)

MANY of Mr. Cowley’s letters about this time allude to his afflictions, and to the kindness of friends in ministering to his necessities. With a few more extracts, we pass over the remaining ten years of his sojourn here below, which were still marked with family cares and afflictions, occasionally paying a visit into the country to supply the churches where he had been so much accustomed to go, particularly Cheltenham and Bath.

In a long letter to Mr. Philpot, acknowledging the receipt of a sovereign from him, and a contribution from other friends, he says:

“Once, when I was in distress, suffering the want of temporal mercies, these words came to my mind: ‘For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.’ I was reproved, strengthened, and comforted by the words; and God has been faithful to his word until now. And

since I have been in London, I have proved his goodness and mercy in finding me temporal provisions for my family, and supplies for the pulpit. In my late heavy affliction I have had also the sympathies of my friends, both in town and in the country; besides the blessedness of having my mind so sweetly brought into subjection to the will of God in the most trying part of my afflictions, especially the loss of my dear affectionate daughter and her husband. Before her illness and death took place, when I was confined to my bed, I was made happy in my soul in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I felt to be in good hands, as if laid upon a bed of gracious promises. I was sure God would not let me want any needed good. This to me seemed a preparation for the increasing affliction and bereavements which followed. God was good; a stronghold in my day of trouble; neither did he leave me nor forsake me."

A letter from which the following extract is made appears to be written to one of his members, then out of town, dated July 6th, 1870:

"Our quarterly meeting is expected to take place on Monday next. I do not like being present on such occasions. You know that as a church we do not increase. If we have gained at one time, we have lost at another; yet I think the Lord is with us of a truth. I think at each removal from one place to another for worship (which some say is against me), I have lost a friend both to myself and the cause."

It seems from the above that the church had to move first to one place, then to another.

Early in this year, Mr. Cowley had the pleasure of baptizing his own son Charles, who was about to join the church at Barking. His daughter Rebecca was married also about this time, which made the fifth marriage amongst his children; and yet on none of these occasions had he been present. It seems the marriage of his children did not lessen his family troubles.

The following letter, relative to the illness of Mrs. Cowley, was written a year or two later on:—

"Dear Charles,—I thank you for your letter, and your dear wife for hers. We were glad of both of them. I should have written before, but have been so put about with cares of different sorts. Your dear mother has been in bed ten days; but she is better, and able to sit up in her bedroom now. One week I really thought she must die, but her end was not come.

"33, Hanley Road West, Jan. 9th, 1875."

It pleased the Lord to bless the means used to the partial restoration of Mrs. Cowley, as will be seen from the following letter, written to their son and his wife:

"Dear Charles and Wife,—Mercy says that I have not written to you, since her return from your house, to let you know that both arrived here in safety. We are much as usual. Mother has not been dressed yet, and I cannot say that she ever will be. I wish her mind was in as good a state as it appeared to be when at her worst. It is very trying for her and all of us for her to be such a prisoner, always in or on her bed.

"I was helped and very comfortable in Sussex. I preached at the Dicker and at Ripe on Sept. 30th, and Oct. 3rd and 4th; but was very ill on Monday. I began to think whether I should not die. But through mercy, I got a little ease, and slept. I have been sensibly

helped in my preaching the last few times, more so than usual; inso-much that I have thought perhaps my end is drawing near.

"Another deacon at Gower Street is to be buried to-morrow, which makes two in a few weeks out of their five. A warning voice to others. We had five when I came here. Two have died; two have left; and only Mr. L. remains; so that the church have chosen two more to act with him. I think never had a poor minister three more faithful and affectionate deacons than I have as yet.

"You know I am published on the 'Gospel Standard' wrapper for Blunsdon on the 30th, and Stratton on the 31st of this month. I hope to be able to fulfil the engagements. I suppose I must go to Oxford on Thursday, Nov. 1st; and home the day following. Our united love. May the Almighty bless you and yours.

"Your tried Father, COR. COWLEY.

"33, Hanley Road, Oct. 16th, 1877."

These engagements he did not live to fulfil. He was taken very unwell at Bath, and wrote to his son as follows:

"My Dear Son Charles,—I write a line to let you know that I am too unwell to come to Stratton and Blunsdon next week. The friends here will let me off on Sunday night, that I may go home on the Monday, where some think I ought to be, and under a doctor's care; and I feel so too. You will let the friends know, and prevent my being published on Sunday for Wednesday. My breath is very short. I feel much weakness and great pain.

"Kind love to you and your dear wife. May the Lord be a Father to you when you have lost your earthly one.

"From your much tried and affectionate Father,

"Bath, Oct. 25th, 1877.

"CORNELIUS COWLEY."

On the Saturday, Mr. Prewett, one of the friends, wrote to Mr. Cowley's son as follows:

"Dear Friend,—Mrs. Prewett went to see Mr. Cowley. I am requested to inform you that he is very unwell, and feels fully persuaded that to-morrow, if able then, will end his preaching. He told her he longed to be at home.

"What a solemn matter this is! So many of the Lord's servants dropping off. I should so much like to hear your father to-morrow; but cannot, as I am expected at Corsham.

"Mrs. P. stayed some time with him, and found that he was very low in his mind, feeling so dark. O that God would break in, and give him sweetly to feel that he has 'not followed cunningly-devised fables!' He asked her to get me to write to you, and say how impossible it would be for him to come to Stratton.

"Yours faithfully, in much haste,

"HENRY PREWETT."

Receiving this intelligence, his son left home for Bath the same day, but was too late to see his dear father alive. He says in a letter:

"I am glad that I went to Bath on the Sunday that he bade farewell to earthly cares. What a heavenly smile he had on his countenance!"

Mr. Cowley had more than once expressed a wish that he might not be laid aside, but die in harness. His request was granted; for it pleased God to call him home to himself quite suddenly.

He had gone to Bath to supply for the friends there on Lord's

day, Oct. 28th. In the morning of that day, not making his appearance at the breakfast-table, the person of the house where he lodged went to call him, and getting no answer after knocking at his door, went in. What was her astonishment as she entered to find him quite dead in his chair, in a sitting posture, and with his Bible open on a table before him. Thus suddenly, away from home, with no friend near him but the One true and unseen Friend, he passed away, to spend his Sabbath in eternity; set free for ever from all infirmities of the frail body, cares, and anxieties of the mind, and from all the changing scenes of time and sense. He has entered upon the everlasting rest, peace, and joy he longed for.

“No rude alarms of raging foes;
 No cares to break the long repose;
 No clouded sun, no midnight moon;
 But sacred, high, eternal noon.”

All was done for him that respect and kindness could do, both by the friends at Bath and those in London, who spared neither trouble nor expense. His remains were conveyed from Bath to London; and many friends met on the occasion of his funeral. Thus was he honourably interred, and much lamented; being much esteemed as a faithful experimental preacher of the glorious gospel of the grace of God.

JESUS ALL IN ALL.

WHEN I of sinners felt the chief,
 And thus was overwhelm'd with grief,
 What was it gave my heart relief?
A *sight* of Jesus.

When at the throne I wept in prayer,
 And waited for deliverance there,
 What was it saved me from despair?
A *hope* in Jesus.

When I, defiled throughout by sin,
 Mourn'd o'er the malady within,
 What was it made me whole and clean?
The *blood* of Jesus.

When I forget redeeming love,
 And often so ungrateful prove,
 What is it then my heart can move?
A *look* from Jesus.

When trouble is approaching near,
 And darker still the clouds appear,
 What is it calms my rising fear?
A *word* from Jesus.

When earthly friends appear unkind,
 And I in them no comfort find,
 What is it then supports my mind?
A *smile* from Jesus.

When I am call'd a cross to bear,
 And persecution is severe,
 What is it checks the gathering tear?

A thought of Jesus.

When Christians meet for prayer and praise,
 And wait for fresh supplies of grace,
 What is it makes me choose their ways?

A love to Jesus.

When I my heavenly home perceive,
 If still to earth my soul should cleave,
 What then will make me glad to leave?

A call from Jesus.

When I have left this wilderness,
 And reach'd the shores of perfect peace,
 What then will constitute my bliss?

A heaven in Jesus.

Croydon.

JOHN.

Obituary.

RICHARD HYDE.—On July 25th, 1879, aged 67 years, Richard Hyde, of Greenfield, Bedfordshire, deacon of the Particular Baptist church at Westoning.

Richard Hyde was the subject of convictions in early life, and, like many of the Lord's children, could hardly tell when his spiritual convictions commenced. This strange work went on gradually for some time, until one day, when at plough with another man, such vile and improper language as young and foolish men are prone to when at work together was used. On that day, God put his hand to the work with tenfold force, and entered into judgment with him, and gave him to feel a lost sinner indeed in his holy eyesight. Convictions after that memorable day sank much deeper than the skin, causing him to wander about as a forlorn, guilty wretch, his head bowed down like a bulrush, well knowing that he deserved the hottest place in that dread abode of eternal fire where hope can never come.

Like others of the Lord's quickened family, he began to search for something the world could not give. He wanted something for his never-dying soul, yet knew not precisely himself what. Only he felt that he needed mercy; but whether he should ever find it he could not tell. Like Abraham, he went out, not knowing whither he went. He became openly religious, in search of the one thing needful, and for about five years attended a General Baptist place of worship. He joined the church, and was baptized.

At the end of five years, God opened his eyes more perfectly to see the fallacy of human merit, creature-ability, and fleshly righteousness. He also saw how any man must be saved, if saved at all, and that it must be solely and entirely by free, unmerited love, grace, and mercy, in and through Christ Jesus alone, without worth or merit of any kind in the creature. God's truth was so fastened on his mind, and daily experience so convinced him of the error of the teaching he sat under, that he was obliged to leave; though he then knew not where to go, or what to do. But as infinite wisdom leads his people in a way they knew not, and brings the blind onward to the right point,—a city of habita-

tion, so divine providence led him to Westoning, where the pure truth of God was faithfully preached. There he heard the certain sound of the gospel trumpet, and found a home. He soon cast in his lot with the people, being received by the church. He was not re-baptized, as they believed he had been baptized as a believer, though at the time his judgment was cloudy. This took place about forty years ago.

He continued a consistent member about five years, during which time the then pastor, Mr. Chew, died. They then began to have supplies, which proved a source of much unpleasantness. The old Corinthian leaven began to work; one saying, "I am of Paul;" another, "I am of Apollos," &c. One of these supplies seemed so to gain the ascendancy over the minds of some of the members of the church, that they thought he was the man for their pastor. On the other hand, Richard could not get on with him. He could not hear him; but counted him only a letter man. The contention was so strong that it ended in Richard leaving the chapel, giving up his membership, and abandoning all open or public profession; which solemn and awful backsliding state lasted the long period of nearly five years; and affords us a solemn warning against miserable church strifes.

Soon after the commencement of this bitter part of his life, he came in contact with two or three professed infidels. He was taken captive by them, and tried to talk as they talked, and act as they acted; spending every Lord's day in the fields; reading Tom Paine's works and talking over the reasonableness of the same. But Richard Hyde was not what he seemed. He wandered about those fields with those men with a bleeding conscience, a heavy heart, and in an agony of spirit. "O!" he he would afterwards say, "none but God knew what misery I passed through during that woeful part of my worthless life."

But God has a set time to favour Zion, in which he fulfils the promises suitable to a child of God's particular case. Thus, having said, "I will heal their backslidings; I will love them freely. How long wilt thou go about, O backsliding daughter? Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee!" the dear Lord fulfilled these words in Richard Hyde's case, in his own time and way. First, by scattering his infidel companions into various parts of the globe; and secondly by close dealings in a way of solemn conscience-work with Richard Hyde himself. He chastised him sorely by giving him to feel the terrors of his frowns. Poor Richard was thus alone in the midst of terrible company. He was far from the church of God; his infidel companions had left him; an angry God stood afar off with a frowning face; no man cared for his soul; and he himself wished he had had none to care for; and to add to his misery Satan also came in here, and vented a great degree of his own malice against God. Richard has told me this was the most solemn bit of ground he ever set foot upon, and hoped he never should touch it again. The prince of darkness worked awful rebellion in him, as to his feelings, against the Almighty. Solemn feeling indeed! The writer of this obituary knowing to his sorrow what this is, having been once in the very spot, has at times in conversation with Richard just hinted with trembling at the awful subject. We could well agree in this,—that it was the most solemn ground we ever touched upon, in all our travels.

In the Lord's own time, he brought our beloved brother to his dear feet, with weeping and supplication, and led him in the way of his steps. He brought him as a little child to his house and amongst his saints. He was restored to membership, and that with love, pleasure, and delight, by his brothers and sisters in the Lord, believing as they did that all the while he was a dear child of God, though so left, and running so far and so long in such terrible backslidings.

This took place about thirty years ago; and ever since he has been looked upon as a model Christian. His reflections upon the past, with God sanctifying the same, caused him to walk humbly with his God and his fellow-men, both in the church and in the world. Our surviving deacon, George Squires, and Richard have walked together, talked together, and worked together, for the said thirty years, without the least jarring note. O for more of such godly union!

Richard was a very weighty man in prayer. On reading Sundays he usually concluded the afternoon service with prayer; and several of the friends have told me that his prayer crowned the day. He was well established in the doctrines of the gospel; but wished those doctrines to be well interwoven with a living experience and gospel practice by those who stood up to preach. If this was not the case, he was much dissatisfied.

Like others of the Lord's family, he found the truth of his Master's speech: "In the world ye shall have tribulation;" but in his latter days he also experienced the latter part of that text: "But in me ye shall have peace." He had many temporal trials; but I must be brief, and name only a few. He had an only daughter, who died in the Lord when quite young, leaving three little children. Her obituary is in the "Gospel Standard" for Jan., 1865, page 31; and is well worth reading. The burden of her little family fell on her father; their own father being far from a proper and natural parent to them. Richard, for his departed daughter's sake, and from his own humane feelings, took charge of them at his own cost, though his means were often very scanty, as he was only a market gardener. To add to his burden, his wife began to be afflicted; and after much suffering on her part and cost on his, she died, and left him to fight the battle of life alone for some time. He then married again, and this brought fresh trouble; as the children could not take to his wife, though she was a godly woman, and a good mother to them. After a time she was taken away also by death, leaving poor Richard again in solitude. In addition to all these things, his own health began to fail, and he became subject to severe attacks of affliction in the chest and bowels, of which he eventually died. The most severe attack he ever had was in March last; and it proved fatal on July 25th.

At the commencement of this last affliction, God blessed his soul in such a way and degree as he never felt before in all the 50 years of his regenerate life. Yea, all the blessings he had ever had before were only like so many candles in comparison to the blazing summer sun. Tongue or pen must fail to rightly express the glory that filled his happy soul at this time; but I must try to give a few words on the subject, as it was the crowning point in his valuable life, both to himself and all spiritual observers. Christ Jesus his Lord was revealed to him in a most astonishing manner, as his Days-man, Mediator, Surety, Law-fulfiller, Advocate, High Priest, and almost in every office he sustains to his church and people; but especially as his Saviour. "His Saviour." This seemed to swallow up every other name. Saved from all his sins, from death and hell, from the curse of the law and all backslidings, and saved to Christ himself, to heaven and glory, with an everlasting salvation. I went to see him in this happy state of mind, and his countenance beamed with heavenly joy. He spoke as long as his little strength would allow. Amongst other gracious utterances, he said, "I can now join the psalmist, and say, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, and crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies,'" &c. Also, "I am a companion to dear Paul. I can now say in truth, 'I know that when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, I have a building of God, an house

not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' With other dear saints and servants of God in the Scriptures, I can now well join and say, 'Praise ye the Lord,' &c.

In this triumphant state, one night when left alone, his soul was filled with heavenly raptures to that degree that every power of his soul and body was put to the utmost strain in inwardly singing God's high praises in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, making melody in his heart to the Lord. Amongst other hymns, he made special mention of the 201st, all of which he sang with unspeakable delight; and especially the last verse:

"Grace all the work shall crown
Through everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

During that blessed night his soul was lifted up to a very high degree in an experimental enjoyment of his interest in the love of God his heavenly Father, in the blood-shedding and righteousness of Jesus, his dear Saviour and Redeemer; the Spirit itself bearing his own witness with his spirit that he was in very deed a child of God, a joint-heir with Christ, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. At this point, the world, the family, his business, and all things here below were as if dead to him. In a word, he was as if he had already left the body, and his soul was bathing in bliss. Such manifestations of God's salvation are better felt than described; for

"Living tongues are dumb at best;
We must die to speak of Christ."

He said to me, "O! I can now realize things that I saw a beauty in, but could not lay hold of; but they have now laid hold of me, and I now well understand them. He referred to tasting, handling, and feeling the good things of God for one's self by the testimony of God the Holy Ghost in the heart.

We thought his end was very near; and as I was going to London, I left my address, that they might send for me to bury him. But, to the surprise of all, he so far recovered as to be able to ride to chapel several Lord's days, to witness both to small and great the wonders of God to him. He appeared like a man raised from the dead. None of us ever saw any one out of bed with such a death-like appearance. He felt he must come, if possible, to chapel to tell to sinners round what a dear Saviour he had found. This he did, with all the little strength he had; and very kindly admonished the young male members not to hang back in trying to pray at prayer-meetings, &c.

The last time he was at chapel was on July 13th, twelve days before his death. He would have been there on the 20th, but the weather forbade, as it was wet.

His last attack was on the 23rd, two days before his death. I was sent for, as he wished to see me. I went, but found no particular change in him. He did not seem any worse, but simply unable to get up as usual. After a long conversation on soul matters, he spoke to me on his little business affairs, as if he knew he was shortly to put off his poor tabernacle. After prayer, &c., I promised (D.V.) to see him again on Friday, before I went to Oakham. Accordingly, I went as arranged, and to my surprise and wonder, he was just fallen asleep in death. His grand-daughter was supporting him while he sat up in bed to rest, as she sometimes did during his affliction. He passed away, while thus leaning upon her, so calmly and quietly that it was undiscernible.

Thus ended the mortal life of this dear saint of God. The church has lost a pillar; the grand-children a grand-parent; the village a worthily

beloved inhabitant; and myself the best and most unswerving friend I ever had in my life. It is now more than twelve years since we first met. We were united in heart and soul at first, and, like David and Jonathan, remained the same to the last.

“Our loss is his eternal gain.
His death to me imparted pain.
I hope to meet again above,
To bask in everlasting love.”

Soon after his death, he began to swell very much; and corruption soon set in, so that he had to be buried on Sunday, the 27th, two days only after death. I ministered at his funeral on that day.

As he had a good report of them that are without the church, as well as those that are within, many strangers came to pay their last respect to his memory, and to see him deposited in his last resting-place; also to hear what I should say of him. He was well laid in the grave, owing no man anything, notwithstanding all his afflictions. Blessed saint! Blessed end!

Flitwick, Ampthill, Beds, Sept. 6, 1879.

WM. DARBYSHIRE.

THOMAS SEABROOK.—On Jan. 4th, 1879, aged 75, Thomas Seabrook, of Furneaux Pelham, near Braughing, Herts.

I was personally acquainted with my dear friend for more than eight years, and felt a sweet and blessed union. Though born in sin, and shapen in iniquity, he was not permitted to run such great lengths in sin and folly as some of the Lord's dear family are.

The first serious impression upon him was in a manner somewhat remarkable. While visiting his relatives in Cambridgeshire he picked up a tract of Dr. Hawker's, which the Lord made use of to convince him of his lost and undone state as a guilty sinner, and to show him that, living and dying in that state, he was lost, and that for ever. Thus the Spirit of truth came in his convincing power to convince him of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

At that time, being a young man, he could no longer go with the professing world, but became singular for his profession of and faith in the truth of the gospel. Hearing of a place of truth at Braughing, he soon cast in his lot amongst those who worshipped there. For many years he sat under the ministry of the late E. Lawrence, and was at times raised to a comfortable hope in the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. The searching ministry of such men as Mr. Smart, Mr. Cowper, and Mr. Mortimer was much prized by him. He became well established, strengthened, and settled in the doctrines of free grace and unmerited mercy. He spoke with great tenderness of soul matters, for fear of presuming. This was a marked feature in him. He was swift to hear, and slow to speak, and spoke as having the fear of God before his eyes.

My dear friend was one of those who, through fear of death, are all their lifetime subject to bondage. He had many doubts and fears of coming short at last, fearing that he should not endure to the end. Knowing that the promise was for such, he was the subject of much questioning. He was well taught the plague of his own heart. The workings up of the abominations of it often made him reel and stagger, and feel at his wits' end. He was much plagued with the unbelief of his heart; and said the hymn of Mr. Hart's, beginning,

“If unbelief's that sin,” &c.,

suited his case. This, with many others, set forth the exercises of his mind.

On various occasions the enemy severely tempted him to give up his hope, and said that he would turn out an hypocrite after all. One day

in particular, whilst in conversation, he said, "I hope you will tell me the truth as to what you really think of me. Don't you think I am a downright old hypocrite?" These words came sweetly to my mind, as I listened to the inquiry: "We are persuaded better things of you, though you thus speak." Then he said, "It is all mercy, all on the Lord's side. O! if ever there was a poor devil-driven sinner upon the face of this earth, deserving hell, I am that sinner; for had not the Lord in his mercy in the hour of temptation, twice in particular, appeared for me, I know I should not have been here now." How good the dear Lord is to me in not permitting me to be tempted more than I am able to bear, being Man as well as God! As Man, he was tempted, and is able to succour them that are tempted. As Mediator, he has all power given unto him in heaven, as well as earth; so that there is nothing too hard for the Lord Jesus. I am a poor five-hundred pence debtor, with nothing to pay.

"Mercy is joyful news indeed

To those who guilty stand."

'Frankly forgiven;' this is divinely sweet."

During 1878, the Lord saw fit to lay his afflicting hand upon him in the form of bronchitis, which was followed by dropsy. From this he did not recover. During his illness the blessed Spirit spoke the words addressed to Hezekiah home to his heart: "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live." From this time he had an earnest desire to settle his affairs, so far as concerns this life; as, being in business, many things pressed hard upon him. This desire the Lord granted; and whilst thus engaged, the dear Lord favoured him much, which melted him down with tears of love and gratitude at his feet, and brought sweet submission to his sovereign will in all things. He said the case of the poor woman in the Gospel, whom Satan had bound eighteen years, was a great comfort to him. As soon as the Lord took her in hand, the cure was immediate. Thus was he brought sweetly to confide in the Lord, and, as Hart says, to

"Shelter in his wounded side."

The enemy often suggested that he had never come aright to Christ. But he knew he had come feeling himself a poor sensible sinner, and pleading the merits of the Saviour, and could say, "His perfect obedience, placed to my account, is all my salvation and all my desire; thus would I be found in him."

Being much respected, many kind friends visited him, though few liked his religion. He did not spare those who thus came. He would say to his sister, "I must contend for that faith which is God's gift to every one of his elect, and which is my only support. All that is short of the power of vital godliness is not of God." He said, "Tell the friends I am as firm in the doctrines of grace as ever I was; and I must contend for the faith once delivered to the saints." This he did unto the last.

Three days before his death, he said, "You have come to see a poor five-hundred pence debtor, and nothing to pay with." He also said, "The words have come again: 'Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.' Mercy, mercy, O mercy shall be built up for ever. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; because his mercy endureth for ever. I want the Lord to come, clear the way, and bid me come, and enable me to follow like one waiting." Shortly after this, his breathing was difficult, and he became drowsy and unconscious for a few hours. Then the Lord took his poor child to himself. "A sinner saved by grace."

Braughing.

J. C.

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